The Origins of John's Gospel

JOHANNINE STUDIES 2

Edited by

STANLEY E. PORTER
& HUGHSON T. ONG

BRILL

The Origins of John's Gospel

Johannine Studies

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VOLUME 2

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Series Preface

This is the second of a series of volumes in the Johannine Studies series being published by Brill Publishers of Leiden. This volume is on the topic of The Origins of John's Gospel. The first volume, Stanley E. Porter and Andrew K. Gabriel, *Johannine Writings and Apocalyptic: An Annotated Bibliography* (JOST 1; Leiden: Brill, 2013), met with an enthusiastic welcome, and we are pleased that many have found that volume a help in their research. Subsequent volumes currently scheduled to appear are as follows:

Volume 3: Johannine Christology
Volume 4: The Johannine Prologue and its Resonances
Volume 5: John's Gospel and its Sources

Johannine studies has seen a resurgence of interest in the last several years, with many of the assured results of previous Johannine scholarship being re-examined. These include theories regarding the origins of John's Gospel, its relationship to the Synoptic Gospels, its historiography, and many other topics. Study of the Johannine writings, including the Gospel, three Johannine letters, and Revelation, has been hampered, however, by a lack of dedicated avenues for publication. There are many such opportunities, including dedicated series and journals, for study of the Synoptic Gospels, and an equivalent number for the Pauline writings. Therefore, it is appropriate and necessary to publish a series devoted to the Johannine writings and their many attendant research questions. This Johannine Studies series will concentrate upon topics of special relevance for Johannine research, especially where recent work is re-conceptualizing old topics or introducing new ones. The number of scholars devoting their efforts to such areas continues to grow, as is evidenced by the numbers of sessions dedicated to Johannine studies at recent major conferences, as well as the variety of Johannine publications finding their ways into various journals and other works.

I would like to invite any scholars interested in making contributions to one or more of these scheduled volumes to be in contact with me regarding their proposed work, including submitting their paper (please submit in Word file and pdf, following SBL guidelines). Contact information is provided below. The topics of the volumes are being defined and interpreted broadly, so that papers that deal, for example, with clearly related subjects (and especially those that encompass the breadth of the Johannine corpus), we hope will be able to find a home in these collections of papers. Plans for the third and

fourth volumes are already underway, so those interested in publishing in these volumes should not hesitate to make contact immediately. As with similar series, the anticipated rate of publication is one volume per year. We are also contemplating extending the series according to interest in these initial five volumes. I would request that submissions be made by 31 January of a given year for publication later in that calendar year. This means that papers for the third volume, Johannine Christology, should be submitted (due to publication delays with this volume) by 31 January 2016, so as to allow time for review and then editing. I will be in contact with all authors of submissions regarding the status of their essays.

I would like to thank those who have encouraged the development of this project, and especially Louise Schouten and (now retired) Mattie Kuiper at Brill, who have continued to be an encouragement as this project took shape and is now finally coming to its initial fruition.

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Abbreviations

1 Apol.	Justin Martyr's *1 Apology*
AASFDHL	Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae. Dissertationes humanarum litterarum
AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
Adv. Haer.	*Adversus Haereses* (Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*)
Adv. Iovin.	*Adversus Iovinianum* (Jerome's *Against Jovinian*)
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
Apol.	*Apology* (Tertullian's *Apology*)
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation*
Bibl.	*Bibliotheca* (Photius's work)
BibSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BiH	Biblische Handbibliothek
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentary
BT	*Bible Translator*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament
BU	Biblische Untersuchungen
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
Chron.	*Chronicon* (Malalas's *Chronicle*)
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
Comm. Matth.	*Origen's Commentary on Matthew*
Comm. in Io.	*Origen's Commentary on John*
De vir. III.	*De viris illustribus* (Jerome's *On Illustrious Men*)
ECC	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
EdF	Erträge der Forschung
Ep.	*Epistles*
Epid.	Ireneaus's *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*
ETL	*Ephemerides theologicae lovaniensis*
ETR	*Etudes théologiques et religieuses*

ExpTim	*The Expository Times*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten and Neuen Testaments
Fzb	Forschung zur Bibel
GTA	Göttinger theologische Arbeiten
Haer.	*Adversus Haereses* (Epiphanius's *Against Heresies*)
HBS	Herders biblische Studien
HE	*Historia Ecclesiastica* (Eusebius's *Church History*)
Hist.	*Historiae* (Cassius Dio's *Histories*)
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
IBS	*Irish Biblical Studies*
In Matth.	*In Matthaeum* (Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew*)
Int	*Interpretation*
ITQ	*Irish Theological Quarterly*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JES	*Journal of Ecumenical Studies*
JGRChJ	*Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*
JOST	Johannine Studies
JRH	*Journal of Religious History*
JSHJ	*Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSSR	*Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LASBF	*Liber Annuus Studii Biblici Franciscani*
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
NTA.NF	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen. Neue Folge
NTM	New Testament Monographs
Neot	*Neotestamentica*
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament
PG	Patrologia Graeca (Migne)
Plin. Ep.	Pliny the Younger's *Epistles*

Praescr.	*De praescriptione haereticorum* (Tertullian's work)
QD	Quaestiones Disputatae
RB	*Revue biblique*
RBL	*Review of Biblical Literature*
RelSRev	*Religious Studies Review*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor*
RSR	*Recherches de science religieuse*
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testaments
SBAB	Sttutgarter biblische Beiträge
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSS	Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SecCent	*Second Century*
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
Sen. Ep.	Seneca's *Epistles*
SIJD	Schriften des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum
SJHC	Studies in Jewish History and Culture
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTU	*Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt*
SR	*Studies in Religion*
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TRev	*Theologische Revue*
TRu	*Theologische Rundschau*
TrinJ	*Trinity Journal*
TENTS	Texts and Editions for New Testament Study
TTS	Theologische Texte und Studien
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VF	*Verkündigung und Forschung*
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum alten und neuen Testament
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNT	*Zeitschrift für Neues Testament*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*

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The Origins of John's Gospel: An Introduction

Stanley E. Porter and Hughson T. Ong

The origins of John's Gospel is a topic that touches most areas of Johannine studies, and has potentially large implications for many if not most of them. There have been numerous surveys of Johannine scholarship to date, and they have dealt with various topics ranging from the wider fields of research, such as authorship and dating, audience identity and the Johannine community, sources and traditions (oral and written), structure and composition, theological themes, issues of historicity, and Synoptic relations, to narrower and more specific ones within those broader categories, including topical and textual studies.[1] Discussions of these topics, whether within a broader or a narrower

1 For a recent survey of Johannine studies (the Gospel of John, the epistles of John, and the book of Revelation), including monographs, journal articles, book essays, collections of essays, and commentaries from the period of the late nineteenth century to 2012, see Stanley E. Porter and Andrew K. Gabriel, *Johannine Writings and Apocalyptic: An Annotated Bibliography* (JOST 1; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 11–298, esp. 11–14. Other surveys include: C.M. Pate, *The Writings of John: A Survey of the Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011); E. Malatesta, *St. John's Gospel 1920–65* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967); Gilbert van Belle, *Johannine Bibliography 1966–1985* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988); idem, *The Signs Source in the Fourth Gospel: Historical Survey and Critical Evaluation of the Semeia Hypothesis* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994); Ruth B. Edwards, "John and the Johannines: A Survey of Some Recent Commentaries," *BT* 43.1 (1992): 140–151; W. Nicol, "The History of Johannine Research during the Past Century," *Neot* 8 (1972): 7–16; J. Zumstein, "Chronique Johannique," *ETR* 59 (1984): 547–556; Robert Kysar, "The Gospel of John in Current Research," *RelSRev* 9.4 (1983): 314–323; idem, "The Fourth Gospel: A Report on Recent Research," *ANRW* 2.25.3 (1985): 2389–480; idem, "Community and Gospel: Vectors in Fourth Gospel Criticism," *Int* 31 (1977): 355–366 (repr. in James Luther Mays, ed., *Interpreting the Gospels* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981], 265–277); B. Vawter, "Some Recent Developments in Johannine Theology," *BTB* 1 (1971): 30–58; J. Becker, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium (1978–1980)," *TRu* 47 (1982): 279–301; H. Thyen, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium (1 Fortsetzung)," *TRu* 39 (1974): 222–252; idem, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium (2 Fortsetzung)," *TRu* 40 (1975): 289–330; idem, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium (3 Fortsetzung)," *TRu* 42 (1977): 221–270; idem, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium (4 Fortsetzung)," *TRu* 43 (1978): 325–359; idem, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium (5 Fortsetzung)," *TRu* 44 (1979): 97–134; R. Schnackenburg, "Zur johanneischen Forschung," *BZ* 18 (1974): 272–278; Stephen S. Smalley, "Keeping up with Recent Studies: St. John's Gospel," *ExpTim* 97 (1986): 4, 102–108; C.H.H. Scobie, "New Directions in the Study of the Fourth Gospel," *SR* 6 (1977): 185–193; Urban C. von Wahlde, "The Johannine Jews: A Critical Survey," *NTS* 28.1 (1982): 33–60;

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field, inevitably touch upon issues of Johannine origins, because matters of origins are naturally entwined with historical and textual investigations of ancient texts that characterize the nature of New Testament studies in general. Specifically, historical and textual investigations inherently require inquiries of some sort regarding when, where, how, and why a particular ancient text was written, as well as who wrote it. Even theologically-oriented studies utilize historical and textual works as reference points for defining and articulating theological ideas and principles. At the very least, theologically-focused studies still use particular texts within a New Testament book as the contextual framework or evidential basis to support theological ideas. This scenario is simply indicative of the nature of the study of the New Testament, of which Johannine studies is part. The Johannine corpus is composed of John's Gospel, John's Epistles, and the book of Revelation. While studies of each of these books or set of books can at times overlap each other, especially when dealing with issues of origins, this volume is specifically focused upon John's Gospel. Before we introduce the volume more fully, we note that this work is not intended to be an introduction to the various research areas of John's Gospel. Even though we believe that both scholars and students of John's Gospel can benefit in a number of ways from reading the essays in this volume, they would need to consult other works like those indicated in the footnote of this introductory essay, in order to become acquainted with the various research areas in John's Gospel. Nonetheless, it is our goal that this volume will be a useful source for anyone who wants to study the origins of John's Gospel. We hope that our readers will be challenged but also encouraged to continue studying this historically and theologically rich book called John's Gospel.

Questions concerning the origins of John's Gospel continue to intrigue scholars engaged in the field, not least because there is multiplicity of opinions on virtually every specific issue related to Johannine origins; the essays in this volume should individually and collectively elucidate this point. Individually, each essay either surveys or discusses to some extent the state of play of scholarship in the specific subject area it addresses, and, in some cases, engages a particular scholar in dialogue. Collectively, these essays represent various studies and particular views on some of the wider and narrower fields of research in Johannine scholarship, and, more specifically, in John's Gospel. It is important

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John A. Dennis, "Jesus' Death in John's Gospel: A Survey of Research from Bultmann to the Present with Special Reference to the Johannine Hyper-texts," *CBR* 4.3 (2006): 331–363; and F.G. Untergassmair, "Das Johannesevangelium: Ein Bericht über neuere Literatur aus der Johannesforschung," *TRev* 90.2 (1994): 91–108. This list does not include particular surveys of specific topics within the wider fields of Johannine research.

to note, however, that this volume does not represent any particular school of thought in the study of John's Gospel. In other words, the contributors in this volume may or may not agree with each other on any specific issue or view addressed in the individual essays (in fact, differences among them will be readily apparent). The objective of our collective effort is to offer some important contributions to various areas in the study of the origins of John's Gospel, without necessarily attempting to be comprehensive in our scope and treatment of those areas. Instead, we pay attention to the specific contributions the twelve individual essays make to the particular Johannine area of research that they separately address. Whereas some essays posit new arguments or suggestions opposing other views or arguing against the majority or consensus view (so Porter on the dating of John; Anderson on the composition of John; Blomberg on the priority of Johannine traditions), other scholars either present new evidence (so Ramelli on the overlooked patristic tradition of Theodore of Mopsuestia) or introduce new methodological tools (Labahn on the concept of secondary orality; Ong on the sociolinguistic theory of community of practice; Argentino and Bonneau on Lewis Coser's social conflict model; Sheridan on critiquing previous sociological models) to specific areas of Johannine research. Two essays address the issue of authorship and/or composition via linguistic (Yoon) and historical (Zelyck) means, arguing against, respectively, Urban von Wahlde's composite theory of composition and Richard Bauckham's view on the authorship of John. Finally, two other essays provide a survey of scholarship on the perennial topic of Johannine anti-Judaism (Numada) and on the much-neglected Johannine Son of Man sayings (Coutsoumpos), both of which also demonstrate how these topics provide implications for issues of Johannine origins. This is a snapshot of our volume.

The essays of our contributors are categorized more or less according to the topic or the research area they address in studies of John's Gospel. There are four groups to note. The first group, comprising the first to the fourth essays, investigates the date, underlying sources, and traditions of John's Gospel. The fifth to the seventh essays constitute the second group. These essays discuss various issues relating to the notion of the Johannine community. The third group, the eighth to the tenth essays, is a set of essays that deals with issues of structure, composition, and authorship of John's Gospel. Finally, the fourth group is composed of two essays that survey the topics of Johannine anti-Judaism and the Johannine Son of Man sayings. In what follows, we provide a summary of the individual essays under each of these four groupings.

In the opening essay, the first of the first group mentioned above, Stanley Porter addresses various issues relating to the dating of John's Gospel. While acknowledging that the compositional date for many biblical books stands on

shaky grounds and that discussions of dating are often considered not a significant indicator of various issues surrounding the contextual background of a given book, Porter asserts that this marginalization prevents an informed discussion of many New Testament books. He contends that the compositional date of individual books is also closely tied to their relationship with other books within the New Testament, which, when studied critically, can provide a means for tracing the origins not only of a given book but also of the development of early Christianity. Porter thus surveys in his essay the range of dates proposed by scholars for John's Gospel, offering some critical observations on the importance of these various dates as a means of exploring the wider questions of the origins of the Gospel.

In the second essay, Ilaria Ramelli investigates the relationship between John and the Synoptic Gospels via patristic sources on the origin and composition of the canonical Gospels. Noting that most scholars have assumed the Synoptic Gospels to be the primary sources behind John's Gospel on the basis of the early patristic traditions of Papias, Clement, and Irenaeus, as well as Origen and Eusebius, Ramelli presents a largely overlooked *redaktionsgeschichtliche* patristic tradition from Theodore of Mopsuestia. This overlooked tradition derives from a number of multilingual written sources, which include passages from the *Martyrdom of Timothy*, the Muratorian Fragment, and a tradition reported by Origen. The passages show significant textual convergences that highlight John the Evangelist as the final reader and redactor of the four Gospels. Ramelli notes that the result of her analysis suggests an early origin for the tradition represented in this overlooked *redaktionsgeschichtliche* theory.

The third essay, by Michael Labahn, deals with the oral sources and traditions of John's Gospel through the use of the concept of "secondary orality." Labahn defines secondary orality as follows: "the 'sounding word' places itself in public memory; when a text is read aloud and thus transmitted to an audience, a route for a new story is opened to be re-told by the recipients who will now become storytellers." Consequently, he argues that John 20:30–31 gives us access to the oral environment of the origins of John's Gospel, because the text provides us with information that may have been present in the public or collective memory of the Johannine audience. Furthermore, he claims that the two terms πολλά and ἄλλα in John 20:30 may refer to various oral traditions concerning Jesus that were available to John's audience but were not included in John's Gospel. Labahn assumes the common oral practice of reading aloud texts in philosophical and religious communities in ancient times, and suggests that this phenomenon can also be detected in John 20:31.

Craig Blomberg's essay, the fourth in the volume, examines the relationship between Mark's and John's Gospel. Blomberg asks whether Mark ever relies

upon a pre-Johannine tradition. He also points out that scholars often come up empty when searching for parallels between John and Mark, since many of the parallels between John and the Synoptics involve John and Luke, and, to a lesser degree, John and Matthew. Blomberg identifies thirty-two sayings of Jesus in Mark and searches for "reasonable verbal or conceptual parallels" in John, while recognizing the inescapable subjectivity in this type of exercise. He then shows that twenty of these thirty-two Markan–Johannine parallels apparently evince probable Johannine traditions that are prior to Mark, with ten of them even demonstrating clear Johannine priority.

In the fifth essay of this volume, the beginning of the second group, Hughson Ong offers a study of the Johannine community by situating the discussion within the broader Gospel community debate. Ong observes that scholars often readily assume a direct correlation between the situational context of the Gospel communities and the audience identity of the Gospels. He argues, however, that such direct correlation might not actually exist, since the issue of "from which communities were the Gospels written" does not necessarily betray the presupposed concomitant issue of "for whom were the Gospels written." Analyzing the Johannine community through the sociolinguistic theory and corporate business model of community of practice, Ong argues for a *via media* in the Gospel community debate, showing *how* the Johannine community was a distinct community that had its own unique characteristics, but at the same time also shared elements in common with the larger Christian community of the first century.

Also addressing the Johannine community is the sixth essay, by Marc-André Argentino and Guy Bonneau. Their essay analyzes the functions of different types of "social conflicts" in John's Gospel, identifying various identity constructions of the Johannine community. Argentino and Bonneau argue that social conflict is what drives the Johannine narrative drama, without which the salvific climax of the cross cannot be achieved. Using Lewis Coser's social conflict model, Argentino and Bonneau identify three types of religious identities in John's Gospel that are engaged in some kind of social conflict: the heretic who remains within the community but who becomes a divisive member and who creates confusion within it; the renegade who leaves the community in order to join a new community and who consequently becomes an enemy of their former community; and the marginalized character who is neither a heretic nor a renegade. Their analysis shows that Jesus belongs to the "heretic" group, his disciples to the "renegade" group, and Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the blind man in John 9, among others, to the marginalized group.

Still addressing aspects of the Johannine community is the seventh essay, by Ruth Sheridan. Sheridan asks the question whether Johannine sectarianism

is a category that should now be considered defunct in Johannine scholarship. Taking her cue from narrative criticism and post-modernist hermeneutics, Sheridan examines the application of sociological theories of sectarianism to the study of John's Gospel. Specifically, she focuses on the theories of newer sociologists (e.g. Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge), in order to expose an inherent and key theoretical problem in the field of sociology—Rational Choice Theory (RCT), which, according to Sheridan, is "an intriguing—but reductionistic—understanding of human transactional behavior." Sheridan's study is an attempt to reassess the feasibility of sectarian theories for reading John's Gospel, suggesting in the end that dialectical theories of the sociologies of language and knowledge seem to promise a more fruitful result in interpreting the Gospel of John in comparison to the typical sociological models employed by previous scholars that are largely based upon the tenets of RCT.

In the eighth essay, the first of the third group, Paul Anderson addresses the issue of the structure and composition of John's Gospel. Anderson notes that, whereas some scholars have argued for John being a strictly "seamless robe" woven from top to bottom, demonstrating the literary unity of the Gospel in both its form and presentation, other scholars have highlighted the "rough transitions" in the Gospel text, betraying the contributions of different sources from both the evangelist and redactors. Between these two opposite views, Anderson posits a third way of explaining this puzzle of John's literary composition. He argues that a two-edition theory seems to be a more plausible way of understanding this Johannine compositional puzzle—the first edition is an apologetic Gospel that was written by the Johannine evangelist as a complement, corrective, and alternative to Mark, and the second edition is a pastoral Gospel that was compiled by the Johannine elder who added John 1:1–18; 6; 15–17; and 21 to the first edition.

The ninth essay, by David Yoon, deals with the relationship between the authorship and composition of John's Gospel. Yoon's contention is that multiple authorship views that are based upon the purported aporias in the Gospel are often asserted without linguistic grounding. Acknowledging the complexity involved in the debate between proponents of the single document and composite document views, Yoon responds to and argues against the composite document proposal of Urban von Wahlde, which claims that the aporias in John imply redacted materials. Yoon notes the circularity of von Wahlde's arguments and points out that this presupposed redaction of materials is one of the glaring flaws of the composite document theory. Yoon then analyzes, using the linguistic theory of cohesion, three Johannine passages (John 10:7–13; 13:33–37; 14:18–22) to show that John's Gospel is not necessarily character-

ized by literary awkwardness and dissonance as von Wahlde wants to claim, but is actually a "cohesive" document.

The tenth essay is Lorne Zelyck's that addresses the issue of authorship of John's Gospel by reiterating the widely acknowledged and consensus view that derives from Irenaeus, who considered the author of the Gospel to be John the apostle. Zelyck selects Richard Bauckham, who, according to Zelyck, vehemently distinguishes between John, the son of Zebedee, and John, the disciple of the Lord, as his dialogue partner. Arguing against Bauckham's position, Zelyck shows that Irenaeus's identification of the apostle John as the author of John's Gospel both supports and validates Irenaeus's arguments against his opponents as reported in *Against Heresies*. Zelyck provides evidence that Irenaeus knew of three "Johns" and that his use of the epithet "the disciple of the Lord" to refer to the Fourth Evangelist, and his identification of him as the Beloved Disciple who had an intimate relationship with and witnessed Jesus, further indicate the inaccuracy of Bauckham's thesis.

In the eleventh essay, beginning the fourth and final group, Jonathan Numada surveys a select number of scholarly studies on the perennial topic of anti-Judaism in John's Gospel from F.C. Baur to the end of the German Weimar Republic. Numada asserts that the issue of anti-Judaism is closely associated with Johannine origins, since it has significant implications for the *Sitz im Leben* of John's Gospel. He notes a number of recent scholarly approaches that attempt to reconstruct the historical context of Johannine anti-Judaism, and provides an overview of approaches to John's cultural backgrounds by the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* (or the History of Religion School) as well as a summary of the conservative reactions to these *religionsgeschichtliche* approaches. Numada compares these two approaches and observes that post-Holocaust investigations into Johannine anti-Judaism lack historical self-awareness, displaying scholarly responses that continue patterns that existed in pre-Holocaust scholarship.

Our closing essay by Panayotis Coutsoumpos surveys a number of the scholarly proposals on the issue of the origins of the Johannine "Son of Man." Coutsoumpos points out that most scholarly research has focused upon the synoptic Son of Man sayings, and has thus largely neglected the Son of Man sayings in John's Gospel. He also points out that the debate over the origins of the Johannine Son of Man sayings often fails to pay adequate attention to the historical context and larger literary genre where these sayings appear. Arguing that the Son of Man sayings are tightly knit to the high Christology of John's Gospel, Coutsoumpos contends that this expression is used in John's Gospel to highlight the humanity of Jesus. He further contends that, even though this expression may have been derived from various origins (e.g. the Old Testament,

Daniel 7, Jewish traditions, or Jesus himself), its use in John reveals a significant and consistent pattern that integrates the events surrounding the earthly ministry, the suffering, and the return of Jesus. Coutsoumpos concludes, "This pattern may be linked to the origin of the concept of the Son of Man in the Gospel of John."

As noted at the outset of this introduction, there are many more topics that might legitimately be included within a discussion of the origins of John's Gospel. This volume presents some of them, by discussing a number of topics that, for the most part, are readily and rightly discussed within the field of Johannine studies. We as editors, and certainly the individual authors, do not pretend to have exhausted the important topics within this field, nor do we claim even within our individual essays to have resolved all of the pertinent issues. However, Johannine studies has experienced a rebirth of interest over the last few years, and we are confident that the essays contained within this volume will make a worthy contribution to the developing discussion and debate about the origins of John's Gospel.

Dating, Sources, and
Traditions of John's Gospel

The Date of John's Gospel and Its Origins

Stanley E. Porter

Introduction

Discussions of the origins of John's Gospel—and most books of the New Testament, for that matter—rarely treat the question of the date of its composition. In fact, in many discussions of various biblical books, and John's Gospel is among these, there is relatively little discussion of the date of composition. Introductions to commentaries and New Testament introductions apparently indicate that there are far more important issues to be discussed regarding a book of the New Testament, often leaving the question of date as a late and brief word near the end—sometimes even failing to provide any relatively firm date at all. There is no doubt that the date of composition for many biblical books is often regarded as an issue that cannot be firmly established, especially within the current critical climate in biblical scholarship. There is also no doubt that the date of composition of a book is itself not a driving force in discussion of the various issues surrounding the context and situation of a given book, but is the result of such discussion. The date of composition is a way of situating a variety of other factors that must be considered. The result of this critical situation is that the dating of a variety of New Testament books is often marginalized within New Testament studies.

I believe, however, that this marginalization is to the detriment of our informed discussion of a number of books of the New Testament, because the necessity of assigning a date forces us as scholars to make some hard and important decisions—decisions not only about the individual book concerned but also about how a given book might relate to other books within the New Testament. All of this knowledge of a given book and its environment should provide a means of weaving together a number of individual strands into a coherent tapestry that traces the origins of not only a given book but of the development of early Christianity. In this essay, I wish to examine the subject of the dates assigned to John's Gospel as a means of exploring wider questions of the origins of John's Gospel. I first examine the range of dates that has been proposed, offering some observations on the importance of these various dates. I then tease out some of the most important implications regarding these dates for various theories of the origins of John's Gospel. In anticipation of my conclusion, I simply wish to say here that the story of how we date John's Gospel provides an interesting and intriguing episode in the history of New

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Testament scholarship, one that provides impetus for examining wider implications regarding the New Testament as a whole.

The Dates Suggested for the Writing of John's Gospel

There has been an incredibly wide range of dates suggested for the writing of John's Gospel, whether one accepts various periods of writing or rewriting as part of the process of composition. These dates range from pre-AD 70, even as early as the late AD 50s, to as late as around AD 170, and virtually every date or range of dates in between.[1] This is an extent of nearly 120 years, perhaps a wider span than for just about any other book in the New Testament. This fact alone ought to cause one to wonder regarding both the dates themselves and the means by which they are estimated. For John's Gospel, indeed it should.

Before I pursue this point further, however, I wish to note that, in fact, the dates proposed for John's Gospel—indeed, very similarly to those proposed for virtually every other book in the New Testament—arrange themselves into three rough groupings: early, middle, and late dates.[2] This might at first glance appear as if each of these dates has had an equal and viable history regarding the date of John's Gospel. This is certainly not the case. Instead, as John A.T. Robinson states, "The story of the dating of the fourth gospel in modern scholarship is an extraordinarily simple one,"[3] in which one date, the middle one of roughly AD 90, has been predominant. However, having said that, the history of the development of the three different views regarding the date of composition is far from straightforward.[4]

In most discussion of the date of composition of New Testament books, discussion begins with the rise of historical criticism. This, however, is decidedly not the case for John's Gospel. As Gerald Borchert states, "For most of Christian

1 See Stanley E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus: In Pursuit of the Johannine Voice* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming), ch. 1, where these are surveyed with bibliography.

2 I pursue this means of examining the dates in various New Testament books in Stanley E. Porter, "Dating the Composition of New Testament Books and Their Influence upon Reconstructing the Origins of Christianity," in *Festschrift for Antonio Piñero* (ed. Jesús Peláez and Israel Gallarte; Córdoba: Ediciones El Almendro, forthcoming 2015).

3 John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 259.

4 The following discussion is dependent upon a forthcoming publication, Stanley E. Porter, "John's Gospel and the Criteria for Authenticity," in *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 4* (ed. Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher; SBLSS; Atlanta: SBL, forthcoming).

history the church had accepted the patristic view … concerning the dating … for the Fourth Gospel."[5] This date, which is relatively late for John's Gospel in relation to the Synoptic Gospels, is what I am calling the middle date, and has been maintained from ancient times on the basis of comments by early church authors. There are a number of comments by the fathers that must be considered that have led to this relatively firmly established middle date, or at least relatively firmly established for most modern scholarship. Eusebius (AD 260/65–339/40) offers a summary of Clement of Alexandria's (AD 150–215) view of the order of composition of the Gospels, in which he states: "But that John, last of all, conscious that the outward facts had been set forth in the [Synoptic] Gospels, was urged on by his disciples, and, divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel" (*HE* 6.14.7 LCL). Elsewhere also citing Clement, Eusebius first describes the origins of the other Gospels, and then John "at last took to writing," after the "three gospels which had been written down before were distributed to all including himself" (*HE* 3.24.7). Thus, we see that Clement through Eusebius establishes that John was aware of the Synoptic Gospels, perhaps allowing them to write the historical facts. John then wrote his Gospel last and wrote not a historical but a spiritual Gospel. Irenaeus states that John lived in Ephesus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.3.4) until the reign of the emperor Trajan (AD 98–117) (*Adv. Haer.* 2.22.5, both traditions cited in Eusebius, *HE* 3.23.3–4) and that from Ephesus he published last of the Gospel authors (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1). Jerome (AD 347–420) adds the fact that John died in the 68th year after the death of Jesus (*De vir. Ill.* 9). In the light of these statements, the broad consensus from early on was that John's Gospel was written after the completion of the other Gospels, sufficiently so that John knew of them, and that he did so from Ephesus late in the first century. This basically meant a date of composition somewhere around AD 80–100, with a few suggesting a slightly earlier date.

As I already mentioned above, this date—which we will see more clearly in a moment is the middle date between two others—continued to be endorsed and came to be the traditional view regarding the date of John's Gospel, even after the advent of the historical-critical method. Because of the information from the church fathers regarding John, even though this date was later than that of the other Gospels, many continued to believe that John's Gospel was written by John the son of Zebedee or someone else connected with the Gospel, and hence it was historically highly reliable. Even those who believed that the Gospel was not by John usually believed that it was written by a close asso-

5 Gerald R. Borchert, *John 1–11* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 91.

ciate and therefore was not far removed from eyewitness testimony, if at all. Such an intermediate position was held by such early critical scholars as John Mill (1645–1707), Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752), Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752–1827), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), Heinrich Eberhard Gottlob Paulus (1761–1851), Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780–1849), and Friedrich Lücke (1791–1855), no doubt among many others.[6] The endorsement of the traditional view, however, also often entailed defense of John's Gospel in relation to the Synoptics, with some, such as Schleiermacher, even considering John's Gospel more reliable and the earliest of all of them.[7] Those who continued to advocate what at the time was the consensus (admittedly in various ways) included such scholars as Moses Stuart (1780–1852), August Tholuck (1799–1877), Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802–1869), Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (1800–1873), Eduard Reuss (1804–1891), Frédéric Louis Godet (1821–1900), Carl Weizsäcker (1822–1899) to some extent (he saw John's Gospel as reliable but written by a later follower of Jesus), Brooke Foss Westcott (1825–1901), Bernhard Weiss (1827–1918), Joseph Barber Lightfoot (1828–1889), Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828–1892), Theodor Zahn (1838–1933), William Sanday (1843–1920), at least early in his career, Adolf Harnack (1851–1930), and Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855–1938), among some others who followed them.[8]

This view persisted as the agreed viewpoint until the early nineteenth century. During the nineteenth century, there was a bifurcation of opinion regarding the date of composition of John's Gospel. To use the terms of Robinson, the "conservatives" maintained a date in keeping with the patristic evidence sometime "in or about the last decade of the first century," while the "radical critics" undertook a revision of the date to well into the second century.[9] The development of ideas concerning the later date of John's Gospel generally divided scholars on the date of composition and provides an interesting episode in New Testament intellectual history and scholarship.

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6 I draw upon a number of sources in reconstructing this history. These especially include James Moffatt, *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (3rd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1918), 580–582; and William Baird, *History of New Testament Research: Volume One: From Deism to Tübingen; Volume Two: From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann; Volume Three: From C.H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992, 2003, 2013), vols. 1 and 2, *passim* under the names listed.

7 See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 1:217, citing Schleiermacher who gave priority to John's Gospel.

8 See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vols. 1 and 2 *passim*.

9 Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 259.

As in so many areas, Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860) appears to have been the first major scholar to argue rigorously against the traditional view. With his Hegelian dialectic of early Christianity, along with his *Tendenzkritik* that attempted to excavate the levels of tradition,[10] Baur himself dated authorship of John's Gospel to the second century (perhaps around AD 160–170), in which he saw the date of the Gospel as confirmation of its developed Christology—and hence its being far removed from any connection with an apostle (it was even later than Paulinism).[11] Baur's student and contemporary David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874) also placed John's Gospel in the second century and dismissed its historical value.[12] Other scholars followed suit in following what is best described as the late date for John's Gospel, often, if not usually, linking their revision of the date to demotion of its historical value. This date usually ranges from AD 110–170. These scholars advocating a late date include, no doubt among many others, Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider (1776–1848) around AD 150; John James Tayler (1797–1869) also around AD 150; Bruno Bauer (1809–1882) around AD 160–170; Eduard Zeller (1814–1908) around AD 150, following Baur, his teacher; Ernest Renan (1823–1892) around AD 100–110 by a later follower who built around fictitious discourses; Adolf Hilgenfeld (1823–1907), Baur's follower, AD 120–140; Theodor Keim (1825–1878) AD 110–115, during the reign of Trajan; Charles Augustus Briggs (1841–1913) early second century; Paul Wilhelm Schmiedel (1831–1933) between AD 132 and 140;[13] Adolf Jülicher (1857–1938) around AD 100–125; Oskar Holtzmann (1859–1934) arguing at the same time as Jülicher for a similar date of AD 100–125; Alfred Loisy (1857–1940) early second century for the first redaction (around AD 100–125) and twenty or thirty years later for the second; Ernest DeWitt Burton (1856–1925) around AD 110; Benjamin Wisner Bacon (1860–1932) for redactional levels in the second century; James Moffatt (1870–1944) no later than around AD 110; Edgar Johnson Goodspeed (1871–1962) the early second century; Hans Lietzmann

10 On Baur's *Tendenzkritik* historical-critical method, see Hughson T. Ong, "Ferdinand Christian Baur's Historical Criticism and *Tendenzkritik*," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, forthcoming).

11 See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 1:267–268. See Ferdinand Christian Baur, *The Church History of the First Three Centuries* (trans. Allan Menzies; 3rd ed.; 2 vols.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1878, 1879), 1:177–181. Cf. Moffatt, *Introduction*, 580–581, for others.

12 David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (trans. Georg Eliot from fourth German edition; London: George Allen, 1848), 71–73, 365–386, and *passim*; idem, *A New Life of Jesus* (2 vols.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1879), 77–101.

13 See Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 259–260.

(1875–1942) the early second century; Maurice Goguel (1880–1955) between AD 90 and 110, but by a later follower; Walter Bauer (1877–1960) AD 100–125; Hans Windisch (1881–1935) around AD 100 but not by an eyewitness; Martin Dibelius (1883–1947) the early second century;[14] C.H. Dodd (1884–1973) around AD 96–110; Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976), whose interpreter Walter Schmithals claims Bultmann indicates AD 80 to 120 in his commentary; Ernst Käsemann (1906–1998) a second-century docetic document; Walther Schmithals (1923–2009) for himself 140–160;[15] and Martin Hengel (1926–2009) the early second century.[16] This view, even where it takes a slightly earlier turn, generally places John's Gospel outside the sphere of apostolic or eyewitness origins.

Since the work of Baur in the early nineteenth century, these two views have been the two predominant ones. However, throughout this time, there have been a few scholars who were associated with what we might call an early date for composition of John's Gospel. The early date is pre AD 70 and as early as the late 50s. It is difficult to establish the earliest proponents of the early date, but Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791), the one attributed with developing the discipline of New Testament introduction, appears to be one of the earliest, arguing for a date around AD 70. Most of those who argue for an early date, however, appear to have done so as a reaction to the critical skepticism of the late date since the time of Baur and Strauss. Those who have argued for an early date include Alfred Resch (1835–1912) around AD 70, and John Joseph Halcombe (1832–1910), followed by O. Wüttig (writing in 1897), W. Küppers (writing in 1902), A. Wilms (writing in 1904), and Hermann Gebhardt (1824–1899, but with his publication appearing in 1906), for a date before AD 70, usually on the basis of John 5:2, contending that the present tense-form of the verb "be" indicates that the pool of Bethesda is still in existence.[17] Later proponents of a pre AD 70 date include Paul Minear (1906–2007), Leon Morris (1914–2006), F. Lamar Cribbs (1921–1981) but who argues that the author was not John the Son of Zebedee, John A.T. Robinson (1919–1983), and Daniel Wallace, Wallace

14 Martin Dibelius, *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (repr., Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1936), 104.

15 Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (ed. Francis J. Moloney; New York: Doubleday, 2003), 207 n. 45.

16 For most of these dates, except where indicated, see, Moffatt, *Introduction*, 580–581; and Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vols. 1 and 2 *passim*.

17 See Moffatt, *Introduction*, 581–582 for these proponents, most of whom are now almost unknown (and information about them is difficult to find). Several of them appear to have been pastors writing more popular books.

revisiting the old argument regarding John 5:2.[18] Most of those who argue for an early date enter into discussion regarding the relationship of John's Gospel to the Synoptic Gospels, as they would be contemporary documents according to most forms of this view. They also usually argue for apostolic eyewitness authorship. Whereas there are a few scholars who have argued for the early date, the most rigorous probably being Cribbs and Robinson in recent times, they constitute a distinct minority.

In 1935, however, two important papyri fragments were published that significantly changed the scholarly situation regarding the dating of John's Gospel. The first to mention is P52 (P.Rylands III Greek 457), a fragment of John's Gospel (John 18:31–33, 37–38),[19] and the second is P.Egerton 2, which appears to draw heavily upon the canonical Gospels, and especially John's Gospel.[20] P52 was dated to the first half of the second century and P.Egerton 2 to around AD 150. Despite some recent revisionist tendencies, these dates have, I believe, a solid basis (there are even some indications that they might be able to be dated earlier). This meant that most scholars could no longer believe that they could date the composition of John's Gospel to anywhere in the second century, as the Gospel had already been accepted as in some way authoritative, had been copied, and had made its way directly and indirectly into Christian communities in Egypt, where it was copied again, probably representing a period of anywhere from 25–50 years. This marked a significant shift in proposals regard-

18 See Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 258–260; Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vol. 3 *passim*; Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus*, ch. 1. The argument regarding John 5:2 cannot be made on the basis of the use of the tense-form, ἔστιν, for at least two reasons. One is that this is an aspectually vague verb, and the other is that tense-forms in Greek are not temporal but aspectual. For recent discussion of these issues, see Stanley E. Porter, *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), 191–194.

19 See C.H. Roberts, *An Unpublished Fragment of the Fourth Gospel in the John Rylands Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1935), 11–35; and in P.Ryl. III 457.

20 H.I. Bell and T.C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri* (London: Trustees of the British Library, 1935); idem, *The New Gospel Fragments* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1951); and the most recent critical edition by Tobias Nicklas in Thomas J. Kraus, Michael J. Kruger, and Tobias Nicklas, *Gospel Fragments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 11–120. There has been further discussion of these papyri, but that is not germane to the discussion here (see Stanley E. Porter, "Recent Efforts to Reconstruct Early Christianity on the Basis of Its Papyrological Evidence," in *Christian Origins and Greco-Roman Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament* [ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts; TENTS 9; Leiden: Brill, 2013], 71–84; and Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus*, ch. 1).

ing the dating of John's Gospel, so that the vast majority of authors writing from that time on dated John's Gospel to a time that generally conformed to the consensus view, regardless of their view of the identity of the author or the relation of the Gospel to eyewitness testimony.[21]

Thus, the general situation regarding the dating of John's Gospel has returned essentially to where it was when it began. The traditional view has reasserted itself in light of the papyrological discoveries as the predominant view, whether one is a so-called conservative or liberal in theological circles. In other words, the date of somewhere around AD 80–100 once more appears to be the widespread consensus date for the composition of John's Gospel—although there now is a small but robust group of scholars arguing for an early date of pre AD 70. For those who hold to the consensus view, the major difference now is whether the scholar holds to John the son of Zebedee as the author, a view that is now not so closely attached to this position as it was before the fall of the late date, or whether the scholar holds to the author being some other figure in the early church, whether that person is closely connected to the events of the Gospel, such as the Beloved Disciple and possibly an eyewitness,[22] or not.

I admit that this has been a brief survey of a highly complex episode in New Testament critical scholarship. Nevertheless, I believe that it accurately reflects the broad developments in discussion of dating of John's Gospel, and it sets an appropriate foundation for discussing the issues of date of composition in relationship to the origins of the Gospel.

Implications of Date of Composition for the Origins of John's Gospel

I turn now to the major topic of this essay and of this volume, the origins of John's Gospel. However, I only do so after establishing the foundation in dating that I have described above. There are a number of implications regarding the origins of John's Gospel on the basis of the various dates of composition. I focus on the major ones in relationship to issues in study of John's Gospel.

21 See Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 261 n. 34, who lists commentators who do so. Other names to add to the list include W.D. Davies, Werner Georg Kümmel, Barnabas Lindars, G.R. Beasley-Murray, D.A. Carson, Andreas J. Köstenberger, and Craig S. Keener. There are no doubt others. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vol. 3 *passim*; and Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus*, ch. 1.

22 See Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

Before I turn to those issues and implications, however, let me simply note that the entire development of the late date of John's Gospel ought to make New Testament scholars very cautious about the claims for their speculative reconstructions, especially as these reconstructions take them further away from the traditional views of New Testament date and origins. This proposed late date—unless it is shown that both of these papyri date to a much later date, which some have tried to do, I suspect as much for theological or political as for historical or papyrological reasons—appears to have been clearly wrong, and wrong from the beginning, even if it was supposedly based upon evidence from the text of the Gospel (I highly doubt that this was the basis of the claims being made, but that is an issue for another time). This makes one wonder how many other views in critical New Testament scholarship, especially regarding date and hence origins, are only lacking a fortuitous papyrological discovery or the like (whatever it might be) before they are shown equally to be misguided and misleading.

Let me now turn to this once-proposed late date and its implications for the origins of John's Gospel, as well as the impact of its necessary revision in the light of the more recently discovered papyrological evidence. It is not just that the view of the date of John's Gospel is radically altered by this changed dating scenario. The entire reconstruction of the origins of John's Gospel is also affected, as is its relationship to the other Gospels (and perhaps even the overall origins of early Christianity). According to the late date, John's Gospel is the product of later thought about the events and developments of earliest Christianity. This means that it was assuredly not written by John the son of Zebedee, or probably any other eyewitness for that matter. At best, it was the product of second-generation reflection upon the Gospel events—if not a later rendition by those only contingently linked to the events, if at all. In some instances, such as the proposals of Baur, Strauss, and a few others, John's Gospel originates after virtually all of the major important developments of early Christianity (historical, theological, ethnic, etc.). This includes being written after the entire Pauline movement, beginning with the original (four) letters of Paul and the developments of later Paulinism. This would mean that John's Gospel would be written after the developments of catholic Christianity (i.e., institutionalization), the formulation of high Pauline theology, the rise of Gnosticism, and the reconciliation of Hellenistic and Jewish Christianity in the composition of the book of Acts, among other things.[23] In other words, it is no

23 See Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Work, his Epistles and his Doctrine* (2 vols.; London: Williams & Norgate, 1873–1875; repr., Peabody, MA:

wonder that Clement calls John's Gospel a "spiritual Gospel," according to this viewpoint, as it certainly cannot be called a historical one or one even on the same level of reportage as the Synoptic Gospels. Instead, John's Gospel would reflect a situation in which the church has already long departed from the synagogue (see discussion below), has previously engaged in clear opposition to Judaism (as seen perhaps in reference to "the Jews"),[24] has come instead under the influence of what is now a thriving Gnosticism (seen in a variety of ways, including Johannine dualism),[25] has a robust Christology (see below), and has been fully institutionalized and pacified with respect to the Hellenistic and Jewish elements (seen perhaps in its "realized eschatology"),[26] among many other implications.[27] Even if not all of those who adopt a late date argue for all of the implications of origins as outlined above, the seeds are planted for such a conclusion, and in fact we see just this sort of result in much thought regarding John's Gospel in later interpreters influenced by the late date.

What is often overlooked, unfortunately, is how the elimination of the late date affects such an interpretation of the origins of John's Gospel. There are at least three major sets of implications of abandoning a late date, often not taken fully into account or reflected in subsequent scholarship. First, rather than John's Gospel being a late composition reflecting all of the developments of the first hundred plus years of Christianity—that is, a post-Paulinism period, according to Baur—it now is conceivably written and originates within one lifetime of the events that are reported within the Gospel, and quite possibly is the composition of one who was an eyewitness, whether John the son of Zebedee or another close follower of Jesus. This is a major shift in perspective on John's Gospel. However, as already noted above, for many Johan-

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Hendrickson, 2003), for his reconstruction of Paul in regard to these developments in early Christianity. For my critique of the notion of Paulinism, especially in relation to composition of Luke–Acts, see Stanley E. Porter, "Was Paulinism a Thing when Luke-Acts was Written?" in *Reception of Paulinism in Acts: Réception du paulinisme dans les Actes des Apôtres* (ed. Daniel Marguerat; BETL 229; Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 1–13.

24 John's use of "the Jews" continues to be a focus of dispute. See Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus*, ch. 6. I find this explanation implausible, especially in so late a context. Whoever "the Jews" are in John's Gospel, the tension is contemporary and intense.

25 On Gnosticism of the second century and its characteristics, see Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Pre-Christian Gnosticism: A Survey of the Proposed Evidences* (London: Tyndale, 1973).

26 On characteristics of early Catholicism, see Donald A. Hagner, *The New Testament: A Historical and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 605–613.

27 I cannot help but note that this extreme depiction of John's Gospel appears difficult to justify on the basis of the text itself, as it seems to lack many of the features that one might expect such a mid-second-century document to contain.

nine scholars who follow the late date tradition, even if they are compelled to accept an earlier date, one closer to the middle date, this does not mean that they revise their estimation of a number of these issues. For example, many of them retain their view of the second- or subsequent-generation composition of John's Gospel by someone other than an eyewitness.[28] There is also the tendency to discover that the influence of various groups once thought to be second-century heretical groups, such as Gnosticism, is already present within the late first century—now on the basis of the evidence of John's Gospel.[29] There is also the tendency to find institutionalized Christianity within an earlier context, such as the realized eschatology of John's Gospel.[30] The external evidence, however, has not changed, but only the range of dates available, and hence one's view of John's Gospel.

There is a second major implication of such a change in dating, and this concerns the placing of both those who take the late date (now revised as roughly the middle date) and those who take the original middle date into temporal proximity. Both groups now argue for roughly the same temporal parameters of composition. However, even though they share this common date, they still maintain very different accounts of the origins of John's Gospel, as already noted to some extent above. The result is as if the same historical and especially temporal parameters resulted in two very different versions of John's Gospel, with one tending to be more closely tied to early witnesses and the other reflecting a secondary witness at best. There is at least the appearance of inconsistency in such a position. By way of illustration, I note that some of the reasons for the late date were ostensibly that various features of John's

28 I think that this viewpoint is especially reflected in the two-stage view of Johannine composition found in the work of J. Louis Martyn (*History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* [3rd ed.; Louisville: Westminster, 2003 (1968)]), Raymond E. Brown (*The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* [New York: Paulist, 1979]), and John Ashton (in his latest reiteration, *The Gospel of John and Christian Origins* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014]). This view seems to wish to maintain some of the features that are wedded to the late date, while being forced to recognize some of the implications of the traditional date.

29 I think that this may be reflected in Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray et al.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971 [1941]). Note that Bultmann was inclined to see the influence of Mandeanism on John's Gospel (even though it was much later), clearly imposing a later development (more akin to a later date) on John's Gospel.

30 I think that this may be reflected in C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953). Note further that Dodd had at one time looked to the *Hermetica* of the second or third century as of importance for understanding John's Gospel.

Gospel—such as authorial stance, historical situation, theology, etc.—fit better within a second-century context, or at least some distance away from the earliest days of Christianity (see above). To be sure, one of the major points of divide between the late and middle date proponents in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was over possible apostolic and certainly first-hand evidence within the Gospel. The proponents of a late date saw this as an impossibility on the basis of their reading of the Gospel; and hence, they usually placed it firmly within the second century. With the loss of the late date as a possibility, however, one wonders about how strongly one can maintain advocacy of a second-hand testimony by later followers when this appears to have been one of the major grounds for the original division regarding date in the first place. In other words, I find it difficult to see how proponents of the same date can read fundamental issues regarding John's Gospel in such radically different ways (history, Christology, Jewish/Christian relations, etc.), especially if such differences were in the first place formulated in conjunction with consideration of date, especially the advocacy of a late date to handle apparent features regarding authorship, history, and theology.

The change in date has a third set of potential implications for other, related reconstructions. The third major implication addresses the relationship of John's Gospel to the Synoptics in regard to the late and then revised date. From the outset, as seen through the patristic evidence onward, the consensus date of John's Gospel distanced John's Gospel from the Synoptic Gospels by labeling it the "spiritual Gospel" and placing it later than the Synoptics, even if it was written by John. In other words, the Synoptics would have been written sometime around AD 60–80, and John's Gospel after that (i.e., AD 80–100). Since that time, suggested dates for the Synoptic Gospels have generally been extended later, so that common dates are found in the period from about AD 75–100 (middle date), overlapping with the consensus view of John's Gospel, with some dates suggested for the Synoptic Gospels being as late as the mid second century (with late dates up to about AD 130 or 140 for Luke or Matthew).[31] With the elimination of the late date for John's Gospel, we are now faced with the interesting historical scenario of the reverse of the earlier consensus view on dating, with some very intriguing implications for the origins of the Gospels as a whole. That is, we have a scenario in which the Synoptic Gospels were written as either contemporary with John's Gospel (according to the middle view

31 See the discussion at various points in Moffatt, *Introduction*; Werner Georg Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (rev. ed.; trans. Howard C. Kee; Nashville: Abingdon, 1975); and Hagner, *New Testament*, three introductions I have found very helpful on matters of date of composition for all the Gospels.

of the date of the Synoptic Gospels) or as later than John's Gospel (with the late date of the Synoptic Gospels).[32] This is an interesting and provocative scenario, in which one might now have John's Gospel written in around AD 80–100 and one or more of the Synoptic Gospels (and maybe as many as three of them) written as late as John's Gospel or even later, as late as the middle of the second century. This seems to defy virtually all of the history of New Testament scholarship, pre-modern and critical (apart from a few exceptions). This would further mean that we would need to rethink all of the criteria by which it was determined that John's Gospel was the latest, since it now would be contemporary or even the earliest. This reconsideration would include such matters as the relation of John's Gospel to history (such as separation from Judaism), what it means to be a spiritual Gospel in relation to the others, how its account does or does not capture or reflect eyewitness testimony, and how one makes such determinations. What I am trying to point out here is that the date of John's Gospel has implications both for the origin of John's Gospel and for the origin of the Gospels as a whole, and along with it the entire reconstruction of earliest Christianity. The result is that with the fall of the late date for the composition of John's Gospel, there is probably a consequent effect of eliminating the late date for the composition of the Synoptic Gospels as well—even if this juxtaposition is often not talked about in New Testament studies.

At this point, let me return to the issue of the two remaining dates for John's Gospel and their implications for the origins of John's Gospel.

I will deal with the compromise date first, that is, the date of around AD 80–100. This date is a compromise date for two groups of people, as I have already observed above. The first group is those who at one time would have argued for a second-century date but have now had to revise their dates and have accepted the nearest date, that is, at the end of the first century. There is no necessary reason for this date, according to their examination of the issues, apart from the fact that the discovery of P52 and P.Egerton 2 makes the second-century date unviable, and so they are compelled to accept it as the latest date that appears to be available. It should come as no surprise that this group accepts a compromise date out of necessity. The second group is those who settled on a late first-century date simply because it was the traditional date. They too represent a compromise date—a fact that is not often realized. As noted above, the early patristic evidence, along with perceptions about the relationship between John's Gospel and the Synoptics, led to a date that was after that of the Synop-

32 For discussion of the middle and late dates of the Synoptic Gospels, see Porter, "Dating the Composition of New Testament Books."

tics, and possibly near the end of the century. Especially in the modern era with the advent of historical criticism, since the Synoptics were thought to date to anywhere from around AD 60–80 or so, the date of AD 80–100 became the compromise date settled upon by this group of scholars, where it has remained for many to this day. There is nothing necessarily about John's Gospel itself—apart possibly from the so-called exclusion from the synagogue (see further below)—that would require this date, but it is based upon a number of related factors. One of these is the developmental hypothesis. The developmental hypothesis that arose in the nineteenth century virtually demanded that John's Gospel be seen as later than the Synoptics, because of its developed Christology. John's Gospel was seen to have a more developed Christology, a more "spiritual" or theological sense to it, and (as a result?) to reflect at least in a few instances ideas that could only be accounted for on the basis of later developments.[33] A second is the supposed issue of the banishment from the synagogue as reflecting late first-century disputes within the synagogue that led to the addition of the twelfth to the eighteen benedictions, or the *birkat ha-minim*. The *birkat ha-minim* supposedly indicates banishment from the synagogue (or at least cursing, taking "blessing" as a euphemism) for the "heretics," who were thought to be Christians. This is further thought to be in keeping with what is depicted in various places in John's Gospel (see John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2). A third factor is the supposed anti-Judaism of John's Gospel, as seen most apparently in the use of the term "the Jews" to describe Jesus' antagonists, with the implication being that the entire race is depicted as his enemies. This is seen to be a factor in establishing the so-called middle date (although see below). As a result, not only does this view tend toward a historico-chronological distancing from the events of Jesus' life, but a distancing from the other Gospels, and most connections to traditional authorship of John's Gospel by the son of Zebedee.

The implication of such a compromise date is that even if John's Gospel were to be written by John the son of Zebedee, or even some other eyewitness such as the Beloved Disciple, the Gospel takes on a second order position within Gospel chronology and hence reliability. The developmental hypothesis results in characterization of John's Gospel as less firmly related to the precipitating events in the life of Jesus and more attuned to later developments within early Christianity, especially those after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and related to

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33 The classic recent expression of this is J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 213–250, whose view of the prologue of John's Gospel being the first explicit statement of incarnation of the divine Christ in the New Testament reflects a more recent view of this same framework.

the separation of Judaism and Christianity. This heightened tension between Judaism and Christianity is seen in both the supposed explicit statements regarding the "Jews," but also in the more explicit events regarding relationships between Johannine Christians and the Jews. The expulsion from the synagogue reflects the result of the growing tensions between Judaism and Christianity to the point where the Gospel itself is often seen to be anti-Jewish, in some way in relation to a parting of the ways that results in synagogue expulsion.[34] One must wonder, however, whether this is actually clearly seen in the evidence of the Gospel (see below on the expulsion from the synagogue) or simply a reading of the earlier second-century hypothesis into the available time slot. No doubt others have previously argued for even later dates—such as Baur and his followers—but these dates have been dismissed because of the papyrological evidence. For Baur and many others who followed him, the theological position of John's Gospel, besides the other factors possibly involved, was such that it was best placed long after early Christian formulations. The question becomes whether John's Gospel can now be placed within the historical and theological situation at the end of the first century. If John's Gospel reflects a post-Paulinism position, then it is hard to see that it can now also fit comfortably within the period immediately after the fall of Jerusalem, with growing tensions between Judaism and Christianity that, by all accounts, led directly to the partings of the ways (for those who take a post AD 70 date of such partings).

One cannot leave this compromise date, however, without noting that three of the major planks in a date of AD 80–100 have been called into question. The first concerns the strength of the patristic evidence. When this evidence is examined more closely, the only clear result is that John wrote with knowledge of the Synoptics and after they were written (from Ephesus).[35] The other

34 The issue of the parting of the ways continues to arouse discussion. The range of dates has gone from early (see Stanley E. Porter and Brook W.R. Pearson, "Why the Split? Christians and Jews by the Fourth Century," *JGRChJ* 1 [2000]: 82–119) to late (as represented by many essays in Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik, eds., *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007]). A moderating view that looks to the *birkat ha-minim* in relation to John's Gospel is seen in J.D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM, 1991).

35 On the problematic nature of the Patristic evidence, see Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 256–258, who contends that there is no good reason from the evidence itself to accept the consensus. The ancient evidence merely notes that John knew the Synoptics and that he wrote with them in mind—not when or where he wrote or how much distance separated them.

conclusions drawn from the several citations by the early church authors are arguably inferences and not firm evidence. This would especially include the fact that John wrote at an advanced age, which is not specifically tied to the dating or the writing of John's Gospel. The characterization of Johannine theology is also subject to question in relation to other New Testament evidence. John's Gospel is not the only book within the New Testament to have a high view of the nature of Jesus. Similar views were already found in the Pauline writings, where Jesus is seen as inhabiting the divine realm (Phil 2:6–11) and exercising divine prerogatives (Col 1:15–20).[36] There is arguably little in John's Gospel—not even the prologue may be excepted—that is not commensurate with what is indicated elsewhere of the nature of Jesus. There are also other explanations of the supposed anti-Jewish sentiment of the Gospel. There has been much discussion of the use of the term "the Jews" in John's Gospel. While some argue that this indicates anti-Jewish sentiment, there have been other proposals as well. The most likely include the indication that the term must be understood contextually, and often when used negatively indicates the Jewish leaders, rather than the Jews as an entire people. In fact, Robinson has argued that John's Gospel is not anti-Jewish but anti-Jewish establishment. The opposition is to those Jewish leaders who were involved in the persecution and death of Jesus. John's Gospel is not a pro-Gentile Gospel but one opposed to those Jewish leaders involved in the persecution of Jesus, such as the Pharisees.[37] There is also significant debate over whether the *birkat ha-minim* refers at all to the banishment of Christians from the synagogue. There are numerous problems with the traditional interpretation of the *birkat ha-minim*, including having to take the "blessing" as a "cursing," the interpretation of who the named "heretics" are, and the fact, as Robinson has observed, that those who are excluded are expelled on the basis of their own failure to observe the strict behavior required.[38] The use of the *birkat ha-minim* arguably appears to be a convenient juxtaposition of a convenient date with a possible convenient pretext.

36 This has been one of the major objections to Dunn's work—that he has misinterpreted Paul and failed to see that earlier New Testament writers (than that of John's Gospel) have equally high Christology.

37 See John A.T. Robinson, "The Destination and Purpose of the Johannine Epistles," *NTS* 7 (1960–1961): 56–65, repr. in his *Twelve New Testament Studies* (SBT 34; London: SCM, 1962), 107–125, and in *New Testament Issues* (ed. Richard Batey; London: SCM, 1970), 191–209; and idem, *The Priority of John* (ed. J.F. Coakley; Oak Park, IL: Meyer-Stone, 1985), 69–72.

38 See Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 272–275; cf. Robinson, *Priority of John*, 72–82.

I now turn to the third and final date, the early date, of composition of John's Gospel and its relationship to the origins of the Gospel. This position, argued in several different forms, claims that John's Gospel was written sometime before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, and possibly as early as the late 50's. This is a position that has been argued in a number of more popular writings but in surprisingly few scholarly writings. This position argues, according to the detailed proposal put forward by Robinson, probably the most detailed of recent proponents, that the early patristic evidence is not decisive for the dating of John's Gospel, that the supposed high Christology is no higher and not significantly different from that found within other early writings of the New Testament such as Paul's letters, that the Gospel is neither pro-Gentile nor anti-Jewish, but only anti-Jewish establishment similar to the evidence found at Qumran in its opposition to the temple establishment, and that it is not the Christians who are being excluded from the synagogue in the *birkat ha-minim*.[39] Robinson uses as one of his crucial concluding arguments the reference in John 5:2 to the pool of Bethsaida as being in Jerusalem (use of the Greek verb ἔστιν).[40] In light of the difficulties with the other positions, as noted above, it might at first appear that the best arguments rest with the early date of composition of John's Gospel, and it is surprising that anyone maintains the older dates. There are still a number of problems with this position, however. The first concerns the emphasis placed upon John 5:2 with its use of the aspectually vague form of the verb "be." This verb simply cannot bear the weight of the argument put upon it. Robinson also faces the dilemma of the prologue and epilogue of John's Gospel. These are admittedly problematic for such a clear position, in that despite Robinson's wishing to find common ground between John's high Christology and explicit statements in the Pauline letters, the prologue to John's Gospel seems to say much more. In his study of the priority of John, rather than arguing for a single edition of John's Gospel, he argues that the body of the Gospel (essentially from John 1:18–20:31) was written first, then the epistles, and then the prologue and chapter 21. He argues further that views of the unparalleled high Christology of the Gospel are formulated around what is found in these two later additions.[41] However, by any account,

39 See Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 254–311; and *Priority of John*, esp. 36–122, 296–398. Cf. Stanley E. Porter, "John A.T. Robinson: Provocateur and Profound Johannine Scholar" (forthcoming), for summary of his views.

40 Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 277–278; cf. *Priority of John*, 55–59.

41 See Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 282–285, 306–307; and *Priority of John*, 343–397.

the second edition with the prologue and epilogue is still within the timeframe of AD 65–70, separated from the first edition by only ten years.

Nevertheless, there are implications for the origins of the Gospels for this position. The implications are surprisingly many and not inconsiderable. They include a complete rewriting of the development of early Christianity, so as to accept that all that is presented in John's Gospel is plausible within the context of early Christianity up to AD 70. In other words, one must accept—even if one brackets out the prologue, as Robinson does (though he does not delay its writing by a huge temporal gap)—that John's Gospel depicts a Jesus who had a highly sophisticated and developed theology, and who had developed such a theology in explicit ways. This is seen in his depiction of Jesus' use of a variety of apparently self-conscious metaphors of personal identity ("I am the …"),[42] a sense of theological awareness regarding his ambient Jewish theology (e.g. statements regarding his relationship to Abraham; John 8:58), and a sense of his own larger destiny (e.g. in his words to his disciples in John 14–17 and to Pilate in John 18–19), among others. Even if one questions Jesus' own identity, the early date mandates that the author of the Gospel—and at such an early date one can easily posit a close associate, probably an eyewitness—envisioned Jesus in this way (including the prologue, with its high Christology). This is despite the fact that Jesus has a much more muted presence in the contemporary (or later?) Synoptic Gospels. Differences between John's and the Synoptic Gospels have no doubt been overdrawn, but at the least the Synoptics are more restrained about such things. There is the further implication that, insofar as estimations of developments of gnostic thought, etc. are to be found as present in John's Gospel, the early date requires that they all be phenomena found within the world of early Christianity before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, let me simply say that I have not attempted to solve the issue of the origins of John's Gospel in any clear or definitive way. What I have tried to do is to bring the issue of date of composition for John's Gospel—and by implication other books of the New Testament, especially those that intersect with it, such as the Synoptic Gospels—to the fore so that we can examine some of the implications of its date of composition for theories of the origins of John's Gospel. I conclude with several observations. The first is that discussions

42 See Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus*, ch. 5.

of dates of composition of New Testament books do matter. As we have seen, dates suggested for composition of John's Gospel—not unlike those suggested for other New Testament books—tend to follow a common pattern, including a late, early, and middle date. Each of these has its own distinct set of implications, such that if one of the dates is no longer seen to be viable, there is a knock-on effect of altering such a view for various theories of origins. The second is the realization that we must consider the dates of various New Testament books in relationship to each other, because alteration in the date of one may well have implications for how we reconstruct the history of early Christianity and thereby trace the origins of other books. As we observed above, the full set of implications of elimination of the late date for composition of John's Gospel has not been appreciated. The result has been an intriguing compromise between former advocates of a late date and those who argue for a middle date on very insecure grounds. Nevertheless, they bring their views into forced conglomeration. Since both major groups within the middle date seem to be forced to be bedfellows on the basis of compromise, the traditional date of John's Gospel is highly suspect. The third and final observation is that there are important reasons for treating the issue of date of composition as intricately intertwined with other discussions regarding New Testament origins and that such discussions occur beyond the parameters of discussion of a single book. As was noted above, if the late date for John's Gospel is eliminated and we accept some of the recently proposed late dates for the Synoptics, we have an interesting inversion of the dating scenario that first led to the middle and late dates in relation to the Synoptics and John's Gospel. I withhold judgment on whether such a revisionist scheme is viable, but I think that it is not just entirely appropriate but imperative that future discussions extend the scope of enquiry to ensure that such anomalies are fully weighed.

John the Evangelist's Work: An Overlooked *Redaktionsgeschichtliche* Theory from the Patristic Age[1]

Ilaria Ramelli

It is generally assumed by scholars that among the sources of John are (the) other Gospels, at least in the sense that the author of the Fourth Gospel wrote knowing the Synoptics, in addition to the materials that are peculiar to John. This can already be seen in the early patristic tradition, which will be analyzed critically and comparatively in the first part of this essay. But another virtually unstudied tradition from the patristic age assigns to John the Evangelist a more "invasive" role in the redaction, not only of the Fourth Gospel, but also of the three others. This tradition will be assessed here in conjunction with Origen and the Muratori Fragment. The result of the analysis indicates that we might be dealing here with quite an early tradition.

In particular, the first patristic reconstructions of the origin and composition of the canonical Gospels came from Papias, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius. The Papias–Clement line of tradition was later received by Origen, and by Eusebius, who also integrated it with that of Irenaeus. Theodore of Mopsuestia, following the exegetical tradition of the "school of Antioch," provides an interesting and scarcely studied account of the origins of the Synoptic Gospels and John. His version does not contradict the Papias–Clement–Irenaeus tradition received by Origen and Eusebius. However, in this version, John is presented as one who first read and evaluated the other three Gospels, before writing his own as a supplement to them. A passage from the *Martyrdom of Timothy* presents John the Evangelist, not only as the reader, but also as the final redactor of the other three Gospels. This is a *redaktionsgeschichtliche* reconstruction *ante litteram*. It is necessary to analyze it and investigate its roots, meaning, and relation to the other accounts of the origin and composition of the canonical Gospels. Important convergences, which I shall point out, with a passage of the second-century Muratori Fragment, and with a contemporary tradition reported by Origen, suggest an early origin of this theory.

1 I am very grateful to Dieter Betz and Jörg Frey for our conversations about this issue in Metochi in 2013 and in Kiel in 2012, and to the editors of this volume for receiving my chapter, which profoundly honors me.

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The Papias-Clement Version of the Origin and Composition of the Gospels, Received by Origen and Eusebius—A Comparison with Irenaeus

A report on Mark the Evangelist from Clement's *Hypotyposeis* 6 is preserved by Eusebius, *HE* 2.14–16, and confirmed, according to him, by the second-century church father Papias. Eusebius deemed this report so trustworthy that he relied on it also in his *Chronicon*. Clement reported on Mark's activity in Rome and, next, in Alexandria, probably based on an Alexandrian tradition that situated the composition of the Gospel of Mark in Rome during the reign of Claudius, at the time of Peter's coming to Rome (traditionally AD 42 or twelve years after the Ascension, when Peter, liberated from prison, went "to another place"; Acts 12.17): "During the reign of Claudius, the same (during which Simon the Magician had come to Rome), universal Providence, supremely good and full of love for the human beings, led Peter to Rome … here he repeatedly announced the Good News of the Kingdom of Heavens, Light itself and the Logos that saves the souls" (*Hist. eccl.* 2.14.6). Clement then recounts that Mark, pressed by his hearers, after Peter's departure from Rome wrote down his preaching. This seems to refer again to the reign of Claudius:

> With every kind of supplication, they implored Mark, whose Gospel is in circulation and who was the companion of Peter, to leave them also a written account [διὰ γραφῆς ὑπόμνημα] of the teaching that had been handed down to them orally [διὰ λόγου παραδοθείσης]. They did not give up before persuading him, and thereby became the cause of the writing [γραφῆς] called "Gospel according to Mark". *They say* that the apostle learnt what was done by means of a revelation of the Spirit and rejoiced in the zeal of those people, and approved of that writing [τὴν γραφήν] for reading in the churches.

Mark's Gospel, according to this tradition, was composed in Rome, but Peter's approval of this tradition took place somewhere else. In *Hist. eccl.* 2.15.2, Eusebius details his sources: Clement and Papias:[2] "It is Clement, in Book 6 of his *Hypotyposeis*, who relates this story; moreover, the bishop of Hierapolis named Papias attests to it, agreeing with him. According to Clement and Papias, Peter mentions this Mark in his first letter (1 Pet 5:13). *They also say* that this letter

2 See Ilaria Ramelli, "The Birth of the Rome-Alexandria Connection: The Early Sources on Mark and Philo, and the Petrine Tradition," *The Studia Philonica Annual* 23 (2011): 69–95.

was composed precisely in Rome, and that Peter himself indicates this, by allegorically calling this city Babylon." The subjects of "they also say" are, in all probability, Clement and Papias. And what Eusebius adds soon after (2.16.1) is introduced by another φασίν, which again probably refers to them. If this is correct, Clement and Papias thus claimed that Mark, after being in Rome and composing his Gospel there, was sent to Egypt to preach the Gospel there.

In a parallel account from his *Hypotyposeis* on the origin of the Gospels, Clement treats "the order of the Gospels" and claims that his report was based on the "tradition of those who were elders from the very beginning":

> Clement said that, among the Gospels, those (or: those parts) that include the genealogies were composed first (or: in advance) [προγεγράφθαι τὰ περιέχοντα τὰς γενεαλογίας], whereas the Gospel according to Mark had the following origin. When Peter had publicly announced [κηρύξαντος] the Word in Rome and proclaimed [ἐξειπόντος] the Gospel for inspiration of the Spirit, those who were present, who were many, exhorted Mark, who had accompanied him for a long time and remembered what had been said [λεχθέντων], to write down his words [ἀναγράψαι τὰ εἰρημένα]. After doing so, he gave the Gospel to those who asked him for it. When Peter learnt this … he neither forbade this, nor encouraged him. As *the last of all*, John *compared the other Gospels and realised* that in these only corporeal aspects were represented; therefore, exhorted by his acquaintances/disciples [γνωρίμων] and divinely inspired by the Spirit, he produced the *spiritual Gospel* [πνευματικὸν εὐαγγέλιον].
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> *Ap*. EUSEBIUS, *HE* 6.14.5–7

John appears as the last of the authors of the canonical Gospels, who read and compared the previous others. His Gospel is a reaction to these, its content being "spiritual." This is why it was Valentinus's favourite in the first half of the second century, when clearly it was already circulating (as is also confirmed by P.Rylands 457).[3] Clement's two accounts imply that at least a version of Mark was composed in Rome while Peter was still alive, but this was after his departure from Rome. The aoristic κηρύξαντος, ἐξειπόντος, and λεχθέντων suggest that Peter had concluded his preaching in Rome but was still alive, since he subsequently had learned of Mark's Gospel. In the parallel passage reported by Eusebius (*HE* 2.15), Clement states that Mark's Gospel was recommended by Peter. Indeed, Mark is there said to be Peter's companion

3 Cf. Anna Passoni dell'Acqua, *Il testo del Nuovo Testamento* (Turin: LDC, 1994), 67–68.

(ἀκόλουθον ὄντα), and not to have been Peter's companion in the past. And in 16.14, τὰ εἰρημένα can well be what Peter was still preaching, albeit elsewhere. Clement does not state that Mark wrote in Rome after the departure of both Peter and Paul, but only after Peter's departure, which was considered to have taken place before Paul's. Some time after Peter's departure, Mark left for Alexandria. All this is dated by Clement to Claudius's reign.

Another second-century report agrees with the Clement–Papias tradition. According to Irenaeus, Mark and Luke wrote their Gospels after Peter's and Paul's departure from Rome—Mark after Peter's, and Luke after Paul's. Irenaeus's account is based on Papias or Polycarp; thus, it agrees with Clement's version, which corresponds to Papias's. Irenaeus reports the tradition known to him concerning the composition of the Gospels: first the Semitic redaction of Matthew in Palestine, then of Mark and Luke, and finally, of John, in Ephesus:

> Matthew among the Hebrews, in their language, produced a written version of the announced Gospel [γραφὴν εὐαγγελίου], while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel [εὐαγγελιζομένων] and founding the Church in Rome. After their respective departure [ἔξοδον] from there, Mark too, Peter's disciple and interpreter, transmitted to us in a written form what was being announced [κηρυσσόμενα] by Peter, and Luke, who accompanied Paul, put down in a book the Gospel that was being announced [τὸ κηρυσσόμενον εὐαγγέλιον] by the latter. Finally, John too, the Lord's disciple [μαθητής], who also leaned upon his chest, published the Gospel [ἐξέδωκεν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον], while dwelling in Ephesus, in Asia.
>
> *Ap.* EUSEBIUS, *HE* 5.8

That here ἔξοδος means not "death," but "departure," is suggested by Irenaeus's usage[4] and by the present participle κηρυσσόμενα, which implies that Peter was still alive and was still preaching when Mark wrote his Gospel. Therefore, Mark wrote his Gospel, not after Peter's "death," but after his "departure." This is strongly indicated by Clement's claim that Peter had read Mark's Gospel. Had Irenaeus meant that Peter was dead, he would have said, "what *had been* announced by Peter," and not "what *was being* announced," albeit this was no longer in Rome. Irenaeus states that Mark wrote what "Peter" alone preached, and not what "Peter and Paul" preached; this too agrees with Clement's account. The same argument holds for Irenaeus's use of κηρυσσόμενον in reference to

4 See E. Earle Ellis, "The Date and Provenance of Mark's Gospel," in *The Four Gospels: FS Frans Neirynck* (ed. F. Van Segbroeck; BETL 100; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 801–815.

Paul's preaching: Luke wrote while the Gospel "*was being* announced" by Paul, and not after it "*had been* announced." Mark and Luke wrote when Peter and Paul were alive, first Mark, based on Peter's preaching, and later Luke, on Paul's. Irenaeus's account does not contradict Clement's, which, in turn, agrees with Papias's. If Irenaeus mentions Peter and Paul together, it is because he deems them the common evangelizers of Rome. Likewise, under Zephyrinus, the Roman churchman Caius mentioned Peter's and Paul's τρόπαια together;[5] already at the end of the first century, Peter and Paul seem to have been associated with Christian onomastic,[6] as they also are in Clement of Rome's Letter to the Corinthians (54–57). This does not imply that Irenaeus deemed all of Paul's preaching in Rome contemporary with Peter's. Irenaeus states that Mark wrote on the basis of Peter's preaching, and not of Peter's and Paul's. Luke is said to have composed subsequently his Gospel on the basis of Paul's preaching. Indeed, Luke 1:1–4 refers to many previous expositions when he composed his own:

> Since many [πολλοί] have undertaken to compile a narrative [ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν] of the things accomplished among us, just as they were delivered [παρέδοσαν] to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses [αὐτόπται] and have become ministers of the word [ὑπηρέται τοῦ λόγου], it seemed good to me too, having followed (all) closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you [ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς γράψαι], most excellent Theophilus.

Irenaeus's account is thus consistent with Clement's and Papias's: Mark wrote after Peter's departure from Rome, relying only on Peter's preaching, and Luke after Paul's departure, relying on Paul's.

Irenaeus's tradition on the composition of John in Ephesus as the last Gospel by "the beloved disciple" derives from Polycarp. Irenaeus is Eusebius's source on Polycarp (*HE* 4.14.1–8). In his account, Polycarp was "instructed by the apostles," who elected him bishop of Smyrna, and "conversed with many who had seen the Lord." Polycarp "always taught that which he had learnt from the apostles," and Irenaeus met him in his early years; he cites Polycarp as a source on facts in

5 *Ap*. Eusebius, *HE* 2.25.6–7.

6 Susini dated from late I to early II century (CIL 14.566) an epitaph dedicated by *M. Anneus Paulus* to his son *M. Anneus Paulus Petrus*. The *Paulus-Petrus* association is first attested here and is Christian. See Ilaria Ramelli, "L'epistolario apocrifo Seneca-Paolo," *Vetera Christianorum* 34 (1997): 1–12; and Marta Sordi, *I cristiani e l'Impero romano* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2004), 51–54.

Ephesus involving "John, the Lord's disciple" (*HE* 4.14.6). The source, John, and the place, are the same with Irenaeus's account of the composition of John's Gospel. In *Adv. Haer.* 3.6, Irenaeus, again based on Polycarp, describes Paul as the founder of the Ephesian church, and states that John lived in Ephesus until the age of Trajan (AD 98–117).

A tradition from John the Elder preserved by Papias (*Ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 3.39.15) details the origin and structure of Mark in implicit contrast to John:

> This is what the Elder [ὁ πρεσβύτερος] used to say: Mark became Peter's interpreter and carefully wrote down [ἀκριβῶς ἔγραψεν] what he remembered concerning what was said or done by the Lord, but not in order [οὐ τάξει]. For he had neither listened to the Lord nor accompanied him, but later, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who delivered his teachings each time as necessity demanded (or: *anecdotally*) [πρὸς τὰς χρείας ἐποιεῖτο τὰς διδασκαλίας], without the intention to produce an *ordered* exposition [σύνταξιν] of the Lord's sayings. Therefore, Mark was not mistaken to *write down several things as he remembered them*. For his sole concern was to omit nothing of what he had heard and falsify nothing in his reports.

That Mark did not write Jesus' deeds and teachings in the right order suggests that the correct chronology is John's. Indeed, Theodore Bar Konai in *Liber Scholiorum* 7 claims the same concerning Matthew: he wrote down his Gospel following his "teaching by heart" and thus "he has not put at the beginning what happened at the beginning, nor at the end what happened at the end, but he chose a different order." If neither Mark nor Matthew has the right chronology—and therefore nor even the third synoptic Gospel, Luke—the implicit consequence is that it is the Gospel of John that preserves the correct historical τάξις.

Papias too claimed to have been in close contact with "John (the Elder)" (*Adv. Haer.* 5.33.4), who is probably the John mentioned by Polycarp and identified with the evangelist. In particular, Papias was "a hearer of John and companion of Polycarp," and he wrote the lost *Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord* (Eusebius, *HE* 3.39.1). Papias relied on the "living voice" of the apostles' companions, out of his concern with following those who could "teach the truth" (Eusebius, *HE* 3.39.1). He asked the "Elders," who had known the apostles: Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John, Matthew, and the other "disciples of the Lord," such as Aristion and John the Elder (Eusebius, *HE* 3.39.3).[7]

7 See William Schoedel, "Papias," in *ANRW* 2.27.1 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993), 235–270; Charles Hill, "What Papias Said About John (and Luke)," *JTS* 49 (1998): 582–629; Dennis MacDonald,

Papias's further account on Matthew agrees with Irenaeus's as for the original Semitic redaction of the *logia*: "Matthew ordered together [συνετάξατο] Jesus's sayings/episodes (of his life)/prophecies (on him) [τὰ λόγια] in a Hebrew dialect; then each one interpreted/translated [ἡρμήνευσεν] them as he or she was able" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.16). I have suggested that Papias's statement that the writings containing the genealogies were written in advance can mean that the genealogical sections were written first. Indeed, the Gospels' τάξις in Papias can be the internal order of their composition or structure, as is suggested by the perfect προγεγράφθαι, while an aorist would indicate the composition of a whole Gospel at one point in time. Papias could even have had in mind Matthew's genealogy alone, whose Semitic redaction was the oldest.

Origen's account of the origin and composition of the canonical Gospels, the only ones he accepts as Scripture (*Comm. Matth.* 1; *Ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 6.25.3–6),[8] agrees with Irenaeus's and Clement's, whose works Origen knew. The order Origen indicates and his information on the Semitic Matthew are the same as in Irenaeus. First comes Matthew "in Hebraic letters" for people coming from Judaism; then Mark, based on Peter's preaching; then Luke, praised by Paul and written for the pagans; and then finally John, without further information. Origen highlighted the disagreement between John and the Synoptics (*Comm. in Io.* 10.3) to show that the *defectus litterae* points to the necessity of an allegorical interpretation, while Eusebius, the author of the Canons, is more concerned with the historical consistency of the evangelists against external attacks, such as that from Porphyry. This is why he claims that John recounts facts from the life of Jesus prior to the imprisonment of the Baptist, while the Synoptics relate later facts of the event. That Eusebius does not mention Origen in his refutation (*Hist. eccl.* 3.24.8b–13)[9] is a sign of his veneration of him.

The accounts by Papias–Clement, Irenaeus–Polycarp, and Origen agree that John was written after the Synoptics. This does not mean that John cannot be based on eyewitness memories.[10] An overlooked account from Theodore

Two Shipwrecked Gospels (Atlanta: SBL, 2012), 3–91; Richard Bauckham, "Did Papias Write History or Exegesis?" *JTS* 65 (2014): 463–488.

8 On the notions of canon and Scripture, see, e.g., Michael Holmes, "The Biblical Canon," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (ed. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; online version September 2009), ch. 20 (DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199271566.003.0021), esp. 20.1, with wide-ranging overview of scholarship.

9 Overestimated by T. Scott Manor, "Papias, Origen, and Eusebius: The Criticisms and Defense of the Gospel of John," *VC* 67 (2013): 1–21.

10 For example, Henry Wansbrough, *The Four Gospels in Synopsis* (Oxford: Oxford University

of Mopsuestia († AD 428) argues along the same lines when it describes John as the last of the four Gospels. It also presents John as the reader of the three previous Gospels. According to an ancient, neglected tradition, John was not just the *reader* but the final *redactor* of the other Gospels.

Theodore: John the Reader of the Other Gospels and the Last Evangelist

Theodore was an exegete, a disciple of Diodore of Tarsus († AD 393), together with John Chrysostom, at the Antiochian ἀσκητήριον. The School of Antioch is regarded as opposed to the School of Alexandria, as it was hostile to allegoresis, but Diodore's and Theodore's criticism of sheer allegory—denying history—is to be seen, not as a reaction against Origen, but as a reaction against "pagan" Neoplatonic allegory, especially Julian's and Salustius's.[11] I do not rule out a polemic against "Gnostic" allegoresis either—an allegorism which, unlike Origen's, denies the historicity of Scripture. Theodore, in his commentary on the minor Pauline epistles,[12] criticizes not allegorists in general, but those who, *unlike* Origen,[13] rejected the historical narrative, *narrationem rerum ges-*

Press, 2001), 1012–1013; Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), with my review in *Aevum* 82 (2008): 244–248; James D.G. Dunn, *The Oral Gospel Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013). John A.T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (London: SCM, 1985), suggests that John is earlier than the Synoptics. I shall show that an ancient Christian tradition maintained the same.

11 See Ilaria Ramelli, "Giovanni Crisostomo e l'esegesi scritturale: le scuole di Alessandria e di Antiochia e le polemiche con gli allegoristi pagani," in *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo* (Rome: Augustinianum, 2005), 121–162; Margaret Mitchell, "Christian Martyrdom and the Dialect of the Holy Scriptures," *BibInt* 17 (2009): 177–206, expanded in *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 107 and *passim*. Cf. Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 161–216, who calls Antiochene exegesis "ikonic" (173; cf. 169–176).

12 See H.B. Swete, *Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Minor Epistles of St. Paul* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1880–1882), 1:75.

13 For Origen's allegorical method, which retained the historical level, and his polemics against "pagan" allegorism, see Ilaria Ramelli, "The Philosophical Stance of Allegory in Stoicism and its Reception in Platonism, Pagan and Christian," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 18 (2011): 335–371; and idem, "Philo as Origen's Declared Model: Allegorical and Historical Exegesis of Scripture," *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 7 (2012): 1–17.

tarum. The Antiochenes' predilection for θεωρία should also not be overstated. Adrian's *Isagoge*, a scriptural exegetical handbook, reveals a critical attitude toward θεωρία (§ 133).[14] The influence of Origen's eschatology on the main exponents of this school, at the least Diodore and Theodore, should be taken into full consideration: the Antiochenes supported the Origenian doctrine of *apokatastasis*.[15]

In his exegetical works, Theodore begins with some information on the biblical book at stake, particularly regarding its authorship and date of composition. In the first Greek fragment of his Commentary on John, Theodore starts with a description of how the apostles after the Ascension began to preach to various peoples: "For a good while the disciples remained in Jerusalem, visiting the cities nearby and conversing about the Christian announcement, especially with those who came from Judaism, until the great Paul, guided by the divine grace, was manifestly destined to preach [κηρύττειν] to the gentiles." Only after a while did the other apostles, too, begin to preach the good news to the people: "After some time, the divine grace did not permit that its heralds [κήρυκας] be confined in just one part of the earth, but it pushed them out, toward external lands, according to different dispensations [οἰκονομίαις]: Simon's occasion had the blessed Peter run the way toward Rome, and each other another way; this is not the appropriate place for listing all their destinations. Thus, the blessed John in turn settled in Ephesus, travelling around the whole of the province of Asia, offering enormous help to its inhabitants with his words." At that time, according to Theodore's tradition, the Gospels were published, once Peter had gone to Rome and John had settled in Ephesus: "It is in this period that the other evangelists published their works [ἔκδοσις]: Matthew, Mark, and Luke, too, composed their gospels [τὰ οἰκεῖα γεγραφότων εὐαγγέλια], which spread in a wink across all the inhabited world, and received the utmost attention from all believers."

John's Gospel, according to Theodore, was composed shortly after the Synoptics, on the basis of John's memories. Like some modern critics, Theodore too maintains that John is the most reliable of all the Gospels. The reasons are two: (1) the teaching about love, since John the Evangelist is identified with the beloved disciple that appears in the fourth Gospel; and (2) eyewitness testimony, since John had been with Jesus much longer than the other evangelists had been:

14 CPG 6527; Peter Martens, "Adrian's 'Introduction to the Divine Scriptures' and Greco-Roman Rhetorical Theory on Style," *JR* 93 (2013): 197–217.

15 Ilaria L.E. Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

> But the believers of the province of Asia deemed the blessed John *more trustworthy* [ἀξιοπιστότερον] than the others for the testimony [μαρτυρίαν] of the Gospel, in that *he had been with the Lord for a longer time* [ἄνωθεν], even before Matthew, and had enjoyed the divine grace more thanks to love. Therefore, *they brought the papyri/rolls to him* [προσήνεγκαν μὲν αὐτῷ τὰς βίβλους], since they wanted to learn from him his opinion concerning them. He praised those who had written them, because they said the truth. However, he declared that a few points had been omitted by them [βραχέα μὲν αὐτοῖς παραλελεῖφθαι], especially among those miracles that were most necessary to be recounted; of Jesus's teachings, instead, they had reported everything, omitting just little (see Commentary on John, Greek fragment 1).

John, an independent witness, is said to have compared the other Gospels, which were presented to him, written on papyri. When John wrote his Gospel, the three others were already composed, and he knew them. Theodore adds that the other evangelists paid attention to Jesus' humanity rather than to his divinity. This is similar to Clement's above-quoted excerpt (*Ap.* Eusebius, HE 6.14.7), based on the tradition of "the elders": "As the last of all, John compared the other Gospels and realised that in these *only corporeal aspects* were represented; therefore, exhorted by his acquaintances/disciples and divinely inspired by the spirit, he produced *the spiritual Gospel.*" The last Gospel was written after a close inspection of the Synoptics, in order to complement them. The "elders" appear as witnesses and authors of reports on John, as well as his collaborators (also in *Adv. Haer*. 2.22.5: "All the elders [πρεσβύτεροι] who worked with John, the disciple of the Lord, are witnesses to John's tradition, since he remained with them until the time of Trajan").

The rest of Theodore's passage concerns John's criteria for the composition of his Gospel. These remarks could easily be drawn from the contents of John itself. John first insisted on the divine doctrines with philosophical reasoning, then he described Jesus' dwelling on earth, the baptism of John, Jesus' sayings and deeds, always endeavouring to keep the correct τάξις; he divided his exposition into days, to this end. The attribution of "order" to John, against Mark, is already implied, as I have noted above, in Papias's fragment based on John the Elder (*Ap.* Eusebius, HE 3.39.15). Theodore observes that John did not deal much with Jesus' teachings, because the other evangelists had already done so satisfactorily, but John expounded the few they had overlooked. Likewise, he narrated the miracles the other evangelists omitted; if he included other miracles that had already been reported by the others, he did so to connect them to Jesus' teachings (e.g. in the case of the multiplica-

tion of loaves which comes immediately after Jesus' discourse on the Bread of Life).

The detail of the other Gospels that, written on papyri, were brought to John for consideration before he composed his own, appears in a variant form, which is also found in another tradition, that is regularly overlooked. Remarkably, this tradition presents John, not only as a reader and evaluator of the other Gospels, but also as their final redactor on the basis of multilingual written sources.

John the Final Redactor of All Gospels (Based on Multilingual Written Sources): A *Redaktionsgeschichtliche* Reconstruction in the Timothy Tradition, the Muratori Fragment, and Origen

Photius (*Bibl.* cod. 254, p. 468b Bekker) preserves a very interesting excerpt from the *Martyrdom of the Apostle Timothy* (ἐκ τῆς μαρτυρικῆς Τιμοθέου τοῦ ἀποστόλου συγγραφῆς), which to a certain extent corresponds to the fifth-century redaction of the *Acts of Timothy* (*Acta Timothei*), edited by Hermann Usener[16] on the basis of Paris Codex Gr. 1219 (eleventh-twelfth century), as well as to BHG 1847. The redacted material available to Photius was probably earlier than *Acta Timothei*. Indeed, according to Usener,[17] Photius had at his disposal a much more ancient Greek redaction than the *Acta*. Usener dates the *Acta* before AD 356, probably between AD 320 and 340, and considers them based on a reliable history of the Ephesian church.[18] Theodor Zahn tends to date the *Acta* edited by Usener to a slightly later date, at least after AD 370, since there it is stated that the city of Lystra was situated in the eparchy of Lycaonia (*Acta*, p. 8.1 ll. 1–12 Usener), but the latter became an independent eparchy only after ca. AD 370.[19] Most scholars now date the *Acta* to the late fourth or fifth century.[20]

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16 Hermann Usener, *Acta S. Timothei* (Bonn: Caroli Georgi Universitas, 1877); Hippolyte Delehaye, "Les Actes de saint Timothée," in *Anatolian Studies Presented to W.H. Buckler* (ed. W.M. Calder and J. Keil; Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1939), 77–84; Rick Strelan, *Paul, Artemis, and the Jews in Ephesus* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996), 122–124. After Usener's edition, six more manuscripts of the Acts of Timothy have been discovered.

17 Usener, *Acta*, 5, 28 n. 65.

18 Usener, *Acta*, 36 and *passim*.

19 Theodor Zahn, "Review of Usener," *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* (1878): 97–114 (98); Delehaye, "Les Actes de saint Timothée," 79.

20 Hans-Joseph Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008), 248; Timothy D. Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History* (Tübingen:

However, some details in this hagiographical novel reveal historical traces within the general frame of the fictional narrative, especially with regard to a precise knowledge of the topography and culture of Ephesus.[21] This points to the use of ancient, local sources. In this light it is not so surprising that in these *Acta*, besides the episodes involving Timothy, the nominal protagonist, no less material is devoted to John the Evangelist, whose figure was traditionally related to Ephesus. I have already pointed out that John was said to have lived there for a long time and have composed his Gospel there (so Polycarp, Irenaeus, Theodore). The *Acta* convey an early tradition of the church of Ephesus. This is clearly the case also with the earlier version, the *Martydrom of Timothy*, known to Photius.

Indeed, the most interesting point in relation to the present investigation is not what is said about Timothy, but what is said about John. Let me first analyze what is reported in the version known to Photius, which is probably anterior to the *Acta*. Here it is recounted that, when Nerva succeeded Domitian, in AD 96, "John the Theologian left his exile and returned to Ephesus, from where he had been previously exiled by Domitian" (ὁ θεολόγος Ἰωάννης τῆς ὑπερορίου φυγῆς ἀφεθεὶς κατάγεται πρὸς τὴν Ἔφεσον, ἧς καὶ πρότερον ὑπὸ Δομειτιανοῦ πεφυγάδευτο). The Ephesian stay of John was interrupted under Domitian, when he was exiled, but before and after Domitian, John was in Ephesus.

The interruption was traditionally linked to the attempted martyrdom of John and his subsequent exile under Domitian. The first known witness to this "martyrdom" tradition is Tertullian's *De praescriptione haereticorum*, the most ancient, as it seems, of his doctrinal works which dates toward AD 200. The mention of the attempted martyrdom of John comes in a passage in which Tertullian praises the church of Rome and associates Peter, Paul, and John with it (*Praescr*. 36.2–3). The presence of John in connection with Rome may come

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Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 302. Barnes also observes that the names of the two proconsuls of Asia (300–303), Maximus and Peregrinus (mentioned in Usener, *Acta*, 8 l. 17 and 13 l. 69), are fictitious. This is common in this kind of Acts, which are historical novels (e.g. also in the *Doctrina Addai* and the *Acts of Mari*; see Ilaria Ramelli, *Possible Historical Traces in the Doctrina Addai?* [Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009]; idem, "The Narrative Continuity between the *Teaching of Addai* and the *Acts of Mari*: Two Historical Novels?" in *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient Near East* [ed. F. Hagen et al.; OLA 189; Leuven: Peeters, 2011], 411–450).

21 See Joseph Keil, "Zum Martyrium des heiligen Timotheus in Ephesos," *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes* 29 (1935): 82–92; J.H. Crehan, "The Fourfold Character of the Gospel," in *Studia Evangelica* 1 (ed. Kurt Aland et al.; TU 73; Berlin: Akademie, 1959), 3–13, praes. 38; and Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts*, 249.

as a surprise, but Tertullian offers a brief explanation: in Rome John suffered a terrible torment, the immersion in boiling oil. He went through it miraculously safe and sound, after which, instead of being killed, he was exiled:

> Ista quam felix ecclesia cui totam doctrinam apostoli cum sanguine suo profuderunt, ubi Petrus passioni dominicae adaequatur, ubi Paulus Iohannis exitu coronatur, ubi apostolus Iohannes posteaquam in oleum igneum demersus nihil passus est, in insulam relegatur.
>
> What a blessed church is this of Rome, for which the apostles spread all of their teaching along with their own blood. Here Peter imitated the Lord's passion; Paul was crowned with the same martyrdom as John (the Baptist); and the apostle John was plunged into boiling oil, but he suffered no damage, so he was relegated into an island.

Jerome took over Tertullian's information but added that the boiling oil into which John was immersed was contained in a terracotta jar (*dolium*: *In Matth.* 3.20.23; *Adv. Iovin.* 1.26). This tradition was also known to Ambrose, who alluded to it in the hymn devoted to St. John: "It is said that he was arrested by unbelievers and in boiling oil he washed away the dust of this world and triumphed over the enemy" (*Vinctus* [...] *ab impiis/calente olivo dicitur/tersisse mundi pulverem/stetisse victor aemuli*). The same story was later reflected in Roman Christian architecture. At *Porta Latina* in Rome, where according to tradition John was immersed in boiling oil, the basilica of *S. Giovanni in Porta Latina* was erected, as well as the even more ancient oratory of *S. Giovanni in Oleo*. Still in the Byzantine age, John Malalas (*Chron.* 10) recorded that John was put on trial in Rome, and Domitian attended the trial; the emperor wanted to allow John to return to Ephesus, from where he had come to Rome when he was arrested, and from where he had already written his Gospel, but Domitian was "reproached," obviously by the Senate. This is why he exiled John to Patmos, where John composed his Apocalypse. Indeed, Cassius Dio (*Hist.* 68.1.3) reports the opposition of a senator, Fronto, a *vir consularis*, concerning Nerva's decision to cease the accusations of "atheism and Jewish customs," which had produced many (Christian) martyrs under Domitian.

It would be interesting to discover the source of Tertullian's information on John's attempted martyrdom and exile. Although we cannot be certain about such information, a suggestion can still be put forward. The first of Jerome's passages on this episode (*Adv. Iovin.* 1.26) expressly mentions Tertullian as a source, but adds the details of the name of the island to which John was exiled and of the container of the boiling oil, which were absent in Tertullian:

> Vidit enim in Pathmos insula, in qua fuerat a Domitiano principe ob Domini martyrium relegatus, Apocalypsim … Refert autem Tertullianus quod Romae [codd. a Nerone] missus in ferventis olei dolium, purior et vegetior exiverit, quam intraverit.
>
> John saw his Revelation in the island of Patmos, where he had been relegated by emperor Domitian as a consequence of the testimony he had rendered to the Lord. Tertullian reports that in Rome (codices: by order of Nero) he was put into a jar full of boiling oil, but he exited cleaner, safer and sounder than he had entered it.

The second passage by Jerome (*In Matth.* 3.20.23) adds the same information, not available in Tertullian (the name Patmos and the terracotta jar); moreover, it does not refer to Tertullian as a source, but to some "histories of the Church":

> Cum Iohannes autem propria morte vitam finierit […] Sed si legamus ecclesiasticas historias in quibus fertur quod et ipse propter martyrium sit missus in ferventis olei doleum, et inde ad suscipiendam coronam Christi athleta processerit statimque relegatus in Pathmos insulam sit.
>
> John, instead, ended his own life by a natural death (sc. not by martyrdom). But if we read *some histories of the Church*, these report the tradition that he too was immersed in a terracotta jar full of boiling oil to be martyred there, but he came out as an athlete, ready to receive the crown of Christ, and soon after he was relegated into the island of Patmos.

These *ecclesiasticae historiae* are hard to identify with Tertullian's *De praescriptione haereticorum*, which is not a history of the church. Jerome likely had another source available, from which he also drew the information he could not find in Tertullian. This source might be Hegesippus's *Hypomnemata*, which could be considered as a history of the church. This is all the more so in that Hegesippus was well known to Tertullian and was the source of a historical mistake committed by him in *Apol.* 5.4 concerning the cessation of Domitian's anti-Christian persecution. It is therefore probable that Hegesippus was also Tertullian's source concerning another episode related to Domitian's "persecution" of some Christians. According to Eusebius (*HE* 4.22.8), Hegesippus, who was of eastern Jewish descent, arrived at Rome shortly after AD 150 and remained there during the episcopates of Anicetus (AD 155–166) and Eleutherius (174–189). He composed five books of *Hypomnemata* intended to relate "the tradition of the apostolic preaching without error" (*HE* 4.8.2). In Rome, he devoted

himself (Eusebius, *HE* 4.22.3) to collecting the Christian traditions preserved there. Among these, there was probably also the tradition concerning the "martyrdom" of John. If it was available to Hegesippus shortly after AD 150, this tradition could go back at least to the first half of the second century. As I shall show, this is also the period from which stems the tradition on John the Evangelist preserved in the *Martyrdom of Timothy* and the Muratori Fragment.

Let us thus return to the *Martyrdom of Timothy* known to Photius. After saying that John in AD 96 returned to Ephesus after he was exiled by order of Domitian, the anonymous author goes on to explain that, before being exiled by Domitian, John the Evangelist lived in Ephesus, where he was shipwrecked in the day of Nero's persecution of the Christians,[22] in the last years of his reign. "At that time," apparently between the last years of Nero's reign and the exile from Ephesus under Domitian, therefore between ca. AD 64 and the 80s or early 90s, while he was in Ephesus, John was reported to have read the accounts that served as the basis of the Gospels, to have re-ordered them, and to have assigned them to the three other evangelists:

> ὅτε καὶ τοὺς *τόμους* οἳ ἀνέγραφον *διαφόροις γλώσσαις* τὰ σωτήρια τοῦ Δεσπότου πάθη τε καὶ θαύματα καὶ διδάγματα, τούτους παρὰ τῶν κομιζόντων δεξάμενος *διέταξέ* τε καὶ *διήρθρωσε*, καὶ ἑνὶ ἑκάστῳ τῶν τριῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν τὸ ὄνομα ἐνηρμόσατο.
>
> At that time he received *papyrus rolls*, from people who kept bringing them to him. These papyri recorded, in *different languages*, the salvific Passion of the Lord and his miracles and teachings. He *put them in order*, *articulated them into a structure*, and *attributed to each of them the name of one of the three evangelists*.

It is interesting that the materials, on the basis of which John purportedly performed his redactional work, are said to have been "in different languages," presumably in reference to Greek and Hebrew/Aramaic (this being attested at least for Matthew in the tradition analyzed above), and less probably, to Latin. The material support of these first-century writings is correctly identified with papyrus rolls, which suggests an early date for the origin of this tradition.[23] The

22 Καὶ γὰρ ἐν ταύτῃ [*sc.* Ephesus] διέτριβε ναυαγήσας μὲν περὶ τὸν αἰγιαλόν, ἐκβρασθεὶς δὲ τῆς θαλάσσης ἐμπνέων ἔτι, ἡνίκα Νέρων ὁ ἐμμανὴς τὸν κατὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἔμπνει διωγμόν.

23 Crehan, "The Fourfold Character," 39, does not take into account the *Martyrium Timothei*

essence of the materials that were to make up the Synoptic Gospels is presented as coinciding with the Passion narrative, Jesus' miracles, and his teachings, in this order. But what is most striking is that John was said to have not only the knowledge of the three other Gospels, but he was also said to have substantially redacted the three other Gospels, as though he was the final redactor, not only of his own Gospel—which here is not even considered—but also of the other three. He is even said to be the one responsible for associating the names of the other evangelists with the Gospels that are ascribed to them. He assembled the bits and pieces of the material, and re-ordered and structured them. Nothing is said, however, about the Greek translation of the parts that were in other languages.

The narrative goes on to say that, when Nerva recalled John back from the exile under Domitian, he returned to Ephesus and preached the gospel until the reign of Trajan (98–117). The last chronological detail agrees with Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer*. 3.6.

And this is the later parallel passage as it appears in the *Acta Timothei* edited by Usener:

> Some followers of the disciples of the Lord were at a loss about how to arrange *some papyri* which were written *in various languages* and had been put together randomly by these disciples, and which dealt with the miracles of the Lord Jesus that had taken place in their time. So they came to the city of Ephesus and by common consent brought them (the papyri) to the famous theologian John. He examined them thoroughly and, taking his cue from them, after he had *put in order the three gospel narratives* and *entitled them Gospel of Matthew, Gospel of Mark, and Gospel of Luke*, assigning their proper titles to the gospels, he himself theologized upon the things they had not narrated [...] filling up also the gaps they had left, especially in their accounts of the miracles, and then he set his own name to this compilation or Gospel.

This account is longer than the earlier version, summarized by Photius, but the substance of its peculiar reconstruction of the origin of the Gospels does not change much. Here too the papyri are the support of the bits and pieces that John ordered into the three other Gospels before composing his own. What

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in Photius's summary, but he bases it only on the later *Acta*; however, even for these, he rightly notes that the very mention of papyri is "an account which it would have been difficult for a forger in the days of the big *vellum* codices (after 320) to make up for himself."

is more, the same detail of the papyri is found, not only in the probably earlier *Martyrium*, but also, as I have pointed out, in Theodore of Mopsuestia's account, which relies on a tradition that goes back at least to the fourth century, if not earlier. Here in the *Acta* it is stated that the bits and pieces written on papyri in various languages had been composed by Jesus' disciples and handed down by them to their own followers. These were the people who brought those papyri in disorder to John, that he might arrange them. Here in the *Acta*, moreover, the composition of John's own Gospel is also narrated, along the same lines as Theodore of Mopsuestia's account of it. There are also details that, conversely, appear only in Photius's summary but not in this longer version, such as the identification of the materials of the Synoptics not only with Jesus' miracles (as here in the *Acta*), but also with the Passion narrative and Jesus' teachings.

This overlooked and somewhat surprising *redaktionsgeschichtliche* version of the composition of the Gospels by John, as it was reported in the *Martyrdom of Timothy* known to Photius and in the *Acts of Timothy* edited by Usener, may be illuminated to a certain extent by another, not less overlooked, tradition found in a much earlier, second-century source: the Muratori Fragment/Canon.[24] This text is probably a translation from an original Greek usually dated toward AD 170 due to the mention of the episcopate of Pius in Rome († AD 157) as very recent, *nuperrime temporibus* (l. 44).[25] At ll. 9–16, this fragment reports an even earlier tradition, presumably going back to the first half of the second century or the end of the first, on the redaction of the Gospel of John as based on materials sourced from the other disciples as well:

24 Bruce Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 191–201, advocates a dating toward AD 170; *Editio princeps* Ludovico Antonio Muratori, *Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi*, 3 (Mediolani: Societas Palatina, 1740), cols. 851–856. Wilhelm Schneemelcher and Robert McLachlan Wilson, *New Testament Apocrypha: Gospels and Related Writings* (Louisville: Westminster, 2003), 34–36; Philippe Henne, "La datation du canon de Muratori," *RB* 100 (1993): 54–75; Charles E. Hill, "The Debate Over the Muratorian Fragment," *WTJ* 57 (1995): 437–452; Joseph Verheyden, "The Canon Muratori: A Matter of Dispute," in *The Biblical Canons* (ed. J.-M. Auwers and H.J. de Jonge; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 487–556.

25 A fourth-century dating is advocated by Albert C. Sundberg, "Canon Muratori: A Fourth-Century List," *HTR* 66 (1973): 1–41 (refuted by Everett Ferguson, "Canon Muratori: Date and Provenance," *Studia Patristica* 17.2 [Oxford: Pergamon, 1982], 677–683); Geoffrey Mark Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992) (reviewed by Everett Ferguson, "The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon," *JTS* 44 [1993]: 696); Jonathan Armstrong, "Victorinus of Pettau as the Author of the Canon Muratori," *VC* 62 (2008): 1–34. Holmes, "The Biblical Canon," 20 n. 3, expresses skepticism about a fourth-century dating.

> quarti evangeliorum iohannis ex decipolis cohortantibus condescipulis et *eps* suis dixit conieiunate mihi odie triduo et quid cuique fuerit revelatum alterutrum nobis ennarremus eadem nocte revelatum andreae ex apostolis ut recogniscentibus cuntis iohannis suo nomine cuncta describeret
>
> ll. 9–16, non-emended version in the ms.

> Quartum evangeliorum *Iohannis ex discipulis*. Cohortantibus condiscipulis et episcopis suis dixit: Conieiunate mihi hodie triduo, et quid cuique fuerit reuelatum, *alterutrum nobis enarremus*. Eadem nocte reuelatum Andreae *ex apostolis* ut, *recognoscentibus cunctis, Iohannes suo nomine cuncta describeret.*
>
> ll. 9–16, emended version

> The fourth Gospel is that of John, *one of the disciples*.[26] Since his fellow-disciples and *episkopoi* exhorted him all together, he said to them: "Please, fast along with me today and for three days, and *whatever will be revealed to each of us, let us tell each other*". During that very night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the apostles, that *all of them should gather, check, and approve their memories*, but *John should write down everything under his name*.

Here the same idea as in the Timothy tradition is at work: John wrote what others too related to him. However, here in the Fragment the other disciples' contributions were oral, and not written; the only one who wrote down everything is John, although what he wrote was also the memories of others and not only of his own. The Timothy tradition speaks of written sources, papyri sources, which John arranged in the correct order and attributed to the three other evangelists, while here there is an oral conversation behind the composition of John. Indeed, here in the Fragment it is said that John wrote everything in his own name, with a clear reference to the Gospel, while in the *Martyrdom* and in the *Acts of Timothy* John is depicted as the final redactor of the three other Gospels with their own names (although the *Acts* also mention John's own Gospel after his redactional work on the Synoptics). The idea that John is the redactor of a work based on several witnesses' narrations (be these written or oral), however, is common to both the Muratori Fragment and the Timothy tradition.

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26 Or "The fourth Gospel is that of John, *based on the disciples' memories*." This rendering is consistent with the Fragment narrative, but less probable than the other because of the parallel expression *Andreae ex apostolis*, which means "to Andrew, one of the apostles."

It is to be remarked that the author of the second-century Fragment does not seem to identify John the Evangelist with the son of Zebedee, since, while he describes Andrew as one of the "apostles" (probably qua one of the Twelve), he says that John was one of the "disciples," as though he intended to make a distinction. But what is most important is the early composition of the Gospel of John and its being based on materials from other disciples as well.

The author of the Fragment identifies John the Evangelist with the author of Revelation and places the composition of Revelation, or at least its initial letters, very early, in fact even earlier than Paul's letters. He states that Paul, when he wrote his letters, followed the example of "John, his predecessor," who wrote seven letters, those preserved in Revelation 2–3: *cum ipse beatus apostolus paulus sequens prodecessoris sui iohannis ordine non nisi nominati sempte ecclesiis scribat ordine tali* … (ll. 47–49 as they appear in the ms.); *cum ipse beatus Apostolus Paulus, sequens praedecessoris sui Iohannis ordinem, nonnisi nominatim septem ecclesiis scribat ordine tali* … (ll. 47–49 in emended Latin), "The blessed apostle Paul himself, following the way of proceeding of his predecessor John, writes to only seven churches by name, in the following order …" This would date the Apocalypse, or at least the letters that introduce it, even to the 50s. A tradition that dates not only the Apocalypse of John, but also his Gospel, or at least a first redaction of it, to very early years is reported in the fourth century by Ephraem the Syrian in his *Memra* on John: "the first written redaction of the Gospel of John was done in Antioch" on John's way to Ephesus, before his exile. Epiphanius refers to a redaction of the Gospel of John under Claudius, and therefore no later than AD 54, but based on earlier traditional material: John wrote his Gospel "after his return from Patmos, which happened under Claudius … he needed not speak subtly [λεπτολογεῖν] about the Incarnation: for this point was already fixed with certainty [ἤδη γὰρ ἠσφάλιστο]" in the preceding tradition (*Haer*. 2.1.51.12, PG 41.909).

That the composition of the Gospel of John stemmed from the exhortation of fellow disciples, as the Muratori Fragment has, harmonizes with Clement's information (*Ap*. Eusebius, *HE* 6.14.7) that John began to write because he was exhorted to do so by his disciples or acquaintances, ὑπὸ τῶν γνωρίμων. The Fragment also insists on the order John conferred to the narrative of Jesus' life, teaching, and miracles. At ll. 32–34 the anonymous author praises John as an eyewitness and as the one who composed a Gospel "following the right order," *per ordinem* (ll. 33–34):

> sic enim non solum visurem sed et auditorem sed et scriptore omnium mirabiliu dni per ordinem proftetur
>
> in the ms.

> Sic enim non solum uisorem, sed et auditorem, sed et scriptorem omnium mirabilium Domini per ordinem profitetur.
>
> emended Latin

> Indeed, in this way he reveals to have been not only an eyewitness, but also an earwitness, and even also a writer of all the wonderful deeds (and teachings?) of the Lord according to their order.

The detail that only John's Gospel follows the right order is the same with the one found in the Timothy tradition and with the one that is implied in Papias's fragment (Eusebius, *HE* 3.39.15) based on John the Elder, as I have noted; it was later picked up by Theodore of Mopsuestia. John was the only one who could put the Gospel narratives in order, be these narratives his own or those of the other evangelists. This ability is related to John's being an eyewitness. This is why Luke in the Muratori Fragment is evaluated differently with respect to his two works, since when he wrote his Gospel he was no eyewitness to the facts and sayings he narrated, but when he wrote Acts he was. In the account concerning his Gospel, the author thus remarks that (unlike John) Luke was no eyewitness and therefore he recounted what he could gather from his sources, in the order he could:

> tertio evangelii librum secundo lucan lucas iste medicus post ascensum *XPi* cum eo paulus quasi ut juris studiosum secundum adsumsisset numeni suo ex opinione conscripset ***dnm*** *tamen nec ipse vidit in carne et ide prout asequi potuit ita* et ad nativitate iohannis incipet dicere
>
> ll. 2–8 as they appear in the ms.

> tertium euangelii librum secundum Lucam. Lucas iste medicus post ascensum Christi cum eum Paulus quasi itineris sui socium / ut iuris studiosum secum adsumpsisset, nomine suo ex opinione conscripsit; *Dominum tamen nec ipse uidit in carne, et ideo, prout assequi potuit*, ita et a nativitate Iohannis incepit dicere.
>
> ll. 2–8 in emended Latin

> The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. This Luke was a doctor. Paul took him with himself as a companion in his travels/as an expert in the law/as one zealous for the law, after the ascension of Christ; thus he wrote (the Gospel) in his own name, on the basis of conjectures/according to his opinion/according to tradition. In fact, he too (*sc*. like Mark) *had not seen the Lord in the flesh, and therefore, to the*

> *extent that he could ascertain the facts*, he began his narrative from the birth of John (the Baptist).

But in the case of Acts, Luke was an eyewitness and therefore an accurate author:

> acta aute omniu apostolorum sub uno libro scribta sunt lucas obtime theofile comprindit quia sub praesentia eius sincula gerebantur sicuti et semote passione petri evidenter declarat sed et profectione pauli ab urbe ad spania proficiscentis
>
> ms. reading

> Acta autem omnium apostolorum sub uno libro scripta sunt. Lucas ‘optimo Theophilo’ *comprehendit quae sub praesentia eius singula gerebantur*, sicut et semota passione Petri evidenter declarat, sed et profectione Pauli ab urbe ad Spaniam proficiscentis.
>
> emended Latin

> The Acts of all the Apostles, then, were/are written under one single book. Luke, who addresses here the “excellent Theophilus,” included in this all the facts, one by one, that were done *in his own presence*, as he also makes clear by means of his omission of Peter’s passion, as well as of Paul’s departure from Rome, when he left for Spain.

In the time of the Fragment, the tradition concerning Paul’s first stay in Rome, his trip to Spain,[27] and his return to Rome later under Nero for a second trial and his death was being established. Now this reconstruction is mostly dismissed by New Testament scholars, also because it is generally acknowledged that the Pastoral Epistles are pseudepigraphic, be they all by the same author or not. This has momentous implications from a historical point of view, given the details that 2 Timothy provides regarding Paul’s last days on earth (arguably on the occasion of his second trial in Rome, not reflected at the end of Acts) and his acquaintances. One of the few and most recent exceptions to this *communis opinio* is the thesis of Michel Gourgues.[28] Gourgues argues that, while 1 Timothy and Titus were not composed by Paul, 2 Timothy is probably authentic, at least

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27 On this tradition, see Ilaria Ramelli, “Alcune osservazioni sulle origini del Cristianesimo in Spagna: La tradizione patristica,” *Vetera Christianorum* 35 (1998): 245–256.

28 See Michel Gourgues, *Les deux lettres à Timothée. La lettre à Tite* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), with reviews by J. Murphy-O’Connor in *RB* 116 (2010) and M. Quesnel in *Science et Esprit*

for three fifths of the letter.[29] Indeed, the impressive parallels that have been detected between these letters and Hellenistic moral philosophy, most recently with Hierocles the Stoic's doctrine of *oikeiōsis*, *kathēkonta*, and "contraction of circles,"[30] concern especially 1 Timothy and Titus. And it is only in these two letters, and not in 2 Timothy, that a U-turn against women's church leadership is found, so as to meet the customs of Greco-Roman society.[31]

Origen may be another witness to the tradition reported by the *Martyrdom of Timothy* and the Muratori Fragment concerning the work done by John on various narratives of the life of Jesus, including the detail, as attested in the Fragment, of the early composition of the Gospel of John. According to Rauer's edition,[32] Origen claims, in his homilies on Luke in Fragment 9, commenting on Luke 1:1–2,[33] as he also does in his first Homily on Luke (1.1), that the church has received only the four canonical Gospels, while rejecting the others. In this connection, he retrojects this choice to John the Evangelist himself:

> Λόγος ἐστὶ Ἰωάννην ἔτι περιόντα βίῳ ἐπὶ Νέρωνος τὰ συγγεγραμμένα εὐαγγέλια συναγαγεῖν καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐγκρῖναι καὶ ἀποδέξασθαι, ὧν οὐδὲν ἡ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐπιβουλὴ καθήψατο, τὰ δὲ ἀπολέξασθαι καὶ καταργῆσαι, ὅσα μὴ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐχόμενα συνέγνω.
>
> There is a tradition that John in his lifetime, *during the reign of Nero, collected the Gospels that had been composed*, and *approved of and received*

62 (2010): 472–476. See now also the important reassessments in Stanley E. Porter and Gregory P. Fewster, eds., *Paul and Pseudepigraphy* (PAST 8; Leiden: Brill, 2013).

29 2 Tim 1:1–2:13 + 4:6–22 is authentic; 2 Tim 2:14–4:5 was possibly inserted afterwards.

30 See Ilaria Ramelli, "The Pastoral Epistles and Hellenistic Philosophy: 1 Tim 5:1–2, Hierocles, and the Contraction of Circles," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 562–581; and idem, "1 Tim 5:6 and the Notion and Terminology of Spiritual Death," *Aevum* 84 (2010): 3–16.

31 For example, Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2007), esp. 71–79; Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* (New York: Crossroads, 1992), 233, 266 and *passim*; Anette Merz, *Die fiktive Selbstauslegung des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht; Fribourg: Academic, 2004); Thomas McGinn, *Widows and Patriarchy: Ancient and Modern* (London: Duckworth, 2008), who also addresses the New Testament and classical antiquity on 18–48, esp. 38 on 1 Timothy; Carolyn Osiek and David Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Houses and House Churches* (Louisville: Westminster, 1997); Deborah Krause, *1 Timothy: A New Biblical Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

32 See Maximilian Rauer, *Origenes Werke 9: Die Homilien zu Lukas* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959).

33 This passage might also stem from Origen's Commentary on John, which is now partially lost.

> *some*, those of which the devil's deceitful assault had not taken possession, while he *refused and rejected/abolished others*, those which he recognized as having no truth in themselves.

Even if here John is not presented as the redactor of the other Gospels, nevertheless, he is described as their judge, who was responsible for their collection and circulation. This tradition already existed in Origen's time; therefore, it must go back at least to the second half of the second century, which is also the time from which most probably the Muratori Fragment stems. The chronology given in this tradition is very high: under Nero, in the 50s or 60s, John collected the Gospels that already existed in written forms and distinguished those to be received from those to be rejected.[34] As the tradition known to Tertullian (Origen's contemporary) goes, it was under Domitian that John was exiled to Patmos and wrote his Apocalypse. The Muratori Fragment, shortly before Tertullian and Origen, indicates a very early dating for John's Apocalypse or the letters that appear at the beginning of the Apocalypse itself, since, as I have noted above, it implies that Paul wrote his letters after John's.

That John ratified the other three Gospels is also indicated in Eusebius, *HE* 3.24.7–8a, which may have depended on Papias, or possibly Origen: "When the three other Gospels had already been composed and spread out to everybody, as well as to himself, they say that John received [ἀποδέξασθαι] them and testified to their truth [ἀλήθειαν αὐτοῖς ἐπιμαρτυρήσαντα], but the only thing that was missing in their texts was an exposition of Christ's deeds from the beginning, at the outset of his preaching. And this report is true." But the Timothy and Muratori traditions, as well as of Origen, suggest a more "invasive" role played by John, the eyewitness Evangelist, in the redaction and reception of the Gospels.

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34 Some New Testament scholars have dated John's Gospel very early. John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1977), 284, 307 and *passim*; and Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 59, both suggest a date between AD 50 and 70 for John.

"Secondary Orality" in the Gospel of John: A "Post-Gutenberg" Paradigm for Understanding the Relationship between Written Gospel Texts

Michael Labahn

"Written Text, Orality, Collective Memory"[1] and the Gospel of John—Some Implications from John 20:30–31

All three ancient media categories, written text, orality, and collective memory, are of crucial importance in understanding the Gospel of John as a written document that recounts its special version of the Jesus story in early Christian literature.[2] Although I am not completely convinced by all her answers, especially regarding the "oral style" of the Johannine narrative,[3] Joanna Dewey seems to be right in claiming that "an understanding of the oral world in which FG [the Fourth Gospel] was produced may help us answer … questions about its composition history and the Johannine Jesus tradition."[4] *The phenomenon of "secondary orality" is part of such a Johannine oral and literal milieu.*

The Johannine narrative describes itself as a written book that has access to collective memory and its oral stories (John 20:30–31):

30 Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ],
ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ·

1 This is a revised version of the title of the Amsterdam NOSTER conference "History, Orality, and Collective Memory. A New Paradigm for the Study of Early Christianity?" in October 2009, where I presented an earlier version of this paper. I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte for his kind invitation. Another revised and more elaborated version was presented at the University of Pretoria, South Africa (12.8.2013). I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Geert J. Steyn for his kind invitation and to all the participants in the discussion. A shorter German version of this paper was read at an academic ceremonial honoring Prof. Dr. Johannes Beutler, S.J., on the occasion of his 80th birthday (3.10.2013).

2 Cf. the important introduction to the problem by J. Dewey, "The Gospel of John in Its Oral-Written Media World," in *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (ed. R.T. Fortna and T. Thatcher; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 239–252; cf. also T. Thatcher, "John's Memory Theater: The Fourth Gospel and Ancient Mnemo-Rhetoric," *CBQ* 69 (2007): 487–505.

3 Dewey, "Gospel of John," 249–251.

4 Dewey, "Gospel of John," 247.

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Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples,
which are not written in this book.[5]

31 ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται
ἵνα πιστεύ[σ]ητε
ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ,
καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

But these are written
so that you may come to believe
that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,
and that through believing you may have life in his name.

(a) Using the verb "to write" (γράφω) and the noun "book" (βιβλίον), it becomes evident that the Gospel of John wants to be understood as a literary entity which claims—in the light of Pilate's "what I have written I have written" (ὃ γέγραφα, γέγραφα; John 19:22)—finality and authority that serve a certain aim, in order to foster belief in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. Klaus Scholtissek, among other scholars, concluded that, by this remark, the Gospel places itself among Scripture or maybe even aims to replace (Jewish) Scripture.[6]

(b) At the same moment, John 20:30–31, which forms the end of a first edition of the Gospel of John, opens a view towards an oral environment of the Gospel and the world of its collective memory: "Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples." The two adjectives πολλά and ἄλλα refer to (possibly oral) traditions beyond the content of the Johannine "book": they refer to "many other" signs,[7] so that John 20:30 points to more stories

5 All English translations of the Gospel of John are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

6 K. Scholtissek, "'Geschrieben in diesem Buch' (Joh 20,30)—Beobachtungen zum kanonischen Anspruch des Johannesevangeliums," in *Israel und seine Heilstraditionen im Johannesevangelium* (ed. M. Labahn, K. Scholtissek, and A. Strotmann; FS Johannes Beutler SJ; Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004), 207–226. Cf. F.J. Moloney, "The Gospel of John as Scripture," *CBQ* 67 (2005): 454–468, who understands the Gospel of John as Scripture in the way of bringing it "to an end" (466). For Moloney, "a desire to convince readers that the biblical narrative reached its perfection in the Johannine story of Jesus" is "part of the rhetoric of the Fourth Gospel"; see also C.S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 1215: "Because he is inspired by the Paraclete … the author of the Fourth Gospel may quietly suggest that his work belongs in the same category with the Scripture of old."

7 "Signs" (σημεῖα) is a term that is mostly used in John for miracles performed by Jesus and

about other extraordinary performances by Jesus, revealing his identity available to the addressees of the text.[8]

Scholars have read this aforesaid notion as a rhetorical device to claim that Jesus was an impressive hero;[9] however, whether this was a rhetorical device or not, John 20:30 includes a possible knowledge of signs/stories besides those written in the Gospel text. This notion might include a reference to other (written) Gospel texts, as supposed, for instance, by the "Leuven hypothesis,"[10] but it is more likely that it refers to some information that was present in the *public memory* of the Johannine audience as the first readers of the Johannine text.[11] The notion of the authority of the Johannine written book may not have

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their interpretation. The term, however, includes more than only miracle stories. Cf., for example, H. Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HNT 6; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 774, who refers to the sign of "Verhaftung, Verurteilung, Hinrichtung und Auferstehung (Joh 18–20)"; similarly, J. Beutler, "Der Gebrauch von 'Schrift' im Johannesevangelium," in idem, *Studien zu den johanneischen Schriften* (SBAB 25; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1998), 295–315 (307–308); U. Schnelle, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (3rd ed.; THKNT 4; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2004), 336–337: "… die Wunder sowie die Erscheinungsberichte …"

8 For example, Schnelle, *Evangelium nach Johannes*, 336; see also Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 774, who assumes a direct knowledge of the Synoptic Gospels by the addressees of John: "… dass seine potentiellen Leser, vermutlich doch wohl aus ihrem Vertrautsein mit den synoptischen Evangelien, um derartige Zeichen wissen."

9 Cf., for example, Keener, *Gospel of John*, 1214–1215, who mentions a number of significant ancient parallels, including Diogenes Laertius 6.2.69, about the number of sayings attributed to the cynic philosopher Diogenes which could not all be mentioned in the same book regarding stories relating to the female philosopher Hipparchia (Diogenes Laertius 6.7.98). A small selection of texts using these rhetorical devices is presented in U. Schnelle, M. Labahn, and M. Lang, *Neuer Wettstein: Texte zum Neuen Testament aus Griechentum und Hellenismus. Bd. 1/2: Texte zum Johannesevangelium* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 855–856.

10 The so-called "Leuven hypothesis" assumes that the Gospel of John knows and uses at least one or more of the synoptic Gospels as a literary source. Cf. G. Van Belle, "Tradition, Exegetical Formation, and the Leuven Hypothesis," in *What We Have Heard From the Beginning: The Past, Present, and Future of Johannine Studies* (ed. T. Thatcher; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 325–337 (333–336).

11 Richard Bauckham's thesis of the Gospels as texts for all Christians ("For Whom Were Gospels written?" in *The Gospels for all Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* [ed. R. Bauckham; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998], 9–48) is especially not convincing with regards to the Gospel of John, since the text in John was formed through the retelling in a certain community, adding John 21 and other passages, which, in turn, adds new Johannine meaning to the older text: "If we agree that the reception text intends to deepen the ref-

been that much interested in referring (even indirectly) to other written Jesus narratives. The reference to public memory in John 20:30 could be understood as a "room" full of information, from which John's tradition has been drawn. Such a memory, referred to in John 20:30, *is an important presupposition to apply the theory of "secondary orality" to research in the Gospel of John and to understand its relation to other Christian writings, especially to the Synoptic Gospels*. The assumption of the milieu of the collective memory is supported by reference to Johannine communities and a Johannine school,[12] which includes a Johannine "sociolect"[13] that could be explored in the Johannine writings (Gospel of John and the epistles of John).

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erence text—or to allow a new level of reflection about the questions it has raised—then it follows that the reception text does not in any way denigrate the validity or authority of the reference text; in fact, this is precisely what it recognizes." Cf. J. Zumstein, "Intratextuality and Intertextuality in the Gospel of John," in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature* (ed. T. Thatcher and S.D. Moore; SBLRBS 55; Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 121–135, here 126. See also his programmatic article J. Zumstein, "Ein gewachsenes Evangelium: Der Relecture-Prozess bei Johannes," in *Das Johannesevangelium—Mitte oder Rand des Kanons?* (ed. T. Söding; QD 203; Freiburg: Herder, 2003), 9–37, esp. 19.

12 On arguments that assume the Johannine School as a social group behind the Johannine writings, see U. Schnelle, *Antidoketische Christologie im Johannesevangelium: Eine Untersuchung zur Stellung des vierten Evangeliums in der johanneischen Schule* (FRLANT 144; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 53–75. See also R.A. Culpepper, *The Johannine School: An Evaluation of the Johannine-School Hypothesis Based on an Investigation of the Nature of Ancient Schools* (SBLDS 26; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1975). For a critical treatment of this issue, see C. Cebulj, "Johannesevangelium und Johannesbriefe," in *Schulen im Neuen Testament? Zur Stellung des Urchristentums in der Bildungswelt seiner Zeit* (ed. T. Schmeller; HBS 30; Freiburg: Herder, 2001), 254–342.

13 A "sociolect" is a distinct language of a certain social (or religious) group which is intended for communication within that group (on the term sociolect, see H. Kubczak, *Was ist ein Soziolekt? Überlegungen zur Symptomfunktion sprachlicher Zeichen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der diastratischen Dimension* [Sprachwissenschaftliche Studienbücher 1; Heidelberg: Winter, 1979], 94–105; and W. Steinig, *Soziolekt und soziale Rolle* [Sprache der Gegenwart 40; Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1976], 11–18). On the important distinction between Johannine sociolect and ideolect, see E. Ruckstuhl, "Zur Antithese Idiolekt—Soziolekt im johanneischen Schrifttum," in *Jesus im Horizont der Evangelien* (ed. E. Ruckstuhl; SBAB 3; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988), 219–264; and my critical discussion of Ruckstuhl's assumptions in M. Labahn, *Jesus als Lebensspender: Untersuchungen zu einer Geschichte der johanneischen Tradition anhand ihrer Wundergeschichten* (BZNW 98; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 106–109. On Johannine sociolect, see also H.-J. Klauck, *Die Johannesbriefe* (EdF 276; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1991), 103–104; J. Frey,

(c) According to John 20:31, the written text and its narrative are meant to provoke belief (reading the aorist subjunctive πιστεύσητε) or to support/strengthen belief (reading with the older manuscripts the present subjunctive πιστεύητε) in Jesus as the Christ, the son of God. By doing so, the written text is understood as a text that tells stories, while it develops meaning in addressing its audience by telling its Jesus story. It refers to reading the Gospel and, therefore, to orality.

In the period of the emergence of early Christian texts, there was a different system of reading, compared to nowadays. As Paul J. Achtemeier notes, *omne verba sonat* ("all words are telling aloud").[14] Most often in ancient times, texts were read aloud, even through individuals alone, and it seems that, especially in philosophical or religious communities like the early Christian ones, their basic texts—if there were any—were read aloud in front of these communities.[15] To get a picture of the process, we may refer to the letters of Paul (e.g. 1 Thess 5:27; see also Col 4:16) or to the Book of Revelation (1:3; 22:18) or to the scripture reading part in the Christian church service program (Justin, *1 Apol.* 67.3).[16]

This oral practice, as we have detected in John 20:31, is also important for the assumption of "secondary orality": the "sounding word" places itself in public memory; when a text is read aloud and thus transmitted to an audience, a route for a new story is opened to be re-told by the recipients who will now become

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Die johanneische Eschatologie. Band 1. Ihre Probleme im Spiegel der Forschung seit Reimarus (WUNT 96; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 439–442.

14 P.J. Achtemeier, "*Omne verbum sonat*: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity," *JBL* 109 (1990): 3–27. Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 95.2; Pliny, *Ep.* 1.1.3. See also T.C. Mournet, *Oral Tradition and Literary Dependency: Variability and Stability in the Synoptic Tradition and Q* (WUNT 2.195; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 134–135. This general view holds true despite the critique of F.D. Gilliard, "More Silent Reading in Antiquity: Non omne verbum sonat," *JBL* 112 (1993): 689–696.

15 Cf. L.W. Hurtado, "Oral Fixation and New Testament Studies? 'Orality', 'Performance' and Reading Texts in Early Christianity," *NTS* 60 (2014): 321–340, here 324.

16 "And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read" (trans. P. Schaff, *Ante Nicene-Fathers 1* [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.ii.lxvii.html (access: Oct. 2009)]). Martin Hengel deduces a first-century AD practice of reading the Gospel texts in Christian church services, claiming that Mark and Matthew were especially composed for such use: "… die Evangelien des Markus und Matthäus wurden vor allem zum Zweck der Lesung im Gottesdienst geschrieben" (*Die vier Evangelien und das eine Evangelium von Jesus Christus: Studien zu ihrer Sammlung und Entstehung* [WUNT 224; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008], 167). While this is a far-reaching hypothesis, Hengel might be right to assume that stylistic features in the Gospel texts aim at public reading.

storytellers. The Synoptic Gospels may become such a source for stories being transmitted and re-narrated within the Johannine community.[17] As being now part of the Johannine collective memory, some of these stories may have been re-written in a new (Johannine) Jesus story.

"Secondary Orality"

On the Term "Secondary Orality" between Antiquity and Post-Gutenberg Time

Modern Literacy begins with the possibilities of printing, and this happens with the invention of typography by Johannes Gutenberg.[18] Since then, written texts were widely read and could be re-told. Such a distinction between a literacy before and after the invention of printing allowed for a distinction between primary and secondary orality, which was later used in studies on early Christianity. The term "primary and secondary orality" was coined by Walter J. Ong (1912–2003),[19] distinguishing between these two notions of orality:

> a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print … is 'primary' by contrast with the 'secondary orality' of present-day high-technology culture in which a new orality is sustained by telephone, radio,

17 The narrator of John's Gospel is using the biographical genre formed by the Gospel of Mark, which strongly supports the assumption that at least a certain knowledge of the Synoptic Gospel(s) was accessible to the Johannine community. Cf., for example, J. Beutler, *Das Johannesevangelium: Kommentar* (Freiburg: Herder, 2013), 60–61.

18 W. Raible, "Orality and Literacy," in *Schrift und Schriftlichkeit: Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch internationaler Forschung* (ed. H. Günther and O. Ludwig; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 8, however, reminds us that, in the light of book production in the early thirteenth century, "Gutenberg's invention presents itself much more as a necessary consequence, than as an 'agent of change' in the domain of literacy."

19 W.J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World* (New Accents; repr., London: Routledge, 2007). On Ong's contribution to the understanding of orality, see, for example, L. Strate, "Sounding Out Ong: Orality across the Media Environment," in *Of Ong and Media Ecology: Essays in Communication, Composition and Literary Studies* (ed. T.J. Farrell and P.A. Soukup; Media Ecology; New York: Hampton, 2012), 91–116; K.R. Iverson, "Orality and the Gospels: A Survey of Recent Research," *CBR* 8 (2009): 71–106 (75–76). On Ong's influence on biblical scholarship, see W.H. Kelber, "The Work of Walter Ong and Biblical Scholarship," in *Imprints, Voiceprints, and Footprints of Memory: Collected Essays* (SBLRBS 74; Atlanta: SBL, 2013), 441–464.

television, and other electronic devices that depend for their existence and functioning on writing and print.[20]

The term "secondary" is not qualitative. Rather, it describes the place of orality in its social context where communication is dominated by forms of writing (manual, print, or digital). In such a context, orality interacts with, and is to some extent dependent upon, the experience of written texts and their contexts[21]—it is "a further iteration of literate orality."[22]

The ancient world is often interpreted as a world of orality—only a small percentage of people were able to read texts for themselves (in the modern usage of this reading activity).[23] However, the situation becomes more complicated when it comes to specifying exactly what is meant by reading texts. Further, there is a relatively broad presence of written texts in the ancient world,[24] which includes a spectrum that ranges from their use in highly literate culture to its wider use in low literacy mass culture. These written texts include political and religious inscriptions,[25] coins, numerous papyri letters and contracts, and graffiti (like those from Pompeii).[26] This evidence provides a much more

20 Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 11.

21 On Ong's usage of the concept/term "secondary orality," see Strate, "Sounding Out Ong," 106–111; and Mournet, *Oral Tradition and Literary Dependency*, 74–75. Mournet refers to Ong's "secondary orality" to describe the temporal distance of modern exegetes to the "primary oral setting of the first century C.E."

22 Strate, "Sounding Out Ong," 107.

23 W.V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), pleads for a rather small percentage of literacy.

24 "As reflected in the many thousands of manuscripts that survived from the Roman period, the many literary works produced and circulated, the many inscriptions and the many kinds of 'documentary' texts (letters, contracts, business/commercial documents, et al.), writings were not mere appendages to the spoken word but were important in themselves as a major factor in many areas of life and among various levels and sectors of societies" (see Hurtado, "Oral Fixation and New Testament Studies," 324, who criticizes an understanding of New Testament times as a primarily oral era, noting that such an understanding is "an oversimplification" [ibid.]). See also L.W. Hurtado and C. Keith, "Writing and Book Production in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods," in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: The Bible, From the Beginnings to 600* (ed. J.C. Paget and J. Schaper; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 63–80.

25 See the important work of S. van Tilborg, *Reading John in Ephesus* (NovTSup 83; Leiden: Brill, 1996), who makes use of the wide range of ancient public written media to understand the Gospel of John.

26 The more than 10,000 graffiti from Pompeii are of interest to the understanding of literacy in ancient Roman times. Those graffiti indicate both the wide-ranging and limited writing

differentiated picture than that of a dominant or primary oral culture. Accordingly, a considerable group of people would have been able to read or at least understand smaller units of text, and there was even probably a group of people who would have been able to classify texts by purely graphical recognition of written texts. Moreover, in the ancient media world, there was already a book market for written texts, including some kind of publishing shops, and even public libraries.[27] Additionally, it is a well-known fact that even at a rather early time of the Christian movement, written texts became part of the Christian communication and proclamation (see, e.g., the letters of Paul and the Sayings Source Q).

Further, literacy in Roman times is not only an oral-based endeavor. There seems to be an interesting and challenging exchange between orality and written texts. As Larry Hurtado points out:

> … the Roman period is better characterised as a time of rich interplay of texts and readers (both private and to/before groups), writers and speakers, and appreciation of both oral/aural and written expressions of thought and entertainment, and it is a fallacy to make the one subservient to the other in any generalizing way.[28]

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skills of the people. However, the erotic or obscene graffiti are not so much of major interest, but only the number of partially erroneous, or even intentionally changed citations, from Roman literature (such as Virgil and Ovid). According to K. Milnor, *Graffiti and the Literary Landscape in Roman Pompeii* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), these pieces of literature give an important insight as to how Roman people responded to the "popular" literature of their time.

27 There were some nice remarks on the book market in the *Epigrams* of the Roman poet Martial (ca. AD 40–104). See, for example, Martial's reflection on the length of a book that gives some insights into the economic site in *Epigrams* 2.1: "You could, I admit, have contained three hundred epigrams; but who, my book, would have contained himself at you, and read you through? Yet learn, what are the advantages of a short book. The first is, that I waste less paper. The next, that the copier finishes it in one hour, and his services will not be confined only to my trifles. A third advantage is, that if any one happens to read you, you will not, though ever so bad, be detested. A person at table will begin to read you with his wine mixed, and finish you before the cup set before him begins to grow warm. Do you imagine that by such brevity you are secure from all objection? Alas! to how many will you even thus be too long!" (Bohn's Classical Library [1897]: http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/ martial_epigrams_book02.htm [October 2009]).

28 Hurtado, "Oral Fixation and New Testament Studies," 325, referring to E. Valette-Cagnac, *La lecture à Rome: Rites et pratiques* (Paris: Belin, 1997). However, any underestimation of the meaning of oral tradition needs to be avoided as well.

Such an insight is, of course, important for our understanding of intertextual relationship. Such an intertextual relationship might be a direct and literary one. However, it might also be a more indirect one as a kind of re-narration, which is an orally influenced literary relationship. And there might be an orality that goes back to a written text that was read (aloud) and then turned into a new oral transmission and finally got back into a literary context newly influenced by literary techniques—ancient "secondary orality."

Nevertheless, Ong's differentiation between oral antiquity and post-Gutenberg writing holds true at least with regard to production of texts written by a scribe's or a craftsman's hand. An almost unlimited access to written text is only possible for the different revolutions in book print or even more by electronic media. Ironically, through the internet, for example through blogs or even by wikipedia, a new mix of literacy and (indirect) orality occurs. In the English version of the lexicon wikipedia, which is virtually the cultural memory of a computer-oriented society, there is an entry on "secondary orality." This anonymous entry takes a further differentiation between a primarily oral, primarily written and a "post-Gutenberg" time that opens a new oral sphere represented by digital "texts." The entry states regarding the "post-Gutenberg-time": "knowledge is formed—increasingly—through 'secondary orality' on the Internet."[29]

Knowledge is created in the internet by "secondary orality," as far as writing in the electronic media of the internet is classified as "orality," because it does not produce a text that is printed or committed to paper. This concept of an orality that is only possible in the post-Gutenberg media age of the internet is associated with Tom Pettitt.[30] It would be useful to discuss at this point how the internet, as a medium of communication, can redefine concepts of "orality," "literacy," "authorship," and "author," as well as their mutual interrelationship. It seems to me that the study of the influence of oral communication in the literacy of the internet contributes to the understanding of ancient literacy and of the influence of social groups on the formation and transmission of texts and the preservation of knowledge. Due to matters of space and focus it is not possible here to give further discussion of this issue.[31]

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29 Quoted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secondary_orality (access: 4 August 2013).

30 Cf. T. Pettitt, *Before the Gutenberg Parenthesis: Elizabethan-American Compatibilities* (http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit5/papers/pettitt_plenary_gutenberg.pdf).

31 A different route is taken by Robert M. Fowler's reception of Ong's model of "secondary orality." He refers to the linguistic theory of "hypertext": "The Secondary Orality of the Electronic Age can awaken us to the Primary Orality of Antiquity or what Hypertext can

In my discussion below, however, it must suffice to give reasons why it makes sense to successfully apply the term "secondary orality" to early Christian literature. This literature was produced in a primarily oral environment which had influence on literacy. Writing participates in rules of orality and rhetoric, without denying literary classification and composition techniques in ancient texts.

Werner H. Kelber and the Use of the Term "Secondary Orality" in Early Christian Studies

At this point, we should briefly examine the question of how the term "secondary orality" enters the exegetical discussion. Werner H. Kelber in his important work, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, investigates the relationship between literacy and orality in early Christian literature and the problem of how the reading of a text produces new orality, leading to a new tradition:

> If this text enters the world of hearers by being read aloud, it functions as secondary orality. But now the story narrated is one that was never heard in primary orality, for it comprises textually filtered and contrived language.[32]

Kelber uses the term to explain the influence of the Old Testament on the Markan passion narrative. Both his model and his use of the term are close to that of Ong:[33]

> The existence of allusions and influences, in addition to quotations, suggests that much of Scripture, like much literature in antiquity, was mentally accessible to an oral mode of appropriation. Obviously, orality derived from texts is not the same as primary orality, which operates with-

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teach us about the Bible" (http://serials.infomotions.com/ipct/ipct-v2n03-fowler-how.txt; access: October 2009).

32 W.H. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 217–218.

33 Kelber is aware of the origin of his term and of any possible problems in its usage; therefore, he is pleading for another distinction: "In communications theory secondary orality usually refers to electronically mediated sound. We would suggest a differentiation of three types of orality: primary orality, textually mediated or secondary orality, and electronically mediated or tertiary orality" (*The Oral and the Written Gospel*, 226 n. 118).

> out the aid of texts. The passion narrative is largely built on texts and texts recycled into the oral medium, that is, secondary orality.[34]

According to Kelber, the Scriptures of Israel are not directly accessible to the early Christian storytellers as written texts, but they are accessible by an oral medium, which, in turn, generates a new medium in the form of oral literature. This is an instance of the process of secondary orality, as related to written Scripture texts. Thus, "secondary orality" describes an orality taken from written media, inspired by and derived from written texts. These considerations do not only describe the influence of the writings of Israel on early Christian literature, above all for allusions and echoes. They also explain the similarities and differences of parallel texts in early Christian literature that do not necessarily show a literary dependence.

Later, in response to Klyne Snodgrass,[35] the Finnish exegete Risto Uro has introduced "secondary orality" as a quite effective model for the interpretation of the relationships of the Synoptic parallels used in the Gospel of Thomas.[36] April DeConick uses this explanatory model, explicitly acknowledging "secondary orality," besides "oral multi-forms," as an explanation for the Synoptic parallels in the Gospel of Thomas.[37] For the Gospel of Peter, István Czachesz has brought this new paradigm into conversation.[38] The model of "secondary orality" has been established in this research area so clearly that Hans-Josef

34 Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, 197.

35 K.R. Snodgrass, "The Gospel of Thomas: A Secondary Gospel," *SecCent* 7 (1989–1990): 19–38.

36 R. Uro, "'Secondary Orality' in the Gospel of Thomas? Logion 14 as a Test Case," *Forum* 9 (1993): 305–329 (quoted from the revised version in idem, "*Thomas* and Oral Gospel Tradition," in *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* [SNTW; ed. R. Uro; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998], 8–32, here 10).

37 See, for example, A.D. DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation: With a Commentary and New English Translation of the Complete Gospel* (LNTS 287; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 21, 91, 140, 215; J. Frey, "Die Lilien und das Gewand: *EvThom* 36 und 37 als Paradigma fur das Verhältnis des *Thomasevangeliums* zur synoptischen Überlieferung," in *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung–Rezeption–Theologie* (ed. J. Frey, E.E. Popkes, and J. Schröter; BZNW 157; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 122–180 (139–140); and S. Gathercole, *The Composition of the Gospel of Thomas: Original Language and Influences* (SNTSMS 151; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 155–159, 209–224.

38 On the Gospel of Peter, see I. Czachesz, "The Gospel of Peter and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: Using Cognitive Science to Reconstruct Gospel Traditions," in *Das Evangelium nach Petrus: Text, Kontexte, Intertexte* (ed. T.J. Kraus and T. Nicklas; TU 158; Berlin: de Gruyter 2007), 245–261 (255–256).

Klauck, in his introduction to the apocryphal gospels, can mention the phenomenon of "secondary orality" as a tool "brought to light in recent scholarship":

> In many cases, oral traditions are antecedent to the written texts, and these oral traditions continued to flow alongside the transmission of the texts. And it is very important to note that even material which had found a written form continued to be transmitted in oral form in the classical period. This is obvious in the case of the canonical gospels, when one reflects on the fact that they were regularly read aloud in worship. The narratives in the canonical gospels thus enter a phase of new, secondary orality, where these texts are exposed to a free reformulation and above all to a harmonizing assimilation of the various versions. This too may be a route which permitted the canonical gospels to exercise indirect influence on the composition of apocryphal texts.[39]

Klauck made a step forward in mentioning a *Sitz im Leben* where "secondary orality" came into being in the ancient media world. Compared to Ong and Kelber, he is less interested in the relationship between orality and written text, and more concerned with the creative freedom of transmission.

It is to a different field of research and a different type of literary relationship that Samuel Byrskog adopts his concept of "re-oralization,"[40] a term coined by Margaret A. Mills.[41] However, his concept also parallels the phenomenon of "secondary orality" and needs to be mentioned here. The point of Byrskog's model is to strengthen the impact of creativity in using a written text; therefore, Byrskog understands the author of Matthew as a hearer and re-teller of the Markan story[42] who used Mark as his written source, while adopting "a process containing a certain oral hermeneutic"—however, according to Byrskog, cre-

39 H.-J. Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 3.

40 S. Byrskog, *Story as History—History as Story: The Gospel Traditions in the Context of Ancient Oral History* (WUNT 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). A longer critical review of Byrskog's theory is presented by P.M. Head, "The Role of Eyewitnesses in the Formation of the Gospel Tradition: A Review Article of Samuel Byrskog, 'Story as history—history as story'," *TynBul* 52 (2001): 275–294.

41 M.A. Mills, "Domains of Folkloristic Concern: The Interpretation of Scriptures," in *Text and Tradition: The Hebrew Bible and Folklore* (ed. S. Niditch; SBLSS 20; Atlanta: Scholars, 1990), 231–241.

42 Byrskog, *Story as History—History as Story*, 348.

ativity is not elaboration but conservation of the Jesus tradition.[43] This model is based on some kind of distinction between the written and the oral media world—whereas the former is "objectively distanced," the latter "is empathetic and participatory."[44]

There should be no doubt that early Christian texts, including the Gospels, were read aloud in their communities. The public reading of a text is an oral act and is thus considered orality. Therefore, scholars rightly apply the concept of secondary orality to early Christian literature in discussing the literary relationship of written scriptural and early Christian texts, which, while showing parallels, also show differences in setting, structure, and wording, so that these texts cannot be taken as merely copies or quotations. In this context, the term "secondary orality" suggests a shift from written texts back to orality in the transmission of material, that is, material drawn from a written document is re-incorporated into oral tradition/performance. Thus the notion of secondary orality has expanded traditional discussions of "literary dependence" in ways that acknowledge the relationships between written texts, while also accounting for the dynamics of orality in antiquity. Ong's term is of a heuristic meaning to describe certain strands of transmission of tradition in a mixed media world, that is, an oral-and-written world.

The term "secondary orality" is a useful label for the change of tradition—written to oral media—which can later on be used again in a written text, showing the influence of its oral transmission. Thus, secondary orality helps to understand the relationship between written texts, showing parallels and differences in wordings, setting, and structure, rather than by means of a literary relationship alone. According to the concept of secondary orality, it is expected that a written text leaves its mark formally, structurally, and also linguistically in the new orality that emerged from hearing a written text read aloud. Such an approach takes seriously the idea that written texts participate in a mixed world of orality and literacy. Therefore, it is not anachronistic to apply Ong's model to biblical literature, even if written texts were not as widely distributed or accessible in antiquity as they are today.[45]

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43 Cf. L. Lybæk, *New and Old in Matthew 11–13: Normativity in the Development of Three Theological Themes* (FRLANT 198; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 53.

44 Byrskog, *Story as History—History as Story*, 338.

45 Uro, "'Secondary Orality' in the Gospel of Thomas," 10 n. 11.

A "New" Paradigm in Johannine Research? The Paradigm of "Secondary Orality" in Johannine Research

John and the Synoptics—The Problem

Compared to the Synoptic Gospels, the Fourth Gospel tells a relatively different Jesus story. Although there are parallels in so far as John the Baptist is mentioned at the start of the Gospel, Jesus performing miracles, his addressing outsiders and preaching, and his being crucified and resurrected in Jerusalem show significant differences in the plot of the Jesus story, when the Gospel is compared with the Synoptics. The basic structure, similarities in narrative settings, and verbal parallels, even in the use of identical words, between the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels are topics of ongoing discussion in modern research concerning their literary relationship.[46]

"Secondary Orality" in Johannine Exegesis

In my doctoral dissertation *Jesus als Lebensspender* in 1997/98 (published in 1999), I borrowed the term "secondary orality" from Walter J. Ong and used it to explain the pre-history of a written text, something that was already done with regard to Mark's use of the Old Testament in Kelber's work, and with regard to synoptic text in the Gospel of Thomas by Uro.

The concept of secondary orality was used in order to explain the complex relationship between the miracle stories narrated in John and their Synoptic parallels: John 4:46–54 and Luke 7:1–10; John 6:5–21 and Mark 6:30–54; and John 21:1–14 and Luke 5:1–11.[47] Although these texts do have a number of parallels in

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46 This is not the place to give a survey of the history of research. Cf., for example, M. Labahn and M. Lang, "Johannes und die Synoptiker: Positionen und Impulse seit 1990," in *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums: Das vierte Evangelium in religions- und traditionsgeschichtlicher Perspektive* (ed. J. Frey and U. Schnelle with J. Schlegel; WUNT 175; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 443–515; and D.M. Smith, *John Among the Gospels: The Relationship in Twentieth Century Research* (2nd ed.; Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001). See also J. Frey, "Das Vierte Evangelium auf dem Hintergrund der älteren Evangelientradition: Zum Problem: Johannes und die Synoptiker," in *Das Johannesevangelium—Mitte oder Rand des Kanons?* 60–118; S. Schreiber, "Kannte Johannes die Synoptiker? Zur aktuellen Diskussion," *VF* 51 (2006): 7–24.

47 Labahn, *Jesus als Lebensspender*, 195–199, 293–294; cf. idem, *Offenbarung in Zeichen und Wort: Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte von Joh 6,1–25a und seiner Rezeption in der Brotrede* (WUNT 2.117; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 243–244, 272–275. On the last stories, see M. Labahn, "Fishing for Meaning: The Miraculous Catch of Fish in John 21," in *Wonders Never Cease: The Purpose of Narrating Miracle Stories in the New Testament and Its Religious Environment* (ed. M. Labahn and B.J. Lietaert Peerbolte; LNTS 288; London:

wording, structure, characters and setting, they are presented in a Johannine manner with a significant number of differences, indicating literary independence. A detailed analysis of the Johannine miracle stories can show that these stories are taken from tradition, in accordance with John 20:30, possibly from a milieu of Johannine collective memory, so that a simple literary dependence between John and the Synoptics does not seem to be convincing. The concept of "secondary orality" could help to understand such a complex simultaneity of parallels and differences in the narrative structure, setting, and wording between the Synoptic and the Johannine stories, which, according to my interpretation, could not be described in terms of literacy alone.

A number of reviews of my book provided both credit and critique to the new methodological tool. The new methodological paradigm seems to be an encouraging approach to the interrelation between John and the Synoptics.[48] In dialogue with a short overview of the critique and reactions to that proposal of "secondary orality," some methodological conclusions from the discussions will be drawn.

D. Moody Smith placed the hypothesis within early Christian history of literature pointing out that it is in accordance with Papias's praise of oral tradition:[49]

> The concept of secondary orality is a useful one, underscored as it is by Papias's famous preference for the living voice over the written word.

T&T Clark, 2006), 125–145 (140–142); and the revised German version, idem, "Fischen nach Bedeutung—Sinnstiftung im Wechsel literarischer Kontexte: Der wunderbare Fischfang in Johannes 21 zwischen Inter- und Intratextualität," *SNTU* 32 (2007): 115–140 (133–137). See also idem, "Beim Mahl am Kohlenfeuer trifft man sich wieder (Die Offenbarung beim wunderbaren Fischfang): Joh 21,1–14," in *Kompendium der frühchristlichen Wundererzählungen I: Die Wunder Jesu* (ed. R. Zimmermann et al.; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2013), 764–777 (773).

48 Cf. F.J. Moloney, "Where Does One Look? Reflections on Some Recent Johannine Scholarship," *Salesianum* 62 (2000): 223–251, esp. 234, 246 n. 67: "I am also open to further investigation along the lines suggested by Labahn's use of Ong's 'secondary orality'"; repr. in idem, *The Gospel of John: Text and Context* (BIS 72; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 137–166. See the review by K. Haldimann of M. Labahn, *Offenbarung in Zeichen und Wort: Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte von Joh 6,1–25a und seiner Rezeption in der Brotrede* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2000), *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 126 (2001): 1269–1271, esp. 1271: "Der Vorschlag, mit dem Konzept der 'secondary orality' die form- und überlieferungsgeschichtliche Fragestellung mit der Annahme der Kenntnis der Synoptiker zu verbinden, stellt einen Lösungsvorschlag dar, den weiter zu diskutieren sich lohnen wird."

49 Smith, *John among the Gospels*; see idem, in *RSR* 27 (2001).

> Labahn's conception of its relation to the Johannine tradition is conceivable, and it is hard to imagine how a more thorough case for the position could be made. Yet is there not also the possibility that such secondary orality affected, not the Johannine tradition, but the text of the Gospel of John at the early stage of transmission for which there is no manuscript evidence?[50]

However, the main concern was about methodological control in struggling with oral tradition. Francis Moloney assumes that there is a "lack of ability to trace these oral traditions with any certainty."[51] Although transmission in oral tradition is not completely arbitrary, oral tradition is, of course, a form of transmission that is more fluid,[52] more open to the narrator's/transmitter's creativity, and more related to change of addressees than to transmission within a model of written text reception.[53] But such creativity and openness also has to be kept in mind regarding the use of written texts—there is no ancient "copy and paste" system, although within the synoptic text relations, a word-for-word coherence can sometimes be found with a very different rate of coherence. The overall rate of coherence with regard to the Johannine miracle stories in relation to their Synoptic counterparts is significantly lower than most parallels among the Synoptic Gospels themselves.

Using secondary orality as model for the complex relationship between John and the Synoptics, I will try to explain how verbal similarities and differences between the reference text and the reception text can be adduced to an oral media world.

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50 Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 197. Smith is still skeptical concerning a direct Synoptic influence on the passion narrative of John, but regards the model of "secondary orality" as a thesis that "could accommodate the implications" of his own achievements.

51 F.J. Moloney in a note to R.E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (ed. F.J. Moloney; ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 2003), 102 n. 31.

52 The matter that no linear tracing of oral tradition seems possible leads to a skeptical tendency towards deconstruction of texts with regard to any oral pre-history in recent research (see J.F. McGrath, "Written Islands in an Oral Stream: Gospel and Oral Traditions," in *Jesus and Paul: Global Perspective* [ed. B.J. Oropeza, C.K. Robertson, and D.C. Mohrmann; FS J.D.G. Dunn; LNTS 414; London: T&T Clark, 2009], 3–12, here 3): "Although few if any would argue that there was *no* oral tradition, many are understandably happy to bracket out the topic as asking unanswerable questions and seeking to answer them in the absence of evidence."

53 Even if we assume the creativity of an author in establishing a literary relationship, as Byrskog has claimed, we still see a more fixed literary relationship than an assumed oral intermediate time of transmission.

Sometimes the reference to "secondary orality" is taken as complicating the issue: "The possibility of 'secondary orality' as a 'go-between' for John and the Synoptics makes the issue of establishing John's dependence on the Synoptics far more complex."[54] However, the methodological concept of secondary orality does not add complexity to the relationship between different traditions/writings and text-growth. Secondary orality answers to a complexity that is due to the pre-history and retelling of the Gospel texts in the Johannine community.

Therefore, applying the theory of "secondary orality" to the relationship between John and the Synoptics needs to explain both (a) the necessity to assume a written Synoptic text as a point of departure, and (b) the process as to how such a tradition is used by the narrator of the Johannine story. As shown above for the Johannine Gospel, the milieu behind the text can show usage and knowledge of oral traditions. All in all, the similarities and differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels indicate that we are dealing with plausibility and that we cannot present positive proofs. However, methodological reflections on secondary orality help to establish criteria and methods to advance such plausibility.

Other Related Models in Johannine Research

The term "secondary orality" is a new one in Johannine research—the model itself, however, is not completely new. The most important predecessor is Anton Dauer[55] who once developed a theory of an indirect relationship between John and the Synoptics. The relationship is marked by a "Ineinanderfließen von mündlicher und schriftlicher Tradition."[56]

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54 S.A. Hunt, *Rewriting the Feeding of Five Thousand: John 6.1–15 as a Test Case for Johannine Dependence on the Synoptic Gospels* (StBibLit 125; New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 45. Hunt's own approach reacts to the parallels and differences between John and the Synoptics by applying the concept of "transformative imitation."

55 A. Dauer, "Spuren der synoptischen Synedriumsverhandlung im 4. Evangelium. Das Verhältnis zu den Synoptikern," in *John and the Synoptics* (ed. A. Denaux; BETL 101; Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 307–339. See also idem, *Johannes und Lukas: Untersuchungen zu den johanneischen Parallelperikopen Joh 4,46–54/Lk 7,1–10, Joh 12,1–8/Lk 7,36–50; 10,38–42, Joh 20,19–29/Lk 24,36–49* (Fzb 50; Würzburg: Echter, 1984); idem, "Zur Authentizität von Lk 24,12," *ETL* 70 (1994): 294–318; idem, "Lk 24,12—Ein Produkt lukanischer Redaktion?" in *The Four Gospels* (ed. F. Van Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. Van Belle, and J. Verheyden; FS F. Neirynck; BETL 100; Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 1697–1716.

56 A. Dauer, *Die Passionsgeschichte im Johannesevangelium: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche und theologische Untersuchung zu Joh 18,1–19,30* (SANT 30; Munich: Kösel, 1972), 60, 99, 164.

However, according to Dauer, it is a (written) pre-Johannine tradition that is affected by oral influence from Synoptic texts, not from the author of the Gospel himself. The methodological problem is that we can explain the random use of the Synoptics by that theory, but we have to identify written and oral tradition, and it is doubtful that only the last one had influences on the tradition.

Since Dauer's and Labahn's studies, other scholars adopted concepts parallel to "secondary orality." It was, for instance, Hans-Josef Klauck who drew out a pre-Markan and a pre-Johannine passion narrative, both depending on a common passion narrative. So far, the theory of Klauck does not differ from other concepts to understand the special relationship of John 18–19 to its Synoptic parallels. Klauck's special contribution is in accepting an oral influence from written Synoptic texts on the Johannine Gospel itself:

> Zusätzlich kann die Johannespassion dann unter den Einfluss der synoptischen Evangelien geraten sein, was nicht unbedingt deren Benutzung in schriftlicher Form durch den Autor des Johannesevangeliums erfordert. Medium der Vermittlung könnte auch eine sekundäre Oralität gewesen sein. Das will sagen, dass die Evangelien nach ihrer Abfassung in beträchtlichem Umfang wieder mündlich weitergegeben wurden und neue mündliche Traditionen freisetzten.[57]

Like Klauck, Josef Pichler assumed an influence of the oral tradition on the later passion narrative:

> (D)ie Johannespassion (steht; ML.) unter dem Quereinfluss der inzwischen literarisch festgelegten Erzählung des Leidens und Sterbens Jesu nach Lukas.[58]

According to Pichler, the advantage of this proposal is that not the whole literal entity of the Gospel narrative needs to be understood by Synoptic influence,

57 H.-J. Klauck, "Geschrieben, erfüllt, vollendet. Die Schriftzitate in der Johannespassion," in *Israel und seine Heilstraditionen im Johannesevangelium*, 140–157, here 142. He finds partial support by J. Pichler, "Jesus vor Pilatus: Zum Verhältnis der Passionserzählungen von Johannes und Lukas," in *Im Geist und in der Wahrheit: Studien zum Johannesevangelium und zur Offenbarung des Johannes sowie andere Beiträge. FS M. Hasitschka SJ zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. K. Huber and B. Repschinsky; NTA.NF 52; Münster: Aschendorf, 2008), 169–200, here 177: "durchaus plausible Annahme."

58 Pichler, "Jesus vor Pilatus," 199.

rather a few passages ("punktuell")[59] lay under influence of Luke by "secondary orality." Yet, the Gospel of Luke is no entire literal source, and the whole Gospel of John does not need to have been influenced by Luke. "Secondary orality" refers to a process of re-oralization, and it is an open question whether the collective memory that re-narrates the oral tradition is aware of the written source behind it or not.

In a model that comes close to the theory of Byrskog, Gerd Theißen understood the genre and structure of the Gospel of John as having originated from "orality":

> Der erzählerische Einsatz mit der messianischen Predigt Johannes des Täufers, die noch erkennbare Wende mit dem Petrusbekenntnis, die Aufgliederung der Passionsgeschichte in einen Abschieds- und einen Gerichtsteil—all das erklärt sich am ungezwungensten, wenn der Johannesevangelist das MkEv kennen gelernt hat. Er muss es deswegen nicht als Quelle bei der Niederschrift seines Evangeliums vor sich liegen gehabt haben. Es genügt, wenn er es (vor-)gelesen bekommen hat oder wenn er es selbst einmal (vor-)gelesen hat. Eine lose Kenntnis der anderen synoptischen Evangelien ist weniger wahrscheinlich, aber nicht ausgeschlossen. Entscheidend ist: Der Johannesevangelist folgt ganz gewiss seiner eigenen Tradition, mit einer eigenen stilistischen und theologischen Prägung.[60]

According to the definition given above, Theißen's model does not present itself as a theory of "secondary orality." It also does not assume a process of oral transmission of the entire narrative or of stories that were part of it. In any case, Theißen defines the relationship between the Gospel of John and the Gospel of Mark as an oral one[61] that does not exclude the use of other traditions. Parallels and differences to the Markan texts were part of the author's orality and creativity. Theißen's approach was able to explain John's genre and structure. But does all Synoptic-like material really come from a direct, but oral relationship to Mark? If the use of tradition is still accepted, it could be assumed that Synoptic-like traditions may have originated from "secondary orality."

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59 Pichler, "Jesus vor Pilatus," 200.

60 G. Theißen, *Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments als literaturgeschichtliches Problem* (Schriften der Philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften 40; Heidelberg: Winter, 2007), 224–225.

61 The proposal by Beutler, *Johannesevangelium*, 60, comes close to an oral relation: "Denkbar wäre auch, dass Johannes die Synoptiker sehr frei aus dem Gedächtnis zitiert."

More general is the perspective of Hans Weder and Konrad Haldimann:

> (1) Der Evangelist Johannes hat keines der synoptischen Evangelien im Sinne einer *literarischen Quelle* benutzt. (2) Die synoptischen Evangelien dürften am ehesten auf die mündliche Tradition der joh Gemeinde eingewirkt haben, möglicherweise auf den Passionsbericht. (3) Das Joh lässt sich *genetisch* gesehen in seinen zentralen Intentionen nicht aus dem (Zusammen-) Spiel mit den Texten der Synoptiker erklären resp. verstehen, auch wenn eine intertextuelle Lesart aufschlussreiche Aspekte des joh Textes erkennen lassen mag.[62]

Weder and Haldimann discuss *limits* and *open field* for research on the relationship between John and the Synoptics. *Limits* are not literary relationship and not generic interpretation of John's Gospel on the background of the Synoptic Gospels. *Open field* is the broad hermeneutic approach of intertextuality; here the Synoptic texts may have served as a background that could lead into a deeper understanding of John. The second point is "secondary orality" as a place for possible indirect influences of Synoptic texts.

We can see that the modes of "secondary orality" deal especially with the passion narrative, although there is no consensus as to whether the relation is to the final Johannine Gospel text (Klauck) or to the traditions behind the Gospel narrative (Dauer). However, the possible influence of re-oralization on understanding the Johannine parallels in terms of genre, structure, and wording is more broadly acknowledged (remember that Theißen used the model only to explain the genre and the structure of the Fourth Gospel) and still needs more elaboration. The following section will try to draw some methodological conclusions from the ongoing discussion.

Methodological Reconsiderations

First of all, the *text* of the Gospel of John itself is of major importance. Does the Johannine text show any kind of signals to indicate that it stems from re-narrated oral traditions? Both the Johannine text (cf. John 20:30–31) and the Johannine milieu allow reckoning with oral tradition or with retold written tradition behind the text. Therefore, a first methodological step in secondary orality is to identify tradition and to elaborate its basic structure and content.

62 K. Haldimann and H. Weder, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium 1985–1994. Erster Teil: Historische Situierung und diachrone Analysen," *TRev* 67 (2002): 328–348 and 425–456, esp. 455.

While elaborating traces of tradition, elements of orality show up, which are close to particular Synoptic texts. A very important methodological approach is to analyze a particular Synoptic text and to mark its redactional features[63] and/or basic structures, settings, and other details of that text.[64] If such a Synoptic Gospel text stands behind a tradition of "secondary orality," possible traces of the tradition should be identified.[65] Of great importance here are parallels in structure and wording to Synoptic texts. But special narrative features of the Synoptic parallels should also be taken into consideration.

Orality is a fluent and audience-oriented kind of transmission of memory. New situations and new problems lead to changes and to actualization, even though those ones do not necessarily have to be understood in terms of discontinuity.[66] That means, not the differences but rather *the parallels* are of special importance, and they need to be evaluated. We have to keep in mind what we can learn from psychology of the mind.[67] In view of the free variability of the matter and the language, it is appropriate to attribute differences to the oral tradition, because "Wenn mündliche Texte nicht gerade gesprochen werden, bestehen sie nur in der Erinnerung derer, die sie sprachen oder hörten."[68] This is a "kognitive/gedankliche Repräsentation des Textinhaltes im Gedächtnis des Hörers":

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63 For the use of this argument, see, for example, I. Dunderberg, *Johannes und die Synoptiker: Studien zu Joh 1–9* (AASFDHL 69; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1994), 27–28; and S. Landis, *Das Verhältnis des Johannesevangeliums zu den Synoptikern: Am Beispiel von Mt 8,5–13; Lk 7,1–10; Joh 4,46–54* (BZNW 74; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 2. For a critique of the criterion of dependence from redactional passages, see Labahn and Lang, "Johannes und die Synoptiker," 487 n. 233.

64 DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 91, highlights the "characteristics of orally transmitted material rather than the traditional appeal to redaction criticism."

65 Cf. McGrath, "Written Islands in an Oral Stream," 6: "Moreover, once texts are written, their presence will potentially leave a mark … on subsequent oral tradition. In other words, as stories continue to be told and retold, some of those who are telling and retelling them will have read written sources (or heard them read aloud), and their subsequent retellings may be influenced by texts."

66 On the question of the mutability and the constancy of non-literary and literary tradition, see Labahn, *Jesus als Lebensspender*, 89–91.

67 C. Breytenbach, "MNHMONEYEIN. Das 'Sich-erinnern' in der urchristlichen Überlieferung—Die Bethanienepisode (Mk 14,3–9/Jn 12,1–8) als Beispiel," in *John and the Synoptics* (BETL 101; ed. A. Denaux; Louvain: Peeters, 1992), 548–557.

68 Breytenbach, "MNHMONEYEIN," 554.

> Wenn der Hörer nun aber zum Erzähler wird, greift er nicht auf die von ihm damals gehörte Phonemkette zurück. Diese hat er nicht mehr im Ohr. Er hat sie aber beim Hören in eine semantische Textbasis, die situationell organisiert ist, umgesetzt. Er greift auf diese kognitive Repräsentation in seinem eigenen Gedächtnis zurück und formuliert mit Hilfe seiner gedanklichen Vorstellung der Situation, von der die Erzählung handelte, eine neue Erzählung, die seinem neuen kommunikativen Kontext entspricht.[69]

Out of this inventory, the narrator formulates a new narrative, which is in keeping with his own new horizon of communication. Differences and similarities are due to the sequence of the "plot" in the narrative, to the specific parameters within which it is narrated and to the sociological context of his/her presentation, which is in our case the milieu of the Johannine community/school. The structure of the "plot" also includes the "actors" and the names given to them. We must also assume that some linguistic elements will not vary, because it is only in this way that the *individual* story can be "stored" in memory.[70] Common structures and convergences could be explained on the basis of the preservative function of memory.

Finally, the Johannine milieu, as we can find it in the Johannine sociolect and in the Johannine world of ideas, may also become a criterion to explain changes and differences in the Synoptic reference texts, which can be used as indication for "secondary orality," if the features could successfully be applied to the tradition. If the tradition is transmitted already within the Johannine circle, the tradition should be modeled according to Johannine theology or Christology, which may also show traces of Johannine sociolect.

In summary, referring to secondary orality is not just guesswork. It takes the self-understanding developed in John 20:30 seriously. It is based on an analysis of the ancient media world, which is mainly an oral one (but with the presence of written media) that usually comes to mind when a written text is read (aloud) and heard. Secondary orality is a way of understanding the Johannine passages and episodes, with their differences and parallels to the Synoptic Gospels taken as representing oral tradition. Finally, secondary orality is a methodologically reflected approach. It operates in terms

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69 Breytenbach, "MNHMONEYEIN," 554–555.

70 Cf. M. Labahn, "The 'Dark Side of Power'—Beelzebul: Manipulated or Manipulator? Reflections on the History of Conflict in the Traces Left in the Memory of Its Narrators," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ed. T. Holmén and S.E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 4:2911–2945, esp. 2938–2945.

of plausibility of the actual scenario in dialogue with textual data and with different previous interpretations.

From Synoptic-Style Miracles Stories to Tales about the Gift of Life[71]—Taking John 6:1–21 as an Example of "Secondary Orality" in the Gospel of John

John 6 is central for understanding the theology of the entire Johannine text.[72] One of the reasons is that Jesus introduces himself as *the* God-given source of life insofar as he regards himself as the Bread of Life (6:35, 48; see also 6:51) or "bread from heaven" (6:31–32, 33, 41, 51), that is, the "eternal life" (6:27, 40, 47, 68; see also 6:54). Judas and Peter drew their final decisions from Jesus' words at the end of ch. 6—either confessing Jesus as having "words of eternal life," as Peter did (6:68: ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου), or professing unbelief, thus becoming a traitor of Jesus, as Judas did.[73]

Nevertheless, ch. 6 also *takes part in the complex development of the Johannine tradition*. Sometimes the whole chapter is taken as a later addition,[74] but such an assumption is rather unlikely because John 6 fits well in the overall plot of the Gospel.[75]

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71 For a more complete treatment with further details and documentation, see Labahn, *Offenbarung in Zeichen und Wort*; cf. idem, *Jesus als Lebensspender*, 265–304.

72 Cf. J. Beutler, "Zur Struktur von Johannes 6," in his *Studien zu den johanneischen Schriften* (SBAB 25; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1998), 247–262, here 247: "eine *Summe* dieses immer noch rätselhaften Evangeliums." See also H. Weder, "Die Menschwerdung Gottes: Überlegungen zur Auslegungsproblematik des Johannesevangeliums am Beispiel von Joh 6," in his *Einblicke ins Evangelium: Exegetische Beiträge zur neutestamentlichen Hermeneutik: Gesammelte Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1980–1991* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 363–400, here 363: "repräsentativ für die johanneische Theologie."

73 For the pragmatics in John 6, see M. Labahn, "Controversial Revelation in Deed and Word: The Feeding of the Five Thousand and Jesus' Crossing of the Sea as a Prelude to the Johannine Bread of Life Discourse," *IBS* 80 (2000): 146–181; cf. Labahn, *Offenbarung in Zeichen und Wort*, 277–288.

74 Cf. now J. Beutler, *Judaism and the Jews in the Gospel of John* (Subsidia biblica 30; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006), 99; idem, "Joh 6 als christliche 'relecture' des Pascharahmens im Johannesevangelium," in *Damit sie das Leben haben* (*Joh 10,10*) (ed. R. Scoralick; FS W. Kirchschläger; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2007), 43–58; idem, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 205.

75 Cf. Labahn, *Jesus als Lebensspender*, 169, 273.

Tensions in the textual coherence of the narrative may be due to both a pre-historical as well as a post-historical element of the story, or it may also be due to the retelling of the story.[76] Jesus' walking on the sea, which presupposes the feeding story as narrative setting, for instance, is often taken as a foreign body within the semantic field of "bread" and "eating," so that there is good reason to assume an underlying tradition behind it. Central keywords of literary entities are "bread," "life," and "consume" (eat and drink).[77] The Jewish addressees in most parts of the chapter are absent in 6:16–21. On the other hand, the disciples act as a separate figure during the absence of Jesus. And most of the literary features of the sea-crossing episode are absent in the rest of ch. 6. Terms that are not normally used in John are further *hints at a more or less fixed tradition behind the Johannine narrative*.

The sequence is part of a longer literary entity that runs from the feeding miracle to the confession of Peter, and it is paralleled in the Gospel of Mark (6:30–8:33) and the Gospel of Matthew (14:13–16:23).[78]

Regarding the feeding stories, the overall structure of both accounts, that is, providing sufficient bread (κλάσματα) and fish to a great multitude of people to eat, referring to a small and counted number of stocks, followed by a reference to a surprising number of leftovers, is the same. There are even more details these stories have in common, such as the need to buy something to eat, the sum of money that was needed to buy food is insufficient, the mention of "grass" (χόρτος) as a resting place,[79] and of baskets to collect the leftover bread and fish. All these parallels refer to a common core of the story. The parallels allow for discussion of the relationship between the written witnesses of the story. One strand is a story about the feeding of the 4000 people (Mark 8:1–10//Matt 15:32–39) and another about the feeding of the 5000, which, as mentioned before, is combined with Jesus' walking on the sea in Mark 6:30–42, Matt 14:13–33, and John 6:4–21. In the second strand, we find five fishes, two loaves of bread, 5000 men, twelve baskets, and 200 denarii as some of the common elements.

76 John 6:51b–58 seems to be a Eucharistic retelling of John 6, which understands the eating of Jesus as bread in a verbal manner.

77 Cf. P. Maritz and G. Van Belle, "The Imagery of Eating and Drinking in John 6:35," in *Imagery in the Gospel of John: Terms, Forms, Themes, and Theology of Johannine Figurative Language* (ed. J. Frey and J.G. van der Watt; WUNT 200; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 333–352.

78 The story of Jesus' walking on the sea is missing in Luke. It belongs to a Lukan gap that omits the episodes in Mark 6:45–8:26.

79 Cf. John 6:10 with Mark 6:39 and Matt 14:9.

There are also important parallels in Jesus' walking on the sea. After Jesus' return to the mountain, the disciples were struggling by themselves on the Sea of Galilee in fear and distress, and eventually encountered the epiphany of Jesus (only Matt 14:28–31 adds the story regarding the faith of Peter). Further parallels can be mentioned by referring to the details of the story, such as the time of the disciples' seafaring (mentioned at different places in the setting), the arriving at the shore, the measurement unit στάδιον, which is used to measure the distance traveled by the boat (πλοῖον).[80] A further important detail is Jesus' answer to the fear of his disciples: ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε (Mark 6:50//Matt 14:27; John 6:20), which is often part of epiphany stories. Interestingly, the verb ἐλαύνω, which means "to row," is only used in Mark 6:48 and John 6:19 in the New Testament.

Although it cannot be completely ruled out that the Johannine author is dependent on Mark (or Matthew) for his sources, differences in the distinct settings and individual wordings in the narratives *clearly show that the relationship is not directly a literary one.*[81]

Regarding the narrative setting, it is rather doubtful to assume that the combination of the feeding event in the wilderness and the crossing of the sea originated from the overall narrative of a Markan plot. Both parts of the sequence have only two things in common. First, there is the form of a miracle story, although both stories do not present the same type of a miracle story. The first one is a gift story, while the second one is an epiphany story. It then follows that the second point these stories have in common is only accidental for the second story, that is, a need for something. In the first story people needed something to eat, but in the second story, people need to be rescued from danger; the epiphany of Jesus was an act that forms the center of the story, both in form and in content. *Therefore, the narrative unit is best explained as the result of a combination of stories done by the Markan narrator*.[82]

80 The terms πλοῖον, ἄνεμος (of some importance) and θαλάσσης belong necessarily to such a narrative setting but may also be collected under the number of parallels.

81 Schnelle, *Antidoketische Christologie im Johannesevangelium*, 121–122, points to a "eigenständige vorjoh. mündliche Traditionsgeschichte," and notes: "Die Aufzählung der Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zeigt, daß der Markustext in seiner jetzigen Gestalt wohl nicht im direkten Sinn literarische Vorlage für Johannes gewesen sein kann" (127).

82 Cf., for example, Dunderberg, *Johannes und die Synoptiker*, 156–161. See also Schnelle, *Antidoketische Christologie im Johannesevangelium*, 129; and F. Schnider and W. Stenger, *Johannes und die Synoptiker: Vergleich ihrer Parallelen* (BiH IX; Munich: Kösel, 1971), 107–

The parallels between Mark 6:34–52 and John 6:5–21 *are best understood in terms of the way in which oral culture deals with a story that is transmitted through different performances*. The situational framework is similar in both the Markan and the Johannine stories, although their wordings are quite different. Those words that are connected with the situational framework are close to one another: boat, sea, στάδιον, and ἐλαύνω. The temporal setting is also the same in both stories although placed in different ways.

Other details remain to be the same: the number of stocks, the number of the people fed, and the number of leftover baskets. This observation is very important, since the numbers change, and they especially tend to increase (cf. in contrast to the feeding of the 5000, Mark 8:34 [7 loaves], Mark 8:9 [4000 people]//Matt 15:34 [7 loaves], 15:38 [4000 men, besides women and children]). It might be that we have to refer to the literary background of the story. According to the model of secondary orality, such is an orality that "comprises textually filtered and contrived language."[83]

Jesus' exhortation ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε might belong to the same argument, especially because it also has its roots in Old Testament tradition. On the other hand, it is set as an important place within the narrative setting, and it is *the* word of the framework's hero. As far as orality is not mere discontinuity, it keeps the central words of the central figures of the setting.

An analysis of the linguistic parallels supports an oral relationship between the text in discussion and another written text, so that we may refer to the model of secondary orality as a means to understand this complicated relationship.

With regard to the situational framework, two major changes could be mentioned regarding focalization. It is a Johannine narrative feature to put Jesus as the focus of the story. Jesus evidently becomes the central character

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108, 110. For a pre-Markan origin of the sequence, see A.-M. Denis, "La section des pains selon s. Marc (6,30–8,26), une théologie de l'Eucharistie," *TU* 102 (1968): 171–179, here 175; K. Kertelge, *Die Wunder Jesu im Markusevangelium: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (SANT 23; Munich: Kösel, 1970), 140; D.-A. Koch, *Die Bedeutung der Wundererzählungen für die Christologie des Markusevangeliums* (BZNW 42; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1975), 36, 107; B. Kollmann, *Ursprung und Gestalten der frühchristlichen Mahlfeiern* (GTA 43; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 105; P.J. Madden, *Jesus' Walking on the Sea: An Investigation of the Origin of the Narrative Account* (BZNW 81; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 95–96. Taking similarities and differences into account and considering that the sequence of the two miracle stories is probably a Markan invention points to an indirect oral relation between Mark 6:34–52 and John 6:5–21. Matthew 14:13–33 could also be taken into consideration, but there is no signal to particular Matthean features within the Johannine sequence.

83 See note 34.

of the traditional feeding story, but he is also of central importance in the disciples' sea story. The distress of Jesus' disciples lasts as long as they are separated from Jesus (cf. 6:17: … καὶ οὔπω ἐληλύθει πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς). Within the situational framework of the Johannine story, it is the moment of Jesus' speaking ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε that brought rescue to the disciples' fate—as a new miracle, the boat is at shore and they are saved (v. 21). Therefore, the second miracle story presents also the power of Jesus—the first story tells how Jesus was the hero who helped by performing a miracle, and the second story tells how the disciples needed Jesus as their helper. *Both stories seem to be re-told together in a Johannine milieu that left its traits in the focalization of Jesus as the main character, who was God's sent answer for the needs of the disciples*.

"Secondary Orality" a "Passe-Partout" to Understand the Relationship between John and the Synoptics? Some Conclusions

The model of secondary orality is a useful tool to interpret the relationship between John and the Synoptics within the ancient oral and written media world. It is a model that respects the importance of orality, on the one hand, taking into account the functions and transmission of memory. On the other hand, it also takes seriously the literary relationship between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John. It treats the Johannine text as a literary entity, with both an oral (and perhaps) partly written prehistory, and as a meaningful text that betrays some kind of retelling.

This concept of secondary orality, as applied to the relationship between John and the Synoptics, does not make the relationship more complex. Rather, it helps us understand the complex relationship. Due to the character of orality, the reference to oral media includes loss of methodological control. But this does not mean that we cannot make any claims about the content, key terms, and structure of the tradition, and it does not exclude dealing with orality in the search for the interrelation between John and the Synoptics at all.[84]

However, the question is could the model of secondary orality function as an interpretative tool to understand *all* aspects of the relationship between John

84 Cf. the remark of McGrath, "Written Islands in an Oral Stream," 12, regarding the "Synoptic problem": "But in actual fact, a serious treatment of the types of interconnectedness between these islands of literature cannot ignore the river of oral tradition that flowed into and around them. We do not have any way of studying the river itself, but the islands that have remained cannot be studied without taking seriously the effects the river has had on them."

and the Synoptics? It is evident that different aspects of the problem need to be discussed separately and that different answers need to be given. Different passages of the Gospel will need to be treated in different methodological manners. As Jürgen Becker has pointed out previously, the Johannine passion narrative and the other Gospel passages need to be treated in different ways.[85] Therefore, secondary orality is an interpretative tool, which can help us understand at least part of the problem of the Gospel of John in its relationship with Synoptic Gospels. It takes the oral and written milieu of the Gospel seriously, but it does not need to be the only key to understand the whole relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic Gospels.

85 J. Becker, "Das vierte Evangelium und die Frage nach seinen externen und internen Quellen," in *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity* (ed. I. Dunderberg, C. Tuckett, and K. Syreeni; FS H. Räisänen; NovTSup 103; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 203–241 (226).

The Sayings of Jesus in Mark: Does Mark Ever Rely on a Pre-Johannine Tradition?

Craig L. Blomberg

What John Robinson dubbed "The New Look on the Fourth Gospel" way back in 1957[1] reached a provisional climax with his posthumously published book, *The Priority of John*, in 1986.[2] In it Robinson made a credible case for the older age of tradition in the Gospel of John than in the Synoptic Gospels for a significant minority of places where they run parallel and for the probable authenticity of the Johannine tradition in a number of those places and in various unparalleled segments of the Fourth Gospel as well. In 1998, Richard Bauckham edited another landmark volume that impinged on Johannine tradition criticism. While the theme of the entire work, *The Gospels for All Christians*,[3] was broader than just concerns with the Fourth Gospel, Bauckham's own essay, "John for Readers of Mark,"[4] sketched an intermediate option between the older view of John as consciously supplementing the written form of the Synoptics and the more recent consensus of literary independence between the two corpora. Bauckham's argument was compelling. Pointing to the "interlocking" phenomenon, he reminded scholars of how frequently the Fourth Gospel presumes knowledge like that found in the core Synoptic kerygma or explains things left ambiguous in that kerygma. While the actual verbal parallelism between John and the Synoptics remains too small to make arguments for literary dependence persuasive, it certainly seems likely that the author of the Fourth Gospel took for granted that most in his audiences knew the basic contours of the contents of the Synoptics, or at least of Mark, even if only via oral tradition and proclamation of the gospel message.

In 2006, Paul Anderson combined previously published studies with further reflection to produce a book-length treatment of *The Fourth Gospel and the*

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1 Published first as John A.T. Robinson, "The New Look on the Fourth Gospel," *TU* 73 (1959): 338–350.

2 John A.T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (ed. J.F. Coakley; London: SCM, 1985; Oak Park, IL: Meyer-Stone, 1987).

3 Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

4 Bauckham, "John for Readers of Mark," in *The Gospel for All Christians*, 147–171.

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Quest for Jesus.[5] Among other things, he argued in detail for what he calls a "bi-optic" approach to the historical Jesus quest, recognizing the "interfluentiality" and dialectic between John and the Synoptics, notably the Gospel of Mark. More specifically, Anderson envisages pre-Markan and early Johannine traditions influencing each other, with the resulting Mark and John drawing on the resulting confluences. His diagram of the relationships among the Gospels and their putative oral traditions is in fact much more complicated than this,[6] but for a study of Mark and John this is the most important part of his hypothesis. Anderson has helpfully reiterated, clarified, and expanded his study in his 2011 textbook, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel*,[7] and is increasingly calling for a "fourth quest of the historical Jesus"—one that treats the Fourth Gospel as an equal partner with the Synoptic Gospels as a potential historical source from which to mine authentic Jesus material.[8]

The SBL "John, Jesus and History" Seminar has played an important role in the last several years of this "new look on the Fourth Gospel" and in what some day might be looked back on as the beginning of the "fourth quest." Particularly significant for potential fourth questers has been volume 2 of the three-volume *John, Jesus and History* series, which appeared in 2009, on *Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel*.[9] The third volume, yet to appear, will look respectively at glimpses of the passion, works, and words of Jesus "through the Johannine lens."[10] It is only fitting then, as the Seminar embarks on the next stages of its study, to tackle these same three divisions of the Johannine material in relationship to each of the Synoptic Gospels, beginning with the Gospel of Mark, which is generally accepted as the earliest of the three.

My mandate is to reflect on the sayings of Jesus in Mark and John. The yeoman's share of the work on this topic has been meticulously undertaken by Philipp Bartholomä in his Louvain dissertation and published as *The Johannine*

5 Paul N. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus: Modern Foundations Reconsidered* (London: T&T Clark, 2006).

6 Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*, 126.

7 Paul N. Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011).

8 Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*, 192; idem, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel*, 237.

9 Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher, eds., *John, Jesus and History, Volume 2: Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: SBL, 2009).

10 Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher, eds., *John, Jesus and History, Volume 3: Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine Lens* (Atlanta: SBL, forthcoming).

Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics.[11] Recognizing that no one had ever published a book-length work that compares the major discourses of Jesus in the Gospel of John with the Synoptic logia, Bartholomä chose six of the Johannine discourses for painstaking analysis, analyzing their degree of similarity in both form and content. Two were dialogues—Jesus with Nicodemus (John 3:1–21) and with the Samaritan woman (4:1–30); two were addresses to the Jewish public—the Bread of Life (6:22–59) and Light of the World (8:12–59) discourses; and two were speeches to the disciples—the first unit of the Farewell Discourse (14:1–31) and Jesus' post-resurrection words (20:11–29).

Proceeding verse-by-verse and sometimes clause-by-clause through each discourse, Bartholomä identifies any potential Synoptic passage with either verbal or conceptual parallelism and evaluates how close that parallelism is. While inevitably a subjective exercise up to a point, the end results provided more than enough evidence to substantiate his conclusion that there does not appear to be good reason to reject the authenticity of the concepts of the discourses analyzed, even when couched in Johannine language, based on the argument that they are too different from the Synoptics to be credible, especially when it is recognized that the historiography of the ancient Mediterranean world encouraged such recasting. Bartholomä recognizes that this is a negative position that would have to be paired with a set of positive reasons for actually affirming authenticity, and he believes that I have made a good start in that direction with my passage-by-passage application of the double dissimilarity and double similarity criterion in my book, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel*,[12] by design far broader than just a study of the Johannine sayings but of course including them. In terms of the priority of traditions, however, the frequent signs of Johannine redaction still give pride of place to the Synoptics.

But what if we reversed the procedure? What if we took each of the sayings of Jesus in the Synoptics and identified any reasonable verbal or conceptual parallel in John and asked similar questions? More manageably for an article-length work, what if we limited our survey to Mark, since it has by far the smallest amount of sayings material ascribed to Jesus of the three Synoptics? What if, for the sake of the interests of this paper, we were concerned with only one issue in each instance: which of the two forms (Markan or Johannine) appears

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11 Philipp Bartholomä, *The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics* (Tübingen: Francke, 2012).

12 Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary* (Leicester: IVP, 2001). See also esp. Peter W. Ensor, *Jesus and His "Works": The Johannine Sayings in Historical Perspective* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996).

to reflect older tradition? Alternately, if the parallels were not from the same contexts in Jesus' ministry in the two corpora, is there any reason not to view *both* of them as going back to Jesus? If the audiences were the same or similar in both accounts, did the historical Jesus himself ever intend to hark back to an earlier statement of his, even if at the redactional level the same evangelist did not choose to include both traditions?

More often than when one combs John looking for parallels to the Synoptics, when one is reading Mark looking for parallels to John, one comes up empty.[13] Part of this is because many of the parallels between John and the Synoptics involve the Fourth Gospel and Luke[14] or, to a lesser degree, the Fourth Gospel and Matthew[15] (unless we count every echo of Matthew's Johannine thunderbolt [Matt 11:25–27] throughout the Fourth Gospel as a separate parallel, in which case Matthew wins hands down!).[16] But even if we look only for parallels to John in Mark, we still find a higher percentage of Johannine words of Jesus that have Markan parallels, at least conceptually, than if we look for parallels to Mark in John.[17] This is due largely to a fair amount of repetition of key themes and language, a reduced semantic range, and a higher level of abstraction in the discourses of Jesus in John.[18] Finally, and not surprisingly, where the question of relative priority can be answered with some confidence, more often than not Mark appears to have the earlier tradition, while Johannine redaction more fre-

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13 For the first of these exercises, see the charts throughout Bartholomä, *The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics*; for the second, see the appendix to this paper.

14 The standard work remains John A. Bailey, *The Traditions Common to Luke and John* (Leiden: Brill, 1963). For a survey of more recent study, with suggestions of his own but apparently unaware of Bailey, see Andrew Gregory, "The Third Gospel? The Relationship of John and Luke Reconsidered," in *Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John* (ed. John Lierman; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 109–134.

15 See esp. Gerhard Maier, "Johannes und Matthäus—Zweispalt oder Viergestalt des Evangeliums," in *Gospel Perspectives, Volume 2: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels* (ed. R.T. France and David Wenham; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 267–292. Cf. also Benedict T. Viviano, "John's Use of Matthew: Beyond Tweaking?" *RB* 111 (2004): 209–237.

16 Adelbert Denaux, "The Q-Logion: Mt 11,27/Lk 10,22 and the Gospel of John," in *John and the Synoptics* (ed. Adelbert Denaux; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2005), 163–199.

17 Bartholomä, *The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics*, unfortunately refers to all passages common to Mark and at least one of the other Synoptics by citing their location in either Matthew or Luke, followed by "par(s)," making tabulation more laborious.

18 Bartholomä, *The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics*, 345–359.

quently comes to the fore. Still, in a notable minority of instances, while looking for parallels to John in Mark, a case for Johannine priority seems probable.[19]

But when we reverse the process, the opposite conclusion results. If we proceed through a "red-letter Bible," isolating the *logia Jesu* in Mark and then looking for verbal or conceptual parallels in John, more than two-thirds of the instances in which such parallels emerge disclose Johannine priority. Of the thirty-two texts identified in the appendix to this paper, in which Markan sayings of Jesus find Johannine parallels, only in eleven cases does Markan priority appear to remain. Of the twenty examples of probable Johannine priority, ten surface most clearly.[20] We will discuss these passages in the order they occur in Mark.

Mark 2:19–20

In the collection of pronouncement stories that span Mark 2:1–3:6, Jesus responds to the question about his disciples' lack of fasting by asking whether wedding guests can fast when the bridegroom is with them. After insisting that they cannot, he goes on to predict coming days when they will fast after the bridegroom is taken away from them. The only other places in the Gospels that νυμφίος appears, besides the Synoptic parallels to this passage, are in the parable of the ten bridesmaids (Matt 25:1–13), in John 2:9 where there is a literal bridegroom at the wedding in Cana, and in John 3:29 where John the Baptist likens himself to the best man and Jesus to the bridegroom. This last passage is the most interesting one for our purposes, because it immediately precedes John's declaration in v. 30 that Jesus "must increase," while John "must decrease." As John Meier has stressed, it is highly unlikely that the early church would have invented this saying that discloses that John was once more popular than Jesus.[21] But v. 29 is tied closely enough to v. 30 that it, too, is probably authentic.[22] If one had reason to view Mark's extended metaphor of the

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19 Again, cf. the charts throughout ibid.

20 For all 31 texts, see the appendix to this paper. The ten discussed below appear in bold-face print there.

21 John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus, Volume 2: Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 120–121, 133. Cf. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*, 156.

22 For the unity and traditional origin of all of vv. 26–30, see C.H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 281–286. On v. 29 and the bridegroom metaphor itself, see Michael Tait, *Jesus, The Divine Bridegroom, in*

bridegroom as redactional, then John's saying would obviously have tradition-critical priority. Some have questioned whether a veiled reference to Jesus' death ("when the bridegroom is taken away from them") in Mark 2:19b–20 is too premature a prediction of Jesus' death to be authentic, but even then it is often viewed as an addition to the authentic verse 19a.[23] Chronologically, as part of Jesus' Galilean ministry, the Synoptic saying comes later in Jesus' career as Mark depicts it than does John 3:29, where the Fourth Evangelist has located it.[24] This leads to the possibility that Jesus himself was aware of the metaphors John had used for the two of them and now reuses the one about himself in a new context. Either way, however, the Fourth Gospel retains priority, whether chronologically or tradition-critically.

Mark 6:4

In the context of Jesus' rejection in Nazareth, Mark includes the proverb attributed to Jesus that a prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his kin and in his house. Such a saying could easily have been a floating logion, usable in numerous settings. Matthew, however, preserves it in this identical context, minus the reference to kin (Matt 13:58), as does Luke (Luke 4:24), who omits the house as well and transposes the entire passage to the beginning of Jesus' Galilean ministry to function as a programmatic introduction to Jesus' entire career (vv. 16–30).[25] In John, however, the Fourth Evangelist's indirect speech narrates that Jesus testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country, and this right after Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well in Samaria and his subsequent return to Cana in Galilee (John 4:44).

Mark 2:18–22: Mark's Christology Upgraded (Rome: Gregorian and Biblical Press, 2010), 262. Yoon-Man Park, *Mark's Memory Resources and the Controversy Stories (Mark 2:1–3:6): An Application of the Frame Theory of Cognitive Science to the Markan Oral-Aural Narrative* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 217, suspects that this metaphor "may have operated on the basis of the knowledge in the early Christian audience's long-term memory that the kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus was understood as a wedding ceremony," citing John 3:29 for support.

23 Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 197–199.

24 Mark 2:1–3:6 is, of course, a topical collection of pronouncement stories within the larger chronological framework of Jesus' early Galilean ministry, and probably chiastic in structure. See throughout Joanna Dewey, *Markan Public Debate* (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1980).

25 I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 177–178.

Like Luke, John contains no reference to kin or house and, also like Luke, he avoids the triple negative. The very fact that the Fourth Evangelist is summarizing Jesus' words indirectly in narrative form makes it clear that he is redacting.

But assuming that there *is* a pre-Johannine saying attributed to Jesus which the author of the Fourth Gospel is putting into his own words, its very proverbial nature is not likely to have included the less pithy expansions about kin and house or a triple negative, precisely because proverbs tend to be more concise and smooth.[26] This could suggest that Mark has elaborated pre-Johannine tradition to fit the specific context of Jesus' rejection in Nazareth. Or, as with the bridegroom saying, perhaps John and Mark both recognize that this was a maxim Jesus used more than once, tailoring it to different situations. The criterion of embarrassment makes it unlikely that early Christians would have applied it to Jesus if he had not used it at least once.[27] In both Mark and John, it comes in contexts in which those among whom Jesus is ministering doubt whether he is anything special. Chronologically, John's setting occurs earlier in Jesus' ministry; Mark could well have known that Jesus said something like this before. In any event, John's version would appear to retain priority.[28]

Mark 6:35–44

Paul Barnett has already made a compelling case for Johannine independence in the account of the feeding of the 5000 overall.[29] That, of course, does not mean that the oral traditions underlying Mark and John did not interact. Places where John agrees with Luke and/or Matthew, against Mark, may reflect later

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26 Cf. also Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John I–XII* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 187–188: "It seems best to classify John's saying as a variant form of a traditional statement, rather than as a selective borrowing from Mark and Luke. The redactor has not adapted the saying to the Johannine style of the rest of the Gospel" (188).

27 In addition, "prophet" is not an exalted enough title for most early Christian invention. See Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel according to Mark* (London: A&C Black; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 153.

28 Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*, 163. Against this conclusion is the interpretation of John 4:44 that sees John changing Jesus' homeland from Galilee to all of Israel (John W. Pryor, "John 4:44 and the *Patris* of Jesus," *CBQ* 49 [1987]: 254–263). But G. Van Belle, "The Faith of the Galileans: The Parenthesis in Jn 4:44," *ETL* 74 (1998): 27–44, has shown that Jesus' country is Galilee in John's context as well.

29 P.W. Barnett, "The Feeding of the Multitude in Mark 6/John 6," in *Gospel Perspectives: Volume 6: The Miracles of Jesus* (ed. David Wenham and Craig Blomberg; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 273–293.

redaction or at least later stages of tradition history, though there are actually very few such places.[30] Focusing strictly on the sayings attributed to Jesus in Mark's account, we begin with v. 37 in which he tells the disciples to give the crowds something to eat. Matthew and Luke agree with Mark, but John has no command from Jesus. Rather, introducing this segment of the episode, the Fourth Evangelist depicts Jesus *asking* Philip, "From where will we buy bread, so that these people may eat?" (John 6:5). John, of course, names individual disciples numerous times as the speakers or addressees of various comments or questions where the Synoptics do not (e.g. 1:43–51; 12:1–8; 13:21–30; etc.). But these do not add up to any definable redactional interest, and Richard Bauckham has made a plausible case that at least some of them may reflect the actual tradents of the traditions in which they are embedded.[31] It would be natural for Mark to change John's question to a command, avoiding the problem that John likewise must explain (John 6:6)—about Jesus' apparent ignorance.

Jesus' second saying in Mark's account both asks a question and gives a command: "How many loaves do you have? Go, see" (Mark 6:38). These words would actually fit quite nicely between John 6:7 and 8–9, which report Philip's and Andrew's contributions to the conversation, since Mark also records a (much shorter) report of the availability of the five loaves and two fish. So there is really no question of arguing for the priority of one Gospel over the other here. More intriguing, however, are the two places where *John* has direct speech of Jesus but Mark does not. John 6:10 finds Jesus proclaiming, "Make the people sit down," whereas Mark 6:39 merely reports that Jesus commanded them all to sit down. John 6:12 presents in direct speech the order to "gather the leftover fragments so that nothing may be lost," while Mark 6:43 moves immediately to the disciples' compliance, as one might expect from a narrative summary. In each case, then, it seems best to conclude that John has retained the oldest tradition. If any portion of the various versions of this episode is authentic, as John Meier has shown, it contains at least these core dialogues,[32] which are most clearly and directly recounted in the Fourth Gospel.

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30 Brown, *The Gospel according to John I–XII*, 239–244. For a dissenting view that postulates extensive rewriting by John of the Synoptics' redaction, see Steven A. Hunt, *Rewriting the Feeding of Five Thousand: John 6.1–15 as a Test Case for Johannine Dependence on the Synoptic Gospels* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).

31 Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 39–66.

32 Meier, *A Marginal Jew, Volume 2*, 959.

Mark 8:27–30

Peter's confession on the road to Caesarea Philippi is a key turning point in all three Synoptic Gospels, but especially in Mark. Mark's very streamlined narrative contains only two brief utterances of Jesus: "Who do people say that I am?" (v. 27) and "Who do you say that I am?" (v. 29). John has no parallel at this juncture in Jesus' ministry but does present a passage with close conceptual and a few verbal parallels at the end of the Bread of Life discourse in John 6:67–69. After the larger group of disciples has departed, Jesus asks the Twelve, "You don't also wish to go away, do you?" (v. 67). In both Mark and John, Peter replies with a ringing affirmation of Jesus as the "Messiah" (Mark 8:29) or "the Holy One of God" (John 6:69).[33] Of course it is possible to argue that John has recast Peter's confession from the Synoptics and put it in a completely different context,[34] but again John's form is more embarrassing, as it suggests not only Jesus' ignorance but also a very human, wistful sentimentality. If one version claims tradition-historical priority, it would seem to be John's.[35] But again, perhaps both passages are authentic, and the reason Mark can abbreviate so dramatically, except for adding his distinctive Messianic secret theme (Mark 8:30),[36] is because he is aware that the chronologically earlier Johannine episode is widely known.

Mark 9:19

After the Transfiguration, Jesus encounters the nine disciples left at the bottom of the mountain unable to deal with a demonized man. Somewhat surprisingly

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33 The meanings of the two titles are not identical, but "Holy One of God" functions at least messianically here—Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1972; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 275–276 (though it may be an even more exalted title—see William R. Domeris, "The Confession of Peter according to John 6:69," *TynBul* 44 [1993]: 155–167). Recognizing this, and the parallels with Mark 8:29, various scribes created harmonizing variants that explicitly changed or added to John's text by inserting "the Christ" in different ways.

34 Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 275.

35 Paul N. Anderson, "Introduction to Part 2: Aspects of Historicity in John 5–12," in *John, Jesus and History, Volume 2*, 110, asks, "If the Johannine Evangelist was familiar with Mark, why is Peter rendered as speaking like the Markan demoniac [Mark 1:24] instead of the Markan Peter?"

36 On which, see now esp. David F. Watson, *Honor among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010).

for a response to the *disciples*, he blurts out, "Oh, unbelieving generation, how long must I be with you; how long must I endure you?" Kurt Aland's synopsis uses fine print to reproduce John 14:9 as a partial parallel,[37] but I am more interested in the general question of the length of Jesus' ministry. As a classic example of Johannine priority, Robinson cites Jesus' lament over Jerusalem in Q 13:34: "*How often* I wanted to gather your children, like a hen gathers her own chicks under her wings, but you were not willing." Yet in the Synoptics, except for events associated with Jesus' birth and childhood, Jesus has never been to Jerusalem prior to the last Passover of his life. Only the multiple-year chronology of Jesus' ministry, with his repeated visits to Jerusalem at festival times, found exclusively in the Fourth Gospel, can make sense of Jesus' Synoptic lament about how often he was thwarted.[38] Might a similar argument make best sense of Mark 9:19 as well? This is not the first example of unbelief in Mark (recall esp. 6:1–6a), but it has not been as nearly pronounced a theme, especially for the entire "generation,"[39] as it is throughout John from the earliest chapters of the Gospel until Jesus' death.[40] Perhaps Mark is aware, and expects his readers to be aware, of still more rejection and disbelief than his short Gospel itself narrates. This, by definition, then qualifies as pre-Johannine tradition.

Mark 10:15

The similarities between this verse and John 3:3 and 5 have often been noted. In the Synoptics, Jesus warns his disciples that "whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus says to Nicodemus, "unless someone is born from above, they cannot see the kingdom of God," and, again, "unless someone is born of water and the spirit, they cannot enter the kingdom of God." Again, the contexts are entirely different, but, as Barnabas Lindars demonstrated, if there is any authentic core to Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus, it is likely to include these two "double-Amen" sayings, both because of that formula and because of the unusual use, for John,

37 Kurt Aland, ed., *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (New York: American Bible Society, 1982), 156.

38 Robinson, *The Priority of John*, 126–127.

39 Only in 8:12 and 38 does Jesus elsewhere speak of "this generation" disparagingly, and only in 9:19 as ἄπιστος.

40 The use of Ἰουδαῖοι as a generalization for the negative response of the Jews affords an even clearer example, having not yet occurred in Mark at this juncture, but often in John 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc.

of the phrase “kingdom of God.”[41] Interestingly, the Synoptics agree that Jesus began his saying with “Amen,” it is just not doubled, a characteristic distinctive to John.[42] Mark 10:15 is often thought to be an independent saying redactionally inserted here, but Robert Gundry gives several arguments against this idea.[43] A strong case can likewise be made for the authenticity of Jesus’ saying in the Synoptics, given the countercultural role of humility in the ancient Mediterranean world.[44] So perhaps both sayings are authentic in their given contexts. Given their respective chronological locations in Jesus’ ministry, however, if one text harks back to the other it would be the Synoptics to John and not vice-versa. Indeed, Matthew’s parallel to Mark 10:15 comes in what is probably already a composite discourse (Matthew 18; see v. 3).[45] So if only one version reflects its original setting, it would be more likely John’s than the Synoptics’.

Mark 11:17

The relationship between the Synoptic and Johannine temple clearing incidents is particularly vexed. Contributors to the resurgence of the interest in the historicity of John, nevertheless, have regularly argued for the priority of the Johannine event, against the more general trend of scholarship, not least because of the reference to the temple having been rebuilt for forty-six years (John 2:20), a figure that cannot be assigned any date later than AD 28.[46] The Markan version (paralleled in Matthew but absent from Luke) forms a pronouncement story, with the climactic saying of Jesus reading, “It is written, isn’t it, that my house shall be called a house of prayer for all the Gentiles? But you have made it a cave of robbers” (Mark 11:17). John, on the other hand, describes Jesus declaring to the dove sellers, “take these things away from here.

41 Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 150.

42 R. Alan Culpepper, “The Origin of the ‘Amen, Amen’ Sayings in the Gospel of John,” in *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (ed. Robert T. Fortna and Tom Thatcher; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 251–262.

43 Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 548–549.

44 Craig A. Evans, “Jesus’ Ethic of Humility,” *TrinJ* 13 (1992): 127–138.

45 And if Peter Spitaler, “Welcoming a Child as a Metaphor for Welcoming God’s Kingdom: A Close Reading of Mark 10.13–16,” *JSNT* 31 (2009): 423–446, is correct that this passage is a recasting of Mark 9:33–37 (whether by Jesus or Mark), then it already has a secondary nature to it.

46 Robinson, *The Priority of John*, 130–131.

Do not make my Father's house a marketplace" (John 2:16). If Jesus can have spoken only one of these verses, the Johannine logion claims precedence—chronologically in Jesus' ministry, but also tradition-critically. Synoptic scholars tend to be suspicious of texts that show Jesus as particularly interested in the Gentiles,[47] and "my house" is a more christologically loaded claim than "my Father's house." The Fourth Gospel's exclamation about trade in the temple, on the other hand, fits perfectly into an intra-Jewish debate of Jesus' day.[48] But, again, it is by no means difficult to envision Jesus having made both claims.[49]

Mark 14:6–9

All four Gospels contain an account of a woman anointing Jesus with an expensive perfume. Mark (14:3–9) and Matthew (26:6–13) run closely parallel to each other. Luke's account is so different (Luke 7:36–50) that there is reason to suspect that it may be a separate episode altogether.[50] John 12:1–8 appears to narrate the same incident as Mark and Matthew but with several significantly different details. John's account is explicitly assigned to six days before the Passover, on the night before Jesus' entry intro Jerusalem (12:1–8), whereas Mark's appears to take place the night of the Last Supper. Some commentators have assumed that John has moved this account to an earlier setting so that it functions as an introduction to the Book of Glory (John 12/13–20), just as the programmatically relocated temple clearing functions as the introduction to the Book of Signs (John 2–11/12).[51] Those inclined, however, to give John credit for the correct location of the temple clearing tend to do the same

47 For a survey of this perspective (but one that is followed by a reasonably persuasive rebuttal), see Michael F. Bird, *Jesus and the Origins of the Gentile Mission* (London: T&T Clark, 2006).

48 Victor Eppstein, "The Historicity of the Gospel Account of the Cleansing of the Temple," *ZNW* 55 (1964): 42–58.

49 It is even just possible, despite the scorn poured by the majority of the academic guild on those who occasionally make the suggestion, that Jesus cleared the temple twice. See E. Randolph Richards, "An Honor/Shame Argument for Two Temple Cleansings," *TrinJ* 29 (2008): 19–43.

50 Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 80; Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 213.

51 For example, J. Ramsey Michaels, *John* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989), 50.

for the anointing.[52] After all, a closer analysis of Mark 14:3–9 shows that it is quite detachable from its immediate context. Nothing in these seven verses positively links it to Passover at all, and Mark may very well be the one who has thematically relocated it, recognizing the link between the anointing and the preparation for Jesus' death.[53]

This then raises the question of whether the words attributed to Jesus in Mark are likewise secondary to those in John. Mark 14:6–8 portrays Jesus declaring of the woman, "Leave her. Why are you bothering her? A good work she has done to me. For the poor you always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you don't always have me. She did what she could; she anointed my body beforehand to prepare for my burial." John 12:7–8 has a more streamlined saying, "Leave her, in order that for the day of my burial she may keep it. For the poor you always have with you but you don't always have me." The verbatim parallelism of Ἄφες αὐτήν, τοὺς πτωχοὺς γὰρ πάντοτε[54] ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν, and ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε, goes well beyond the number of Greek words one usually finds identical when comparing any of the Synoptics with John, even in narrative material, when they *do* run parallel,[55] thus suggesting a definite relationship between the two accounts. Has John or pre-Johannine tradition abbreviated Mark or has Mark or pre-Markan tradition expanded John? Mark's other redactional changes here make it natural to suggest the latter, giving John both the chronological and tradition-critical priority. Mark, however, cannot be deriving all of his distinctive material in this narrative from John, nor can John from Mark, nor do demonstrably redactional themes emerge in the singly attested material of either passage. All this gives added support to the thesis of interfluentiality of traditions at the pre-Markan, pre-Johannine stages.[56]

Mark 14:30

Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial once again occurs in a chronologically earlier location in the Fourth Gospel than in the Synoptics. Both form part of Jesus'

52 For example, Richard Bauckham, "The Bethany Family in John 11–12: History or Fiction?" in *John, Jesus and History, Volume 2*, 192.

53 William L. Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 492 and n. 18.

54 Mark 14:7 has these identical four words but in the order πάντοτε γὰρ τοὺς πτωχοὺς.

55 Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel*, 46.

56 Cf. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*, 169–170.

teaching to his disciples on the last night of his life. In Mark, Jesus is en route to Gethsemane (14:26–31), whereas in John, he is still indoors with the Twelve (13:36–38). Does Jesus ask the rhetorical question, "Will you lay down your life for me?" and then assert with the double-Amen formula, "I say to you, the rooster will in no way crow until you deny me three times" (v. 38), or does he declare with a single Amen, "I say to you that today this night before the rooster crows twice you will deny me three times" (Mark 14:30)? The double-Amen formula, as we have observed, is distinctively Johannine, while the rooster crowing twice creates a "harder reading," so that it is likely original.[57] But the question form in John, as we have seen earlier, could well be an original touch of Jesus to a passage that is already likely to be authentic because of its "Amen (Amen), I say to you" introduction. John uniquely introduces Peter's preceding asseveration of his willingness to lay down his life for his Lord with a question as well, "why cannot I follow you now" (John 13:37)? With the strong ancient Jewish tradition of disciples questioning their masters and those rabbis often replying with questions,[58] most likely Mark has abbreviated a pre-Johannine, possibly authentic tradition at this juncture.

Mark 14:35–36

As Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, he asks his Father if there is any way he can be spared the cup of God's wrath but concludes by praying for God's will, not his, to be done. The well-known "Johannine Gethsemane" appears earlier in John's Passion Narrative, not during the Gethsemane event but after the triumphal entry with crowds present, when Jesus admits that his soul is troubled and asks, rhetorically, if he should say, "Father, save me from this hour." But he acknowledges it is for this hour that he has come and therefore prays, "Father, glorify your name" (John 12:27–28a).[59] Apart from addressing God as Father, there are no linguistic or verbal parallels of significance between the two passages. But in each instance, Jesus realizes that he has the option of avoiding

57 R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (Carlisle: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 579.

58 Cf. esp. the possible links to the Passover haggadah noted by Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary, Volume 2* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 928.

59 Verse 27, however, should perhaps be punctuated so that the only question is "What shall I say?" (cf. KJV, ASV), bringing it even closer in harmony with the Markan parallel (see George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* [Waco, TX: Word, 1987], 212). The parallel use of "save" in Heb 5:7, not found in Mark, suggests a pre-Johannine tradition (see Brown, *The Gospel according to John I–XII*, 467).

the cross and its agony but that he must submit to God's will for him. If ever there is a theme that the early church is not likely to have made up, it would be that of Jesus considering not going through with his divinely appointed mission, so at least one of these passages must be reasonably authentic.[60] If only one of the two can have roots in the ministry of the historical Jesus, Mark's should this time be accepted, because of the Johannine theme of "the hour" central to the Fourth Gospel's pericope.[61] But as with Peter's confession or with the temple clearing, what is intriguing is how John's account is again the chronologically earlier one. If it is possible that both John and Mark present distinct, reliable accounts of events from Jesus' life, then Mark may again be presupposing knowledge of the pre-Johannine tradition on the part of his community to soften the blow and prepare the way for Jesus' dramatic utterances in Gethsemane.

Examples could be multiplied but these are arguably the ten clearest. Even then ambiguities remain. There is no absolutely foolproof example of Mark utilizing pre-Johannine tradition.[62] These are merely suggestive possibilities, some more evocative than others. More fascinating is how, in each of these passages, when John has a parallel of sorts in a different context within Jesus' ministry, it is *always* chronologically earlier. Just as the Markan narrative about the disciples' immediate response to Jesus (Mark 1:16–20) makes better sense if its readers already know about those disciples' prior exposure to Jesus as narrated in John 1:29–51, and just as the false charges against Jesus at the Markan trial (Mark 14:48) make better sense if Jesus actually said something about the destruction of the temple a couple of years earlier as in John 2:19 that could easily have been garbled over time,[63] so also in Jesus' *sayings* in Mark there are a significant minority of instances where distinctively Johannine tradition seems presupposed. Bauckham's argument concerning "John for Readers of Mark"

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60 Craig S. Keener, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 565 n. 69.

61 Cf. Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to Saint John* (London: A&C Black; New York: Continuum, 2005), 351.

62 Ian D. Mackay, *John's Relationship with Mark: An Analysis of John 6 in the Light of Mark 6–8* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), shows how one can postulate both a measure of independence between John and Mark and a measure of John's use of Mark, and he comes up with at least reasonably plausible explanations for all of John's differences in the corpora surveyed. But he nowhere discusses any of the phenomena we have highlighted here.

63 See, respectively, Robinson, *The Priority of John*, 180; and Andreas Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 108.

would appear to be applicable in a number of cases beyond the handful that he suggested, while Anderson's case for interfluentiality within a bi-optic tradition can be supported as well. The overturning of the dehistoricization of the Fourth Gospel and the dejohannification of the historical Jesus must continue.[64] The need for a fourth quest of the historical Jesus in which the Synoptics and John are equal partners on a level playing field becomes more urgent than ever.

Appendix: The Sayings of Jesus in Mark and Significant Verbal or Conceptual Parallels in John

Passage	Contents	Parallel(s)	Probable older tradition
1:15	kingdom has come, repent, believe gospel		
1:17	follow me (cf. 2:14), fish for people	1:43; 21:19, 22	Jn 1:43 (chr[65]); Mk vs. Jn 21 (chr)
1:25	be silent, come out of him (exorcism)		
1:38	let's go on to preach, why I came out		
1:41	I want to, be cleansed (to leper)		
1:44	don't tell, go to priest, offering as witness		
2:5	son, sins forgiven		
2:7–11	why ask Qs, which is harder? take up mat	5:8	Jn? (chr); separ tradns w/ interfl[66] (t-c[67])?
2:17	not healthy need doc, came to call sinners		
2:19–20	**wedding guests don't fast w/ bridegroom**	**3:29–30**	**Jn (chr)**
2:21–22	old, new cloth; old, new wineskins	2:1–11	Jn (chr)
2:25–28	David & Abiathar, Son of man Lord Sabb.		
3:3–5	lawful do good on Sabb.? stretch hand		
3:23–30	Satan cast out Satan? kingdom divided, plunder strong man, blasphemy ag. H.S.		
3:33–35	Who are my mother and brothers?		

64 See esp. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*, 43–99.

65 "Chr" denotes the chronologically prior of two separate events as portrayed by the evangelists.

66 "Separ tradns w/ interfl (t-c)" means that tradition-critically, there are probably separate traditions with interfluentiality at the pre-Markan, pre-Johannine stages.

67 "T-c" denotes the probably tradition-critically prior of two accounts, whether or not they are separate events.

Passage	Contents	Parallel(s)	Probable older tradition
4:3–32	seed parables and related material		
4:35	let us cross to other side		
4:39–40	peace, be still, why afraid? still no faith?		
5:8–9, 19	Come out, spirit, what is name? go home		
5:30, 34	Who touched me? faith has made you well		
5:36, 39, 41	Don't fear, child only asleep, Talitha koum	11:11	Mark (chr)
6:4	**Prophets not w/o honor except in home**	**4:44**	**Jn (chr)**
6:10–11	stay in house entered; if no welcome, shake off dust as testimony against them		
6:30	Come to remote place for rest		
6:37–38	**You give them to eat; how many loaves?**	**6:5**	**Jn (t-c)**
6:50	Take heart, It is I, don't be afraid	6:20	too similar to choose one
7:6–23	Isaiah's prophecy, Corban, true defilement		
7:27, 29	Don't throw kids' food to dogs, demon left		
7:34	Ephphatha		
8:2–3, 5	compassion for crowds' hunger, they will faint, how many loaves do you have?	6:5	separ tradns w/ interfl (t-c)?
8:12	why does generat. seek sign? none given	4:48	Jn (chr)
8:15–20	yeast of Pharisees, don't you understand?		
8:23,26	can you see anything? don't go into village		
8:27,29	**who do people, you say I am?**	**6:67**	**Jn (chr)**
8:33–38	Get behind me, Satan; take up cross, lose life	6:70; 12:25	Jn (chr), Mk (chr, t-c)
9:1	some won't taste death till kingdom	8:51	Jn (chr)
9:12–13	on why must Elijah come first = Baptist		
9:16–25	**how long? & other dialog re/ demonized boy**	**3 yr. min.**	**Jn (chr, t-c)**
9:31pars.	three passion predictions	12:32	Mk (chr, t-c)
9:33–37	arguing? 1st must be last, welcome child	13:20	Mk (chr)
9:39–49	one not against is for us, cup of water, millstone, stumbling, hell, salt		
10:3–12	marriage, divorce, remarriage, celibacy		
10:13–15	**let children come, receive kingdom as child**	**3:3, 5**	**Jn (chr, t-c)**
10:18–31	dialog w/ ruler, receiving 100-fold what left		
10:37–40	on sitting at J's rt. hand, drinking his cup		
10:42–45	not lording it over but serving, ransom	13:4–5; 12–17	Mk (chr, t-c)

(cont.)

Passage	Contents	Parallel(s)	Probable older tradition
10:49–52	call him, what do you want? faith healed		
11:2–3	go to village, get colt, Lord needs it		
11:14	no fruit eaten from tree again		
11:17	**temple house of prayer vs. den of robbers**	**2:16**	**Jn (chr)**
11:22–25	faith to move Mt., ask, receive, forgive	14:13–14; 15:7; 16:23	Mk (chr, t-c)
11:29–30	JB's baptism—from heaven or not?		
11:33	I won't answer you either		
12:1–11	parable of wicked tenants, cornerstone		
12:15–17	why test? Bring denarius, give God/Caesar		
12:24–27	rebutting Sadducees on resurrection		
12:29–31	Shema, two great love commands	15:12–13	Mk (chr, t-c)
12:35–37	question about Ps 110:1		
12:39–40	Beware of scribes … devouring houses	13:12–17	Mk (chr, t-c)
13:1–2	not one stone on another	2:19	Jn (chr)
13:5–36	Olivet Discourse	16:2; 15:21; 14:26	Mk (chr)
14:6–9	**she prepared body for burial, poor with you always, proclaimed in memory of her**	**12:7–8**	**Jn (chr), Jn/Mk interfluential**
14:13–15	preparations for Passover w/ water jar man		
14:17–21	prediction of betrayal		too similar to choose one
14:22–25	Words of institution about body and blood	6:51–58	Jn (chr), separ tradns w/ interfl (t-c)?
14:26–30	**prediction of scattering and Peter's denial**	**16:32; 13:36–38**	**Jn 13:36–38 (chr, t-c?)**
14:32–42	**w/ disciples, praying in Gethsemane, rise**	**12:27; 14:31**	**Jn (chr)**
14:48–49	have you come w/ clubs? I've taught openly	18:20	Mk (chr)
14:62	I am, Son of man seated, coming w/ clouds	7 "I AM"s	Jn (chr)
15:2	You are saying it	18:37	Mk (chr)
15:34	Eloi, Eloi lema sabachthani[68]		

68 This essay was first given as a paper for the SBL John, Jesus and History Seminar, in Chicago in November 2012.

The Johannine Community

The Gospel from a Specific Community but for All Christians: Understanding the Johannine Community as a "Community of Practice"

Hughson T. Ong

Introduction

Studies on the Johannine community are naturally entwined with or embedded within the larger Gospel community debate.[1] The debate is usually concerned with whether various individual communities or a single "universal" community underlies the writing of the Gospels.[2] It is often presumed that historical reconstructions of the social situation or context of the Gospel communities subsequently betray the identity of the audience of the Gospels.[3] Thus, there is a reciprocating relationship between the social situation of a Gospel community and the audience identity of the Gospels. Such reciprocat-

1 Treatments of the Gospel community debate are surveyed in Edward W. Klink III, ed., *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity* (LNTS 353; New York: T&T Clark, 2010); idem, "The Gospel Community Debate: State of the Question," *CBR* 3 (2004): 60–85; Stephen Barton, "The Communal Dimension of Earliest Christianity: A Critical Survey of the Field," *JTS* 43 (1992): 399–427; and, most recently, Wally V. Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community Hypothesis (1968–Present): Past and Present Approaches and a New Way Forward," *CBR* 12 (2014): 173–193. See also Stanley E. Porter and Andrew K. Gabriel, *Johannine Writings and Apocalyptic: An Annotated Bibliography* (JOST 1; Leiden Brill, 2013), 40–47.

2 The most obvious example is the collected essays in Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), which challenges the traditional assumption that a community exists behind each of the four Gospels. Cf. Craig L. Blomberg, "The Gospels *for* Specific Communities and All Christians," in *The Audience of the Gospels*, 111–133. For a study that does not show any concern at all with respect to the audience of the Gospels, see Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (London: SCM, 1990).

3 In fact, historical reconstruction of the Gospel communities is closely associated with the study of the oral traditions or origins of the Gospels, in which the identification of the audience of the Gospels is not typically discussed. For two recent works that deal with the oral tradition of the Gospels, see Eric Eve, *Behind the Gospels: Understanding the Oral Tradition* (London: SPCK, 2013), esp. 15–158; and Rafael Rodriguez, *Oral Tradition and the New Testament: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), esp. 33–52.

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ing relationship might not actually exist, however. For whom the Gospels were written is something that is harder to grasp, as it rests solely in the minds of the Gospel authors—hence the scholarly debate over whether the Gospels were written for general or specific readership. It perhaps would serve both Gospel and Johannine scholarship well, if discussion is focused on just one side of the equation, that is, "from which communities were the Gospels written?" In other words, determining the intentions of the Gospel writers and studying the origins of the Gospels are two issues that need to be distinguished from each other.[4] To be sure, in the Gospel community debate, the "whence" may not necessarily expose the "whither."[5]

This essay examines the Johannine community and argues for a *via media* view in the Gospel community debate. It demonstrates that the Johannine community was a special community that had its own unique characteristics, yet it also shared things in common with the larger Christian community of the first century. The first-century Gospel community was a community that can be viewed concentrically—a general Christian community composed of individual smaller communities. In what follows, this essay provides a short summary of the Gospel and Johannine community debate. This summary shows that scholarly efforts at discovering and reconstructing the historical and social situation of the Gospel communities have mostly aimed at providing answers for the "whither" aspect of the debate. This summary is followed by a discussion of three arguments for seeing *how* the Johannine community was a unique Gospel community that belonged to the general, larger Christian community. I posit these arguments based upon the sociolinguistic theory of "community of practice."[6]

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4 Cf. Dwight N. Peterson, *The Origins of Mark: The Markan Community in Current Debate* (BIS 48; Leiden: Brill, 2000), esp. 158–159, who makes a similar argument.

5 One of the sessions at the *Life in Abundance: An International Conference on the Gospel of John* meeting held in Baltimore, Maryland in 16–18 October 2003 was entitled "The Whence and Whither of the Johannine Community," which is now published in *Life in Abundance: Studies of John's Gospel in Tribute to Raymond E. Brown* (ed. John R. Donahue; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2005). The main paper of this session was presented by Robert Kysar, which appears to recognize this distinction. Nevertheless, it does not posit the argument I make in this essay. A summary of the proceedings of this conference is found in Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 73–75; idem, "Gospel Audience and Origin," 18–20.

6 Applying this sociolinguistic concept to the study of the Johannine community addresses some of the definitional and methodological concerns raised by Klink and Cirafesi, respectively, in their effort to provide suggestions as to how future research should proceed (see Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 77–79; Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 188–189).

The "Whence" vs. the "Whither" in the Gospel Community Debate

Assessments of the Gospel and Johannine community debate indicate that previous studies have been fairly preoccupied with the identification of the audiences of the Gospels in their social and historical reconstructions of the Gospel communities. For instance, Edward Klink's assessment of past and present scholarship until Richard Bauckham's *The Gospels for All Christians* makes no explicit distinction between issues of provenance and audience identity in the study of the Gospel communities. In his 2004 article, he remarks:

> Bauckham's thesis challenges and refutes the current consensus in Gospels scholarship which assumes that the Gospels were written for a specific church or group of churches, and proposes that it is more probable that the Gospels were written for general circulation around the churches with a general Christian audience in view.[7]

Similarly, in his later essay (2010), Klink, while acknowledging that "The early exegetes sensibly assumed that the Gospels were written for a specific reason and within a particular context,"[8] seems to take the distinction of both of these issues for granted, as nowhere in the remainder of his essay does he address this matter. With reference to studies on the Johannine community, it appears that the situation is quite similar. In his survey of scholarship from 1968 to present, Wally Cirafesi states:

> Thus, the goal of the current literature is specifically to trace the development of research … the nature and situation of the Johannine community as the audience of John's Gospel … Conducting a survey like this—by means of methodologies—will help paint a picture of what I believe is most needed in the ongoing debate over the so-called Johannine community. In the end, I will offer a suggestion regarding a potentially fruitful avenue of research as it pertains to the nature and social situation of the audience of John's Gospel.[9]

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7 Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 61. Bauckham states, "The present book challenges the consensus by arguing that it is probable that the Gospels were written for general circulation around the churches and so envisaged a very general Christian audience. Their implied readership is not specific but indefinite: any and every Christian community in the late-first-century Roman Empire" (Bauckham, "Introduction," in *The Gospels for All Christians*, 1).

8 Klink, "Gospel Audience and Origin," 2.

9 Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 174.

These two compatible assessments of the current state of scholarship on these two related fields of study reveal that scholars have continually assumed in their study that the origins of the Gospel communities naturally exposes the intended audience of the Gospel authors. As a matter of fact, the above stated assessments of both of these scholars who have surveyed the literature also reveal that they themselves have assumed a direct correlation between the origins of the Gospel communities and the intended audience of the Gospel authors. Conceptions of the *Sitz im Leben* of a particular Gospel community may directly correlate with authorship by virtue of the Gospel author being a member of it, but it may not necessarily be so with the Gospel author's intended audience.[10]

There are generally three major views that constitute current scholarship in the Gospel community debate. Klink aptly states the first view: "For decades Gospels research has considered it axiomatic that the four evangelists all wrote for their own particular communities."[11] This view continued in the years following Bauckham's influential *The Gospels for All Christians* in 1998, which various essays represent the counter proposal to the first view or the traditional consensus.[12] Bauckham argues for a plausible but highly speculative theory: "an evangelist writing a Gospel expected his work to circulate widely among the churches, had no particular audience in view, but envisaged as his audience any church (or any church in which Greek was understood) to which his work might find its way."[13]

Klink identifies four essential parts to Bauckham's thesis, and subsequently says that they have already been in one way or another addressed by some scholars prior to Bauckham's work.[14] One of them was the idea that "The early Christian movement was not a scattering of isolated, self-sufficient communities with little or no communication between them, but quite the opposite: a network of communities with constant, close communication among them-

10 As biblical scholars, our contemporary sociocultural experiences and thoughts as members of particular social communities are naturally reflected in the literature we write, especially when we provide explicit descriptions or statements about them. But it does not necessarily follow that the same community is the intended audience we have in mind.

11 Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 60; cf. idem, "Gospel Audience and Origin," 2.

12 See David C. Sim, "The Gospels for All Christians: A Response to Richard Bauckham," *JSNT* 84 (2001): 3–27 (5).

13 Bauckham, "For Whom Were Gospels Written?" in *The Gospels for All Christians*, 9–48 (11).

14 E.g., L.T. Johnson (1979), E.A. Judge (1980), Dale Allison (1988), Bengt Holmberg (1990), J.D. Kingsbury (1991), Graham Stanton (1992), Frederick Wisse (1992), and Stephen Barton (1992). See Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 61–65; and idem, "Gospel Audience and Origin," 2–8.

selves."[15] Accordingly, Bauckham states, "the social character of early Christianity was such that the idea of writing a Gospel purely for one's own community is unlikely to have occurred to anyone."[16] However, as the concept of community of practice will make clear, an apparent contradiction to Bauckham's theory is immediately palpable. I will say more about this below; here, I will simply note that the acknowledgment of a "network of communities," which implies individual communities in association and interaction with each other but without actually sharing a common cause, should automatically question the validity of Bauckham's proposal.

Bauckham's proposal received considerable critique from subsequent scholarship.[17] Perhaps the most significant critiques that merit attention came from Joel Marcus and Margaret Mitchell. On the one hand, Marcus argues that the existence of four different Gospels supports the community hypothesis.[18] If the four Gospel authors wrote from the same broader community (say, the entire society of ancient Palestine), it is perhaps unlikely that they would have intended their Gospels for the same general populace. This is especially the case when these four Gospels, which contain very similar materials, also evince individual peculiarities. To use an example, it is unlikely that the four temple incident accounts in the Gospels were all written for the same audience.[19] On the other hand, Mitchell shows that patristic evidence indicates that patristic authors held in balance a tension between the historical particularity (circumstances of origins) and theological universality (conveyance of a universal message) of the Gospels, which contradicts Bauckham's paradigm.[20] To a certain extent, Mitchell's argument resembles the conclusion generated by this study. As a community of practice, the Johannine community participated in the early church's mission of propagating the gospel of Christ. At the same time, however, it accomplished that mission in its own unique fashion and within its own set of communal circumstances.

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15 Bauckham, "For Whom Were the Gospels Written?" 30.

16 Bauckham, "For Whom Were the Gospels Written?" 30.

17 See Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 65–69; and idem, "Gospel Audience and Origin," 8–13.

18 See Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8* (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 2000), esp. 26–28.

19 For a recent study of the four temple incident accounts in the Gospels, see Hughson T. Ong, "Discussing Oral Traditions via Ethnography of Communication: The Temple Incident as a Test Case," in *The Origins of the Gospels* (ed. Stanley E. Porter, Hughson T. Ong, and David I. Yoon; forthcoming).

20 See Margaret M. Mitchell, "Patristic Counter-Evidence to the Claim that 'The Gospels Were Written for All Christians'," *NTS* 51 (2005): 36–79.

The third and last view offers a *via media* position, pointing out that "the solution to the problem of Gospel communities is not one of 'either-or' but of 'both-and'."[21] Craig Blomberg notes that the *via media* view seems sanest (or perhaps safest), since the Gospels were addressed to specific communities but were also aimed at reaching all Christians.[22] Like the assessments of both Klink and Cirafesi, it is evident from Blomberg's statement that he also does not acknowledge the distinction between "addressing specific communities" (or better, originating from specific communities) and "aiming at reaching all Christians." The former is something that can be deduced or inferred from the Gospel materials and from historical evidence, but the latter is something that we can only know if we are able to enter the mind of the Gospel authors.

This brief summative discussion reveals that the current state of the Gospel-community debate clearly conflates the investigation of the origin, situation, and nature of the Gospel communities with the determination of whether they were addressed to general or specific audiences, even though the *Sitz im Leben* of a particular community from which a Gospel was written is not actually transparent to its intended audience.

The status of the Johannine community debate is also similar. Scholars who employ either historical-critical methods or social-scientific methods have both assumed that the trail to discovering the character and situation of the Johannine community would lead to its purported audience.[23] For instance, Robert Kysar notes that scholarly attempts to reconstruct the community behind the Fourth Gospel essentially entail the question of the "community in whose midst it was written."[24] At first glance, Kysar appears to be solely focused upon an investigative understanding of the community of the Fourth Gospel. On closer scrutiny, however, he also connects the hypothetical composition of the Johannine community with the "whither" aspect of the debate as seen in the paper he delivered at the 2003 international conference on

21 For a summary of various positions arguing for this view, see Blomberg, "The Gospels," 118–121, 131–133.

22 Blomberg, "The Gospels," 133.

23 For a summary of these methodological issues, see Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 173–193.

24 Robert Kysar, "Community and Gospel, Vectors in Fourth Gospel Criticism," *Int* 31 (1977): 355–366 (355). Kysar identifies these research avenues, which he called "vectors," as the community's provenance, the community's traditions, the community's theology, the community's situation, and the community's special concerns (see Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 173–174).

the Gospel of John.[25] Similarly, in J. Louis Martyn's two-level reading of John, he explains that, whereas the first level of reading allows us to see the tradition of the church, the second level of reading helps us understand the unique social and religious circumstances of the community in which the Gospel writer *and his audience* lived. Thus, Martyn points out that "when we read the Fourth Gospel, we are listening both to tradition and to a new and unique interpretation of the tradition."[26] The core argument of Martyn's thesis, however, is that the conflict between the Johannine community and the Jewish synagogue points to the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel was "written by *and for* an isolated Jewish-Christian community struggling to deal with the legal ban from the synagogue" (emphasis added).[27] One last example should clinch my point. In his four-phase reconstruction of the Johannine community, Raymond Brown describes in the second phase the *Sitz im Leben* of the community, arguing that the community is built around the tension between maintaining internal love for its own members and addressing external opposition.[28] For Brown, therefore, John's Gospel "is not an in-group manifesto meant as a triumph over outsiders."[29] Regardless of whether Brown is correct with his historical reconstruction, the point is made that the apparent *Sitz im Leben* of the community reverberates the identity of its audience.

With reference to studies that employ methods from the social sciences, it is interesting to observe that scholars appear to make the same assumptions about the socio-cultural situation of the Gospels as a reflection of its audience composition. For example, Edwin Judge claims that the interests of the audience shaped the contents of the Gospels. Thus, if a particular Gospel condemns wealth, then it implies that its audience not only does not enjoy wealth, but that the Gospel writer is also critical of his audience's use of wealth.[30] The social-anthropological study of Wayne Meeks on the motif of the descending/ascending redeemer in the Fourth Gospel also posits a similar parallelism between social context and audience. Meeks was certainly correct with his con-

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25 See Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 73–74.

26 J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd ed.; Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2003 [1st ed., 1968]), 30–31.

27 Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 175.

28 See Raymond Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

29 Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*, 62.

30 See Edwin Judge, "The Social Identity of the First Christians: A Question of Method in Religious History," *JRH* 11 (1980): 201–217.

tention that this esoteric language and symbolism that pervades the Gospel is suggestive of insider knowledge on the part of members of the Johannine community.[31] However, as Cirafesi otherwise notes, the insider language and gnostic symbolism that Meeks identifies do not necessarily clarify the "isolated community of insiders as the intended readership of the Gospel … [in fact] the narrative would seem to suggest the opposite—that the author expected the Gospel to be read by people who were not part of an isolated insider group but rather needed clarification of certain elements that were unfamiliar."[32] This apparent contradiction between Meeks's conclusion and Cirafesi's critique of Meeks regarding the audience of John's Gospel clearly demonstrates the non-transparent correlation between the situational circumstances of a Gospel community and the identity of the audience of the Gospel.

I give a final example to further illustrate my point. Bruce Malina reconstructs the Johannine community using a sociological model. One of the conclusions generated by his study is that John's Gospel can be characterized as an anti-language—a social reality for John's audience that sets itself up within the larger society as a conscious alternative to it.[33] Like Meeks's study, Malina's findings of the Fourth Gospel as an anti-community that employs anti-language do not automatically mean that the anti-community itself was the intended audience of the Gospel author. For all we know, that anti-community, along with the author of John's Gospel, may have had a Jewish, a Gentile, or a general audience in mind. It may simply be that the Gospel was written in the midst of that kind of community.

This short survey of some of the previous hypotheses on our subject of interest indicates that scholars have usually tended to conflate the "whence" and the "whither" aspects of the community debate. But as I have stated at the outset of this study, these two aspects may not necessarily correlate with each other. While reality points to the fact that each of the Gospels was produced and circulated *from* a specific existent community, it does not follow that they were of necessity written *for* that same community. My contention is that particular communities would naturally have produced the Gospels, but at the same time, they were likely intended for all Christians, as these particular communities inevitably belonged to the larger Christian society,

31 See Wayne Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91 (1972): 44–72 (esp. 63).

32 Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 182.

33 See Bruce Malina, *The Gospel of John in Sociolinguistic Perspective: Protocol of the 48th Colloquy* (Berkeley, CA: Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1985), 11–17.

whose mission was to propagate the gospel and the Christ story. This *via media* view is different, but also not too different, than the ones proposed by others. For instance, Blomberg states, "it is entirely plausible to combine the two approaches: the Evangelists had specific communities foremost in view, but expected their writings to be copied and passed on, and eventually to be read widely."[34] Blomberg wishes to view the Gospels as being written for both a specific and a general readership;[35] however, as I have contended, it is perhaps more appropriate for us to simply say, on the basis of the available historical information, that they were written from specific communities but for general readership. As Andrew Lincoln posits, "although the narrative [of the Fourth Gospel] is shaped by and addresses the needs of the group from which it emerged, it also gives clear indications in its final form that its perspective transcends any particular experiences of this group and is addressed to a wider audience."[36] Lincoln's view, however, according to Klink, "is too vague to be of any help. How does he plan to differentiate between the community that created the Gospel and the community(ies) for which the Gospel was intended?"[37] Klink is right to suggest that what is needed is an appropriate definition for the term "community."[38] And it is partly because of Klink's suggestion that I offer this essay. I will in what follows attempt to define the Johannine community through the sociolinguistic concept of a "community of practice." My use and application of the concept of community of practice may be seen as model-driven, but this concept is certainly anchored in a pool of data observed in real communities that are studied by sociolinguists; hence, community of practice is simultaneously a data-driven approach.[39] Interpret-

34 See Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 47; cf. Blomberg, "The Gospels," 133.

35 Cf. Porter and Gabriel, *Johannine Writings*, 40, who state: "It is possible that the Gospels were written with a primary audience in mind, the one that the author was addressing or envisioning during the time of writing, but with secondary audiences also in mind, that is, audiences where the author knew or hoped that his Gospel would also be read and have an impact."

36 Andrew T. Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 265.

37 Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 78.

38 The other three items cited by Klink that need definition are the nature of the Gospel genre, the use and function of the Gospels in the early church, and the postmodern critique of modernity's historical-critical emphasis (see Klink, "The Gospel Community Debate," 78–80).

39 Cirafesi, "The Johannine Community," 189, wishes to distinguish between a prescriptive or model-driven and a descriptive or data-driven approach, arguing that, "the tendency has

ing the Johannine community through this model suggests that the Gospel was written from or by a specific community but was likely intended for all Christians.

The Johannine Community as a "Community of Practice"

In sociolinguistics, the concept of communities of practice is situated within the larger discussion of the relationship between individuals and communities. The critical point of these discussions usually hinges upon defining or describing the notion of "speech community"—a real community that exists in time and space and that utilizes language for social interaction. One of the early definitions provided for this notion of "speech community" came from the linguist-anthropologist Leonard Bloomfield: "A speech community is a group of people who interact by means of speech … differences of speech within a community are due to differences in the density of communication."[40] In many ways, Bloomfield's definition forecasted what later became a major field of research in quantitative sociolinguistics known as variationist linguistics (or language variation or change), which is often associated with the pioneering work of William Labov in his 1972 study of social stratification in the speech of New York residents.[41] During this time, when the field of sociolinguistics was still in its early stage of development, Labov defined speech community, based on his New York study, as a community that "participat[es] in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant with respect to particular levels of usage."[42] The main thesis of the Labovian framework is that members of a community produced basically similar linguistic performances and structures, such that the "uniformity of their orientation" is what makes

been for scholars to develop historical or sociological constructs with the goal of fitting the text of John within the particular construct."

40 Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1933), 153.

41 See William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), who analyzes sound (or phonetic) change in synchronic variation and in connection with the social forces of a community, that is, how such social factors as class and style shifts affect language patterns in structured ways. See also his earlier study on Martha's Vineyard, "The Social Motivation of Language Change," *Word* 19 (1963): 273–309.

42 Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, 120.

them a speech community.[43] Shortly before the turn of the twenty-first century, however, radical changes in the notion of individuals and communities proliferated, especially with reference to the fact that individuals may belong to more than one specific community. Consequently, sociolinguists now posit the notion of "sub-communities," which is defined by its own social networks and practices that merge and overlap with the larger society or else coalesce to form one.[44] The study of Robert Podesva of the stylistic resources of a gay doctor in San Francisco reveals that the gay doctor was able to produce two different speech styles and personalities as a caring doctor to his patients and as a gay diva with his friends.[45] As such, Mendoza-Denton points out that "the relationships between styles, individuals, and communities described by the Labovian framework are quite different from the relationships envisioned in current studies of … third wave of variation theory … often working in the framework of communities of practice."[46]

The concept of community of practice is therefore an analytic tool that is employed by sociolinguists as well as corporate business enterprises to understand communities, or even to cultivate such communities. One of its proponents, Etienne Wenger, defines community of practice as

> groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis … These people don't necessarily work together every day, but they meet because they find value in their interactions. As they spend time together, they typically share information, insight, and advice. They help each other solve problems. They discuss their situations, their aspirations, and needs. They ponder common issues, explore ideas, and act as sounding boards. They may create tools, standards, generic designs, manuals, and other documents—or they may simply develop a tacit understanding that they share. However they accumulate knowledge, they become informally bound by the value that they find in learning together … Over time, they develop a unique perspec-

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43 See Norma Mendoza-Denton, "Individuals and Communities," in Ruth Wodak, Barbara Johnstone, and Paul Kerswill, eds., *The Sage Handbook of Sociolinguistics* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011), 181–191 (182–183).

44 Mendoza-Denton, "Individuals and Communities," 186.

45 Robert J. Podesva, "Three Sources of Stylistic Meaning," *Texas Linguistic Forum, Proceedings of the Symposium about Language and Society—Austin*, 15(51) (2008): 1–10 (4–5). Also cited in Mendoza-Denton, "Individuals and Communities," 186–187.

46 Mendoza-Denton, "Individuals and Communities," 187.

> tive on their topic as well as a body of common knowledge, practices, and approaches. They may also develop personal relationships and established ways of interacting. They may even develop a common sense of identity. They become a community of practice.[47]

Community of practice is a specific type of social structure that needs to be distinguished from other kinds of social structures.[48] Wenger says that communities of practice are our "first knowledge-based social structures," even for people in antiquity, and therefore, it is not a novel idea.[49] For instance, in ancient Rome and in the Middle Ages, various corporations and guilds provide the social connections and apprenticeships for craftsmen and artisans as well as the general populace to strengthen the moral fiber and mutual commitment of their society.[50] Everybody belongs to a community of practice—school, home, workplace, marketplace, church, geographic region, etc. And communities of practice take various forms—small or big (member size), long-lived or short-lived (years of existence), collocated or distributed (social distance or frequency of interaction), homogeneous or heterogeneous (people from similar or dissimilar backgrounds), inside and across boundaries (existing within or stretching across divisional boundaries), spontaneous or unintentional (emerged naturally or created), and unrecognized to institutionalized (formal or informal).[51] Yet, despite these various forms that communities of practice take, they all share a basic structure that uniquely combines three fundamental elements: a domain of knowledge, a community of people, and a shared practice.[52] The interplay of all three elements makes a real community. I will discuss each of these fundamental elements in what follows, correlating them with the Johannine community.

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47 Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, and William M. Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2002), 4–5. In his earlier work, Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 73–83, defines communities of practice by means of three criteria: mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire.

48 For a brief discussion of other structures, see Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 40–45.

49 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 5.

50 See, for instance, Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: Free Press, 1964), who traced the history of professional groups from ancient times through the twentieth century.

51 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 24–27.

52 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 27.

The Proclamation of the Jesus Story—A Shared Domain with the Synoptic Gospels

Members of each of the aforementioned forms of communities share and "steward" a critical knowledge domain (or multiple knowledge domains). A domain establishes the common ground and identity of members, affirms their purpose and value, gives meaning to their actions, and defines the set of issues with which they are concerned.[53] Because the sharing of a domain creates accountability among the members of a community, it naturally leads to the formation and development of practices.[54] The development of practices arises through the goals and needs of the community. But communities of practice are not just defined by their goals and practices, since their goals and practices are naturally intertwined with the passions and aspirations of the members.[55] A community without a shared domain is considered merely to be a group of people. And a community that has no passion for its domain will flounder. A well-developed domain, however, will inspire members of the community to "steward" that domain, as they are committed to take responsibility for its growth and development.[56] A domain of knowledge may be shared with other groups or communities and can "become focal points for connecting people in different units who are working on potentially related projects."[57] Domains are easily identified and defined when there is an established discourse.[58] The primary discourse topic the community focuses on determines the knowledge domain of the community. The following questions may be asked to determine a community's domain: "What topics or issues do we really care about … What is in it for us … Are we ready to take some leadership in promoting and developing our domain … What kind of influence do we want to have?"[59]

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53 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 27–28.

54 See L. Berry, V. Zeithaml, and A. Parasuraman, "Five Imperatives for Improving Service Quality," *Sloan Management Review* 31.4 (1990): 29–38; and Jeanne Liedtka, "Linking Competitive Advantage with Communities of Practice," *Journal of Management Inquiry* 8.1 (1999): 5–16.

55 See T.M. Amabile, "Motivating Creativity in Organizations: On Doing What You Love and Loving What You Do," *California Management Review* 40.1 (1997): 39–58; Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996); and M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (New York: Anchor Doubleday, 1966). These scholars have pointed out the importance of passion for a domain to encourage creativity and create innovations.

56 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 32.

57 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 20.

58 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 30.

59 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 45.

As a community of practice, the Johannine community obviously shares a common knowledge domain with the Synoptic Gospels. Despite the arguments of those who wish to emphasize their differences,[60] there are several things that we can mention to demonstrate that John shares a common domain with the Synoptic authors. Let me first emphasize that the clearest overarching domain among the four Gospels is the goal and passion to tell, preserve, and continue the Jesus story (Matt 28:19–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46–49; John 20:31; 21:35). This goal and passion most likely began shortly after Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:4–9). According to Bo Reicke, the formation of the Gospel traditions started with coherent reports, notably the passion and resurrection traditions, of Christ's works and words in Jerusalem. And from this, the early Christians had to add a beginning and a middle story, such as Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist and the Galilean ministry, respectively, in order to produce and complete the framework of the Jesus narrative.[61] Although Reicke focuses only on the Synoptic Gospels, there are enough parallel narratives across the four Gospels to indicate that all of them share this same goal and passion, representing a single, large Christian community in the first century. This is clearly seen in the parallel narratives across the four Gospels, most of which indicate the key events in the life of Jesus.[62]

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60 The topics here can be subsumed under the heading "the dehistoricization of John," a phrase coined by Paul N. Anderson in the John, Jesus, and History project (SBL 2002), which include topics on John's differences from the Synoptics, the Synoptic omissions in John, the Johannine omissions in the Synoptics, the Johannine Jesus speaking and acting in the mode of the evangelist, the Johannine material rendered in response to the history of the Johannine situation, and the Johannine evangelist spiritualizing and theologizing according to his purposes. See Paul N. Anderson, "Why This Study Is Needed, and Why It Is Needed Now," in Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher, eds., *John, Jesus, and History, Vol. 1, Critical Appraisals of Critical Views* (SBLSymS 44; Atlanta: SBL, 2007), 16–43.

61 See Bo Reicke, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), chapters 2 and 3.

62 For example, John the Baptist (Matt 3:1–6; Mark 1:2–6; Luke 3:1–6; John 1:19–23) and his messianic preaching (Matt 3:11–12; Mark 1: 7–8; Luke 3:15–18; John 1:24–28); Jesus' baptism (Matt 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:29–34); the temple cleansing (Matt 21:12–13; Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45–46; John 2:14–22); the journey to Galilee (Matt 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 4:14; John 4:1–3); the Galilean ministry (Matt 4:13–17; Mark 1:14–15; Luke 4:14–15; John 4:43–46); the encounter with the centurion (Matt 8:5–13; Mark 7:30; Luke 7:1–10; John 4:46–54); the healing of the paralytic (Matt 9:1–8; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26; John 5:8–9); the disciples' fate (Matt 10:17–25; Mark 13:9–13; Luke 12:11–12; John 13:16); the reward of discipleship (Matt 10:40–42; Mark 9:41; Luke 10:16; John 13:20); the anointing of a woman (Matt 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:36–50; John 12:1–8); Jesus' true family

Second, it has been traditionally argued that, in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, which are often treated as "historical" Gospels, John is considered a "spiritual" Gospel. But this argument perhaps is untenable for several reasons. One is that more recent scholarly discussions have argued that "Each evangelist presents theology along with history and 'interprets' Jesus for readers."[63] To be sure, even someone like David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874), who does not believe in the historicity of the Gospels, can still say that each of the Gospels painted a preconceived theological portrait of Jesus.[64] This implies that the purpose or goal of each of the four Evangelists, though carried out in different ways, was clearly to present Jesus for readers. Another reason is that, as we have seen from the Gospel parallels, there are enough historical materials in John to indicate that it is as much a "historical" Gospel as the Synoptics.[65] The textual agreement of the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially in reference to John the Baptist, with the Gospel of John further supports this point.[66] Third, historical evidence shows that John's Gospel was used in the same manner as the Synoptics from

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(Matt 12:46–50; Mark 3:31–35; Luke 8:19–21; John 15:14); the feeding of the five thousand (Matt 14:13–21; Mark 6:32–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–15); Peter's confession (Matt 16:13–20; Mark 8:27–30; Luke 9:18–21; John 6:67–71); the saying "if any person would come after me" (Matt 16:24–28; Mark 8:34–9:1; Luke 9:23–27; John 12:25); concerning true greatness (Matt 18:1–5; Mark 9:33–37; Luke 9:46–48; John 13:20); the day of the son of man (Matt 24:23; Mark 13:19–23; Luke 17:22–37; John 12:25); the anointing at Bethany (Matt 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:36–50; John 12:1–8); the triumphal entry (Matt 21:1–9; Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:28–40; John 12:12–19); Jesus foretelling his betrayal (Matt 26:21–25; Mark 14:18–21; Luke 22:21–23; John 13:21–30); prediction of Peter's denial (Matt 26:30–35; Mark 14:26–31; Luke 22:31–34; John 13:36–38); Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest, Jesus before the Sanhedrin, and Peter's denial (Matt 26:36–75; Mark 14:32–15:1; Luke 22:39–62; John 18:1–27); Jesus before Pilate and the release of Barabbas (27:1–2, 11–23; Mark 15:1–14; Luke 23:1–5, 17–23; John 18:28–40); events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion (Matt 27:24–61; Mark 15:15–47; Luke 23:24–56; John 19:16–42); and Jesus and the women in the resurrection account (Matt 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–18). See also Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb, eds., *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), esp. 431–432, 825–853; and Lee M. McDonald, *The Story of Jesus in History and Faith: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 174–176.

63 Gary M. Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John: A Practical Guide* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 19.

64 See David F. Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, Vol. 2* (trans. Marian Evans; New York: Calvin Blanchard, 1860), 454, 880.

65 On this, see John A.T. Robinson, *Twelve New Testament Studies* (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1962), 94–106.

66 See Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (rev. ed.; NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 36.

the subsequent centuries after Jesus to the period shortly before the Enlightenment. John's Gospel was highly regarded as an authoritative document to combat the heresies spawned in gnostic circles at that time. Athanasius and the Council of Nicea (AD 325), for instance, appealed to the Fourth Gospel to affirm Jesus' divinity.[67] This use of John's Gospel by the early church fathers validates the fact that it shares a similar knowledge domain with the other Gospel communities. Despite its own peculiarities, the central message it communicates to readers does not go far beyond that of the Synoptic Gospels'. Fourth and last, and most importantly, contrary to those who want to argue for a literary dependence of the Gospels, it is very likely that all the Gospels, including John, were written on the basis of the oral traditions and testimonies that circulated during the first century, such that we are able to see many parallel materials across the four of them. To take the temple incident accounts as an example (Matt 21:12–13; Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45–46; John 2:14–22), while there are sufficient differences in the material to indicate that the four accounts might have originated from different speech communities, there is also at the same time good evidence to support the theory that all four Gospel writers included the temple incident to provide the reason for Jesus' conflict with and (eventual) arrest by the Jewish leaders.[68] That John's Gospel originated from the same oral streams of traditions as the Synoptic Gospels should say much about its shared domain with them. There are certainly more things that we can mention here which space does not permit, but the main point to highlight is that the shared domain of the Johannine community with the other Gospel communities is undoubtedly the proclamation of the Jesus story.

Social Relations, Jewish Background, and "Independent" Traditions—Unique Features of the Johannine Community

A shared knowledge domain or an intellectual process is not the only thing that defines communities of practice. Communities of practice are also defined in terms of social relationships or the sense of belonging of their members.[69] The element of community brings the idea of group interaction, shared learning, relationship building, and mutual commitment.[70] Interpersonal relation-

67 See Maurice Wiles, *The Spiritual Gospel: The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

68 See Ong, "Discussing Oral Traditions" (forthcoming).

69 See C.J.G. Gersick et al., "Learning from Academia: The Importance of Relationships in Professional Life," *Academy of Management Journal* 43.6 (2000): 1026–1044.

70 See Thomas Bender and Seldon M. Kruger, *Community and Social Change in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 7–8.

ships are important, as members need to interact regularly on issues that are important to their domain.[71] When there is low social interaction, a community's domain cannot be properly maintained, developed, and advanced. Regular interaction achieves for the community a shared understanding of their domain as well as the best approach to their practice, and in the long run, naturally builds trust and respect and a sense of common history and identity.[72] While the concept of community often involves the idea of commonality, it also at the same time connotes heterogeneity, that is, members "take on various roles, officially and unofficially. They create their own specialties or styles ... In other words, each member develops a unique individual identity in relation to the community."[73] Moreover,

> communities tend to divide into subgroups around topics or geographic location, and beyond 150 members, the subgroups usually develop strong local identities ... these nested subcommunities within a single large community allow members to be very engaged locally while retaining a sense of belonging to the larger community.[74]

There are some obvious differences between the Johannine community and the other Gospel communities in their portrayal of the social relations among Gospel characters in the Gospels' parallel accounts. These differences may indicate the level or the kind of "personal" or "mental" relationship the community has with the Gospel characters. And here, the Johannine community appears to be unique in many ways. I will mention three things that will point to these kinds of differences.

First, the Synoptic authors tell the John the Baptist story differently from the Gospel of John. Whereas the Synoptic Gospels narrate the John the Baptist story from a third-person perspective (Matt 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22), the Fourth Gospel tells the story by putting it on the lips of John the Baptist (John 1:29–34). Moreover, the longer account in the Fourth Gospel provides

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71 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 34.

72 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 35. This seems to contrast the concept of "occupational communities," which does not pay careful attention to mutual and regular interaction as a defining element. See, for example, J. Van Manaan and S. Barley, "Occupational Communities: Culture and Control in Organizations," in *Research in Organization Behavior, Vol. 6* (ed. B.M. Staw and L.L. Cummings; Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1984), 287–365.

73 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 35.

74 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 36.

further details about John the Baptist (John 1:6–8, 15, 19–40), highlighting the importance of the roles of both the Baptist and Jesus. It appears that the objective of the Synoptic Gospels is to underscore simply the baptism of Jesus by John as inaugurating Jesus' public ministry. For John's Gospel, however, at least three things are emphasized: the testimony of John about Jesus as the Son of God, the identity of Jesus as the savior of the world, and John's subordination to Jesus. In fact, the only textual similarity between John and the Synoptics is found in the phrase τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν (John 1:32; cf. Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22). In addition, only John mentions that the Baptist was baptizing in "Bethany beyond the Jordan" (1:28; cf. 3:23). For this reason, Gary Burge asks, "Does this mean that the community that followed John was having contact with followers of John the Baptist?"[75]

Second, one cannot fail to observe the kind of social relation the community could have had with "the Jews" (Ἰουδαῖοι). The term Ἰουδαῖος appears sixty-six or sixty-seven times in John as opposed to the sixteen times in all of the Synoptic Gospels.[76] In his seminal study of the Johannine community, Martyn argues that the expulsion of the Johannine community from the Jewish synagogues underlines that this was the main cause of the conflict that erupted between the community and the Jews (see above). The relation of the community to the Jerusalem temple is also noticeable (see John 5:2; cf. 2:19–20; 11:47–52). It is as if John, according to C.H. Dodd, still sees the city standing, despite its destruction by the Romans in ca. AD 70.[77] Furthermore, it is only in John's Gospel that we find dualistic language (e.g. light-darkness, above-below), which was originally thought to have originated from a Greek community, that parallels the language of the community of Jews at Qumran. Thus, Burge points out that "By the mid-1950s New Testament scholars began to speculate that the cultural setting of Qumran was closer to the Johannine world than the proposed Hellenistic world so often offered to explain John's Gospel."[78]

75 Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, 26.

76 Some say the term appears seventy-one times. See Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, 26.

77 C.H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 120. Consequently, John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 264, argues for a date of the Gospel of John that is prior to the destruction of the temple.

78 Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, 13. C.F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922), even goes to the extent of arguing that the Gospel had originally been written in Aramaic. Cf. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967).

Third and last, scholars have also affirmed the strictly Jewish background of the Gospel. The statement of the Cambridge scholar and orthodox Jew, Israel Abrahams, seems convincingly true in light of the many subtle allusions to the Old Testament and Jewish tradition in the Fourth Gospel (e.g. John 3:14 [Num 21:9]; John 6:26–59 [a possible Jewish midrash on Exod 19:4]; and John 10:34–38 [a midrash on Ps 82:6]: "To us Jews, the Fourth Gospel is the most Jewish of the four!").[79] To be sure, in John 2:6, when John refers to the "stone" water jars, only Jews would have been able to understand the significance of such language of ritual purification.[80] From these examples, we may infer the degree of "familiarity" or "intimacy" as well as the type of "relationship" the Gospel author and his community had with the Baptist and the Jews, which apparently differs from the evidence we find in the Synoptic Gospels.

There are also at least four "independent" Jesus traditions that are only found in the Fourth Gospel—the encounter with Nicodemus (3:1–21), the dialogue with the Samaritan woman (4:4–26), the raising of Lazarus (11:1–44), and the upper room discourses (13:31–16:33). The occurrence of these traditions may indicate either that John invented these traditions or that they are simply traditions unique to the Johannine community. In fact, in his influential *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, Dodd concludes, "Behind the Fourth Gospel lies an ancient tradition independent of the other gospels, and meriting serious consideration as a contribution to our knowledge of the historical facts concerning Jesus Christ."[81] These independent traditions may also indicate that Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and Lazarus, among others, were members of (or at least were in contact with) the Johannine community. The placement of these independent traditions has caused scholars to think about rearranging the "dislocated" passages in the Fourth Gospel. For instance, the placement of Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman would have flowed more naturally if it were immediately followed by ch. 6, where it says, "Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the sea of Galilee" (6:1). Instead, ch. 5, which deals with incidents in Jerusalem, follows the Samaritan woman episode.[82] Another instance of dislocation concerns the sequence of the upper room discourses. J.H. Bernard suggests that the order of sequence should be

79 Stephen C. Neill and Tom Wright, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861–1986* (2nd ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 338.

80 Cf. Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, 11–12.

81 Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 423.

82 See Morris, *John*, 46.

13:1–30→15→16→13:31–38→14→17.[83] The main contention is that 14:31 should have immediately preceded ch. 17. These kinds of "dislocations" in the Fourth Gospel are telling enough to indicate that the Gospel originated from a unique community in comparison with the Synoptic Gospels. Additionally, the discourses of the Nicodemus and Samaritan accounts, as well as the Lazarus story, which is considered a miraculous sign that Jesus performed, underscore the fact that the Johannine community has a different way of proclaiming the Jesus story and highlighting its important elements.

All these seem to suggest that the social relationships among members of the Johannine community are quite different from the other Gospel communities; it is possible that what the author of John and his community wanted to convey was that salvation is equally available to the Jews (Lazarus) and everyone else (e.g. the Pharisees [Nicodemus] and the Gentiles [the Samaritan woman]), especially in light of the fact that the Jews in John's Gospel continued to discredit Jesus' identity and attempted to find ways to kill him or, at the very least, they did not understand what was going on (see John 8:21–59). This could be an example of a specific domain of knowledge that only members of the Johannine community would have shared and understood.

The Johannine Symbols and Styles and Aporias—Shared Practices of the Johannine Community

The concept of shared practice refers to the sociolinguistic repertoire of a community, such as "a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories, and documents that community members share. Whereas the domain denotes the topic the community focuses on, the practice is the specific knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains."[84] A community operates as a "living curriculum" through its concepts, symbols, and analytic methods. A shared practice provides the linguistic means for a community to communicate ideas quickly and effectively and to motivate conversations. To be specific, in relation to the domain of a community, Wenger notes that

> It [i.e., practice] denotes a set of socially defined ways of doing things in a specific domain: a set of common approaches and shared standards that create a basis for action, communication, problem solving, performance, and accountability. These communal resources include a variety

83 J.H. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 1:xx.

84 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 29.

> of knowledge types: cases and stories, theories, rules, frameworks, models, principles, tools, experts, articles, lessons learned, best practices, and heuristics. They include both the tacit and the explicit aspects of the community's knowledge.[85]

Thus, a shared practice can also be understood as a kind of mini-culture that distinguishes one particular community from another, or a sub-culture within a larger culture.[86]

Scholars since the nineteenth century have noted and listed many of the literary characteristics of the Fourth Gospel in comparison with the other Gospels. They say that these literary characteristics may either be intentional or incidental, but they clearly are the distinctive style of the Fourth Gospel. These stylistic features include the following: general textual features, misunderstanding, irony, asides, hierarchies of meaning, and hidden glimpses of Christ.[87] I will simply summarize some of them below to highlight the point that these are some shared practices that may only have been unique to the Johannine community. First, some of the more significant textual features that may be unique to the Fourth Gospel are: (1) the use of the "double amen" (ἀμὴν ἀμήν) when Jesus is trying to reinforce his teaching (e.g. 1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24–25; 8:34, 51, 58). However, the Johannine narratives are told predominantly from a first-person perspective, that is, Jesus, which may otherwise explain this textual feature; (2) Jesus' address to his audience as τεκνία or παιδία (e.g., 13:33; 21:5; cf. 1 John 2:1, 12, 18); (3) the "Johannine asides," parenthetical statements to clarify aspects of the story for readers who may not understand (e.g. 1:42; 4:2, 9; 12:6; 21:19); and (4) the phrase ὁ πέμψας με in reference to how Jesus refers to himself (e.g. 1:33; 4:34; 5:24; 6:38, 39; 8:16, 18).

Second, scholars have also noted some of the Jesus statements that immediately puzzled his hearers as a unique literary device of the Fourth Gospel. These instances of the Johannine "misunderstanding" can be seen in the use of peculiar expressions that are found virtually only in John—e.g. "born again"

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85 Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities*, 38.

86 See E.H. Schein, "Three Cultures of Management: The Key to Organization Learning," *Sloan Management Review* 38.1 (1996): 9–20; and S.A. Sackman, "Culture and Subcultures: An Analysis of Organization Knowledge," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 37.1 (1992): 140–161.

87 See Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, 87–99; Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters* (BTNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 133–134; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (2 vols.; AB 29, 29A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966–1970), 1:497–518.

(ch. 3), “destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (2:19), “living water” (4:10–15), “food” (4:31–34), “bread from heaven” (6:31–35), and Jesus will be “lifted up” (12:32–34).

Third, the use of irony in the Fourth Gospel has caused scholars to even wonder if the entire Gospel is actually ironic. That the one who created the world would be rejected by the created world (1:3, 10–11), that Nicodemus would enter his mother’s womb again to be “born again” (chapter 3), that the Pharisees would not be able to follow where Jesus is going (7:32–36), and that it is better for one man to die than for the whole world to perish (11:48–50) are some of the “ironic” statements in the Fourth Gospel that would have appeared ironic to Jesus’ audience.

Fourth, Burge points out that John also used a catalog of titles for Christ in a short span of time to provide what he wants to call the “hidden glimpses of Christ.” In 1:35–51, for example, the reference to Jesus by various people as Jesus, lamb of God, *rabbi*, Christ, Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph, son of God, king of Israel, and son of man, which, according to Burge, is by no means an accident. Another example is the pervasive use of the Ἐγώ εἰμι statements.

Fifth and last, scholars have also pointed to the instances of aporias (“difficulties” or a difficulty in logic) in the Fourth Gospel.[88] These aporias help identify the literary “seams” of the Gospel narrative. The most obvious one is found in the Johannine prologue (1:1–18), which, according to scholars, is a distinctive idiom or poetic style that introduces the narrative that should commence at 1:19, which would parallel the starting point of the synoptic Gospels. A second aporia is evident in the “dislocated” passages in the narrative as mentioned above—in chapters 5 and 6, Jesus travels from Samaria to Galilee and to Jerusalem, then back to Galilee and Jerusalem again, without transitions. A third and final one is Jesus’ statement at 16:5: “None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ” where in fact, two of his disciples, Peter (13:36) and Thomas (14:5), have already previously asked that question.[89] In many ways, there is clear evidence of the unique shared practices of the Johannine community that makes it a Gospel written from a specific community.

88 Eduard Schwartz, “Aporien im vierten Evangelium,” in *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* (Philologisch-historische Klasse) (Göttingen: Commissionsverlag der Dieterich’schen Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1907): 342–372; (1908): 115–188, 497–650, was the one who coined the term, and the term was later used by Robert T. Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessors: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), and Howard M. Teeple, *The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John* (Evanston, IL: Religion and Ethics Institute, 1974).

89 For a list of these aporias, see Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John*, 63–67.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have tried to argue for two equally important things that concern the Gospel and Johannine community debate. My first argument concerns the distinction that needs to be made between the study of the origins and social settings of the Gospel communities and the identification of the audience of the Gospel authors. I have claimed that, while the former can continually be a fruitful field of research, the latter is perhaps something that is not only indeterminable, but is also an objective that must not be conflated with the former. Consequently, my second argument states that the Johannine community was written from a specific community that belonged to the larger Christian community of first-century Palestine. I have tried to support my case via the sociolinguistic concept of "community of practice." Applying this concept to the Fourth Gospel has indicated that the Johannine community shared a common knowledge domain, that is, the proclamation of the Jesus story, with the other Gospel communities. It is also a distinct community of its own as exemplified by its unique ideas of the social relationships between the Johannine Gospel characters, and it clearly has its own set of shared practices that are different from other communities.

The Function of Social Conflict in the Gospel of John

Marc-André Argentino and Guy Bonneau

In his work entitled, *The Function of Social Conflict*, Lewis Coser examines the concept of social conflict to determine what it brings out empirically. This perspective on social conflict relates well to the Jesus narrative in the canonical Gospels. Coser's analysis is significant, as social conflict is an axiomatic element in the narrative of the Gospel of John. However, the function which social conflict fulfills is less obvious. Conflict is elementary to the reciprocity of the Fourth Gospel's dramatic narrative (e.g. the conflict between light and darkness or between the world above and the world below). Moreover, the goal of the Johannine plot—that of Jesus Christ dying on the cross—hinges on the conflictual interactions between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. Without this conflict, the salvific climax of the Johannine text could not be achieved.

It is important to clarify what we mean by "conflict." For the purpose of this essay, we shall use the definition provided by Coser, where "conflict" is understood as "a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals."[1] This is a provisional definition, however, and is used simply as a genesis for our analysis. The concept of conflict is developed depending on its contextual application, which is situated within the confines of the Johannine narrative. Our preliminary definition of conflict is broad; consequently, it will be helpful to distinguish between conflict and hostile attitudes or feelings. As Coser clarifies, "Hostile attitudes are predispositions to engage in conflict behavior; conflict, on the contrary, is always a *trans*-action."[2] The nature of conflicts necessitates an interaction between two parties (minimum). However, hostile attitudes or feelings do not require an interaction or the involvement of other parties. Rather, they can be accomplished by an individual or a single party. This concept of *trans*-action is essential to the social function of conflict, for "conflict is not always dysfunctional for the relationship within which it occurs; often conflict is necessary to maintain such a relationship. Without ways to vent hostility toward each other, and to express dissent, group mem-

1 Lewis Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1964), 8.

2 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 37.

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bers might feel completely crushed and might react by withdrawal. By setting free pent-up feelings of hostility, conflicts serve to maintain a relationship."[3] In the give and take of social conflict, conflict is not always a negative thing, the *trans*-actions can be positive, as they can reinforce group unity, refocus a group on the significant elements of its teachings, bring them together, etc.

Furthermore, the function of conflict is affected by the relationship between an individual's engagement with a group as well as the types of relationships forged within the group. In his work, Coser demonstrates that groups, which require only a partial cooperation of its members, as well as a partial emotional commitment to the group (due to the neutral affective nature of the members' functions and relationships to one another), birth a conflict that is less violent and fervent than groups, which require the total cooperation, emotional commitment, and affective relationship of the members. Coser states:

> In groups that appeal only to a peripheral part of their members' personality, or, to use Parson's terminology, in groups in which relations are functionally specific and affectively neutral, conflicts are apt to be less sharp and violent than in groups wherein ties are diffused and affective, engaging the total personality of their members. In effect, this suggests that conflicts in groups such as Rotary Clubs or Chambers of Commerce are likely to be less violent than in groups such as religious sects or radical parties of the Communist types.[4]

Due to the volatile nature of the latter types of groups, Coser demonstrates why there are frequent divisions and ruptures in these types of groups. Those who participate fully in the life of such groups will be concerned with its continuing existence; therefore, if they witness a breaking away of a member with whom they have shared difficulties, secrets, responsibilities, or functions within the group, it is probable that they will react with violence towards this type of treason, as opposed to the occurrence of the same situation in a group where members are less involved. In such groups, we can determine that there are two groups by which conflict can be initiated: the *renegade* and the *heretic*.

This brings us to our main point: in light of Coser's considerations, we will be examining the function of social conflict in the Gospel of John. The analysis will be conducted under a threefold lens: (1) we will first examine the function of social conflict from the point of view of the heretics in the Johannine narrative;

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3 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 48.

4 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 68–69.

(2) we will then examine it from the perspective of "renegadism"; and finally (3), we will examine the function of social conflict from the perspective of those who do not know whether they believe in Jesus or not in the Fourth Gospel.

The Heretic

Social conflict in religious groups follows a logical pattern; there is an in-group, and there is an out-group. The in-group and the out-group, as opposites, are in conflict with one another. As a member of the in-group, if you will partake in social conflict—or more specifically, if you desire to disrupt, go against, or uphold an alternative to the in-group's *status quo*—there are two roles that you can undertake, that is, you can be either a renegade or a heretic. To begin, we will examine the heretic. Unlike the renegade who leaves the fold of the group, the heretic remains within the community; therefore, the heretic becomes a source of division within the group itself, he creates confusion and breaks down the boundaries that are built up by the teachings of the group. As Coser explains, "The renegade will fight them, the heretic will proselytize."[5] This explains the main problem with a heretic: he maintains the central values of the group and competes for the loyalty of its members; this continues to take place even after he has clearly left the group. Coser sums up the role of a heretic:

> The heretic presents a somewhat different problem to the group than does the apostate. At times the reaction of the group against the heretic is even more hostile than against the apostate. Whereas the latter deserts the group in order to go over to the enemy, the heretic presents a more insidious danger: by upholding the group's central values and goals, he threatens to split it into factions that will differ as to the means for implementing its goal. Unlike the apostate, the heretic claims to uphold the group's values and interests, only proposing different means to this end or variant interpretations of the official creed. Heresy derives from a Greek verb which means "to choose" or "to take for oneself". The heretic proposes alternatives where the group wants no alternatives to exist. As Robert Michels wrote, "The hatred of the party is directed, not in the first place against the opponents of its own view of the world order, but against the dreaded rivals in the political field, against those who are competing for the same end." In this respect, the heretic calls forth all

5 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 71.

> the more hostility in that he still has much in common with his former fellow-members in sharing their goals.[6]

From Coser's explanation, we can begin to understand the perspective of the Jews and comprehend the role they must play in the Johannine narrative. From this sociological point of view, the death of Jesus on the cross was inevitable, as he posed a real threat to the Jewish community and the Jewish faith system as many of the scenes in the Johannine Gospel demonstrate.

The first element that differentiates the renegade from the heretic is the fact that the heretic remains within the folds of the community. In the Gospel of John, we see this as Jesus teaches in the temple: "About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach" (7:14); "Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them" (8:2); "He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple" (8:20). Jesus infringes upon the teaching grounds of the Jewish authorities; he is an enemy from within the community itself. Not only does he teach where the Jewish authorities teach and the Jews worship, but he also claims to uphold their beliefs and values, all the while offering a new and better perspective coming from the Father:

> "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me. Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own. Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him. Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why are you looking for an opportunity to kill me?" The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is trying to kill you?" Jesus answered them, "I performed one work, and all of you are astonished. Moses gave you circumcision (it is, of course, not from Moses, but from the patriarchs), and you circumcise a man on the sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the sabbath in order that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I healed a man's whole body on the sabbath? Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."
>
> John 7:16–24 NRSV

Jesus offers an alternative to the Jewish people, a teaching from above, from the Father, but the Pharisees do not want any alternative. Jesus presents a tempting

6 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 70.

alternative as he promises to provide living water and the bread from heaven; he produces healing and miracles, but the Jewish authorities produce none. Consequently, following in line with the situation presented by Coser, Jesus creates a divide in the crowd of Jewish worshipers, as some of those who were present believe in him, while others do not, because they think that a prophet cannot come from Galilee.

> When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Messiah." But some asked, "Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he? Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" So there was a division in the crowd because of him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.
>
> John 7:40–44 NRSV

Not only does he create a divide within the common people, Jesus also manages to dichotomize the Pharisees and Nicodemus: "Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" (7:51). As the division and struggle between the Jews and Pharisees intensify in the Johannine narrative, the fate of Jesus is sealed as the Pharisees plan to arrest and kill him. This is a social consequence of the division created by the heretic from within a religious community, as Coser explains:

> Groups engaged in continued struggle with the outside tend to be intolerant within. They are unlikely to tolerate more than limited departures from the group unity. Such groups tend to assume a sect-like character: they select membership in terms of special characteristics and so tend to be limited in size, and they lay claim to the total personality involvement of their members. Their social cohesion depends upon total sharing of all aspects of group life and is reinforced by the assertion of group unity against the dissenter. The only way they can solve the problem of dissent is through the dissenter's voluntary or forced withdrawal.[7]

His actions as a heretic within the Jewish community are the source of his arrest, and later, of his death, for it is on these points that the high priest questions him prior to having him brought to Pilate: "I have spoken openly to

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7 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 103.

the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret" (18:20). His claim to be the Son of God and to be a king in his teachings is the source of his crucifixion in 19:7 and 11, as he makes himself a heretic in the eyes of the empire by claiming to be a king.

The Renegade

Unlike the heretic, the renegade has a clear-cut role; he or she leaves the in-group and joins the out-group. They do not create a divide from within by claiming to uphold similar values, while presenting a different or better perspective like the heretic. The renegade creates a clear division, as he leaves the original in-group and becomes the source of its opposition by up-holding the out-group's values. The bridges they burn in doing so leave them with no other choice than to dedicate themselves fully to the defense of the out-group. As Coser defines,

> The renegade contributes to the strength of the out-group to which he transfers his allegiance not only, as Simmel points out, because, unable to go back, he will be more firm in his loyalty to the new group than those who have belonged to it all along, but also because he gives it the increased conviction of the righteousness of its cause. This in itself makes him more dangerous in the eyes of his former associates than any other member of the out-group. Furthermore, not only will the renegade emphasize his loyalty to the new group by engaging in its defense and crusading for its values, but, as Max Scheler, has pointed out, he will also see it as his chief goal to "engage in a continuous chain of acts of revenge on his spiritual pasts." Thus his attack on the values of his previous group does not cease with his departure, but continues long after the rupture has been completed. To the group he has left, he appears as a symbol of the danger in which the group finds itself in the face of potential enemy attack.[8]

In the case of the Johannine Gospel, the renegades leave the Jewish in-group to join the heretical teachings of its leader, Jesus of Nazareth. The difficulty with the disciples is that they are fickle characters in the Johannine text, where

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8 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 70.

they believe in Jesus due to the miracles he performs and recognize who he is, yet they do not demonstrate "perfect" faith. Does this variance in belief and faith affect their role as "renegades," since the lack of faith does not "defend and crusade for" the values presented by Jesus, such as Peter's denial of Jesus in 18:17, 25–26? An analysis of what they accomplish in the Gospel of John might illuminate further this slight conundrum. Therefore, to evaluate the "renegade" status of the disciples, we will examine if they contribute to the strength of the out-group. Are they firm in their loyalty, and do they increase the conviction of the cause? Do they defend and crusade for the Christian values?

The disciples are the disseminators of the faith; this is established early on in 1:35–51 as the disciples bring faith to others. Transmission of the faith is the first quality of the disciples that is presented in the Fourth Gospel, which begins in v. 36, with John the Baptist pointing to Jesus and exclaiming that he is the Lamb of God. Consequently, this leads John's disciples to follow Jesus. Andrew, one of the two disciples, goes to find his brother (1:40) and informs him that he has "found the Messiah." Simon is brought to Jesus (1:42), and the first disciple is brought to the faith. Next, Jesus finds Philip (1:43) and tells Philip to follow him. Philip then goes out and finds Nathanael (1:45) and informs him that they have found the one Moses and the prophets talked about. The strength of the out-group begins to grow as Jesus goes from a single renegade to having five followers: two sent by John the Baptist, two recruited, one called by Jesus himself. This increases the credibility of Jesus, for not only do people begin to follow him, but they also call him Rabbi, Messiah, the one Moses, the prophets, and law spoke about, the Son of God, and the king of Israel. Consequently, the divide between the in-group and the out-group begins to grow. The dissemination of the faith continues to be expressed in chapter four "although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptize" (4:2). The role of bringing in new members into the out-group through baptism was being accomplished by the disciples. By being disseminators of the faith, the disciples add to the credibility of Jesus' out-group, and they strengthen the group by bringing more members into the fold.

In the context of the Fourth Gospel, the disciples, Culpepper explains, "are marked especially by their recognition of Jesus and believing in his claims. Yet, they are not exemplars of perfect faith, but of positive response and typical misunderstandings."[9] The recognition of Jesus is demonstrated in the first few chapters of the Gospel as they bestow upon Jesus all the Johannine titles. Their

9 R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 115.

lack of understanding and constant questioning demonstrates their lack of faith. Therefore, is their positive response and belief in Christ enough to make up for their lacking in faith? Is it enough to maintain the integrity of the claims made by Jesus? Can it still increase the conviction of the righteousness of Jesus' cause when others turned their backs on Jesus? John 6 is an important point where we see faith and belief meet at one of the Gospel's most important crossways. The issue with what is presented to the followers of Jesus in ch. 6 is at the core of social conflict; ch. 6 is the presentation of renegadism of truly breaking from the Jewish faith.

> "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."
>
> John 6:32–35 NSRV

The ramifications are significant, for the disciples are asked to accept Jesus as the revealer, as one who is greater than Moses and as the Bread of life. What is also significant is the response he gets from those present, since the Jews question the origins of Jesus, highlighting his earthly parents, Joseph and Mary (6:41–42). As a result, they doubt the possibility of Jesus being able to offer his flesh as food for them (6:52). Some of his disciples bemoan the difficulty of the teaching and its possible acceptance (6:60). Besides the Twelve, the Jews and some other disciples who did not believe in him turned their backs on Jesus and left him: "Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God'" (6:66–69 NSRV). So the twelve renegades remained; they accepted Jesus as the revealer, the one who has the words of eternal life.

Though they were not exemplars of perfect faith at times, the disciples did demonstrate that they are firm in their loyalty to the out-group, for when difficulties arose for the members of the out-group, they remained with Jesus. They demonstrated that they did contribute to the strength of the out-group by disseminating the faith, but also by remaining with Jesus when others had left him. They chose to accept Jesus as greater than Moses and to recognize him as the Son of Man and the Messiah. Consequently, they are firm in their

loyalty to Jesus, even though their faith waiver at times. The Twelve increases the conviction of Jesus' cause, as they defend and crusade for the values of the out-group.

The Imperfect Believers

Thus far we have examined the Johannine characters that explicitly belong to the categories presented by Coser—Jesus is a heretic and his disciples are renegades. However, what remains of the characters that are on the fringe of believing; those who saw but did not believe; those who did not know how to believe; or those who believed when in darkness (e.g. Nicodemus; John 3; cf. John 7), but not when they are in the light? What do we do about the imperfect believers and the marginal characters we find in the Gospel of John who either express some sort of belief in Jesus, recognize him for who he is in some form or another, misunderstand what he is saying, or believe in him but are too afraid to express publicly their beliefs? There are many options as there are minor characters to work with and examine. Therefore, for simplicity's sake we will examine three characters: Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the blind man. Each of these characters has their own perspective on Jesus and their own way in which they approach him and the out-group.

Nicodemus

Nicodemus is one of those interesting characters that only appear in John. However, he is a very difficult character to study due to the little information provided about him, as well as the fact that he only plays a minor role in the Gospel narrative. Furthermore, the characterizations given to him raise more questions than they answer. With reference to his role in social conflict, it is doubly difficult to evaluate him, as he is not only a member of the in-group, but also a leader of the Pharisees. From this construction of his character, he should be a straightforward enemy of the out-group, but that is not the case. Furthermore, Nicodemus is to be contrasted with the Samaritan woman, who, unlike Nicodemus, responds quickly and overcomes her misunderstanding in her single brief encounter with Jesus. Nicodemus was slow to answer; it is not until his third appearance in 19:39 that we come to know where he stands.

Nicodemus is presented to the Johannine reader, following the warning against people to whom Jesus would not entrust himself, as they believed only in signs. The Jews then said,

> "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part would not entrust to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.
>
> John 2:19–25 NRSV

This passage foreshadows the character construct of Nicodemus. In similar fashion to the Jews in the temple, Nicodemus only understands the literal meaning of what Jesus says, as well as only believes the signs of Jesus but not in Jesus himself (cf. John 3:1–12). By approaching Jesus in the first place, we can see that Nicodemus does have interests in the out-group, even though he approaches the out-group by night and under cover of darkness (3:2), so as to not make any expressed claims of belonging to the out-group. At first glance, Nicodemus lies on the brink of both the in-group and out-group; he is not sure where he belongs and thus fears to choose to break off from the in-group. Coser explains such a situation, stating, "Individuals who participate intensely in the life of such groups are concerned with the group's continuance. If they witness the breaking away of one with whom they have shared cares and responsibilities of group life, they are likely to react in a more violent way against such 'disloyalty' than less involved members. This leads to Simmel's second point: renegadism is perceived by a close group as a threat to its unity."[10] The fear of becoming a renegade leads Nicodemus to come to Jesus first at night. Nighttime is a time when deeds that are not to be seen by unwanted eyes are performed. Since Nicodemus fears the repercussions of leaving the in-group of the Pharisees/Jewish authorities, which are demonstrated in the Gospel to be quite violent (cf. John 8:1–11; 9:22; 11:53; 12:42; 18:3), he comes to Jesus at night. This plays against the character construct of Nicodemus, as he does not commit to anything. As Coser explains, what is key to the renegade is the fact that he cannot return to his original group; it is this burning of the bridge between a person and the in-group that makes him firmly loyal to the out-group. However, Nicodemus is under no such pressure; under the cover of darkness, he gets to play on both sides of the fence. He belongs to the

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10 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 69.

in-group, while enquiring about the out-group and showing interest in joining this group. Nevertheless, the conflict between light and darkness portrayed in the Gospel—“But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God” (John 3:21)—foreshadows the end result of Nicodemus’s conversion. As the movement of the Johannine text is from darkness to light, so is Nicodemus’s movement from visiting Jesus under the cover of darkness to coming to him in the light of day (19:39). Now let us examine how Nicodemus arrives at this transformation.

In this first encounter with Jesus, even though the circumstances favor secrecy, Nicodemus does profess a degree of faith in Jesus; however, this faith is based only on signs and has yet to cross into some form of discipleship and thus renegadism. Nicodemus refers to Jesus as “teacher” (specifically a teacher from God), when addressing him (3:2). The term “teacher” is significant when used in reference to Jesus in the Johannine text, for it is only used by the disciples of Jesus (1:38; 11:28; 13:13–14; 20:16). The fact that this title is used by no one else has some significance, as it shows that Jesus has something to teach this leader of the Jewish people and thus gives conviction to the righteousness of Jesus and the out-group’s cause. This recognition is similar to the early recognition of the disciples, without the immediate conversion, as mentioned above.

When we next see Nicodemus in ch. 7, the readers of the Johannine text are presented with a conflicted crowd: some believe Jesus was a prophet (7:40) or the Messiah (7:41), others in the crowd asked if anything good can come from Galilee (7:41). The situation presented in ch. 7 demonstrates the impact that the heretics and renegades have on the in-group. Coser explains that an in-group of the church type “from its inception, is conceived as a struggle group [and it] is especially prone to engage in violent heresy-hunting; and its members are obliged to participate continuously in the selection and reselection of those who are ‘worthy’, that is, those who do not question or dissent, precisely because its very existence is based on the ‘purity’ of its membership. Such groups must continuously engage in self-purification drives, and so they must constantly breed heresy and schism.”[11] Religious groups must expel dissenters to maintain or increase the cohesion that exists among the participants it deems as worthy. The authority of the Pharisees and the cohesion of their group relies on this principle, like any other religious group. The people are divided; it is in this situation that the Pharisees expect them to choose between the in-group and out-group: “Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him?” (7:47–48). In

11 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 100–101.

this situation, the Pharisees will look to find those in their ranks who would betray them and in turn support the out-group. From their point of view, the crowd in John 7 is accursed, since they do not know the law. It is at this time that a disciple of Jesus would speak up. The Johannine stage is set for such an action, and Nicodemus answers it by defending the crowd and Jesus at the same time, as he points out the ignorance of the chastising Pharisees: "Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, 'Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?' They replied, 'Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee'" (John 7:50–52). Nicodemus slowly moves away from the darkness, in which he had first met Jesus, to a more gray area. He is not fully in the light yet supporting Jesus, since he does not break with the in-group, but he does point out that those who accused the crowd of not knowing the law also ignored their law themselves. One cannot call him a member of the out-group, yet one cannot also say he is fully a member of the in-group, as he did not lend his strength to them, but rather pointed out their flaws. Consequently, he diminished the righteousness and conviction of the Pharisees' cause of hunting down the heretic and of destroying the out-group. He also demonstrates that his loyalty begins to wane in relation to the in-group. He is not a dissenter of the in-group just yet, but he is on the right path to support the out-group's cause.

The burial of Jesus makes obvious the transference from in-group to out-group: "Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds" (19:39). Many who have worked with the Johannine text view this verse as a misunderstanding of the teachings of Jesus about his resurrection and return. However, from the point of view of social conflict, this verse is the culmination of Nicodemus's transformation to become a disciple of Jesus and a renegade of the in-group. John 19:39 recalls when Nicodemus first came to Jesus at night in secrecy under the cover of darkness (3:2). This was the beginning of his transformation—he not only believed in Jesus but also subtly defended him. Now Nicodemus, along with Joseph, openly risks not only their reputation, but also their security to honor Jesus. Both Joseph, a secret disciple (19:38), and Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night (3:2), become archetypes of the secret believers, the secret renegades, among the in-group who feared to leave and join the out-group: "Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue" (12:42). It is these secret disciples that do the honor of burying Jesus, something that is so dangerous that Jesus' own disciples, who followed him from the beginning, would not even honor him in such a fashion, for they

were “locked in fear of the Jews” (20:19). We do not know what happened to Nicodemus after these events, although knowing the nature of the Jewish in-group—“to engage in violent heresy-hunting; and its members are obliged to participate continuously in the selection and reselection of those who are ‘worthy’ ”[12]—we can assume that it did not end well for him. He burnt his bridge with the in-group by openly honoring a heretic and leader of the out-group. His future options are not many, his choices are furthermore not made known to us; nevertheless, his actions do eventually transform him into a renegade in the end.

The Samaritan

The Samaritan woman is nothing like Nicodemus; they are polar opposites of one another. As Culpepper sums up very nicely: “In sharp juxtaposition, the next character to engage Jesus in dialogue lacks all of Nicodemus' advantages. He is a male teacher of Israel; she is a woman of Samaria. He has a noble heritage; she has a shameful past. He has seen signs and knows Jesus is ‘from God’; she meets Jesus as a complete stranger.”[13] On the one hand, Nicodemus demonstrates that Jews and Jewish believers who secretly believe in Jesus can become renegades and leave the in-group. On the other hand, the Samaritan woman crosses the gender barrier, the sociotechnical barriers between Jews and Samaritans, and the moral barriers that are imposed by her marital past. The Samaritans were already considered to be a heretical out-group by the Jews, Jesus reinforces his heretical status in this part of the narrative, as he is speaking to a woman and a Samaritan. In doing so, however, Jesus will reinforce his number of followers, as the Samaritan woman will contribute to the strength of the out-group by transferring her allegiance to Jesus and by becoming a missionary for him to her people: “Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ‘Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?’ They left the city and were on their way to him” (4:28–30). As a result of this, more Samaritans will join Jesus' out-group, which consequently increases its conviction and the righteousness of its cause. “Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, ‘He told me everything I have ever done.’ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay

12 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 100.

13 Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 136.

with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world'" (4:39–42). These aspects of the renegade are completed by the Samaritan woman; however, there is one difference with Nicodemus: to begin with, she was never part of the in-group. The Samaritans were already an out-group of renegades and heretics. Therefore, by definition, they do not have an in-group from which to leave. This was not the case for Nicodemus. Consequently, does this circumstance lead us to believe that the Samaritans were less loyal than someone with nothing left to lose, such as the disciples, the blind man, or Nicodemus? What risks do the Samaritans take by joining Jesus' out-group? The text of the Fourth Gospel does not permit us to provide a definite answer to these questions; what it does demonstrate is that the Samaritan woman was a model of female discipleship and renegadism.

The Blind Man

The story of the blind man at the well is a great representation of the entire social situation created by the conflict between the in-group and the out-group, as well as the social difficulties and consequences that are to be suffered by those who transfer from one group to the other. The blind man is an exemplar model of discipleship; his open confession about Jesus demonstrates his evolving recognition and movement to discipleship: he first recognizes Jesus to be a man (9:11), then a prophet (9:17), a man from God (9:33), the Son of Man (9:35–36), and finally, the Lord (9:37–38). It is not hard to indicate the renegade traits of this character, as he is healed by Jesus and is converted, and as he praises and defends Jesus in front of the Pharisees. He is shunned by his community and family and thus has nowhere to return. His only choice is to join the out-group and the other renegades touched by Jesus. The blind man fulfills all the qualifications of the renegade defined by Coser.

We are presented with an interesting situation of social conflict. Usually, following a miracle, the general reaction of the people is that of astonishment; however, this is not the case with the blind man, rather he is brought in front of the Pharisees for questioning. At this point in the text, the Jewish leaders will do anything to discredit Jesus and his works. They use the Sabbath as the corner stone of their argumentative attacks against Jesus, indicating that due to this violation, he is not from God. Their second weapon is to try to discredit the blind man, as they do not believe that the healed man and the blind man are one and the same:

> The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.
>
> John 9:18–22 NRSV

We see the goals and the means of attack of the in-group as they try to discredit the heretic and the renegade, albeit unsuccessfully. We also see the fear of the members of the in-group, the parents of the blind man, as they do not want to oppose their leaders and be sent out of the synagogue. As Coser states, "the reaction may be stronger under these conditions because the 'enemy' from within, the renegade or heretic, not only puts into question the values and interests of the group, but also threatens its very unity. Renegadism signifies and symbolizes a desertion of those standards of the group considered vital to its well-being, if not its actual existence."[14] The blind man, by accepting Jesus, becomes a pariah shunned not only by his leaders but also by his parents who confirmed his identity, but did not side with him or try to defend him. There are clear boundaries that are created by the conflict between the in-group and the out-group in ch. 9, and this is something that is positive about social conflict theory, as it "defines the boundaries of the in-group,"[15] as well as the boundaries of the out-group.

Identity Forged in Conflict

Coser attempts to explicate in his work that conflict is a component of every social relationship. The Fourth Gospel demonstrates this clearly through the various interactions of the social hierarchy, the socio-ethnical divisions, the religious divisions, and the cultural divisions. Of course not all of the interactions can be covered in this short essay. Nevertheless, one thing still needs to be covered, that is, Coser's point of view on social conflict hinges on the fact that it

14 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 69.

15 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 69.

"fulfills a positive function inasmuch as it leads to the re-establishment of unity and balance in the group."[16] Social conflict serves as a means of constructing one's personal identity, one's identity towards the in-group or the out-group, as well as the identity of the group to which one belongs. Without social conflict, complete self-identification would not be possible. Conflict serves the positive function of removing elements that may cause separation or deviation or argumentation and re-establish unity within a group. This is the concept of *trans*-action mentioned in the beginning of this work. Through this trans-action the *status quo* of the in-group or out-group will be affected, as there is, in social conflict, a movement from an initial equilibrium to disequilibrium, and to a new equilibrium at the end of conflict. Metaphorically, the effect of social conflict resembles that of a stone at the top of a hill (equilibrium), which is then pushed down the hill (disequilibrium) that eventually creates a new stability at the bottom of the hill, which can be more or less satisfactory than the past equilibrium. Conflict accomplishes this by resolving the tensions that are built up between an in-group and an out-group, in the give and take of the proverbial rolling down the hill. Through conflict the relationship between groups can be stabilized. It is important to note that Coser does point out that not all conflicts are positively functional for an in-group/out-group relationship, though we believe this is the case in the Fourth Gospel, for as Coser explains, "conflict usually takes place within a common universe of norms and rules, and that it leads to the establishment or extension of such norms and rules."[17] Through the creation of unity and the creation of a new equilibrium at the end of the Gospel of John, an identity can be created for the Gospel's audience.

As this concept pertains to the Gospel of John, it accomplishes something positive for the identity of the in-group and the out-group: "conflict brings into the conscious awareness of the contenders and of the community at large, norms and rules that were dormant before the particular conflict."[18] By way of social conflict theory, we see that the Fourth Gospel reveals to its audience the narrative, teachings, rules and norms about Christianity found only in the Johannine tradition, as well as reinterpretations of teachings and messages found in the Synoptic tradition, but viewed from the perspective of the Johannine community. These teachings would not have been possible if Jesus was not in conflict with the Jewish in-group, or if members of the in-group did not become renegades: for example, the Christology that stems

16 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 73.

17 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 123.

18 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 127.

from being born ἄνωθεν, from the gift of living water, from Jesus as the giver of the New Manna, and from the ἐγώ εἰμι teachings. These teachings and theological messages of the Gospel of John are born out of the plot's dramatic sequence that would be impossible to detect without the trans-action of social conflict of the text. For it is social conflict which sets into motion the *peripeteia*, *anagnorisis*, and *pathos* of the Johannine text. Without it there would not have been a crucifixion, as there would be no need for the Jewish in-group to act against Jesus' out-group. Without social conflict, the plot and narrative of the Fourth Gospel would not hold together (equilibrium, disequilibrium, new equilibrium) and present its audience with the theological teachings and messages as it does in its present form. Consequently, for the audience of the text, social conflict is the source of their Johannine theological identity.

Moreover, Coser presents to his readers the possibility of unification through conflict: "Struggle may bring together otherwise unrelated persons and groups and temporary associations, rather than more permanent and cohesive groups, will result from conflicts where primarily pragmatic interests of the participants are involved."[19] The section on the imperfect believers in the Gospel of John has demonstrated this fact already. Through the social conflict of the Fourth Gospel, Samaritans and Jews have come together and overcome their ethnical and social differences. Nicodemus demonstrated that the secret believers among the Jews, as well as religious leaders, could follow Jesus. Joseph of Arimathea demonstrated that prominent people could also join the out-group. Lazarus, Martha, the royal official, the man born blind, all these characters come from different cultural, social, economical, and regional backgrounds; yet through the social conflict of the Fourth Gospel, they were brought together. Under different circumstances where there would be no conflict, this would not have taken place. For as Coser explains on the unification potentiality of conflict,

> Most coalitions between already existing groups, especially between numerous groups or between those that differ widely from each other, are formed for defensive purposes only, at least in view of those who enter the alliance. Alliance, even when not formed for the purpose of conflict, may seem to other groups a threatening and unfriendly act. This very perception, however, leads to the creation of new associations and coalitions, thus further stimulating social participation.[20]

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19 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 148.

20 Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, 149.

Conflict permits the construction of a new identity in the Fourth Gospel. It constructs the identity of the Johannine community, the audience of this text in the first century, as well as the religious and theological identity of modern readers and audiences. These identities are constructed through the opposition of the in-group and the out-group of the Gospel of John.

Johannine Sectarianism: A Category Now Defunct?

Ruth Sheridan

A short answer to the question posed by the title of this article would be "No." That is, the category of "sectarianism," when applied to the Johannine writings, particularly the Gospel of John, is not defunct, but is still in existence and continues to assert itself in recent studies, even if with less of an insistent voice than in former times.[1] Perhaps a more pointed set of questions implied in the title and answered in this article would be "*Should* the category be defunct?" and "Has the category lost its descriptive power?" Given the advances made in Johannine scholarship from the perspectives of narrative criticism and post-modernist hermeneutics, these are valid questions. Although these recent methodological trends have not exactly signaled the death of historical-critical investigation of the Fourth Gospel or halted the flow of scholarly reconstructions of the Gospel's community history, they have challenged some of the underlying assumptions governing historical reconstructions. Narrative critics ask whether the Gospels' literary artifices actually indicate anything discernible about their historical development, and they caution us against the circular reasoning presupposed in reading a putative community history off the pages of a text, which itself is supposedly a product of that community history.[2]

Apart from developments in narrative readings of the Fourth Gospel, other objections to the category of Johannine sectarianism have come from scholars with a more sociocultural or historical focus in the employment of their method. Dissatisfied with the models of "sect" articulated in the field of the

1 Daniel R. Streett, *They Went Out From Us: The Identity and Opponents in First John* (BZNW 177; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 12; Albert J. Harrill, "The Cannibalistic Language in the Fourth Gospel and the Greco-Roman Polemics of Factionalism (John 6:52–66)," *JBL* 127 (2008): 133–158; D. Moody Smith, *Johannine Christianity: Essays on Its Setting, Sources and Theology* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 26; Jaime Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken: The Social Function of the Use of Scripture in the Fourth Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

2 See Trond Skard Dokka, "Irony and Sectarianism in the Gospel of John," in *New Readings in John: Literary and Theological Perspectives* (ed. Johannes Nissen and Sigfried Petersen; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 99; R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 5; Tom Thatcher, "Anatomies of the Fourth Gospel: Past, Present and Future Probes," in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present and Future of the Fourth Gospel as Literature* (ed. Tom Thatcher and Stephen D. Moore; Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 1–35.

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Sociology of Religion and applied to John's Gospel, they have proposed alternative models from the social sciences to try and understand the mindset of the distinctive community behind the Fourth Gospel, or they have simply rejected the language of sectarianism *tout court*.[3] Finally, several recent and controversial works of Richard Bauckham threaten to undermine not only the notion of Johannine "sectarianism" but also the very idea of a Johannine community as the Gospel's audience and/or originators.[4] Bauckham's case has come under sustained critique over the last ten years and therefore will not receive extensive treatment here.[5]

In this essay, I examine the application of sociological theories of sectarianism to the study of the Fourth Gospel. Previous scholars have questioned the suitability of applying the sociological category of "sect" to communities in early Judaism because it is an anachronistic category. Based on Weber and Troeltsch's church/sect typology, the argument goes, we have no comparable ancient historical situation to analyze, since "Judaism" was not homogeneous or institutionally organized like the modern "church." Thus, the communities under historical analysis can only be called "factions," not "sects" that have split off from the parent-body of Judaism.[6] This type of argument today is a

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3 Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *Social Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998); Rheka M. Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 202–211; Timothy J. Ling, *The Judean Poor and the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Brian J. Capper, "John, Qumran and Virtuoso Religion," in *John, Qumran, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Sixty Years of Discovery and Debate* (ed. Mary L. Coloe and Tom Thatcher; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 93–116; cf. Eyal Regev, "Were the Early Christians Sectarian?" *JBL* 130 (2011): 771–793; Kåre Sigvald Fuglseth, *Johannine Sectarianism in Perspective: A Sociological, Historical and Comparative Analysis of Temple and Social Relationships in the Gospel of John, Philo and Qumran* (NovTSup 119; Leiden: Brill, 2005).

4 Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). Following Bauckham, see Edward W. Klink, *The Sheep of the Fold: The Audience and Origin of the Gospel of John* (SNTSMS 141; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); idem, "Gospel Audience and Origin," in *The Audience of the Gospels: Further Conversations about the Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity* (ed. Edward W. Klink; London: T&T Clark, 2010), 1–26.

5 See Margaret Mitchell, "Patristic Counter-Evidence to the Claim that the 'Gospels Were Written for All Christians'," *NTS* 51 (2005): 36–79; David C. Sim, "The Gospels for All Christians? A Response to Richard Bauckham," *JSNT* 24 (2001): 3–27.

6 See the collected essays in James D.G. Dunn, ed., *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135* (WUNT 66; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993); and Dieter Georgi, "The Early Church: Internal Jewish Migration or New Religion?" *HTR* 88 (1995): 35–68, esp. 65.

commonplace. I wish to demonstrate in this essay that the term "sect" is problematic when applied to the Fourth Gospel, not only because it is anachronistic but also because it is defined so variously in the sociological literature. In a sense, the Weber-Troeltsch model of religious movements could have been superseded by "sect" theories developed by more recent sociologists (e.g. Stark and Bainbridge, Iannoconne and Fink, and Wilson and Wallis).[7]

Recent scholarship on the Gospel of John undertaken from sociological perspectives relies not on Weber, but on Stark and Bainbridge (see below). But when scholars of the Fourth Gospel adopt the theories of these newer sociologists, without critically reflecting on methodological issues, there are several problems that have largely gone unnoticed in Johannine scholarship. This leads to the main objective of this article, namely, an examination of problems inherent in a key theoretical issue in the field of sociology, which has not been given due attention in Johannine studies. It relates to the controversial core of Stark and Bainbridge's method—Rational Choice Theory (RCT). RCT is an intriguing—but reductionistic—understanding of human transactional behavior. This article is an attempt to consider the complexities of using sociological theories in interpreting the Gospel of John, paying particular attention to the tenets of RCT, in order to reassess the suitability of the heuristic category of "sect" for reading the Gospel of John. As such, this article engages with recent research, analyzing the discursive construction of "Johannine sectarianism" in the literature, but it is more than just a *Forschungsbericht*. It attempts to contribute to the discussion by arguing that the economically-informed concept of RCT that underpins some sociological models of sectarianism requires careful critique and should be employed with some nuance.

While it is beyond the scope of this article to reformulate a thoroughly adequate framework for study of Johannine sectarianism, I do propose some alternatives to RCT-based models in the final section of this article. I suggest that a fruitful way forward is to be found in the dialectical theories of the sociologies of language and knowledge, primarily because of how they complement

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7 Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Rodney Stark, R. Finke, and Lawrence R. Iannoccone, "Pluralism and Piety in England and Wales: 1851," *JSSR* 34 (1995): 431–444; Lawrence R. Iannaccone, "Introduction to the Economics of Religion," *Journal of Economic Literature* 36 (1998): 1465–1496; Bryan Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest among Tribal and Third-World Peoples* (London: Heinemann, 1973); idem, *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism: Sects and New Religious Movements in Contemporary Society* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Roy Wallis, *The Elementary Forms of New Religious Life* (London: Routledge, 1984).

literary-critical understandings of genre as "social action."[8] As a preface to the discussion, I provide an overview of how the categories of "sect" and "cult" have been applied to the Gospel of John, and subsequently, I will analyze the text of the Gospel to illustrate their limited usefulness.

Johannine Sectarianism: The Career of a Concept

In 1972, Wayne Meeks famously stated that the Fourth Gospel could be understood as an "etiology of the Johannine group"—a group which was characterized by a "sectarian consciousness."[9] Meeks's work, perhaps the first to employ social-scientific categories to the analysis of the Gospel, was highly influential in Johannine studies over the ensuing decades. The perception of the Johannine community as sectarian in orientation became something of an *idée reçue* in Johannine research, with various authors employing the term "sect" for its illustrative potential with regard to the community behind the Gospel.[10] Many such studies also built upon the seminal work of J.L. Martyn who understood the Gospel's apparent antagonism with Judaism to be a retrospective reflection of a particular historical situation, that is, the community's forced expulsion from the synagogue (9.22; 12.42; 16.2), and a reaction to the *Birkat ha-Minim*.[11]

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8 This suggestion will be fully developed in a later article. The goal of the current article is not to argue at length for the appropriateness of these theoretical alternatives, but to indicate, through a critique of economic models of sectarianism, that they provide an alternative basis for thinking about the Gospel of John and notions of "sect."

9 Wayne A. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," in *The Interpretation of John* (ed. John Ashton; 2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 193–194 [original publication in *JBL* 91 (1972): 44–72]; see idem, *The Moral World of the First Christians* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 98.

10 R. Alan Culpepper, *The Johannine School* (SBLDS 26; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1975), 287; D. Moody Smith, "Johannine Christianity: Some Reflections on Its Character and Delineation," *NTS* 21 (1974–1975): 224; Fernando F. Segovia, "The Love and Hatred of Jesus in Johannine Sectarianism," *CBQ* 43 (1981): 258–272; David Rensberger, *Johannine Faith and Liberating Community* (Louisville: Westminster, 1988): 143; idem, "Spirituality and Christology in Johannine Sectarianism," in *Word, Theology and Community in John* (ed. John Painter, R.A. Culpepper, and Fernando Segovia; Danvers, MA: Chalice, 2002), 173–188; John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 111; Philip F. Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds: Social Scientific Approaches to the New Testament* (London: Routledge, 1994), 70–91.

11 J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968); cf. Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves and*

The application of a sociology of sectarianism to the Gospel of John appears to have been motivated by attempts to understand some of the more obfuscating "anomalies" (according to even the briefest comparison with the Synoptic Gospels) of this Gospel. The category of sectarianism has been called upon to explain, for example, the Gospel's high Christology,[12] its spatial-temporal plot and its interest in geography,[13] the conflict in the narrative between Jesus and his antagonists, generally condemned as "the Jews" or "the world,"[14] its peculiar systems of language and symbolism,[15] and recently, even its use of Scripture.[16] These studies are not identical in the kind of sociological literature upon which they draw. Some studies use the term "sect" with no further definition and without explaining why they import that modern sociological category into their interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.[17] But in general, it can be said that authors working with the term "sect" in its application to the Gospel are nevertheless aware of its anachronism, as well as the potential hermeneutical problems that can arise when this fact is not acknowledged.

Two of the most recent monographs on Johannine sectarianism are Jaime Clark-Soles's *Scripture Cannot Be Broken* (2003) and Kåre Sigvald Fuglseth's *Johannine Sectarianism in Perspective* (2005). Both of these works explicitly rely

Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times (New York: Paulist, 1979); Peter J. Tomson, "'Jews' in the Gospel of John as Compared with the Palestinian Talmud, the Synoptics and Some New Testament Apocrypha," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel* (ed. Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt, and Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville; Louisville: Westminster, 2001), 198–199. Critiques and reappraisals of the *Birkat ha-Minim* theory still abound: for the former, see William Horbury, "The Benediction of the Minim and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy," *JTS* 33 (1982): 19–61; for the latter, see Joel Marcus, "The *Birkat Ha-Minim* Revisited," *NTS* 55 (2009): 523–551.

12 R. Alan Culpepper, "Inclusivism and Exclusivism in the Fourth Gospel," in *Word, Theology and Community in John*, 85–108.

13 Jouette M. Bassler, "The Galileans: A Neglected Factor in Johannine Community Research," *CBQ* 43 (1981): 243–257.

14 Sean Freyne, "Vilifying the Other and Defining the Self: Matthew's and John's Anti-Jewish Polemic in Focus," in *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (ed. Jacob Neusner and E. Frerichs; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1985), 117–143.

15 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 44–72; Segovia, "The Love and Hatred of Jesus," 258–272. The earlier form-critical work of Herbert Leroy (*Rätsel und Missverständnis: Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums* [Bonn: Frankfurt, 1968]) can be seen as a precursor to Segovia's and Meeks's work.

16 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot be Broken*, 318.

17 This was characteristic of the early studies such as those of Culpepper and Moody Smith cited above. Ruth B. Edwards, *The Johannine Epistles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, repr., 2001), 109, only uses the Concise Oxford Dictionary's definition of "sect."

upon Stark and Bainbridge's particular "sect" model and theories of sectarianism, effectively reopening the debate over the Gospel as a sectarian document.[18] The focus of Clark-Soles's monograph is to analyze the social function of Scripture for the Johannine community. To do so, she "systematically [addresses] the ways in which Scripture contributes to the maintenance" of the community's "sectarian nature."[19] In this respect, Clark-Soles follows the seminal contribution of Meeks to the field. To quote Clark-Soles: "just as Meeks moves *by analogy* from the literary level of the text to the social level, so do I."[20] According to Clark-Soles, the community behind the Fourth Gospel was a "break-away" group standing in "conscious opposition to the parent tradition" of Judaism. In the wake of a painful separation from Judaism, the Johannine community developed an exclusivist outlook towards their religious environment and experienced "minority status" within this environment.[21] Scripture is cited in the Gospel of John with a governing Christological perspective that is revisionist in its impetus; as such, only the Johannine Christians are said to have the "true insight" into Scripture.[22]

Clark-Soles adheres to the definitions developed by sociologist William Sims Bainbridge, namely, that a "sect" is a schismatic group that has divorced itself from a "parent" religion, whereas a "cult" is an innovative, non-schismatic group that is not contingent for its origins upon any traumatic split from a parent religion.[23] Clark-Soles uses a "comparative method of social history" to analyze the Johannine community's sectarian dynamics.[24] She examines the use of Scripture in the writings from the Dead Sea Scrolls and the sermons of the leader of a modern American sect (the Branch Davidians).[25] In each case, she finds that Scripture is used to create and reinforce boundaries between "insiders" and "outsiders," further producing a sectarian mentality.

Like Clark-Soles's work, Fuglseth's monograph on the topic extends beyond the Gospel text and its originating community to other texts that possibly

18 Clark-Soles relies only on William S. Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements* (New York: Routledge, 1997), but Bainbridge's work has much in common with his collaborated studies with Stark.

19 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 13. In fact, her approach is very different from Meeks's, as I will later show.

20 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 209 (emphasis original).

21 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 316; cf. 4–5, 9, 14.

22 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 318.

23 Bainbridge, *Sociology*, 107.

24 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 8.

25 Clark-Soles, *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, 8–9, 54.

betray a sectarian consciousness (Philo and the Dead Sea Scrolls). But unlike Clark-Soles, Fuglseth does not need to employ a method of comparative social history to read these texts, as they are largely contemporaneous with the Gospel text itself. Unconvinced that the term "sect" (as defined by Stark and Bainbridge) is satisfactory for interpreting the Gospel material, Fuglseth argues that the term "cult" is more appropriate. Working from Stark and Bainbridge's definition of "cult" as a "new" religious movement possessing a hitherto undisclosed revelation, Fuglseth claims that the Johannine community, through the Gospel, "still announces a willingness to stay within the parent body" of Judaism.[26] As such, it is not a breakaway sect, but a "Jewish" movement that is novel and singular in its religious expression. There is no evidence, according to Fuglseth, of the community's detachment from the temple or the Jewish society. Rather, the community appears to be world-accommodating.[27] With this distinction in hand, Fuglseth can argue that the Qumran community is a sect apart from Judaism, and that Philo stands within the Jewish traditions, but that the Johannine community stands as something new and different to Judaism, despite somehow remaining under its umbrella.

Sect and Cult in the Sociology of Religion

Weber and Troeltsch

The "classic" definition of "sect" is found in the works of Max Weber and in the double volume work of his student Ernst Troeltsch. In both writers' perspective, "sect" is a phenomenon that comes into existence as a result of having broken away from its parent "church" at some point in time. A "sect" is therefore defined antithetically to the "church" and is set in contradistinction to it.[28] This inherently antithetical definition of "sect" derives from the sociological analysis of Christian organizations and their historical evolution. A sect, as a breakaway movement, can be the result of a schism within the church or can evolve as a protest movement, operating as an agent of religious change. But Troeltsch's analysis rests mainly on defining "church" and "sect" as ideal types. Delineating the contours of a religious sect, Troeltsch argued that, as

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26 Fuglseth, *Johannine Sectarianism*, 316–317.

27 Fuglseth, *Johannine Sectarianism*, 52–53, 360–374.

28 Cf. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (2 vols.; London: Allen & Unwin, 1931; German edition: *Die Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* [Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1911]); Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (trans. and ed. H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills; London: Oxford University Press, 1954).

opposed to the churches from which they have split, sects are characterized by some of the following features: they are relatively smaller and exercise more control over their members than do churches; they claim a monopoly on religious truths; they are set in opposition to the world; their membership is voluntary and usually consists of the lower classes of the populace; they espouse frugality as a means of spiritual asceticism; they are egalitarian and suspicious of charismatic leadership; and their members aspire to personal, inward perfection.[29]

The earliest studies arguing for the Gospels as sectarian documents tended to assume the applicability of Troeltsch's model to ancient Christianity.[30] To be sure, a simple reading of the Fourth Gospel provides us with clues to the mindset of the Johannine group in such a way as to "fit" Troeltsch's descriptive category of "sect." Scholars often note the egalitarian characteristics of the Johannine community, which appears to have been more inclusive of women and their leadership roles than those of the other early Christian churches (cf. 20:17).[31] No charismatic leader is privileged or preeminent (contra Peter in Matt 16:18–19), and the Spirit-Paraclete appears to have neutralized any human usurpation to inspired community leadership (cf. 14:16–18; 15:25–26; 16:7–11). In terms of a "monopoly on religious truths," the Johannine community certainly asserted its truth claims as the final and definitive revelation of God: only Jesus has seen God (1:18); only Jesus has come down from heaven (3:31); only Jesus is the true manna which is spiritual food for all who believe (6:33, 35–40); only Jesus is the Shepherd leading his flock to life (10:10); and only Jesus is the "truth" and the "way" to God (14:6). Schism and separation from Judaism has been read from various passages in the Gospel (e.g. 6:49; 8:17, 56; 9:22; 10:34; 12:42; 15:25; 16:2), which seem to affirm that the community was a "sectarian" movement.[32] This brief overview accords with the list of a sect's characteristics enumerated by Troeltsch above.

However, there is also a central problem with Troeltsch's typology. As abstractions and as ideal types, Troeltsch's categories of "church" and "sect" reflect the historical and cultural reality they meant to explain: they are not truly

29 Cf. Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching*, 1:331–339; and Regev, "Were the Early Christians Sectarian?" 772.

30 Meeks, *Moral World*, 98–99, 103; Philip F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (SNTSMS 57; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 48–49, 54, 57. See further, Regev, "Were the Early Christians Sectarian?" 773.

31 Cf. Raymond E. Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind* (New York: Paulist, 1984), 91.

32 The overall evidence is ambiguous, however. See below for further discussion (cf. Regev, "Were the Early Christians Sectarian?" 784).

descriptive categories of analysis. Their abstraction from historically determined cases (especially medieval Christendom), moreover, makes them inapplicable to non-Western (or pre- and proto-Western) societies.[33] Nevertheless, the breadth of Troeltsch's delineations of church and sect makes the categories applicable to almost any Western religious movement. Applied to the Gospels and early Christianity, however, the main criticism often raised is that the presumption necessary for comparison—namely, the definition of Judaism and its homogeneous nature—is anachronistic and incorrect. Indeed, even the Fourth Gospel's exclusivist claim has been said to fit within the broader climate of the post-AD 70 Jewish world, in both Palestine and the Diaspora.[34] In the field of the sociology of religion, newer ways of thinking about sectarianism began to emerge in Troeltsch's wake, ones which did not require formulations of ready-made characteristics of church or sect for their hypotheses. Most notable among these has been the work of Stark and Bainbridge.

Stark and Bainbridge

Stark and Bainbridge wanted to develop a theory—rather than a typology—of religious movements. They contend that Weber and Troeltsch's church-sect typology was of no use in theoretical construction, because it reified the categories into entities, as in the natural sciences. The attributes ascribed to churches and sects sometimes matched, but sometimes did not.[35] "In the empirical world," they wrote, "mixed types have been the rule."[36] Stark and Bainbridge preferred the starting point of Benton Johnson, who explained that religious movements can be grouped on the basis of their origins, that is, whether they result from schisms or are purely innovative—precisely because the movements can be classified along a continuum of conflict with the wider society.[37] Stark and Bainbridge considered "churches" to be religious movements that are not in tension with their social environment. They are "world-accommodating," because they need to be so for their very existence. Sects, on the other hand, are schismatic groups that reject the larger social environment, needing no approval from it. As such, sects are in a state of high tension

33 See Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 12–16.

34 James D.G. Dunn, "The Embarrassment of History: Reflections on the Problem of 'Anti-Judaism' in the Fourth Gospel," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 43–51.

35 Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements," *JSSR* 18 (1979): 117–133, here 122–123.

36 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 123.

37 Benton Johnson, "On Church and Sect," *American Sociological Review* 28 (1963): 539–549.

with their host society.[38] Sects leave "the parent body not to form a new faith but to *re-establish the old one*," perceiving the old faith as having drifted from the true path.[39] Cults "do not have a prior tie with another established religious body in the society in question," but originate through innovation or through importation from another culture.[40] Cults are something new in society, and are thus not in a state of tension with it. Religious movements may, of course, evolve and change: moving towards less societal tension, they are churchlike; moving towards higher societal tension, they are sect-like.[41] The tension that Stark and Bainbridge assess is likened to "sub-cultural deviance" and takes different forms, such as perceived difference in the deviant/sectarian group, antagonism toward the world or church, and physical separation from both.[42]

Yet we must enter the heart of Stark and Bainbridge's work in order to understand better why they formulated their findings in this way. Stark and Bainbridge did not only want to define a church-sect continuum, as opposed to a typology; they wanted to articulate a broad "theory" of religion as such.[43] This included an understanding of why individuals choose to form sects in the first place, or to adhere to them, and of what people looked for in a church community or church leader. Stark and Bainbridge attempted to account for a whole variety of religious phenomena: the emergence of gods, priests, and magicians, and the modern development of secularization. Their core theory is a development of social exchange theory,[44] and the theory assumes that humans in their actions and behaviors seek rewards and avoid costs; that rewards are scarce and differentially distributed in a social system; that rewards are obtained by individuals through exchanges; and that where rewards are not obtainable, "proxies" exist, which Stark and Bainbridge call "compensators."[45] A religion is "a system of general compensators based on supernatural assumptions."[46] That is,

38 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 123.

39 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 125.

40 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 125.

41 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 123.

42 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 124; cf. *The Future of Religion*, 23, 49–60.

43 Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, *A Theory of Religion* (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), 11.

44 Peter Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (New York: Wiley, 1964); George Homans, *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1974).

45 See John H. Simpson, "The Stark-Bainbridge Theory of Religion," *JSSR* 29 (1990): 368.

46 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 121.

a religious movement proffers "solutions" to questions of ultimate meaning—which Stark and Bainbridge call "general compensators"—and it predicates solutions to those questions on the basis of its adherents' belief in the supernatural.

The economic overlay of Stark and Bainbridge's theory is not accidental; it derives from the expanding application of RCT to sociology. More than just a market analogy, RCT is a set of postulates, the key of which is the assumption that people act rationally.[47] RCT is a purposive model, presuming that people will use rational choices to maximize benefits and minimize costs—a dynamic which in economics is termed "optimization."[48] Frequently—and this is the case for Stark and Bainbridge—rational choice theorists argue that the human drive toward optimization is essentially egoistic in character. People will try to obtain resources in which they have a stake or will seek to obtain them to the disadvantage of others.[49] As in economics, so in social interaction, any "investment" will produce a "return," and rational choice and social exchange theorists used this idea to postulate the essentially self-seeking nature of social exchange. Stark and Bainbridge's theory of religious movements exploits the premises advanced in RCT and exchange theory. Their method is that of the propositional syllogism common to deductive reasoning: an axiom is stated, a quantification is added, and a conclusion is drawn, linking the former with the latter.[50] Stark and Bainbridge's method relies on empirical data to prove the correctness of the initial axiomatic proposition, making the method scientifically positivistic. The empirical data exists to rule out other variables that would render the syllogism illogical.[51] In this manner, Stark and Bainbridge construct a set of 344 propositions and 104 definitions about religion that function as testable hypotheses.[52]

Turning to Stark and Bainbridge's continuum model of religious movements, it becomes clear how RCT fits in. Sects are born out of schismatic breaks with a parent church, and they exist in a high degree of tension vis-à-vis their

47 James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1990).

48 J.S. Coleman and T.J. Fararo, "Introduction," in *Rational Choice Theory: Advocacy and Critique* (ed. J.S. Coleman and T.J. Fararo; London: Sage, 1992), xi.

49 M.M. Marini, "The Role of Models of Purposive Action in Sociology," in *Rational Choice Theory*, 21–48.

50 For example, "people who eat a balanced diet are strong and healthy"; "*x* eats a balanced diet"; "therefore, *x* is strong and healthy."

51 For example, the fact that "*y* eats a balanced diet but is *not* strong and healthy"—perhaps because *y* has an auto-immune disorder that is not remedied by diet.

52 Simpson, "The Stark-Bainbridge Theory," 367–368.

social environment. Why the tension? Why the schism? Because "rewards" are unevenly distributed: they are greedily absorbed by the powerful members of the parent-church or are simply no longer available to the sectarians. In response to this lack, the sectarians intensify "compensators" available within the religious "economy." These compensators can be general and intangible (e.g. the reward of eternal life, communal solidarity, etc.) or specific and tangible (e.g. goods shared in common).[53] These compensators act as substitutes that are the incentive for further reward, either for the self alone or simultaneously for the other. For example, Stark elsewhere hypothesized that if a member of a religious movement is confident in other-worldly rewards, he or she will participate more strongly in religious ritual.[54] The activity that comes from reward, when the sect is in question, operates as a means of solidifying the sect's existing antagonism toward and separation from the world and the parent church.

Cults, on the other hand, are founded on the creation of novel compensators that are seen by their adherents as more immediately "magical" than their sectarian and churchly counterparts.[55] Cults are not necessarily in an antagonistic relationship to the world, and their compensators may arise out of a general lack of attention to the transcendent in a consumerist society, rather than from disaffection with the uneven distribution of rewards in a connected religious denomination. However, according to Stark and Bainbridge, founders of cults may be motivated out of psychopathology or "entrepreneurship" or a need to revolutionize culture.[56] Depending on the motivation, the level of tension a cult experiences with its wider environment will vary. In economic terms, tension is a high "cost" that leads to social isolation, and so the cult-founder-cum-entrepreneur and his or her followers will seek to reduce tension by reigning in compensator-generation. The logic here is that the "magical" compensators generated by the cult are not accommodated or accepted by the wider society, and although they are experienced as "rewards" by the cult members, they potentially come at the cost of social cohesion.[57] The "profitable cult business" has its own risks.[58]

53 Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects and Cults," 120.

54 Rodney Stark, "Micro Foundations of Religion: A Revised Theory," *Sociological Theory* 17 (1999): 264–289, here 283.

55 Simpson, "The Stark-Bainbridge Theory," 369; Stark and Bainbridge, *Theory of Religion*, 310.

56 Stark and Bainbridge, *Theory of Religion*, 155.

57 Stark and Bainbridge, *Theory of Religion*, 185–186.

58 Stark and Bainbridge, *Theory of Religion*, 169.

Finally, what of the grand-narrative of secularization?[59] Stark and Bainbridge postulate that the constant "supply" of religious "goods" in Western society—evinced in the proliferation of cults and sects, some of which morph in status to become church denominations—is a mark of religious vitality. Religious pluralism demonstrates that the "demand" for compensators in society is high; pluralism itself invites and increases religious participation.[60] Secularization is not the loss of religion's function in society, but religion's adaptation to the conditions of modern society.[61] It is in this regard that Stark and Bainbridge perceive secularization to be a self-limiting process: secularization, when seen as a consequence of the decline in church attendance or traditional Christian religious expression, is correlated with a significant rise in new cultic movements.[62] The growth of cultic movements signals a trend towards "counter-secularization" and invites religious engagement. In sum, the combination of RCT and the continuum model of church and sect in Stark and Bainbridge's work is used to explain the dynamic change in religious movements over time, as individuals perennially seek benefits in the form of compensators and try to avoid costs.

I have devoted significant attention to Stark and Bainbridge's theories and underpinning assumptions because two recent Johannine scholars (Clark-Soles and Fuglseth) who adopt the sectarian thesis both relied exclusively on Stark and Bainbridge's sociology. But the core elements of Stark and Bainbridge's work, and the potential problems that arise from their work, are left unexplored by both scholars; neither mentions the broader narrative of secularization informing the sociological theories or the economically-derived model of RCT. To be sure, RTC is an "easy target," that is, even within the field of sociology it has come under critique for its exaggerated individualism, its pessimistic assumption that people will act egotistically rather than altruistically, and its reductionist logic.[63] The concept of "bounded rational-

59 Cf. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

60 Cf. Stark, Finke, and Iannaccone, "Pluralism and Piety," 431–444. A very different view is espoused by David Voas, Daniel V.A. Olson, and Alasdair Crockett, "Religious Pluralism and Participation: Why Previous Research is Wrong," *American Sociological Review* 67 (2002): 212–230.

61 Niklas Luhmann, *Die Religion der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), 301 (cited in Warren S. Goldstein, "Secularization Patterns in the Old Paradigm," *Sociology of Religion* 70 [2009]: 157–178, here 163).

62 See Roy Wallis, "Figuring Out Cult Receptivity," *JSSR* 25 (1986): 494–503.

63 Barry Hindess, *Choice, Rationality and Social Theory* (London: Unwin/Hyman, 1988); Nicos

ity" rather than strict rationality in action now qualifies much RCT.[64] What is more, there is an extensive amount of literature criticizing the application of the market metaphor to matters of religious choice, particularly because, it is argued, there are more complex psychological processes at work in human action and interaction than can be accounted for by RCT, as well as the fact that intangible or supernatural compensators cannot be evaluated unambiguously.[65]

What I want to briefly consider at this point is whether Clark-Soles's and Fuglseth's reading of the Fourth Gospel, using Stark and Bainbridge's theory of sectarianism, is any more useful than the earlier approaches to the Gospel already mentioned, which did not employ Stark and Bainbridge's theories. I have already outlined Clark-Soles's thesis, which for the sake of brevity can be summarized here as follows: the Gospel community is a *sect*, broken off from Judaism in a painful *schism*, and working out a scriptural hermeneutic that creates and sustains an adversarial attitude toward their *antagonists*. The sub-structure of Stark and Bainbridge's thought is that "sects" express a state of high tension with respect to the environment, but that this tension exists on a relative continuum, with "cults" functioning on the lower end of the tension-continuum. Individuals choose to adhere to them by weighing up costs and benefits and seeing if they can seek rewards in the form of compensators in doing so. It is this dynamic *movement* that Clark-Soles does not consider. For if

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P. Mouzelis, *Back to Sociological Theory: The Construction of Social Orders* (London: Macmillan, 1991); Peter Beyer, "Sociological Theory of Religion Between Description and Prediction: A Weberian Question Revisited," in *Secularization and Social Integration: Papers in Honour of Karel Dobbelaere* (ed. Rudi Laermans, Bryan Wilson, and Jaak Billiet; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1998), 83–105.

64 John P. Hoffman, Bruce R. Lott, and Catherine Jeppsen, "Religious Giving and the Boundedness of Rationality," *Sociology of Religion* 71 (2010): 323–348.

65 Joseph Baker, "Social Sources of the Spirit: Connecting Rational Choice and Interactive Ritual Theories in the Study of Religion," *Sociology of Religion* 71 (2010): 432–456; Tigran Melkonyan and Mark Pingle, "Ambiguity, Pessimism and Rational Religious Choice," *Theory and Decision* 69 (2009): 417–438; Scot M. Peterson, "Rational Choice, Religion and the Marketplace: Where Does Adam Smith Fit In?" *JSSR* 48 (2009): 185–192; Lawrence A. Young, ed., *Rational Choice Theory and Religion: Summary and Assessment* (New York: Routledge, 1997); M. Chaves, "On the Rational Choice Approach to Religion," *JSSR* 34 (1995): 98–104; J.M. Bryant, "Cost-Benefit Analysis Accounting and the Piety Business: Is *homo religiosus*, at Bottom, a *homo economicus*?" *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 12 (2000): 520–548; Stephen Sharot, "Beyond Christianity: A Critique of the Rational Choice Theory of Religion from a Weberian and Comparative Religions Perspective," *Sociology of Religion* 63 (2002): 427–454.

the Johannine community was a sect, its members would somehow have been persuaded to join it (by Stark and Bainbridge's model) in a manner according with RCT.

Does the Gospel evidence hold up under the weight of the internal complexities inherent in this sociological theory? A closer analysis of the Gospel reveals a more nuanced stance towards "Judaism" than meets the eye. Did Johannine Christianity emerge as a result of an antagonistic break with a Judaism it had become disaffected with and had ceased to cater to its needs? The answer to this question might be only a qualified "yes." Insofar as consensus has built up around Martyn's hypothesis that a break with the synagogue lay behind the conflict narratives and discourses of the Gospel, one might presume a traumatic split—but again, one might not.[66] There surely were perceived antagonists to the Johannine community, as the Gospel partly reads like a defensive tract against "the Jews" in favour of claims made about Jesus' divinity (cf. 5:17–18; 8:24, 58; 10:30). But again, deciding upon the historical referent of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι is a task fraught with problems.[67] Part of the problem in arguing that the Johannine community was sectarian on the basis of a schismatic separation from Judaism is that the Gospel's attitudes towards Jewish customs, rites, Scriptures, and traditions do not speak of disaffection, nor even of antagonism, but often of appreciation and involvement (cf. 2:13; 4:22; 6:58; 7:10; 10:35; 12:12; 13:2; 20:8).[68] So the evidence for whether or not the Fourth Gospel displays a high state of community tension with its Jewish environment—and can thus be read as sectarian in Bainbridge's terms—is more tenuous than Clark-Soles supposes. This inherent complexity of the Gospel text often leaves interpreters divided over questions such as, Does Jesus fulfill or replace the OT Scriptures? Does Jesus "perfect" the traditions of Judaism or bring them to an end? Does Jesus "complete" the great figures of Judaism or does he supersede them? And can one speak of fulfillment or completion without at least implying "replacement" and supersession?[69]

Finally, it needs to be asked whether the Gospel promotes the kind of economic reasoning that forms the basis of Stark and Bainbridge's model. The obvi-

66 Cf. Judith Lieu, "Temple and Synagogue in John," *NTS* 45 (1999): 51–69.

67 A wealth of literature exists on this topic. For a recent critical assessment, see Urban C. von Wahlde, "'The Jews' in John's Gospel: Fifteen Years of Research (1983–1998)," *ETL* 76 (2000): 418–444.

68 Regev, "Were the Early Christians Sectarians?" 784; Adele Reinhartz, "Judaism in the Gospel of John," *Int* 63 (2009): 382–393.

69 Fuglseth, *Johannine Sectarianism*, 137–138, deftly discusses the views of various scholars on this oft-confusing issue.

ous answer here, of course, is "no." Market capitalism is a modern reality, foreign to the kinds of economic and social exchanges in ancient Mediterranean culture. Cultural anthropological models of honor and shame and patronage and benefaction better illustrate many aspects of the Gospel.[70] So too is the grand-narrative of secularization: the very concepts of sects, cults, and secularization cannot be understood apart from post-Enlightenment Western intellectual discourse.[71] However, the Gospel *does* appeal to the rational choice of the individual: he or she is invited to believe in Jesus and so have life (20:31) and light (cf. 8:12); the alternative is darkness and death (3:19; 12:35)—spare logic indeed![72] The "costs and benefits" involved in believing or refusing to believe in Jesus is certainly made clear. Yet other aspects of the Gospel's community ethic undercut the thesis implied in Stark and Bainbridge's model that the rational chooser will act so as to gain optimal utility out of believing in Jesus: believers are enjoined, after all, to "wash" each other's feet (13:13–15) and even to lay down their lives for each other (15:13–14) in imitation of Jesus.[73] The subtle, as well as the more explicit, aspects of Stark and Bainbridge's theory therefore need to be carefully considered before applying their particular "sect" model to the Gospel of John.

Fuglseth might be said to have surmounted some of these problems by likening the Johannine community to a cult rather than to a sect. For Stark and Bainbridge, a cult is not in a tension-driven relationship with its environment, and is not separated from it. The Gospel evidence expressing a more accommodating stance towards the symbolic world of "Judaism" supports Fuglseth's position (cf. 2:13; 4:22; 6:58; 7:10; 10:35; 12:12; 13:2; 20:8). Similarly, Stark and Bainbridge's hypothesis that cults proliferate when traditional forms of religious expression are in decline may find a parallel in the rise of the diverse forms of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70. But the Fourth Gospel's language of distance and separation from key aspects of Jewish identity ("your/their law" [8:17; 10:34; 15:25]; "your

70 See Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*; Jerome H. Neyrey, *The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

71 Cf. Jeff Kenney, "The Politics of Sects and Typologies," *Nova Religio* 6 (2002): 137–146.

72 Cf. C.F.D. Moule, "The Individualism of the Fourth Gospel," *NovT* 5 (1962): 171–190.

73 Drawing on social-scientific models of religious conversion, Kendra Eshleman, "Becoming Heretical: Affection and Ideology in Recruitment to Early Christianities," *HTR* 104 (2011): 191–216, concludes that in the late second and early third centuries, conversion did not proceed by rational psychological choice or attraction to ideology but spread through pre-existing social networks.

father(s)" [6:49; 8:56]), and its pejorative depiction of "the Jews," must also be explained by Fuglseth. These features indicate some degree of separation, and certainly of tension. Cults are world-accommodating, according to Stark and Bainbridge, and they are, in turn, tolerated by the larger society. But on this score, the Fourth Gospel again presents us with conflicting evidence. Whether the Gospel reflects an exclusively "world-negating" or "world-affirming" position is impossible to say. At first glance, the term ὁ κόσμος in the Gospel appears to bear mostly negative connotations (cf. 1:10; 8:23; 14:17, 30–31; 15:18–19; 16:11, 28, 33; 17:6, 25). To paraphrase Meeks, "the world" implies a religious system that followers of Jesus need to become "detached" from in order to live their new faith wholeheartedly.[74] But in fact ὁ κόσμος can be the object of God's unreserved love (3:16; cf. 17:24) or the place to which Jesus has come to shine his light (8:12; 9:5).[75]

Perhaps, however, the benefit of Stark and Bainbridge's theory is that the continuum it posits means that a religious movement may change in orientation and status over time. Redaction-critical approaches to John's Gospel might demonstrate that positive references to the world belonged to an earlier stage of the community's history, when the community was more world-affirming and existed as a new cultic movement. As tension with their environment increased, and the community became more sectarian in orientation, negative references to the "world" would also have become more common. This aside, Fuglseth addresses the issue of the Gospel's apparent tension with its wider environment by arguing that existing tensions motivated innovative theological development on the part of the community, of which its high Christology is one example (cf. 1:1–18; cf. 10:30). Fuglseth contrasts the Johannine approach with the more sectarian "refurbishment" of traditions, as at Qumran. However, do we need to assume that the innovative Christology of the Johannine community was used to *deal* with tensions, or could we just as well argue that it *produced* tensions between the parent tradition of "Judaism" and the Johannine group?[76] It was very likely that there was a dialectical relationship between these two poles. I will return shortly to this issue in the final section of the article.

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74 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 194.

75 Cf. Stanley B. Marrow, "*Kosmos* in John," *CBQ* 64 (2002): 90–102; cf. Thomas L. Brodie, *The Quest for the Origins of John's Gospel: A Source-Oriented Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 151.

76 This view is adopted by Jerome H. Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt: John's Christology in Social-Science Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988), 117.

To conclude this section I simply make some final general remarks about the application of the terms "sect" and "cult" to the Gospel of John. As with the term sect, the application of the term cult can be liable to the same charge of anachronism. Yet what particularly complicates the issue is that both terms are used so variously in the sociological literature.[77] When applied to the Gospel of John or other early Christian and para-biblical literature, it would seem that the terminology is used in various ways again. Fuglseth's definition of cult, deriving from Stark and Bainbridge, equates to other scholars' definition of "sect." For example, Ashton perceives the "new" and innovative revelation that the Johannine community feels about themselves to be in possession of or likens them to a "sect," not a "cult."[78] Features of both "cult" *and* "sect" as defined by Stark and Bainbridge find their way into most scholars' understanding of the Johannine community when it is spoken of as being "sectarian."

These factors taken together considerably weaken the descriptive value of either sociological category when applied to John's Gospel. It is almost as though one can arbitrarily select a term, define its contours *according* to one's own reading of the Gospel, and then apply it to the Gospel. With this concern in mind, certain other scholars have moved away from models developed in the sociology of religion and toward the dialectical phenomenology of models found in other branches of sociology. My purpose in the following section is not to give an exhaustive analysis of the social theories behind these examples, but simply to summarize their key arguments and findings, in order to show how they attempt to overcome the weaknesses of the sect/cult models applied to the Gospel.

Alternatives to Sectarianism

Sociolinguistics and the Sociology of Knowledge

The suggestion that John's community was an "anti-society" and the language of the Gospel as "anti-language" has been advanced by some scholars as an alternative to modern sociological categories of sect and sectarianism. This is one of the more promising ways to understand the Johannine community from a social perspective because it does not begin with a putative historical reality, but it begins with the *language* of the Gospel itself. The concept

77 For a different view, characterizing cults and sects along a continuum but still with a focus on their internal features, see Wallis, "Figuring Out Cult Receptivity," 494–503.

78 John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (rev. ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 65.

of "anti-language" as the product of an "anti-society" derives from the work of Michael Halliday.[79] Relying on the seminal work of Michael Halliday, New Testament scholars Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh define an anti-society as "a society that is set up within another society as a conscious alternative to it."[80] An anti-society is essentially "a mode of resistance" to the wider society in which it subsists and with which it is in conflict. Anti-societies developed unique languages specific to their group identity and became the expression of their social experience.[81] Malina states that anti-societies are "labelled by the dominant society as deviants" and experience over time various forms of "socially sanctioned depersonalization."[82]

The unique anti-language of such groups "creates and expresses an [alternative] interpretation of reality" and reinforces the "in-group" mentality and group identity of that anti-society.[83] Thus, an anti-language is not simply technical jargon or literary innovation—an authentic anti-language is unlike slang or idiom in that it is always the product of a "disaffected group."[84] Just as ordinary language conveys and interprets social reality and socializes individuals and groups into that reality, anti-language also has an important socializing function. But an anti-language functions to reinterpret an alternative social reality that runs *counter* to the reality of the broader society and to re-socialize "newcomers into that social interpretation."[85] What this means is that an anti-language, although it uses terms and words derived from the ordinary language of its surrounding society, charges those words with a special in-group meaning that is only comprehensible to insiders. This is a key feature of anti-language as outlined by Halliday and developed by Malina and Rohrbaugh. This key feature is called "relexicalisation."

For the Johannine community, the language of life with God is expressed in a variety of idiosyncratic ways, such as believing "into" Jesus, following Jesus, abiding in Jesus, keeping Jesus' word, and so on. The words John chooses to

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79 Michael A.K. Halliday, "Anti-Languages," *American Anthropologist* 78 (1976): 570–584.

80 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 7, citing Michael Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic* (London: Edward Arnold, 1978), 164–182.

81 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 7.

82 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 9, 10. This is very close to Becker's theory of primary and secondary deviation, but Becker does not use a semiotic framework (Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* [Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1963], 24, 35).

83 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 11; cf. 46.

84 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 46.

85 Cf. Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 11.

use to refer to the divine realm and its opposite are equally idiosyncratic: spirit (1:32–33; 3:5–6, 8, 34; 4:23; 6:63; 7:39; 11:33; 13:21; 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:4, 13; 19:30; 20:22), above (3:31; 8:23; 19:11), life (1:4; 3:15–16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:21, 24, 26, 29, 39–40; 6:27, 33, 35, 40, 47–48, 51, 53–54, 63, 68; 8:12; 10:10–11, 15, 17, 28; 11:25; 12:25; 13:17–38; 14:6; 15:13; 17:2–3; 20:31), light (1:4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 3:19, 20, 21; 5:35; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9–10; 12:35–36, 46), and freedom (8:32, 36). These are contrasted with other terms: below (8:23), death (5:24), darkness (1:5; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35), and slavery (8:34, 35).[86] These could all be considered examples of "partial relexicalisation," but they could also be examples of "overlexicalisation," another feature of anti-languages that refers to the use of many different words for the same reality or idea.[87] Thus, the "overlexicalised" dualism of the Gospel functions to contrast an "in-group" with an "out-group." This in-group/out-group dimension of the text foregrounds the anti-societal nature of the community behind John's Gospel. This was a community that defined its boundaries very sharply and developed a special language to facilitate interpersonal bonding among its members, as a *possible* consequence of and/or response to social stigmatization.[88]

In relying upon insights from sociolinguistics and positing a dialectical process of social stigmatization and the group's development of anti-language, Malina and Rohrbaugh's approach comes close to the seminal work of Wayne Meeks mentioned at the beginning of this essay. Although Meeks—who possibly initiated scholarly interest in Johannine sectarianism—uses the term "sect," he makes it clear that he eschews the models of sect provided in the sociology of religion. Meeks chooses the model(s) available in the sociology of knowledge, particularly the category of the "symbolic world" developed by Berger and Luckmann.[89] There is an important distinction here: the category of sect in the sociology of religion has its basis in empirical analysis of the modern phenomenon of radical splinter groups detached from parent churches. By contrast, the sociology of knowledge is less of a positivistic science and is more typically a study of how social institutions influence literary forms and features.[90] In this sense its method is phenomenological rather than empiri-

86 Cf. Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 4.

87 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 5, 47.

88 Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 47.

89 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 194. See Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1967).

90 Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill, and Bryan S. Turner, *Dictionary of Sociology* (3rd ed.; London: Penguin, 1994), 404.

cal; in the words of Berger and Luckmann, it "investigates a phenomenon in terms of the manner in which it appears in human experience, without immediately raising the question of its ultimate status in reality."[91] Turning to the study of religion, Berger proposes that there is a dialectic relationship between "religious activity and religious ideation."[92] Religious symbols and experience "mutually determine each other" to the point where one co-produces the other.[93]

Adopting this approach, Meeks understands the Gospel of John, through its structures of language, to have created a "symbolic world" that is not merely literary, but which originated in and reinforced a "sectarian" group-mentality on the part of the Gospel community. In his celebrated article, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," Meeks analyzes the social function of a Johannine "myth"—that of the descending/ascending redeemer.[94] On the level of the text, the descent/ascent motif is used only of Jesus in the Gospel: Jesus' story is "played out on earth," despite indications that his true home is in heaven.[95] The essential function of this mythical motif within the text, according to Meeks, is to depict Jesus, the protagonist of the story, not as hero, but as "Stranger *par excellence*" whose discourses puzzle those who hear them.[96] The pattern of language inscribed in the Johannine myth of the descending/ascending redeemer had a specific textual function—but by extension it also had a specific social function for the Johannine community and its relationship to its environment. The Gospel's "closed system of metaphors," of which the ascent/descent motif is one example, functioned as a means of communication for a group of believers in a position of estrangement from "the world"; those who believe in Jesus are drawn into his orbit, so to speak, becoming "children of God," and no longer "of this world."[97] The text of the Gospel can therefore be seen as an example of Berger and Luckmann's "harmonic reinforcement between social experience and ideology."[98]

These alternative understandings of the Johannine community's social world have not escaped critique. The recent view of Timothy Ling is particularly

91 Peter Berger, *The Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affiliation* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1979), 37.
92 Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 41.
93 Berger, *The Heretical Imperative*, 51.
94 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 169.
95 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 174.
96 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 174, 183–184.
97 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 192.
98 Meeks, "Man from Heaven," 194.

astute. In Ling's view, the sociolinguistic models of Malina and Rohrbaugh, as well as the socio-epistemological model of Meeks, are just as inappropriate and anachronistic as the classical models of the church/sect typology developed in the sociology of religion.[99] I have reason to be more optimistic about these alternative models than Ling. Although one could rightly question Malina and Rohrbaugh on (a) their assumption of social stigmatization and imposition of sanctions on the part of the wider society toward the Johannine community, and (b) their selective appropriation of Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to "fit" the Gospel, at the least their cultural anthropological approach does not suffer from the same economic biases of RCT theory. The same can be said for Meeks's work, on the grounds that he does not propose "sect" as a truly existent category, but looks at the dialectical reinforcement between group consciousness and reality. This is not to unduly laud sociolinguistic approaches for the sake of it, but simply to highlight the different theoretical bases of the various community hypotheses, which are often unexposed in Johannine scholarship.

Genre as Social Action

At the beginning of this article, I mentioned two facts that threaten to undermine sociological readings of John: first, that the very concept of a Johannine community has been called into question in recent years, and second, that the so-called "linguistic turn" has in theory cautioned historians of the Gospels against a too-ready assumption that their text in question "reflects" a discernible social history. The first of these points I do not find necessary to endorse. Together with various other scholars, I would agree that we could still speak of a Johannine community without the need, however, to expatiate upon the most intricate and speculative details of its constitution.[100] The second of these points, instead of undermining historical-critical inquiry into the community's sociology, can actually enhance it. An understanding of the literary "givenness" of a text and the particularity of a text's genre, as well as how its

99 Ling, *The Judean Poor*, 147. Ling's criticism of the Context Group is extensive and multifaceted, but his argument from anachronism is odd, since his own solution (the Virtuoso model) relies on a modern Weberian formulation.

100 For example, Takashi Onuki, *Gemeinde und Welt im Johannesevangelium: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der theologischen und pragmatischen Funktion des johanneischen 'Dualismus'* (WMANT 56; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1984); Rainer Metzer, "Vollmacht im Johannesevangelium," *NovT* 45 (2003): 22–44, here 37; Jörg Frey, "'… dass sie meine Herrlichkeit shauen' (Joh 17.24): Zu Hintergrund, Sinn und Funktion der johanneischen Rede von der δόξα Jesu," *NTS* 54 (2008): 375–397, here 382.

genre relates to history, can assist us in the interpretation of a textual community's social construction of reality and its place within it.[101]

Language and society are always inextricably interrelated. On the one hand, particular languages (or technically, "sociolects") arise in the context of particular societies, groups, or communities.[102] "Anti-languages," perhaps like the Gospel's *Sondesprache*, evolve as a means of constructing reality. Halliday predicted, on this basis, that "the forms of organization of every language will in themselves carry a model" of that constructed reality.[103] On the other hand, societies are defined and shaped by language because language and meaning are essentially coded by *genres*.[104] Recent advances in literary theory arguing that genre should be defined not solely in terms of the substance of its discourse but in terms of the rhetorical action it seeks to accomplish could enhance these sociolinguistic approaches to the Gospel. I suggest that "anti-languages" can be seen—in the words of Carolyn Miller—as *generic*; they are "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations."[105] That is, texts do not belong to genres but perform them: genres are thus "typified actions" arising from, embodying and responding to particular social situations (the "recurrent form"). Genres make sense of reality via semiosis; the construal of reality through anti-language—which in empirical sociology might take the shape of "sect/church" typologies—can be understood rather as a generic means of organizing social reality according to rhetorical exigencies.

This is, of course, to raise the thorny question of the Gospel's genre—but in such a way as to be relevant for sociological discussion. Miller's seminal theory inextricably links genres to social situations.[106] Against the more destabilising tenets of postmodernism, it is reasonable to assume that texts "reflect" their social history—not in the spirit of a naive realism that reads literature as direct historical reference, but by generic mediation. Genres "mediate between

101 As noted earlier, this discussion forms the basis of another article currently in progress; the purpose here is to note its relevance, rather than to develop it at length.

102 Sociolinguists study not only dialects, but also sociolects, the patterns of language unique to class, age, and gender. See Basil Bernstein, "Social Class and Linguistic Development: A Theory of Social Learning," in *Education, Economy and Society* (ed. A. Halsey, J. Floud, and C.A. Anderson; New York: Free Press, 1961), 288–314.

103 Gunther Kress, Ruqaiya Hasan, and J.R. Martin, "Interview with M.A.K. Halliday, May 1986: Part Two," *Social Semiotics* 2 (1992): 58–69, here 61.

104 Cf. John Frow, *Genre* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 2.

105 Carolyn R. Miller, "Genre as Social Action," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984): 151–176.

106 Anne Freadman, "The Traps and Trappings of Genre Theory," *Applied Linguistics* 33 (2012): 544–563, here 544.

a social situation and the text which realizes certain features of this situation, or which responds strategically to its demands."[107] Martyn's hypothesis of John's narrative as a "two-level drama" makes intuitive sense in this regard because it quite simply expresses the reading dynamic invited by the Gospel itself, that is, that John's story of Jesus is told through the lens of later—and quite particular—social concerns. John's anti-language is a product of, and a response to, the community's anti-societal composition. The phenomenology of Berger and Luckmann and related social constructivist theories allow us to perceive this process of generic mediation as a dialectical reinforcement of ideation and reality.

It might be wise to leave the generic classification of the Gospel text relatively open. This is because "a generic classification never covers the global text."[108] Aspects of Greco-Roman biography or historiography may constitute part of the form and/or content of the Gospel, but these have been skewed to fit John's kerygmatic design.[109] Obviously the Gospels are not *sui generis*, but they are particular manifestations of a mixing of multiple genres, and their particularity arises from the "typified rhetorical actions" they accomplish or perform. The Gospel embodies and responds to the social situation of the Johannine community: this embodiment and response *is* the function of its genre.[110]

Miller's theory of genre as social action has not gone unchallenged; Miller refined her own thinking of this matter in 1994 in light of criticisms from Charles Bazerman, among others.[111] But while some of her earlier suggestions about "macro-level" and "micro-level" concerns were refined, Miller's later article only strengthened her contention that genres function as "cultural constructions that reflexively help construct their culture."[112] Genre is a communicative

107 Frow, *Genre*, 14.

108 Heta Pyrhönen, "Genre," in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative* (ed. David Herman; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 114.

109 Cf. R.A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); Richard Bauckham, "Historiographical Characteristics of the Gospel of John," *NTS* 53 (2007): 17–36.

110 This does move away from taxonomic approaches to genre typical of classical or "Aristotelian" genre theory. See Frow, *Genre*, 51–62. One example is the social event of Jesus' death, configured in John's narrative as departure and return, and expressed by means of innovations around the testamentary genre (13:1–17:26). On this, see Ruth Sheridan, "John's Gospel and Modern Genre Theory: The Farewell Discourse (John 13–17) as a Test Case," *ITQ* 75 (2010): 287–299.

111 Carolyn Miller, "Rhetorical Community: The Cultural Basis of Genre," in *Genre and the New Rhetoric* (ed. Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway; London: Taylor & Francis, 1994), 67–78.

112 Miller, "Rhetorical Community," 68–69.

aspect of societal structure that forges rhetorical communities—genres presuppose "addressivity," which, when adopted by individuals, provides a mechanism by which they "must reproduce patterned notions of others," and the structures of their society (or anti-society) reinforce this reproduction.[113]

What this suggests, finally, is that genre is an aspect of "cultural rationality" that assists groups in defining *identities* and in learning the sorts of values they share and do not share with other groups, something clearly at work in John's articulate ethical dualism.[114] The patterned notion of "others" laid out in John's Gospel almost consistently follows a dualistic structure, with "the Jews" (5:18; 7:1, 20; 8:37, 40; 18:28–32; 19:7, 12) or "the world" (14:17, 27; 15:18–25; 16:33b; 17:25) functioning as adversarial foils to Jesus or the disciples.[115] The kerygmatic impulse of John's Gospel addresses an implied reader, asking him or her to define social identities in the sharp terms of the Gospel and to become part of a rhetorical community (cf. 20:31). For want of any other social category, we may find ourselves still speaking of Johannine sectarianism or Johannine factionalism, but I suggest that it should be with the concerns of this article in mind. The dialectical and sociolinguistic approaches of Malina, Rohrbaugh, Meeks, and others, can complement literary-critical theories on the social and rhetorical functions of texts, and lead into a holistic reading of John's literary features and his social situation. This would then lead away from the less suitable positivistic and reductionist economic theories at the heart of Stark and Bainbridge's sociology.

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113 Miller, "Rhetorical Community," 72.

114 Frow, *Genre*, 144; cf. Raimo Hakola, "The Burden of Ambiguity: Nicodemus and the Social Identity of the Johannine Christians," *NTS* 55 (2009): 438–455.

115 Adele Reinhartz, *Befriending the Beloved Disciple: A Jewish Reading of the Gospel of John* (New York: Continuum, 2001).

Structure, Composition,
and Authorship of John's Gospel

On "Seamless Robes" and "Leftover Fragments"—A Theory of Johannine Composition

Paul N. Anderson

John has been called a "seamless robe" woven from top to bottom, which scholars may gamble for—casting their lots in favor of one theory or another, but which they may not divide (John 19:23–24). Even according to a scholar as radical and freethinking as David Friedrich Strauss, John appears to be a literary unity from beginning to end in its form and presentation.[1] On the other hand, such perplexities and rough transitions in the text persist that a scholar as theologically penetrating as Rudolf Bultmann has argued, with striking lucidity, that John betrays the contributions of at least five different major sources or hands. In his epoch-making commentary, Bultmann attributes John's origins to three or more sources—the work of an evangelist and the contributions of a redactor.[2] In doing so, he and other diachronic scholars appear to have attempted to gather the "leftover fragments" into their respective literary baskets, so "that nothing be wasted" (John 6:12). Whether the literary unity of John is worth gambling for, or whether the sources of John are worth breaking, distributing, blessing, and gathering up again as individuated traditions, interpreters must address the puzzle of John's composition. These, however, might not be the only options.

The Fourth Gospel is one of the most unitive of New Testament writings stylistically, and yet it suffers a great deal of structural disunity. On one hand, such themes as "belief," "witness," "love," "life," "send," "the Son," "glory," and

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1 In his 1856 edition of his book, Strauss referred to John as a "seamless robe" woven together of one piece. W.F. Howard cites the original German passage in *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation* (London: Epworth, 1931), 258. This passage and its implications are discussed further in Paul N. Anderson, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6* (3rd ed.; Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2010), 252–265.

2 Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (trans. George R. Beasley-Murray, R.W.N. Hoare, and John K. Riches; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014). While Bultmann's commentary on John presents these theories within his commentary from passage to passage, D. Moody Smith has done a remarkable service to the world of biblical scholarship in outlining the material and showing the particular source-critical distributions made by Bultmann in *Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel: Bultmann's Literary Theory* (London: Yale University Press, 1965).

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"signs" are distributed throughout various parts of the Gospel; and yet, rough transitions and aporias (perplexities) cause one to wonder about how the material itself came together.[3] Does the unevenness in the material reflect a multiplicity of sources, or has it simply been edited roughly, even if composed by a single author? Was it put together over a long period of time (diachronically), or during a relatively short period of time (synchronically)? Did it have a single author or several? Was John connected in some way to the Synoptic Gospels, or was it an independent tradition? Where did the distinctively Johannine material come from, and why is well-known material in the Synoptics omitted? These are but a few of the questions affecting one's treatment of John's composition. Scholars have put a variety of literary approaches to John's development and composition forward,[4] but to deal with this compositional issue, we first need to address the textual perplexities and literary riddles in the Johannine Gospel.

John's Literary Perplexities and Riddles

When one reads the Gospel of John, most of it flows evenly. However, rough transitions in the text, apparent problems with order, and other textual perplexities have led scholars to address these riddles by means of composition theories. Other issues such as John's theological tensions, John's relations to the Synoptics and the Johannine Epistles, and the history of Johannine Christianity[5]

3 This term was introduced programmatically to the Johannine riddles by Eduard Schwartz in four essays: "Aporien im vierten Evangelium," in *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1907, 1908), 1:342–372, 2:115–148, 3:149–188, 4:497–560. Cf. also H. Latimer Jackson, *The Problem of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920); Robert Eisler, *The Enigma of the Fourth Gospel: Its Author and its Writer* (London: Methuen, 1938); and Paul N. Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011), where 36 of John's theological, historical, and literary perplexities are outlined, engaged, and interpreted.

4 Leading approaches to John's composition are engaged more fully in Anderson, *Christology*, 1–166, and the strengths and weaknesses of a dozen leading scholarly approaches to John's composition are evaluated analytically in Anderson, *Riddles*, 95–124.

5 Regarding John's theological tensions, see Anderson, *Christology*, 1–32 and 266–271; and Anderson, *Riddles*, 25–43; for analyses of John's historical riddles, see Paul N. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus: Modern Foundations Reconsidered* (LNTS 321; London: T&T Clark, 2006); and Anderson, *Riddles*, 45–65. On the history of the Johannine situation, cf. Paul N. Anderson, "The *Sitz im Leben* of the Johannine Bread of Life Discourse and Its Evolving Context," in *Critical Readings of John 6* (ed. R. Alan Culpepper; BIS 22; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1–59.

evoke further historical and theological questions, but the following is a partial list of John's literary riddles, which form the primary bases for scholarly theories of its origin and composition.

Abrupt Changes in Literary Form

Between the Prologue (John 1:1–18) and the John the Baptist narrative beginning in v. 19, there is a clear shift in form. The Prologue is written in poetic verse, and it even appears to be shaped within stanzas, with progressive repetitions of central themes. Some of these important themes—Jesus was the true *Logos*, from whom we receive *plērōma* (fullness) and *charis* (grace), for instance—are not found elsewhere in the Gospel, nor is *logos* used as a Christological reference in the narrative. And, as the Johannine *Logos* hymn clearly emerged from a setting of worship, as likely did Phil 2:5–11, Col 1:15–20, and Heb 1:1–4, its origin was likewise different. As the language of John's Prologue also bears many linguistic similarities with the beginning of 1 John (1:1–4), that connection is worth exploring. Within the Prologue, two prosaic sections that focus on the witness of John the Baptist (John 1:6–8 and 15) seem distinct from the rest of the poetic material, and yet it is difficult to know whether these verses were added to the hymnic material, or whether the hymnic material was crafted around them. Of course, the interpretive issues related here are highly significant: was the Prologue added as an introduction to an already existing gospel narrative, creating an engaging overture, or does the crafting of the Gospel flow from the outline spelled out in the Prologue? More on this will be explored later.

A second major shift in form occurs between the Great Discourses of Jesus in John 14–17, and within this section, we also have ch. 17 standing alone in terms of form as the longest recorded prayer of Jesus. While it is over ten times as long as "the Lord's Prayer" of Matthew and Luke, for instance, "the High Priestly Prayer" in John still contains every one of the themes in the Lord's Prayer—an interesting matter to contemplate, in and of itself. It also contains the fewest new words of any chapter in the Fourth Gospel, which suggests that the prayer is a digest of John's central content. Ernst Käsemann has developed the thesis, for instance, that John 17 represents Jesus' "last will and testament" for his disciples, and that it should be read as a foundational resource for understanding John's perspective on Jesus' will for the church.[6] In terms of form, however, the beginning and the end of this discourse material are worth noting. John 13 begins with a narration of the last supper, and then it moves into a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples, culminating finally with speech-like

6 Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus According to John 17* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968).

discourse material. In that sense, the transition beginning with John 14:1 is not all that pronounced, but it carries on from there as discourses interspersed with some dialogue. The transition into ch. 18, however, is far more abrupt. John 18:1 declares the prayer is finished and begins the narrative in the garden, commencing with the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, leading to his trials and crucifixion.

There are many other less abrupt changes in form that are related to the miracles of Jesus and subsequent elaborations upon his ministry in the light of particular signs and other events. This is especially evident in John 6, where Jesus not only feeds the multitude, but also, after a discussion of the meaning of the feeding and the essence of "bread," moves from the dialogue to short discourses. Likewise, in John 9 and 11, the healing of the blind man and the raising of Lazarus lead to dialogues about the meaning of the signs, out of which Jesus pronounces the truth about his mission and the sort of salvation/revelation he brings. Moreover, one also finds movements from narrative to dialogue, then to discourse, in chs. 1, 3, 4, 5, 7–10, and 12, and these movements raise interesting composition questions regarding the relations between these three literary forms.

Problems with Order and Sequence

Several times in John we find oddities with its order and sequence. In John 13:36, Peter asks Jesus where he is going, and yet later, apparently within the same context (16:5), Jesus says "none of you asks me where I am going." In John 11:2, the narrator clarifies that the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was the same household as that woman named "Mary" who had anointed Jesus' feet, although the anointing does not happen until the next chapter (12:1–8). In John 18, the sequence between Jesus' examinations before Annas and Caiaphas is strange; he is sent first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas the High Priest (18:13), but is questioned by the High Priest (18:19) *before* he is sent to Caiaphas in v. 24. These odd elements of sequence make one wonder whether the order of the text might have been disrupted in some way.

Regarding geography, several odd sequences also present themselves in John. Jesus and his disciples enter "the land of Judea" (3:22) after apparently having been there all along (2:12–25). In John 4, Jesus ministers in Samaria and Galilee, but in ch. 5, he returns to Jerusalem. John 6, however, has Jesus back in Galilee, and in ch. 7, he is back in Jerusalem again, apparently discussing the same healing performed in ch. 5. Bultmann's approach to this perplexity is to infer a disordering and reordering of the material. Perhaps the original order or these chapters, according to Bultmann, was 4–6–5–7. In chs. 20 and 21, the events in John 20 take place in Jerusalem, and all of a sudden, the events in John

21 take place in the shores of Galilee. Indeed, Jesus probably traveled to and from Jerusalem several times during his ministry, but these abrupt geographic moves also raise questions about John's composition and order.

Rough Transitions in the Text

At several places transitions are especially rough. In John 6:25, the crowd asks Jesus, "*When* did you get here?" But his response appears to be disconnected: "You seek me not because you saw the signs but because you ate and were satisfied." At the end of John 6, another odd transition presents itself. In v. 70 Jesus appears to be rejecting Peter's confession: "I have not chosen you, the Twelve (to escape tribulation unscathed), and yet one of you is a devil." The meaning of this exclamation is entirely parallel to his rebuke of Peter in Mark 8:33, "Get thee behind me, Satan." In John 6:71, however, we are told parenthetically that Jesus was not referring to Peter, but to Judas, who would betray him later. Do we have different sources or editorial hands at work within John 6? And, John 20:31 declares the reason the evangelist has written his work (that people might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God), implying an original ending of the Gospel. This makes ch. 21 appear to be a later addition, which conclusion betrays the style of the first ending (21:25). Most perplexing in John, however, is 14:31, where Jesus declares to his disciples, "Let us arise and depart." They do not arrive in the garden until three chapters later (18:1), though, and this makes one wonder how the delivery of the Great Discourses and prayer of John 15–17 are to be understood. Should we consider John 15–17 "the Sermon in the Alley?" If so, it is two-thirds as long as Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, and over twice as long as Luke's Sermon on the Plain. These are just a few of the rough transitions in John that require consideration.

Editorial Explanations

Many times in John events are "explained" for the reader. Parallel to Mark's translations of Aramaic terms for a Greek-speaking audience (Mark 3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 15:22) and explanations of Jewish customs (Mark 7:2–4; 15:42) for Gentiles, John also does the same sort of thing, but even more so. First, we have explicit translation of Semitic names and terms into Greek. Aramaic words for "teacher" are translated for the Greek-speaking reader (John 1:38; 20:16), as is the word for the anointed one (*Messias* = *Christos*, 1:41; 4:25), and uniquely in the Gospels, Peter's Aramaic appellation is *Kēphas* (meaning *Petros*—"Rock" in Greek, 1:42; the Aramaic name for Peter used also by Paul). The evangelist also translates into Greek the Hebrew names of places connected to events in the ministry of Jesus, some of which carry symbolic overtones: the pool by the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem is called in Hebrew *Beth-zatha* (5:2), Jesus commands

the blind man to wash in the pool of *Siloam* (meaning "sent," 9:7), the Stone Pavement (*Lithostrōtos*) on which Pilate's judgment bench rested was called in Hebrew *Gabbatha* (not a translation, but an adding of the Aramaic name for the same place, 19:13), and Jesus was crucified at "The Place of the Skull" (which in Hebrew is called *Golgotha*, 19:17).

In addition to translations from Aramaic/Hebrew to Greek in John, we also find many places where customs of the Jews are "explained" for non-Jewish audiences. Denoting an event as a "festival of the Jews" introduces the Passover and other feasts throughout John (2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2; 11:55), and this detail is used to explain the travel of Jesus and others to and from Jerusalem. Also, a variety of Jewish customs are explained as follows: the six stone water jars used for the turning of water into wine are described as ceremonial containers used for Jewish rites of purification (2:6); Jews, it is explained, had no dealings with Samaritans (4:9); given that it was the Jewish Day of Preparation, the Jewish leaders did not want bodies left on crosses during the Sabbath (19:31); and this led to the haste of Jesus' burial in a tomb nearby (19:42). Likewise, the wrapping of Jesus' body was with spices in linen cloths "according to the burial custom of the Jews" (19:40). At the very least, these signs of cross-cultural translation suggest breaks between times, places, and cultures—between the events in the ministry of Jesus and the reception of those narrations by later audiences.

John also has many editorial explanations along the way, and some of these are stated with varying degrees of explicitness. Parenthetical clarifications include such statements as the timing of John's imprisonment (3:24) and the clarification that Jesus did not actually baptize; only his disciples did (4:2, probably as a correction of misunderstandings resulting from 3:22 and 4:1). The clarification that circumcision came from the Patriarchs rather than from Moses suggests an editorial hand at work, correcting an earlier text in John 7:21–22. Also, the alternative (Roman) name for the Sea of Galilee (that is, *Tiberiados*) is mentioned (6:1); the Greek word for the Hebrew word for "twin" is given as *Didymus* (the name Thomas is also called in 11:16 and 20:24); it is clarified that the Judas speaking in John 14:22 was *not* Iscariot, but the *other* Judas; the name of the servant is mentioned, "Malchus" (18:10); Peter's garment is described as having been removed (21:7); Jesus' words to Peter were to indicate the death by which he would die (21:19); and the disciple who is credited with writing the Fourth Gospel is mentioned as the one who had leaned against the breast of Jesus in John 13:23–25, of whom Peter had asked who would betray Jesus (21:20, 24).

These are just a few of the parenthetical and interpretive remarks made along the way in the Johannine narrative, and they suggest a fair degree of

editorial commentary on why things were said and done as well as what they originally meant.[7] More difficult, of course, is the task of determining which literary layer may have represented the addition of each of the comments. They indeed may have had a place within the oral stages of the tradition—the sort of thing a storyteller would say as an aside in constructing a narrative, they may reflect the evangelist's work in putting down something into writing, or they may reflect a later editor's clarification of meanings or crafting the material for reception by later audiences—or some combination of these possibilities.

Repetitions and Variations

John has many sections that appear to replay a familiar theme: sometimes a theme that has just been used is repeated in slightly different ways, and sometimes one that was used earlier in the text is also sounded again.[8] Verses 31–36 in John 3, for instance, appears to communicate the central outline of the Johannine message. On the other hand, it is unclear who is speaking in this nugget of Johannine content. Is it understood to be a continuation of John the Baptist's words, or is it the narration of the evangelist that has taken over? Or, if we compare the passage with a similar one in John 12:44–50, we find the climactic words of Jesus declaring the essence of his representative mission in ways quite parallel to John 3:31–36.[9]

Another passage raising a rife number of questions is John 6:53–58. This passage continues the "Bread of Life" theme developed so richly in vv. 27–51, but it appears to be introducing eucharistic associations into the discourse. Was it added by an editor, or does it represent the work of the evangelist? Either way, does it require the eucharist for salvation, thus departing from the Christocentric view of salvation so pervasive otherwise in John, or is the emphasis along another line?[10] One more passage to consider is the relation of John 10:1–10 to vv. 11–19. The first part describes Jesus as the Gate of the sheepfold, while the next section describes him as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

Finally, several of the themes regarding the *Paraklētos* and the work of the Holy Spirit, abiding in Christ and receiving guidance in the truth, in John 14

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7 For a fuller list of asides in the Gospel of John, see Merrill Tenney, "The Footnotes of John's Gospel," *BibSac* (1960): 350–364; John O'Rourke, "Asides in the Gospel of John," *NovT* 21 (1979): 210–219.

8 Gilbert Van Belle, Michael Labahn, Petrus Maritz, eds., *Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: Style, Text, Interpretation* (BETL 223; Leuven: Peeters, 2009).

9 William R.G. Loader, "The Central Structure of John's Christology," *NTS* 30 (1981): 188–216.

10 For an extensive discussion of the issues, cf. Anderson, *Christology*, 110–136, 194–220.

are repeated and expanded further in John 15–17. Did these units all develop as the sections we have in the finalized text, or do we have here an indication of a tradition that has grown like a snowball, picking up related material along the way? Whatever the case, proper interpretation hinges upon understanding not only what the tradition was, but also how it developed along the way.

The Fact of Textual Additions in John

A text-critical analysis of John shows evidence of several textual additions, such as the woman caught in adultery (7:53–8:11), explanatory glosses such as the information regarding the healing availed to those getting into the pool when the angel of the Lord stirred the water (5:3–4), and corrections of textual "problems" along the way (1:18; 3:25; 5:44; 6:69; 7:8; 14:7) that suggest ways later copyists dealt with the Johannine text, and they were probably not the first to "improve" an existing document. At the very least, the fact of textual additions proves that some additions were made later, although not by the same hand. If such were the case, however, might these be the *only* units that were added to an earlier text, or might John's literary perplexities be explained by inferring other additions, as well?

Differences of Voice and Attestation in the Fourth Gospel

A distinctive feature of multiple authorship involves differences of voice. John 1:14 and 16 declare corporate attestations: "we have seen his glory," and "from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace." This corporate attestation continues in John 21:24, declaring: "and we know that his testimony is true" with reference to the ascribed author. Note, then, that whoever is finalizing the narrative claims that the Beloved Disciple has written "these things" and that he is the one described earlier as having leaned against the breast of Jesus (13:23). Further, it is attested that Jesus never said he would not die (21:23); by implication it appears that the Beloved Disciple has died and that the Gospel is being finalized by another. Additionally, a reference is made to an eyewitness who was present at the crucifixion, and the narrator attests: "his testimony is true, and he knows he tells the truth" (19:35).

Interestingly, these features cohere with features in the Johannine Epistles, where the first-person plural is used extensively by the author of the Epistles, who calls himself "the Elder." In particular, this leader within the Johannine situation emphasizes "abiding" (1 John 2:24–28; 3:17, 24; 4:13–16), appeals to the authority of others (2 John 9), attests to "what we have seen and heard" from the beginning (1:1–3), claims to impart what "we know" (1 John 2:18; 3:14, 16, 24; 4:6, 13; 5:2, 15, 18, 19, 20), and affirms with reference to Demetrius "we know that his testimony is true" (3 John 13). Therefore, a good number of similarities

abound between some literary features of the Johannine Gospel and Epistles, and theories of composition must include the Gospel and the Epistles of John.

In addition to these major literary perplexities in John, its theological and historical riddles also inform inferences regarding its composition, although these will not be addressed here. In particular, John's theological tensions (the humanity/divinity of Jesus, the Son's egalitarian/subordinate relation to the Father, soteriological universalism/particularity, implicit/absent presentations of sacramental themes, apparent pro/anti-Jewish themes, present/future eschatology, rhetorical/explanatory dualism, and so forth) lead to *Tendenz*-Criticism, whereby the inference of particular sources is matched with theological tendencies. Historical problems include similarities/differences with synoptic renderings of Jesus' ministry, itinerary, teachings, self-understanding, and reception, as well as questions related to John's theological and historical character.[11] And indeed, the most substantive approaches to John's composition include all three categories in posing plausible ways forward.

Literary Attempts to Address John's Perplexities

A daunting fact of Johannine studies is that many leading scholars disagree with each other extensively regarding John's composition. This is true not only regarding the outcomes of particular approaches; it is also true regarding judgments as to how John's composition should be approached. Of course, some traditional or superficial treatments of the Fourth Gospel have not even noticed many of its riddles and perplexities, but in the modern era, critical analysis has been keen, and tools from other fields have been applied to John in hopes of addressing the Johannine riddles. For instance, assuming that Mark reflects a gathering of disparate material, it is understandable that John's distinctive signs, sayings, and features might be attributed to the evangelist's use of sources. Likewise, given that Matthew and Luke made use of Mark, sometimes ordering material differently and adding their own material, it is understandable that scholars might infer some reordering of John's material and the editorial contributions of a later redactor.[12] Likewise, advances in

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11 More detailed analyses can be found in Anderson, *Riddles*, 25–90.

12 See especially Bultmann's highly diachronic approach to the Synoptic Gospels and their traditions in Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (trans. John Marsh; Oxford: Blackwell, 1963; German original, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1921]), which to this day serves as a leading basis for form-critical analyses of the character and origins of gospel material.

new literary studies have helped more recent scholars infer features of literary design and narratological rhetoric within the text. Following are several leading approaches accompanied by a brief analysis of their individual strengths and weaknesses.

Authorial Ascriptions

Given that John is the only Gospel directly attributed to an eyewitness in the text, traditional and critical interpreters have often ascribed its intriguing features to imagined attributes of a fisherman and/or a member of the Twelve (such as John or Thomas), a resident of Galilee or Jerusalem, a Sadducee, a woman, or an unnamed eyewitness who was not a member of the Twelve (such as John the Elder or Lazarus).[13] Third-person references to the Beloved Disciple are taken as self-effacing humility among some advocates of apostolic authorship, and yet James and John being called “sons of thunder” in Mark 3:17 raises questions about such an inference. Differences with the Synoptics pose considerable challenges to the Fourth Gospel’s eyewitness claims. In addition, negations of John’s authorship possibilities also abound, either arguing that John (and Peter) were illiterate (based upon a flawed reading of Acts 4:13, where Peter’s testimony is actually noted as theologically compelling) or that John died early, along with his brother James.[14]

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13 Arguing the Johannine evangelist was John the Son of Zebedee—B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: John Murray, 1882); and Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); Lazarus—Vernard Eller, *The Beloved Disciple* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987); Thomas—James H. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995); John the Elder—Martin Hengel, *The Johannine Question* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989); an unknown eyewitness but not one of the Twelve—Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (ed. Francis J. Moloney; New York: Doubleday, 2003); a woman—Sandra M. Schneiders, *Written that You May Believe* (New York: Crossroads, 2003); and Thomas W. Butler, *Let Her Keep It: Jesus’ Ordination of Mary of Bethany* (self-published, 1998).

14 Advanced by Eduard Schwartz, “Über den Tod der Söhne Zebedäi: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Johannes-evangeliums,” in *Johannes und sein Evangelium* (Wege der Forschung 82; ed. Karl Heinrich Rengstorf; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesselschaft, 1973), 202–272, the so-called early death of John the Son of Zebedee forced scholars in the twentieth century to propose alternative theories of John’s authorship; cf. Pierson Parker, “John and John Mark,” *JBL* 79 (1960): 97–110; idem, “John the Son of Zebedee and the Fourth Gospel,” *JBL* 81 (1962): 35–43, who declared that denying John the son of Zebedee as having anything to do with the Gospel bearing his name is the “one assured result of biblical criticism,” proposing instead John Mark of Alexandria as the author. Despite being the

While authorial ascriptions are impossible to demonstrate, they are even more difficult to deny—especially the traditional view. For instance, while alternative theories are forced by default, given the so-called fifth-century and ninth-century witnesses to the early death of John the apostle, neither Philip Sidetes nor George Hamartolos claims such a thing. They both refer to Papias' referencing James and John undergoing martyrdom as a fulfilment of Mark 10:38–39, but neither declares that James and John died at the same time, or that John died early, and both locate John's martyrdom as taking place in Asia Minor during and after the reign of Domitian (AD 81–96).[15] Thus, no one believed John died early until the modern era, and such is a modern fiction.[16]

An Amalgam of Alien Sources

Assuming that the Gospel of John cannot represent an independent tradition, inferences of non-Synoptic, non-Johannine sources are required to make sense of John's pervasively historical and individuated tradition. Building on the works of Wellhausen and others, the most extensive source-critical theory is that by Rudolf Bultmann, who inferred at least three major sources underlying the Fourth Evangelist's original work: a Signs source, a Revelation-Sayings source, and a Passion Narrative.[17] Here Bultmann followed a form-critical approach, assuming that collections of materials were likely gathered according to their functions within their early tradition histories. Therefore, John's sayings, miracles, Passion tradition, Samaritan tradition, and other material must have come from a set of alien sources. He also assumed that some of this material became disordered and reordered wrongly by the redactor, allowing him to reconstruct the "original" order, which thereby exposed the strophic and poetic character of the discourse material.

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most extensive attempt to deny John's authorship to the son of Zebedee, however, none of Parker's arguments are compelling—individually or collectively—and Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, I (trans. Kevin Smith; London: Herder & Herder, 1968), 92, regards his view as pervasively weak overall.

15 Philip of Side, *History of the Church according to Philip of Side*, codex Baroccianus 142, *Fragments* 4:3, 6; George Hamartolos, *Chronicon*, codex Coislinianus 305; cf. Anderson, *Riddles*, 104–105.

16 And, in the light of an overlooked first-century clue to John's apostolic authorship (cf. Acts 4:19–20, 1 John 1:3), such a view cannot be critically sustained (Anderson, *Christology*, 274–277).

17 Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Johannis* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1908); Bultmann, *Gospel of John*. Bultmann also inferred Baptist, Synoptic-like, evangelical and other traditional material underlying John's narrative.

This approach also allows one to make sense of John's theological tensions by applying *Tendenz*-critical judgments to the character and origin of the material. Therefore, high-Christological sayings came from a supposed Gnostic source, whereas the evangelist's Christology was incarnational; the embellished presentation of John's signs is a factor of a Jewish apologetic source evidencing its own numbering and conclusion (first sign, second sign, etc.; 2:11; 4:54; 20:30–31), whereas the evangelist's semiology is more existentialized (4:48; 6:26; 20:29); John's Passion narrative shows no departure from the theology of the evangelist, but the work of the ecclesiastical redactor, who introduces high sacramentology, futuristic eschatology, deterministic motifs, and Synoptic nuance counterbalancing the evangelist's anti-sacramental stance, present eschatology and free-will theology. He also sees the redactor as the author of the Epistles, who domesticated the Johannine narrative after the death of the evangelist so as to make it more palatable among the churches. Different origins of the material account for these theological tensions. Below is an overview of the highly complex theory of John's multi-source composition devised by the master from Marburg.

Bultmann's Diachronic Theory of John's Origin and Development

- At least three major sources underlie the Johannine Gospel:
  - *A Revelation-Sayings source*—Form: poetic worship material from the Baptist's community; Content: the Prologue and I-am Sayings; *Tendenz* (or tendency): the Gnostic Revealer and high Christology
  - *A Sēmeia* [*Signs*] *source*—Form: an apologetic wonder tract presenting Jesus as the Jewish Messiah; Content: the Johannine signs; *Tendenz*: a God-Man (*theos anēr* in Greek) typology shows Jesus to be a wonder worker
  - *A Passion source*—Form: Gospel narrative parallel to the Synoptics; Content: the Johannine Passion narrative; *Tendenz*: similar to the rest of the Johannine narrative
- The evangelist's contribution in forming a Gospel as a first edition:
  - Arranging the disparate sources into an overall narrative progression
  - Connecting revelation sayings with thematically related signs material
  - Counterbalancing the sayings material with incarnational and low Christology emphases
  - Counterbalancing the signs material with existentializing emphases
  - Presenting his own theology, including anti-sacramental and realized eschatology themes
- A disordering of the text—occurring for "unmotivated" reasons:

  - Chapters 4–7 and 14–17 (as well as other passages) were disordered
  - Other out-of-sequence presentations are thus explained
  - Especially the sayings material was disrupted—allowing for its reconfiguration by Bultmann into an imagined Gnostic sayings source
- A reordering of the text and the redactor's adding of material:
  - An incorrect reordering of chs. 4–7 and many other passages in ways that occlude the original poetic structure of the sayings material
  - The addition of sections that restore sacramental and future-eschatology themes (6:51c–58; 21:1–25, etc.)
  - The addition of sections and details that harmonize the Johannine Gospel with the Synoptics

Bultmann builds his case on stylistic, contextual, and theological evidence, but despite its rigorous and thorough argumentation, the factual evidence is far from compelling. Within this overall theory, John 6 should provide a case study for exposing the diverse character of four of John's five major sources, but when it is examined closely, the diachronic results are dismal.[18] In particular, when all of Bultmann's stylistic evidence for diverse sources is gathered throughout his commentary and applied to John 6, the distribution is not only random; it is non-indicative. We do have a narrator, but this does not mean he used alien material. Further, the likelihood of his inferences regarding the disordering and reordering of the Johannine material is infinitesimally small, and the redactor's work seems conservative rather than intrusive. Some rough transitions are attributable to the use of irony (such as the crowd's question and Jesus' "knowing" response in John 6:25–26). Further, Bultmann commits several theological errors in stipulating the need for disparate origins of John's material. First, he wrongly takes the thrust of John 6:51–58 to be cultic when it is martyrological (as are the sacramental references in Mark 10:38–39), so it is actually not at odds with the evangelist's theology and the way of the cross (vv. 59–66). Second, Bultmann overstates the incongruity of early Christian and Jewish present/future eschatologies and fails to note the highly Jewish character of the Johannine agency motif. Third, he fails to acknowledge the dialectical charac-

18 Robert Kysar, "The Source Analysis of the Fourth Gospel—A Growing Consensus," *NovT* 15 (1973): 134–152, rather than showing coherence among source-critical analyses of John 6, actually exposes major disagreements among source advocates themselves. What source-critical analysts of John 6 do show is engagement with Bultmann's approach, and Kysar himself confesses an about-face in his openness to Johannine source theories (Robert Kysar, "Review of *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel* by Paul N. Anderson," *RBL* 1 [1999]: 38–42).

ter of the evangelist's thinking, while he nonetheless holds that sophisticated modern theologians engage theology dialectically.[19] It does appear that John's Prologue had as its origin the worship life of Johannine Christianity, and that it and other sections were added by a final compiler, but John's stylistic unity and contextual coherence are more widespread than Bultmann assumed.[20]

In addition to Bultmann's overall theory, others have inferred sources underlying John, as well. One of Bultmann's students, Heinz Becker, outlined a hypothetical sketching of what John's so-called Gnostic sayings source must have looked like; Bultmann in turn made use of this work in furthering his overall theory.[21] While theories of sayings sources have endured less well among Johannine scholars, more robust has been a synthesis of Bultmann's *sēmeia* and Passion sources by Robert Fortna, inferring a Signs Gospel.[22] In Fortna's view, the Mark-like signs-faith of John's predecessor is existentialized by the Johannine evangelist; thus, the theological tension within John's text is external to the thinking of the evangelist. It exists between the evangelist and his source. Other approaches to John's hypothetical sources abound, although there is no literary or historical evidence of such sources.[23]

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19 For an extended analysis of these issues and the dearth of evidence for disparate sources, see Anderson, *Christology*, 70–169.

20 Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven* (NovTSup 11; Leiden: Brill, 1965), shows the extensive unity within John 6 and its coherent themes rooted in Jewish scripture, following directly on John 5:46. John's overall stylistic unity is demonstrated by Eduard Schweizer, *Egō Eimi* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939); Eugen Ruckstuhl, *Die Literarische Einheit des Johannesevangeliums* (Freiburg: Paulusverlag, 1951).

21 Heinz Becker, *Die Reden des Johannesevangeliums und der Stil der gnostischen Offenbarungsrede* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956).

22 Robert T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source underlying the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 11; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); and idem, *The Fourth Gospel and its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

23 For other source-critical approaches to John, see Jürgen Becker, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; ÖTK 4:1–2; Würzburg: Echter, 1984–1985); Howard M. Teeple, *The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John* (Evanston, IL: Religion and Ethics Institute, 1974); Folker Siegert, *Das Evangelium des Johannes in seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt: Wiederherstellung und Kommentar* (SIJD 7; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008). See also the extended critique of signs-source theories by Gilbert Van Belle, *The Signs Source in the Fourth Gospel: Historical Survey and Critical Evaluation of the Sēmeia Hypothesis* (Leuven: Peeters, 1994). Following Bultmann partially, Schnackenburg (*The Gospel According to John*) argued that the Johannine evangelist made use of a variety of materials (signs-narrative, sayings, and liturgical traditions); this material became disordered, and it was re-ordered by the redactor, who also added other material. Raymond Brown saw no need for inferring non-Johannine source material.

John as a Spiritualization of Mark or Other Synoptic Material

Despite the rigor of source-analytical approaches to John's composition, some scholars remain convinced neither of the evangelist's use of alien sources nor of his possessing a tradition of his own. That being the case, the default inference is that he must have made use of one or more of the Synoptics, especially Mark. B.H. Streeter actually had advanced such a view before Bultmann's commentary was published, but it was C.K. Barrett who advanced this thesis with sustained vigor in his great commentary.[24] Along these lines, Barrett makes several moves. First, he takes the Gospel of John as a whole, rather than inferring a diachronic history of composition, assuming that it made sense to *someone* as it stands, and that modern interpreters must work with the givens of the text rather than imagining its history to suit their views. He especially has Bultmann in mind in asserting such a judgment. Second, Barrett sees the evangelist as a dialectical thinker, viewing his cognitive operation as capable of thinking in both-and ways rather than being confined to either-or dichotomies.[25] Seeing the evangelist as a creative theologian allows the interpreter to transcend overly wooden views of John's theological tensions, considering also their paradoxical and tensive meanings. Third, given that the Johannine evangelist moves from the mundane to spiritual significance within the Johannine narrative, Barrett notes dozens of similarities between John and Mark (especially connections between John 6 and Mark 6 and 8), inferring John's dependence on Mark as a known source and inferring the evangelist's spiritualizing use of Mark's tradition. Of course, John did not make use of Mark in the direct way that Matthew and Luke did, but Barrett thinks that John at least made use of some of Mark, and perhaps other Synoptic traditions as well.

Several scholars have followed Barrett and Streeter,[26] and the Leuven School has championed the view that John's tradition is dependent on our three other known canonical traditions, the Synoptic Gospels, rather than hypothetical sources.[27] Nonetheless, inferences of John's dependence on the Synoptics face

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24 B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins Treating of the Manuscript Tradition, Sources, Authorship and Dates* (London: Macmillan, 1924); C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978).

25 C.K. Barrett, "The Dialectical Theology of St John," in *New Testament Essays* (London: SCM, 1972), 49–69.

26 See especially Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John* (BNTC 4; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006); and Thomas L. Brodie, *The Quest for the Origin of John's Gospel: A Source-Oriented Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

27 Frans Neirynck, "John and the Synoptics," in *L'Evangile de Jean* (ed. Marinus de Jonge;

serious critical obstacles as well. First, they must face the fact that if John's author knew Mark and the Synoptics, he apparently disagreed with them at every turn.[28] In addition to the four departures from Mark with reference to John 6, one detects at least forty-five similarities-and-differences between the feeding, sea-crossing, discussion, and Peter's confession narratives in John 6, when compared with Mark 6 and 8.[29] Second, imaging John's dependence on non-Johannine sources implies the certainty that there is no independent Johannine tradition, despite the direct claims of the compiler and the unanimous second-century opinion on John.[30] A third problem with inferences of Synoptic dependence by John is that it too easily assumes that the three other canonical Gospels were known by the Johannine evangelist rather much as we know them today; such cannot have been the case. Rather, oral-tradition contact, with some variability between orality and literacy among the Gospel traditions, is a more plausible inference, making particular judgments difficult.

That being the case, taking note of John's possible traditional contacts between each of the Synoptic traditions offers a more plausible way forward, but influence may have gone in more than one direction. In two studies that inform John's contact with Mark, Ian Mackay notes the macro-parallels between Mark's narrative and John's, suggesting that Mark provided a gospel-narrative pattern followed by John, and Richard Bauckham argues that John poses a corrective for readers of Mark and thus is different from Mark on purpose.[31] Mackay's view that the Johannine evangelist may have heard Mark performed in a meeting for worship makes sense of the plausible contacts: the evangelist does not have access to a written text of Mark, so as to borrow from it as a literary source, but he is familiar enough to contribute a narrative alongside Mark's as an alternative rendering of Jesus' ministry. Some scholars follow

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BETL 44; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1977), 73–106; Frans Van Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. Van Belle, and J. Verheyden, eds., *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (3 vols.; BETL 100; Leuven: Peeters, 1992).

28 This view is argued tersely by Percival Gardner-Smith, *Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), who notes four major departures from Mark in John 6.

29 At least twenty-four non-identical similarities can be identified between John 6 and Mark 6, and at least twenty-one non-identical similarities can be identified between John 6 and Mark 8 (see Anderson, *Christology*, 97–102).

30 Charles H. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

31 Ian D. Mackay, *John's Relationship with Mark* (WUNT 2.182; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Richard Bauckham, "John for Readers of Mark," in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (ed. Richard Bauckham; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 147–171.

Streeter's view that John's relation to Luke involved John's dependence on Luke, although two other views have forged more sharply defined paths. John Bailey imagined that John and Luke shared a separate-though-unavailable source, although that is precisely the problem: no such source is available, and just because John may have been finalized late, this does not imply that all inter-traditional contacts flowed to the Johannine tradition rather than from it.[32] More compelling is the view of Lamar Cribbs, who asked the question differently. Instead of inquiring as to why John was like Luke, Cribbs asked why Luke, in departing from Mark, coincided with John—against Mark—many dozens of times.[33] His lead was followed by several scholars, with extensive implications.[34] John's relation to Matthew's tradition was seen by Marie-Émile Boismard as moving in both directions; early John made use of Matthew, and later Matthew engaged John within a three-edition theory of John's composition.[35] James Barker sees John as depending on the Matthean tradition, while Ernst Käsemann saw John's later tradition engaging Diotrephes the primacy-lover (3 John 9–10) and thus challenging Petrine hierarchy rooted in Matthew's text.[36] While the relation between the Johannine tradition and hypothetical Q is the most speculative among Johannine-Synoptic inquiries, one thing is certain: the Father-Son relationship is not unique to John, but it is also found in Matt 11:27 and Luke 10:22.[37] Therefore, the Q and the Johannine traditions may reflect some inter-traditional contact, or their similarities may simply reflect continuities between earlier and later gospel traditions.

While the Johannine evangelist indeed probably became aware of other gospel traditions as they or their component parts were circulated within early

32 John A. Bailey, *The Traditions Common to the Gospels of Luke and John* (NovTSup 7; Leiden: Brill, 1963).

33 F. Lamar Cribbs, "A Study of the Contacts that Exist between St. Luke and St. John," *SBLSP 1973* (Cambridge, MA: SBL, 1973), 1–93; idem, "St. Luke and Johannine Tradition," *JBL* 90 (1971): 422–450; idem, "The Agreements that Exist between St. Luke and St. John," *SBLSP 1979* (Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1979), 215–261.

34 Anderson, *Christology*, 274–277; Mark T. Matson, *In Dialogue with another Gospel* (SBLDS 178; Atlanta: Scholars, 2001); Barbara Shellard, *New Light on Luke: Its Purpose, Sources and Literary Context* (JSNTSup 215; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).

35 Marie-Émile Boismard with A. Lamouille and G. Rochais, *Synopse des Quatre Évangiles en Français avec Parallèles des Apocryphes et des Pères, Vol. III, L'évangile de Jean* (Paris: Cerf, 1977).

36 James Barker, *John's Use of Matthew* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015); Käsemann, *Testament*.

37 Paul W. Meyer, "'The Father': The Presentation of God in the Fourth Gospel," in *Exploring the Gospel of John: Essays in Honor of D. Moody Smith* (ed. R. Alan Culpepper and Carl Clifton Black; Louisville: Westminster, 1996), 255–273.

Christian communities, however, we cannot say that his work was solely derivative from them. Three weighty facts make such a thesis untenable. First, of the 10–15% of John that coheres with Synoptic renderings (especially John 6 and 18–19), none of the contacts is identical.[38] Therefore, if the Johannine evangelist had seen a Synoptic text, he never copied it verbatim and thus cannot be said to have depended on any Synoptic unit literarily. A second problem is that the remaining 85–90% of John that does not have a direct Synoptic parallel goes unexplained if no independent Johannine tradition existed. More critically plausible is the second-century view that John had its own story to tell alongside the Synoptics. There is much independent mundane and grounded material in John; its material cannot be accounted for by hypothetical speculation about spiritualized Synoptic dependence. Third, John's relation to the Synoptics was likely far more complex than a single, overall view can sustain. "The Synoptics" were clearly not gathered until half a century after the four Gospels were finalized, so even particular contacts between John and other traditions may have been partial and incidental, and influence may have gone in both directions—especially during the oral stages of traditions' development. Therefore, a larger theory of Johannine-Synoptic interfluentiality is required.[39]

An Independent Tradition with a Developmental History

Rather than base one's view of John's origin and development upon a particular theory of its authorship (or *non*-authorship), Alan Culpepper reminds us that it is best to build one's view of John's composition and rhetorical design upon the phenomenology of the text itself.[40] Thus, John's distinctive story of Jesus deserves consideration in and of itself; the question is whether it is a theologized history or a historicized theology. Assuming the former, John's tradition shows signs of primitivity and of being connected with the ministry of Jesus, despite showing signs of later developments and reflecting the maturation of

38 In addition to my analysis of John 6 through intertraditional perspective in Anderson, *Christology*, 90–251, see my analysis of interfluence between John 18–19 and Synoptic parallels in Paul N. Anderson, "Aspects of Interfluentiality between John and the Synoptics: John 18–19 as a Case Study," in *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (ed. Gilbert Van Belle; BETL 200; Leuven: Peters, 2007), 711–728.

39 Cf. Paul N. Anderson, "Interfluential, Formative, and Dialectical—A Theory of John's Relation to the Synoptics," in *Für und Wider die Priorität des Johannesevangeliums* (ed. Peter Hofrichter; TTS 9; New York: Georg Olms, 2002), 19–58; also published in Anderson, *Fourth Gospel*, 101–126.

40 R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983).

Christian thinking about Jesus as the Christ.[41] Therefore, history and theology must go hand-in-hand in considering John's composition, and such a venture requires addressing John's historical and theological riddles in addition to its literary ones. Put otherwise, John's presentation of Jesus as the Christ is the most elevated and divine in the New Testament, and likewise its presentation of Jesus of Nazareth is the most earth-bound and incarnational in the New Testament. There is more archaeological-type material in John than in all of the other Gospels combined (canonical and non-canonical), and John is the only Gospel that contains a worship hymn to Christ as the pre-existent *Logos*, who is one with the Father. So, how did these features come together? *That* is the pressing question!

Arguing that John's is an independent, self-standing tradition, Percival Gardner-Smith showed some of the difficulty of following Streeter's line, that John knew the Synoptics and expanded upon them. If that were the case, why did the Johannine evangelist exclude most of what they wrote, and why did he disagree with them at almost every turn? Building the case further, and to some degree bolstering Gardner-Smith's argument with his own considerable authority, C.H. Dodd showed that John possesses its own historical tradition that is parallel-to-but-not-derived-from similar traditions in the Synoptics. This included the Passion narrative, the works and itineraries of Jesus, the role of John the Baptist, and the teachings of Jesus.[42] What Dodd showed compellingly is that if there is historical tradition in the Synoptics, their parallels in John cannot be denied; further, they hang together in distinctively Johannine ways, so an autonomous Johannine tradition is critically established, despite John's theological inclinations.

Furthering this thesis, and addressing the question as to why the absence of overlap between John and the Synoptics, John A.T. Robinson argued that John may have been the first of the Gospels to have been written; after all, it might have been easier to have overlooked a singular composition than for a

41 On John's primitivity, see Edwin R. Goodenough, "John: A Primitive Gospel," *JBL* 64 (1945): 145–182; on John's apologetic Christology, see James F. McGrath, *John's Apologetic Christology: Legitimation and Development in Johannine Christology* (SNTSMS 111; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

42 C.H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963). The stage for his second magnum opus was set by his first, a decade earlier, in idem, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953). See also the collection of essays in Dodd's honor: Tom Thatcher and Catrin Williams, eds., *Engaging with C.H. Dodd on the Gospel of John: Sixty Years of Tradition and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

later composition to have missed all of the three Synoptics. Further, how is it known that John's posteriority is a given? Perhaps the priority of John deserves consideration as a critically plausible means of accounting for the Johannine riddles, and if Paul's Christological hymns in Phil 2:5–11 and Col 1:15–20 reflect early Christian worship before Paul's writings, John 1:1–18 could just as easily have been produced in the second or third Christian decade as well as the sixth or seventh.[43] While English-speaking scholars have not generally followed Robinson's lead (after all, when compared with the Johannine Epistles, which seem to be dealing with Docetism, John's Gospel seems to possess later material as well as earlier material), some German-speaking scholars have indeed taken his lead. Klaus Berger argued that John was indeed the first of the Gospels, and Peter Hofrichter argued that Mark is dependent on John rather than the other way around.[44] These investigations have led to serious inquiry as to whether John was finalized before, during, or after the Synoptics,[45] although it is fair to say that most scholars still see John as being finalized last among the canonical Gospels.

Within a developmental view of the Johannine tradition, early and late material is inferred, although the challenge here is discerning what sort of material might be earlier and what sort might be later. Most notable is Raymond Brown's overall theory, where he sees five phases of the Johannine tradition (within his commentary on John) developing within three stages (within his introduction to John). In the first stage, the evangelist's selection of memories from Jesus' ministry is conveyed in his own preaching ministry, evolving into presenting Jesus as the personification of divine wisdom. The second stage sees the development of a Johannine community, crafting the message to address the interests of followers of the Baptist, Samaritan believers in Jesus, members and leaders of the local synagogue, and representatives of apostolic Christianity. The third stage saw the crafting of a first edition of a gospel narrative in written form, followed by a final edition, plausibly finalized by a conservative editor. Brown's composition theory is bolstered by a theory of the community of the Beloved Disciple, which is supported also by his analysis of the Johannine Epistles. He originally saw the evangelist as John the Apostle, but later, given the Gospel's juxtaposition of Peter and the Beloved

43 John A.T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (ed. J.F. Coakley; London: SCM, 1965).

44 Klaus Berger, *Im Anfang war Johannes: Datierung und Theologie des vierten Evangeliums* (3rd ed.; Gütersloh: Kaiser, 2004); Peter L. Hofrichter, *Modell und Vorlage der Synoptiker: Das vorredaktionelle Johannesevangelium* (TTS 6; New York: Georg Olms, 1997).

45 See Hofrichter, ed., *Priorität des Johannesevangeliums*.

Disciple, he changed his view to the evangelist's being an anonymous eyewitness who was not a member of the Twelve.[46]

While Brown makes several judgments about what would plausibly have been later material, he does not specify the particulars of John's first and final editions. Building on his work, Barnabas Lindars actually contributes a rather simple two-edition theory of John's composition, which deals with its most egregious aporias in the most efficient ways possible. Rather than seeing John's material as reordered, as though it were lying side-by-side, at one time or another, Lindars simply proposes that John 6 and 15–17 were added as supplementary material to an earlier edition of the Gospel. Likewise, the Johannine Prologue and John 21 appear to have been added to the final edition, as well as the Beloved Disciple passages and eyewitness attestations.[47] Less compelling is his view that the temple cleansing narrative at the end of Jesus' ministry was displaced and relocated at the beginning of the narrative as a means of making room for the Lazarus narrative. Other theories regarding two editions of John abound,[48] but John Ashton and I came to the same judgment independently: Barnabas Lindars' modest two-edition theory (a slight modification of it, in my case) is the simplest way to deal with John's major perplexities in the most efficient way possible.[49] Whereas Lindars also sees the evangelist as the editor of his own work, John 21:24 and the third-person Beloved references do seem to point to a second hand as the finalizer of the work. With Bultmann and Brown, that hand seems connected to the author of the Johannine Epistles.

More extended theories of John's development including three or more editions have been proposed by several scholars. Wilhelm Wilkens, for instance, proposed a *Grundschrift* (foundational document) involving Jesus' signs and the Passion narrative produced by the Beloved Disciple. He later added sayings materials, and after some rearrangement (the temple cleansing, etc.) added material that crafted the story into a Paschal narrative. Georg Richter also began with a *Grundschrift* that embodied the main thrust of the Johannine narrative aimed first at local Jewish audiences, seeking to convince them Jesus was the

46 Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966, 1970); idem, *Introduction*; idem, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

47 Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972).

48 Pierson Parker, "Two Editions of John," *JBL* 75 (1956): 303–314; Herman C. Waetjen, *The Gospel of the Beloved Disciple: A Work in Two Editions* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004).

49 John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991; 2nd ed., 2009).

Jewish Messiah. To this was added an emphasis on Jesus' Sonship, and a third layer of the tradition was added by an anti-docetic redactor. More complex is the three-author theory of Boismard and Lamouille, who constructed a four-edition view of John's development. The foundational level identified Jesus as the new Moses (predicted by Deut 18:15–22) and embraced a futuristic eschatology (perhaps produced by John the Apostle); this was followed by the redactor's (perhaps John the Elder) additions to the text involving a Davidic Christology, a realized eschatology, and a disparaging of "the Jews"; further editing (possibly by Luke) added John 21 and other sections several decades later, including a more developed Christology, sacramental themes, and an emphasis on the work of the Spirit; the fourth layer of John's development involved a third hand, who adjusted some of the material in the previous two editions, reversed the order of chs. 5 and 6, and added apocalyptic eschatological motifs.[50]

One of the most extensive re-workings of the Johannine tradition is the three-edition approach proposed by Urban C. von Wahlde.[51] Especially noteworthy within this approach is the outlining of eleven themes and characteristics within the Gospel of John, wherein von Wahlde finds three hypothetical strata. This is one of the most extensive applications of *Tendenz*-criticism in New Testament studies, and von Wahlde is thorough and consistent in applying his criteria to each of the passages (sometimes even a word or phrase) that coheres with the particular stratum to which he attributes the feature. Von Wahlde sees these three editions as being written by different persons, but none of them is John the son of Zebedee. And he also locates the writing of the Epistles between the second and third editions, written by the author of the final-edition material. Within his paradigm, first-edition material included such terms for religious leaders as *Pharisaioi* (Pharisees), *archiereis* (chief priests), *archontes* (rulers), and the term for Jesus' Jewish-prophet-type deeds is *sēmeia* (signs). The second-edition material (reflecting a move from Palestine to a diaspora setting) uses the term *Ioudaioi* for Jewish authorities—often adversarially, and Jesus' miracles are called *erga* (works). The third-edition material features the work of the Holy Spirit and seeks to counter charismatic excesses, which von Wahlde sees as central to the conflicts in the Johannine Epistles. Making nearly three hundred assignments of units of

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50 Wilhelm Wilkens, *Die Entstehungsgeschichte des vierten Evangeliums* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1958); Georg Richter, *Studien zum Johannesevangelium* (ed. Joseph Heinz; BU 13; Regensburg: Pustet, 1977); Boismard and Lamouille, *Synopse*.

51 Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

material to different sources, von Wahlde shows how thematic movements (say, from low-to-high Christology) developed, and he sees variations and repetitions (*Wiederaufnahme*—repetitive-resumptive phrases) as indicators of redacted additions. In this programmatic means of addressing the Johannine aporias and riddles, von Wahlde exposes the development of thematic material in ways cohering with his inferred history of the Johannine situation, although he fails to see the evangelist as a dialectical thinker, who may have held truth in tension.

Given the facts that there is no evidence of alien sources underlying the Gospel of John, and that dependence on Synoptics for the bulk of John's material is unlikely in the extreme, John's tradition must be seen as an autonomous tradition developing alongside other Gospel traditions, especially Mark. While the multi-layered inferences of John's development are thorough in seeking to assign literary histories to particular features of the text, this can also be their weakness. It may be that a particular feature reflects a different hand or editorial process, but such can only be conjectured. For instance, while Brown and von Wahlde assume that the repetition of a familiar theme reflects a later editor adding leftover material to an earlier narrative, a more likely inference is that the same author might have repeated himself, especially if he was partial to that particular theme. This and other aporias could simply reflect the differences between material delivered in the oral stages of tradition being written down later, and even a first edition may have had some repetition within it. In my view, the simplest, most efficient way of dealing with John's most perplexing literary riddles is a modification of the two-edition theory posed by Barnabas Lindars. After years of conveying his own impressions of Jesus' ministry, the Johannine evangelist sets himself to writing in his own voice the words and works of the Lord, and after his death, the author of the Epistles adds later material and finalizes the Johannine Gospel to be circulated among the churches around the turn of the first century.

The "Spiritual" Gospel—A Historicized Drama

Around the turn of the third century, Clement of Alexandria described John's writing as a "spiritual Gospel," after the others had been considered as "bodily" Gospels. Partly due to this approach, it has been argued that the Johannine/Synoptic differences are a result of John's lack of interest in "history," and that these differences are functions of "the theological interests of the Fourth Evangelist."[52] Such a view alleviates concerns over the presentation of wonders, as they

52 See, for instance, Edgar J. Goodspeed, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Chicago:

are factors of theology rather than references to history, given John's differences with the Synoptics, as they ostensibly represent the theological interests of the evangelist. John's extensive inclusion of mundane topographical and historical-like details thus reflects the mimetic imitation of reality, whereby names, places, and descriptions of mundane realities are supposedly added to make otherwise fictive material appear connected to reality. It is argued, for instance, that *The Life of Apollonius*, written a century or more later by Philostratus, displays exactly this feature, in showing Apollonius of Tyana as a God-man figure, who turned water into wine and performed other wonders, as a means of bolstering the authority of his memory. When this sort of stance is applied to John's narrative, the wondrous element in its presentation of Jesus ceases to be a problem for naturalistic historians, and it is regarded as a feature of folklore, myth, or rhetoric. Further, John's differences from the Synoptics are thereby explained as factors of the theological interests of the evangelist, so the Johannine narrative is expunged from canons of historiography and relocated within the genre of spiritualized narrative.

In particular, John's early temple cleansing is taken as making a theological statement about the new dwelling place of God, which extends the grace of the incarnated body of Jesus to the larger flock of Christ. The three mentions of the Passover being near highlight Jesus' being the Lamb of God, as witnessed by the Baptist in John 1. Jesus' multiple visits to Jerusalem at the times of other Jewish feasts also signify his being the light of the world and his providing of the living bread and water. The I-Am and Son-of-Man sayings fulfill the great typologies of Israel, and the signs of Jesus show that he fulfills the roles of Moses and Elijah, proving himself to be the Jewish Messiah. The last supper on the Day of Preparation before the Passover points to his fulfilling the perfect sacrifice. The Beloved Disciple as an anonymous figure invites all hearers and readers into a place of intimacy with the Lord—leaning against the breast of Jesus, and the appearances of the post-resurrection Lord invite later generations into that same apostolic fellowship of the first followers of Jesus, as receptors of the inspiring Spirit and recipients of his mantle to be priestly forgivers of sins. Finally, the unbroken net of the fishermen prefigures the inclusive calling of the church, wherein as many as 153 different people groups are to be welcomed into its evangelistic catch, inspiring unity amidst diversity.

Problems with this hyper-spiritualized approach, of course, are several. First, it is wrong to contrast John's being "a spiritual gospel" with historicality in

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University of Chicago Press, 1937). Therefore, nothing in John, according to Goodspeed and some other scholars, is historical—it is solely a theological narrative.

the Synoptics on the basis of the English mistranslation of Clement's report in Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.14.7) by Arthur Cushman McGiffert.[53] When the archaeological and topographical detail in John is considered critically, it is obvious that John's tradition possessed knowing contact with pre-AD 70 Palestine, before the destruction of Jerusalem.[54] A second problem with ascribing John's non-symbolic and illustrative detail to "mimetic interpretations of reality"—in keeping with contemporary parallels—is that the closest parallels display the exact opposite tendency. Given the fact that some of the distinctive similarities between John and Mark include such details as the 200 and 300 denarii (Mark 6:37; 14:5; John 6:7; 12:5) and green/much grass at the feeding (Mark 6:39; John 6:10), the fact is that Matthew and Luke most often omit incidental details rather than adding them (the same is generally true regarding names of persons and places and other mundane features). Therefore, if John's author constructed his narrative like its closest contemporary parallels, he did not exercise mimetic interpretations of reality. A third problem with this approach is that, while theological inclinations are indeed present in John, much of its rendering of Jesus' ministry is actually more plausibly historical than the Synoptic accounts. Of course, in other ways the Synoptic accounts seem more plausibly historical (Jesus' teaching with parables about the Kingdom of God, dining with "sinners," exorcising the possessed, etc.). John's rendering of multiple trips to Jerusalem (as other observant Jews of the day would have done), a two- or three-year ministry of Jesus, and the last supper taking place on the day before the Passover seems more compellingly historical than the reports of the Synoptics. In these and other ways, a hyper-spiritualized view of John's narrative is critically problematic and fails to account for the phenomenology of John's historical character as an independent tradition.

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53 McGiffert mistranslated *ta somatika* (the bodily things) as "the facts" in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers Library*, vol. 1 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1890), and this distortion influenced a flawed 20th-century understanding of the Fourth Gospel's character, purpose, and origin.

54 William F. Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St John," in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology: In Honour of Charles Harold Dodd* (ed. W.D. Davies and D. Daube; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 153–171. Cf. Urban von Wahlde, "Archaeology and John's Gospel," in *Jesus and Archaeology* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 523–586; and Paul N. Anderson, "Aspects of Historicity in John: Implications for Archaeological and Jesus Studies," in *Jesus and Archaeology*, 587–618.

New Literary Analyses of John

Arguably the most important single Johannine book written since the 1980s is Alan Culpepper's *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*.[55] Given that it cannot be known who John's author was or was not, and given that relations to other traditions may be argued but leave many unconvinced, Culpepper follows Barrett in asserting the need to interpret the completed text of John's Gospel as we have it. That being the case, rather than seeing John's aporias as reflecting a diachronic history of composition, it is better to see them as the work of an ancient author or editor, who was seeking to reach contemporary audiences making a theological claim in a narrative mode.[56] That being the case, considering the plot of John's narrative, the function of characterization,[57] the use of irony, and the progression of time all contribute to understanding the narrator's point of view as well as the implicit commentary of the text. Thus, the last three decades have seen a burgeoning of new literary studies, and the two-volume collection of essays gathered by Fernando Segovia set the stage for a host of new literary approaches to John in ways that transcend longstanding historical-critical impasses and facilitate an appreciation for the narrator's interest in reaching the reader.[58]

One cannot even begin to cover the multiplicity of new literary approaches devoted to better understanding John's literary artistry, rhetorical features, or structural design, but focusing on the narrative thrust of the text opens up new venues into reading John, helping readers to appreciate more fully its mean-

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55 Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*. Cf. also Moore and Thatcher, eds., *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism*.

56 Gail O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).

57 Colleen M. Conway, *Men and Women in the Fourth Gospel: Gender and Johannine Characterization* (SBLDS 167; Atlanta: SBL, 1999); Norman R. Petersen, *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light: Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993); Cornelis Bennema, *Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2009); Christopher W. Skinner, *Characters and Characterization in the Gospel of John* (New York: T&T Clark Bloomsbury, 2012); idem, *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Approaches to Seventy Figures in John* (ed. Steven A. Hunt, D. Francois Tolmie, and Ruben Zimmermann; WUNT 314; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

58 Fernando Segovia, *What is John?* (2 vols.; Atlanta: SBL, 1996, 1998). Cf. Jeffrey Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation of the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: SBL, 1988); Paul D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: Westminster, 1985); David W. Wead, *The Literary Devices in John's Gospel* (2nd ed.; Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt, 1970).

ing.[59] Additionally, garnering a better sense of the character and function of Johannine symbolism helps the reader discern meanings in ways that would otherwise be lost to one's awareness.[60] However, lest it be thought that narrative design proceeds only from the beginning to the end of a text, chiastic studies have also identified patterns reflecting concentric designs. Echoes of a theme or feature at the beginning and end of a unit may provide a sense of its meaning, as does the central and pivotal point in its design.[61] Of course, the place where one chiastic pattern ends will affect one's judgment as to where the next pattern begins, so scholars will disagree with the particulars of pattern structures, but the identification of a unit's "book ends," as well as its central fulcrum, enhances one's sense of the text's meaning.

A great advantage of simply focusing on the literary features of the Johannine text is that issues of authorship, history, and tradition development can be sidestepped, and the focus can be placed squarely on what is being said, informed by a more penetrating understanding of how it is said. That approach, then, informs a theological understanding of the content as well as an aesthetic appreciation for the artistry of the narrative. On the other hand, when considering the genre of the Johannine narrative, its genre is not fictive, even though an appreciation for rhetorical functions of narrative strategies will enhance one's understanding of historical as well as novelistic prose. And, in terms of genre, the Fourth Gospel must be interpreted alongside the other Gospels, so literary and thematic comparisons and contrasts with other traditions cannot but be explored.

Therefore, while literary analyses are serviceable and effective in and of themselves, historical and literary-composition issues must still be addressed if one is to take John's literary genre and character seriously. In particular, John's relation to its subject—Jesus—must be an eventual consideration, if not an initial one. And, that will involve comparative Gospel studies. As well, given John's similarities to the Johannine Epistles, the larger Johannine situation

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59 Mark W.G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 73; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and Johannine Epistles* (rev. ed.; Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2005).

60 Craig Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community* (2nd ed; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

61 Peter F. Ellis, *The Genius of John: A Composition-Critical Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1984); Bruno Barnhart, *The Good Wine: Reading John from the Center* (New York: Paulist, 1993); George Mlakuzhyil, *The Christocentric Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel* (2nd ed.; Rome: Gregorian and Biblical Press, 2011).

and issues relevant to the narrator's audiences cannot be left off the table either. Even more pointedly, if it is known what sorts of issues Johannine Christianity faced over six or seven decades, between the ministry of Jesus and the finalization of the Gospel of John, meanings of the text for audiences then and now will be enhanced. Therefore, new literary analyses of John are most serviceably conducted when they are embraced within a larger overall theory of Johannine composition within the Johannine situation, and that is what this study proposes.

Findings as Beginnings

In the light of the above analysis, two things are clear. First, John's riddles are perplexing for scholars, and the larger constellations of its literary, historical, and theological aporias must be considered together in seeking to address and interpret the Johannine riddles. Second, the reason for such a diverse assortment of approaches to John's character and composition is that thoughtful scholars are seeking to address, in the most suitable ways possible, the most intriguing features of the Johannine riddles, and yet each approach has its own strengths and weaknesses. In my judgment, the strongest features of leading proposals should be embraced within a larger synthesis, and one should be willing to modify one's paradigm if required by newly demonstrated analyses. Such also is my commitment, but in working on these issues for three decades, now, a modest two-edition theory of John's composition offers the most plausible and direct way forward. In that sense, the findings of earlier analyses become the foundational beginnings for proposing such a new overall theory.[62]

No Evidence for Alien Sources Underlying or Overlaying John

In testing all of Bultmann's stylistic, contextual, and theological evidence on John 6 (where four of his five primary sources should be apparent), none of it is indicative, let alone convincing. Therefore, despite John's aporias and perplexities, there is no evidence of non-Johannine material being present in the tradition's developmental process. Such could be the case, but there is simply no evidence that it is so. Therefore, John's tradition deserves to be considered self-standing and autonomous—perhaps engaged with other traditions, but

62 In addition to the brief analyses above, most of these findings are laid out more extensively in the first seven chapters of Anderson, *Christology*, 1–169, and the first six chapters of Anderson, *Riddles*, 1–124.

not necessarily derived from them. There is indeed evidence of a narrator's work, followed by an editor, but even so, Bultmann is correct that the redactor seems to have imitated the style of the evangelist (noting at least how John 21:25 follows the pattern of the first ending in 20:30–31). With Brown, the final editor leaves the rough transitions in, and seeks to "clarify" the evangelist's meanings (cf. 6:71), although it could also be that some clarifying asides could reflect the evangelist's clarifying of his own words (cf. 4:2). And, if the final editor is seeking to gather the witness of the evangelist, his work should be seen as that of a non-intrusive compiler of the Beloved Disciple's work—whose testimony is held to be true.

Not Derivative from Written Mark or Other Synoptic Traditions

Of 45 contacts between John 6 and Mark 6 and 8, none of them is identical; likewise, when John 18–19 is compared with Mark 14–15, one finds a dozen or so instances of plausible cross-traditional engagement and a half dozen ways that John's narrative might be correcting or augmenting Mark's rendering.[63] Thus, John cannot be said to have been based on a text-derivative relationship with Mark or any of the Synoptics, and yet it also cannot be said that the Johannine tradition had no engagement with other traditions. John should thus be regarded independent in an autonomous sense, but varying types of relations between particular forms and stages of parallel Gospel traditions are likely. Therefore, particular inferences regarding intertraditional contact must be analyzed with plausible inferences being drawn from the facts of the analyses. Also, "influence" may be the wrong model; "interfluence" (Raymond Brown calls it "cross-influence") would be more accurate as a descriptor of oral traditions bumping into each other—sometimes in a multiplicity of forms and ways. That being the case, a larger theory of Johannine-Synoptic interfluentiality leads one to infer that: (1) oral-tradition interfluence between the early Johannine and the pre-Markan traditions is likely, as is later engagement between the Johannine tradition and ecclesial uses of the Matthean tradition; (2) John's first-edition material, when viewed alongside Mark, shows evidence of being augmentive and somewhat corrective; (3) the Johannine tradition, probably in its oral stages of development, appears to have been a source for Luke in producing an "orderly" account, and possibly, even the Q tradition if there was one.[64]

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63 With D. Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels* (2nd ed.; Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001); cf. Anderson, "Aspects of Interfluentiality," 719–723.

64 Anderson, "Interfluential, Formative, and Dialectical," 19–58.

Theological Interest Does Not Imply Ahistoricity

John has far more archaeological- and chronological-type material than the other Gospels combined, and the other Gospels are *also* theological constructs as well as historical ones. In many ways, John's rendering is more historically adequate than its Synoptic parallels, although some Synoptic renderings are also more historically preferable over the Johannine.[65] In terms of genre, John's genre is not fictive; it is apologetic and dramatic, but this does not imply that it is ahistoric. John is well read as narrative, but it is not fictive; it claims to consist of later reflections upon the ministry of Jesus, and it represents an autonomous perspective on his ministry and its meaning in later generations. In that sense, John is a dramatized history rather than a historicized drama, and thus its literary and rhetorical features deserve consideration as well as its theological claims. Considering John's rhetorical features in the light of the emerging Johannine situation also provides a literary-rhetorical bridge between the history of John's subject (Jesus) and the history of John's audiences. Therefore, the history of the Johannine situation, informed by clues in the Johannine Epistles and other writings, facilitates understandings of how the thrust of John's content seeks to address audiences then and now.[66]

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65 Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus*; and idem, "Aspects of Historicity," 9–14. Regarding a change in scholarly opinion regarding John's historicity over the last century and a half—away from ignoring John in historical Jesus studies to including John within the enterprise—see James H. Charlesworth, "The Historical Jesus in the Fourth Gospel: A Paradigm Shift?" *JSHJ* 8 (2010): 3–46; Paul N. Anderson, "The Jesus of History, the Christ of Faith, and the Gospel of John," in *The Gospels: History and Christology: The Search of Joseph Ratzinger—Benedict XVI*, vol. 2 (ed. Bernardo Estrada, Ermenegildo Manicardi, and Armand Puig i Tarrech; Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), 63–81; idem, "Gradations of Symbolization in the Johannine Passion Narrative: Control Measures for Theologizing Speculation Gone Awry," in *Imagery in the Gospel of John* (ed. Jörg Frey, Jan G. van der Watt, and Ruben Zimmermann; WUNT 2.200; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 157–194. Cf. the collections of essays in Paul N. Anderson, Felix M. Just, and Tom Thatcher, eds., *John, Jesus and History, Vol. 1: Critical Appraisals of Critical Views* (SBLSymS 44, Early Christianity and Its Literature 1; Atlanta: SBL, 2007); and idem, *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 2: Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel* (Early Christianity and Its Literature 2; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009).

66 Anderson, "*Sitz im Leben*," 24–57; cf. Paul N. Anderson, "Bakhtin's Dialogism and the Corrective Rhetoric of the Johannine Misunderstanding Dialogue: Exposing Seven Crises in the Johannine Situation," in *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies* (ed. Roland Boer; SemeiaSt 63; Atlanta: SBL, 2007), 133–159; idem, "From One Dialogue to Another—Johannine Polyvalence from Origins to Receptions," in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism*,

An Overlooked First-Century Clue to John's Authorship?

While Culpepper is right, that interpreting the Johannine text must proceed whoever the author might have been, this does not mean that questions regarding the particulars of earlier views have disproven the explicitly attested first-hand familiarity with the ministry of Jesus. As James Charlesworth points out, *someone* is claimed to have been the source of John's tradition, and the possibility of an independent memory of Jesus' ministry deserves ongoing critical consideration within modern scholarship.[67] Leading reasons for severing the tie between John the Apostle and Johannine authorship have included the so-called early death of John, confusions over John the Apostle and John the Elder, John's differences with the Synoptics, the juxtaposition of Peter and the Beloved Disciple ("proving" the evangelist could not have been one of the Twelve), and the flawed view that Irenaeus is the first to connect John the Apostle with Johannine authorship explicitly; none of these issues, however, is critically substantive. In particular, Acts 4:19–20 provides an overlooked first-century clue to John's authorship, demanding of critical consideration. Here Peter and John are cited as speaking, and while v. 19 reflects a Petrine saying (Acts 5:29), v. 20 reflects a Johannine motif—testifying to "what we have seen and heard" (1 John 1:3). While such a clue cannot prove the particulars of Johannine authorship, this late first-century connecting of John the Apostle with the Johannine tradition approximates a fact.[68] Therefore, in the light of second criticality, simply to question Irenaeus is not to overturn his judgment; in the light of at least ten passages in Eusebius's *History of the Early Church*, John the Apostle's connection with the Johannine tradition is stronger than modern critical scholars have acknowledged.[69]

A Plausible Two-Edition Theory of Johannine Composition

Given John's being an autonomous tradition, most of the major aporias are explicable by inferring at least an earlier edition of the narrative (indeed, there may have been several), followed by the adding of later material by an editor. Therefore, rather than seeing John 4–7 as being in the wrong order, more likely

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93–119; and idem, *From Crisis to Christ: A Contextual Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2014).

67 Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple*; he believes that such a source was Thomas.

68 The argument is more fully spelled out in Appendix VIII at the end of Anderson, *Christology*, 274–277.

69 Anderson, *From Crisis to Christ*, x–xii; idem, *The Fourth Gospel*, 9–15. Cf. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church*.

is the possibility that John 6 was simply added later and inserted between chs. 5 and 7. Likewise, John 14:31 seems to have flowed originally into 18:1, so rather than infer a disordering-reordering of the material, it is simpler just to see chs. 15–17 as being added during a later stage (and there may have been several) of the narrative's development.[70] Of course, interplay between oral deliveries of material could also have played a role in producing some of the oddities of the text, but the simple view of supplementary material being added to an earlier narrative makes sense of John's perplexities in the most efficient way possible. Therefore, John's supplementary material likely included: (a) the Prologue (crafted around John 1:6–8, 15); (b) ch. 6 (possibly inserted to follow 5:46 "And Moses wrote of me" and after the second healing denoted by the plural reference in 6:2); (c) chs. 15–16 and 17 (filling out the continued preaching and teaching of the Johannine evangelist); (d) ch. 21 (providing a second ending and harmonizing John's narrative with other gospel traditions); (e) and eyewitness appeals (19:35) and Beloved Disciple passages. Therefore, an adequate theory of Johannine composition deserves to include the following aspects:

A Two-Edition Theory of Johannine Composition

- The Johannine tradition takes form in the ministry of the Beloved Disciple (AD 30–85)
- The first edition of the Johannine Gospel is written by the Johannine evangelist as a complement, modest corrective, and alternative to Mark (AD 80–85)
- The Beloved Disciple continues to preach (and perhaps write), and the Johannine Epistles are written by the Johannine Elder (AD 85–95)
- Following the death of the Beloved Disciple, the Johannine Elder compiles the Johannine Gospel, adding John 1:1–18, chs. 6, 15–17, and 21, and eyewitness and Beloved references (AD 100)
- Following the Elder's circulating the witnesses of the Beloved Disciple, post-Johannine influences continue into the second century

In addition to a two-edition theory of Johannine composition, an overall Johannine theory includes also the following elements. First, if John's first edition was

70 Of course, George L. Parsenios, *Departure and Consolation: The Johannine Farewell Discourses in Light of Greco-Roman Literature* (NovTSup 117; Leiden: Brill, 2005), reminds us that the dramatic feature of the delayed departure of the protagonist was a common device within Greco-Roman literature, so the abrupt transition between John 14:31 and 15:1 need not require a diachronic explanation.

produced around AD 80–85, it must be considered the second Gospel, not the fourth. Therefore, it should be seen alongside Mark as a bi-optic alternative to Mark's rendering of Jesus' ministry. As the five signs in John's first edition are precisely the ones not found in Mark, the first Johannine edition (assuming at least general familiarity with Mark) must be considered an augmentation of and complement to Mark. Second, we have in the Fourth Evangelist a dialectical thinker, who looked at things from one side, and then another. Therefore, if theological tensions were internal to the thinking of the evangelist, this likelihood diminishes the appeal of *Tendenz*-criticism; all of John is dialectically crafted. Third, the Son's relation to the Father in John is rooted in the Jewish agency motif based upon Deut 18:15–22. Thus, John's sending motif is not Gnostic, but it is Jewish, perhaps going back to memories of Jesus' self-understanding about his mission and ensuing debates. Fourth, John's tradition developed within a dialectical situation, involving at least six or seven crises in as many decades. Fifth, that being the case, as misunderstanding is always rhetorical in narrative, the Johannine dialogues with Jesus should be seen as engaging audiences in an imaginary dialogue with Jesus, wherein foibles and flawed thinking are set straight and Jewish and Gentile audiences alike are pointed to life-producing faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, that they might have life in his name. I call this overall theory *the dialogical autonomy of the Fourth Gospel*.[71]

John's Composition—A Theory of Two Editions

Within Johannine Christianity, there is evidence of more than one leader, and thus, more than one leader was involved in preaching, teaching, writing, and editing the Johannine tradition. While the author of the Gospel is said to have had first-hand contact with the ministry of Jesus (John 1:14; 19:35; 21:24), the same claim is made by the author of the first Epistle (1 John 1:1–5).[72] This first-hand claim in 1 John 1:3, "what we have seen and heard," is explicitly connected with John the Apostle in Acts 4:19–20; and Luke, in coinciding with John against Mark over six dozen times, expresses gratitude for what he has received from eyewitnesses and servants of the *Logos* (Luke 1:2). While none of these features can demonstrate the particulars of John's authorship, the critical inad-

71 Among other places, this overall theory is laid out succinctly in Anderson, *Riddles*, 125–155.

72 This explains why some scholars have seen John the Elder (not one of the Twelve) or an anonymous figure as the eyewitness source of the Johannine tradition; cf. Brown, *Community*; Hengel, *Johannine Question*; Richard J. Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

equacy of alternatives to the traditional view gives one considerable pause before discounting it altogether. Whoever the Johannine evangelist might have been, the phenomenological evidence is strongest in favor of John's being an independent Jesus tradition, theologically developed (but within a Jewish-and-Hellenistic setting and developed within at least two editions) as follows.

The Preaching Ministry of the Johannine Evangelist

Like the preaching sources of Mark, the Johannine evangelist preached and taught for several decades before his material was gathered into written form. It could even be that some of his preaching about the ministry of Jesus had some contact with the preaching source of Mark's material, suggesting an interfluential relationship between the pre-Markan and early Johannine traditions. Again, while the particulars of Acts 8 cannot be confirmed or disconfirmed in relation to the Gospels of Mark and John, the fact that Peter and John are presented as traveling together in ministry and preaching throughout Samaria, following the tracks of Philip, is replicated in the fact that shared buzzwords and memorable details are common to Mark and John, whereas Matthew and Luke omit those features in their incorporation of Mark's written material into their narratives.[73] The point is that the Johannine and Markan traditions resemble individuated and distinctive perceptions and memories of Jesus' ministry, whoever their sources were, and they represent two distinctive impressions of Jesus, which developed further within the emerging ministries of at least two Christian leaders. Therefore, Mark and John deserve to be called "the Bi-Optic Gospels," as their memories of Jesus were distinctive from day one.[74]

Johannine Reflections on the Ministry of Jesus

As all gospel traditions connected the memory of what had transpired in the past with the needs of present audiences, the Johannine evangelist's reflec-

73 Six phases of dialogical engagements between the Markan and the Johannine traditions are sketched in Paul N. Anderson, "Mark, John, and Answerability: Interfluentiality and Dialectic between the Second and Fourth Gospels," *LASBF* 63 (2013): 197–245.

74 Paul N. Anderson, "Das John, Jesus, and History Projekt—Neue Beobachtungen zu Jesus und eine Bi-optische Hypothese," *ZNT* 23 (2009): 12–26 (revised English version published in *Bible and Interpretation* [February 2010, http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/john1357917.shtml]); idem, "Mark and John—The *Bi-Optic* Gospels," in *Jesus and the Johannine Tradition* (ed. Robert T. Fortna and Tom Thatcher; Philadelphia: Westminster, 2001), 175–188.

tions on the ministry of Jesus identified meanings that would also speak to the needs of emerging situations. Within the Palestinian phase of the Johannine tradition (AD 30–70), several acute concerns found their address in the preaching and teaching of the evangelist. In the light of Roman occupation and empire, being reminded that God's kingdom is one of truth rather than power would have been significant. In the light of followers of John the Baptist, who wondered if he were the Messiah instead of Jesus, John is presented as testifying clearly to Jesus as the one people had been waiting for. With regards to neighboring Samaritans and Greeks, the inclusive mission of Jesus knows no religious, racial, or ethnic bounds; sheep hear the shepherd's voice that are not of a particular, insular fold. In relation to the ambivalent reception of Jesus and his followers in Jerusalem, the Judean religious leadership is presented as being blinded by their certainties and legalisms, failing to recognize the prophet predicted by Moses, whose mission embodies grace and truth. Topographical and archaeological details in John, as well as Aramaic and Hebrew terms and knowledge of Galilean and Judean Jewish customs, connect the Johannine tradition to its roots in memory of Jesus' ministry, and such grounded features are palpable within John's autonomous story of Jesus.

Jesus' Signs and Discourses in John

As there is no evidence that John's signs and sayings developed separately, they plausibly enjoyed a connected history earlier in the Johannine tradition than later. In that sense, such themes as the living water availed by Jesus bore connections with his encounter with the woman at the well (John 4) and his declaration at the Jerusalem feast (John 7); his being the living Bread bore connections with the feeding of the multitude (John 6); his being the Light of the World bore connections with his restoring the sight to the blind man (John 8–9); his being the Good Shepherd and the Gate for the sheep emerged amidst discussions with Jewish leaders (John 10); his being the Resurrection and the Life was associated with the raising of Lazarus from the tomb (John 11); and his being the Way, the Truth, the Life, and the True Vine emerged in the context of addressing the ongoing needs of his followers (John 14–15). In addition, earlier impressions and later realizations are evident in John's intratraditional dialogue, as miscomprehensions of the disciples and others are declared to have been transformed by enlightened awareness. Therefore, even in the selection of and expansion upon incidental elements in the Johannine memory of Jesus' ministry, John's rendering came to possess meaning and significance, which were developed further in the preaching and teaching ministry of the evangelist.

The Formation of the Johannine Tradition within Paraphrastic Homiletical Units

While the Johannine tradition poses a complementary parallel to Mark's rendering of Jesus' ministry, John's Jesus speaks in the language and style of the evangelist. This raises questions about the historical reliability of John's presentation of Jesus' ministry, and yet the paraphrastic character of the discourses of Jesus in John represents the Fourth Evangelist's reflections on *the meaning of what Jesus said and did*, as an interpretive form of historical memory. While the discourses of Jesus in John are more extended than the short, pithy sayings of the Markan Jesus, John possesses many Synoptic-sounding aphorisms, although they are largely embedded within larger discourses rather than standing alone as Jesus-sayings proper. Likewise, rather than developing a more closely representative presentation of Jesus' parables and teaching ministry, the Johannine tradition builds parabolic metaphors around the identity and person of Jesus. This can be seen within the double-*Amen* sayings, where Jesus makes his points with added emphasis (1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:26, 32, 47, 53; 8:34, 51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:16, 20, 21, 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23; 21:18), often issuing an authoritative judgment of one sort or another.

While the form of the metaphorical I-Am sayings in John is absent from the Synoptics, this does not mean they are divorced from the memory of Jesus' actual ministry. Indeed, each of the nine I-Am metaphors and themes in John is also found in the Synoptics, so it cannot be said that these terms were never used by Jesus on the basis of Johannine-Synoptic comparisons and contrasts.[75] Likewise, the absolute I-Am sayings of Jesus in John are also replicated somewhat in Mark, as are references to Moses and the burning bush. In John's rendering of Jesus-tradition material, the evangelist weaves themes from Jesus' teaching into Christological statements about Jesus and his mission. In that sense, he crafts both the I-Am sayings of Jesus to show him as fulfilling the historic typologies of biblical Israel, and he does the same with Jesus' Son of Man sayings. While a good deal of Jesus' language in John may go back to memories of Jesus' words and works, it is the Fourth Evangelist who crafts a set of Christocentric teachings around these motifs, representing his own paraphrasis of the meaning of Jesus' ministry. As he has done the same by commenting centrally on the theological *significance* of Jesus' works, so the Johannine evangelist performs a similar task upon the memory of Jesus' words.

75 Paul N. Anderson, "The Origin and Development of the Johannine *Egō Eimi* Sayings in Cognitive-Critical Perspective," *JSHJ* 9 (2011): 139–206.

The First Edition of John—An Apologetic Gospel

John's tradition shows signs of being crafted in a Hellenistic setting while still preserving memories of the Galilean-Samaritan-Judean ministry of Jesus, and this phenomenology matches the traditional view that John the Apostle relocated to a setting within the Pauline mission, such as Ephesus after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, or thereabouts. Within such a setting, contact with local Jewish communities is evident, while fellowship with Gentile believers was also a reality. As the Johannine evangelist and other believers in Jesus would have worshiped in local synagogues on the Sabbath, first-day worship with Gentile believers was likely an emerging reality. As the *Birkat ha-Minim* (curse against the followers of the Nazarene, added to some synagogue liturgies around this time) would have given Jesus adherents pause in their public profession of faith in Jesus, some Johannine Christians might have withdrawn from the synagogue, not feeling welcomed (cf. John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2). And yet, in their believing Jesus to be truly the Jewish Messiah/Christ, they likely also sought to convince family and friends that Jesus was indeed the Son of the Father. If the Gospel of Mark, or some form of its material, was heard in a meeting for worship, it is likely that the Johannine evangelist would have been encouraged to put forward his own account of the ministry of Jesus, and it is during this time in the tradition's development (AD 70–85) that John's story of Jesus was rendered in a written narrative form. Therefore, a first edition of John was probably gathered around AD 80–85, and it was likely produced either by the evangelist or with the help of an amanuensis or scribe, showing the following features.

An Interest in Preserving the Johannine Witness

Within such a venture, there appears to be a clear interest in preserving the Johannine witness, and such likelihood is evidenced in the Muratorian fragment. Here it is said that while other disciples would review (and edit?) it, John the Apostle should write down his own tradition under his own name. This is somewhat odd, as the Gospel of John does not bear the apostle's name explicitly. Another interesting account is also narrated by Eusebius (*HE* 3.23):[76]

> And when Mark and Luke had now published their gospels, John, we are told, who hitherto had relied entirely on the spoken word, finally took to writing for the following reason. The three gospels already written were in general circulation and copies had come into John's hands. He welcomed

76 *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (trans. G.A. Williamson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1975).

> them, we are told, and confirmed their accuracy, but remarked that the narrative only lacked the story of what Christ had done first of all at the beginning of His mission.

While Eusebius shows a bit of conjecture here, trying not entirely successfully to harmonize the differences between John and the Synoptics, he does make some interesting points. First, he affirms the orality of the Johannine tradition and the relative lateness of its recording. Second, he argues that John was familiar with the other Gospels, but that he still had something to add, seeking not to be redundant but complementary. Third, Eusebius explains, albeit in an oversimplified way, that John sought to preserve the early ministry of Jesus in written form, and he believes this accounts for some major differences between John and the Synoptics. Again, while this explanation is not entirely satisfactory, it coincides with the textual facts when John's first edition is compared with Mark.

Written that Others Might Believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and Believing, Have Life in His Name

As well as preserving the witness of the Fourth Evangelist, however, the key interest of the first edition appears to be apologetic, confirming Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. Parallel to some of the heated engagements between Jesus and Jewish leaders in the Gospel of Matthew, the first edition of John is especially rife with the portrayal of tensions between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. In addition to the historical ambivalence of Jesus' reception in Jerusalem, John's rendering must also have represented the history of Johannine Christianity as it developed in the presence of its Jewish cousins and neighbors. In showing Jesus to be the Jewish Messiah, John's first edition takes special care to present his signs as fulfilling the typologies of Moses and Elijah; this is why John the Baptist denies being either of these figures (John 1:19–27)—their embodiment is reserved for Jesus alone in the Johannine narrative. And, as the first edition posed five signs of Jesus (rather than eight), the five signs of Jesus bore a remarkable parallel to the five Books of Moses, again demonstrating Jesus' being the Messiah/Christ. Likewise, the witnesses of John's narrative testify to having discovered that Jesus indeed is the Messiah/Christ, and even the Father and the Spirit testify to his authenticity. Finally, the fulfilled words of Jewish Scripture, Jesus himself, and the unwitting prophecy of Caiaphas confirm Jesus' messianic identity, and the whole narrative is crafted so as to lead hearers and readers into life-producing faith in Jesus.[77]

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77 Paul Anderson, *Navigating the Living Waters of the Gospel of John—On Wading with*

Especially as the Law of Moses is likely cited by Jewish leaders, arguing that believing in Jesus as the Son of God and one with the Father is blasphemous, transgressing Jewish monotheism, the Johannine evangelist emphasizes Jesus' fulfilling the prophet-like-Moses agency schema of Deut 18:15–22. In addition to performing signs reminiscent of the prophets of old, Jesus' words are fulfilled, confirming his faithful and divine agency. Indeed, the resurrection and appearances of Jesus pose climactic proof of his authentic mission, and yet one gets the sense that the evangelist remains disappointed that many, despite having seen and heard, still refuse to believe. At this point, the evangelist "explains" this reality in several ways. First, it reflects the idolatry of signs-based faith. Some people simply were enamored with the signs, but refused to see beyond them to the revelation they were intended to signify. Another explanation is that some may not have been rooted in God. Rather, they loved the praise of humans rather than the glory of God. A third explanation notes that the rejection of Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah (53:1; 6:9–10); some look without really seeing, and some listen without really listening (John 12:37–43). Nonetheless, the Fourth Gospel's first edition is crafted to evoke the reception of Jesus as the Messiah, so that believers might enjoy life in his name (John 20:30–31).

An Augmentation of and Correction to Mark

As a Gospel narrative, while John is not dependent on Mark for its tradition and content, Mark appears to at least set the template for the kind of document John is. This is especially clear where the first edition apparently begins with the ministry of John the Baptist (John 1:6–8, 15, 19–51) and concludes with a version of the Passion narrative quite similar to Mark's, including an appearance narrative terminating in Jerusalem. We call this an augmentive complement to Mark. Notice first that the five signs in the first edition of John are not found in the Synoptics at all. This may be highly significant, because it documents the process of non-duplicative selectivity declared specifically in John 21:25. This would also explain the emphasis upon the enumeration of the first two signs (2:11; 4:54)—they represent two signs performed before those reported in Mark 1. And, the three other signs in the first edition are performed in Jerusalem in Bethany, thus augmenting Mark's Galilean presentation of Jesus' ministry geographically as well as chronologically.

As well, as a complement to Mark, the first edition of John appears to be a corrective to written Mark, setting the record straight here and there.

Children and Swimming with Elephants (Pendle Hill Pamphlet 352; Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 2000).

This likelihood is also preserved in an ancient tradition, where Papias records that, according to John the Elder, Mark's rendering of Peter's preaching was largely adequate, but flawed in terms of its order, contextual adaptations, and redundancies. According to Eusebius's citation of Papias (*HE* 3:39):

> This, too, the presbyter used to say, "Mark, who had been Peter's interpreter, wrote down carefully, but not in order, all that he remembered of the Lord's sayings and doings. For he had not heard the Lord or been one of His followers, but later, as I said, one of Peter's. Peter used to adapt his teaching to the occasion, without making a systematic arrangement of the Lord's sayings, so that Mark was quite justified in writing down some things just as he remembered them. For he had one purpose only—to leave out nothing that he had heard, and to make no misstatement about it."

Again, note here the fact that the source of Papias's report, according to Eusebius, is none other than the Johannine Elder—John the Presbyter. Therefore, this ambivalent appreciation of the Markan tradition matches several facts in the Johannine text, assuming a basic familiarity with Mark.[78] First, the "wrong order" of Mark is set straight by the Johannine evangelist, who places the temple cleansing at the beginning of Jesus' ministry rather than at the end, who features Jesus going to and from Jerusalem several times during his multi-year ministry, and who presents the last supper on the day before the Passover, not on the Passover and moves the sentencing of Jesus from the third hour to the sixth—more plausible moves, historically. This may also provide an insight into Mark's compositional process. Rather than reflecting a "knowing" chronology, Mark's is a general report of the beginning, middle, and end of Jesus' ministry, and Mark locates the bulk of the religious controversy material at the end, where Jesus is tried and crucified upon his visit to Jerusalem. Second, note the critique of Peter's crafting of Jesus' ministry to suit the needs of his audiences; the Johannine narrator has clearly adapted that critique into license, guilty of the same. Third, as a critique of Mark's duplications is expressed (perhaps two feedings and sea-crossings, multiple healings of the blind and the lame, etc.), John's first edition displays a concern to not duplicate Mark. In that sense, the first edition of John is different from Mark on purpose. It is augmentive, but is also corrective, as the second Gospel narrative to be crafted, although there is no evidence of its being circulated or performed among the churches.

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78 Anderson, "The Jesus of History," 63–81.

The Evangelist's Continued Preaching and Ministry

After the writing of the first edition of John, however, the preaching ministry of the Fourth Evangelist continued, and he may even have continued to preserve some of his material in written form. This might account for the duplication of some of the later material, and it accounts for the supplementary material apparently added to the first edition of John. If the traditional view that the setting of the second phase of the Johannine situation was Ephesus or a place like it (and, there is no better site within which to locate Johannine Christianity), this may also account for some of the Pauline connections within the Johannine tradition. This setting would also account for the explicitly Gentile orientation of the material in John, while still representing a pervasively Jewish background and development.

The Continued Ministry of the Beloved Disciple

The Johannine editor attributes the authorship of John to the Beloved Disciple, the one who leaned against the breast of Jesus, serving as an ideal example of Christian discipleship. While scholars in the modern era have correctly noticed the symbolic function of this unnamed individual, this does not imply that he was not a real person. Rather, if the Beloved Disciple were seen as connected to the historic ministry of Jesus (whether or not he was John the Apostle or another figure), this patriarchal leader would have been able to hold the community together simply by the authority of his persona. Such authority might not, however, have been intrinsic to the persona of the Elder, which could explain why the Elder includes in his letters manipulative attempts to get people to cooperate and to love one another. He issues threats to ward off Antichristic threats, and he also appeals to authority figures. His preserving the witness of the Beloved Disciple may be his final attempt, as far as we know, to provide clear direction for the community of faith—locally and beyond.

Emerging Crises in the Johannine Situation

Several crises by now have been emerging in the Johannine situation, and telling evidence may be corroborated between the Johannine writings and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch (AD 95–110). Following the crises of the early stages of the tradition, the first of these new crises involved crises with local synagogues in Asia Minor. A second crisis involved the rising cult of Emperor worship under Domitian (AD 81–96), and this must have produced a terrible hardship for residents of the empire who refused to offer public laud to the emperor. This led, then, to a third threat involving the teachings of Gentile Christians that Jesus did not suffer, and that his followers need not suffer for

their faith in their hopes of attaining new life in Christ. Such a movement advocated assimilation within Roman society, which Johannine leadership regarded as "worldly." The fourth threat involved adversity experienced at the hand of a leader in another Christian community in his attempt to effect order and faithfulness by means of implementing a hierarchical structure of leadership (likely rooted in Matt 16:17–19). These four crises can be discerned within the letters of Ignatius, the Johannine Epistles, and Apocalypse, and between the first and final editions of the Gospel. They also are all displayed within the history-and-theology narrative of John 6.[79]

Ways of Addressing Those Crises with the Continuing Voice of Jesus

The Beloved Disciple continues to preach and teach along these themes, and common to the material added to the first edition of John is the emphasis upon two themes in particular. First, Jesus indeed suffered, and the believer is called to take seriously the fact of the Incarnation. He became *flesh* and dwelt among us; *water and blood* came forth from his side (19:34–35); the "bread" Jesus gives is his *flesh* (on the cross), given for the life of the world, and believers must be willing to *eat his flesh and drink his blood*, if they expect to be raised up on the last day (John 6:51–58). These are clearly anti-docetic motifs, probably aimed at correcting the sort of teaching represented by the antichrists of 1 John 4:1–3 and 2 John 7. In denying that Jesus came in the flesh, these false teachers denied the message of a suffering Jesus, who demands the same of his followers.

The second motif coming through very clear in this material is the importance of the ongoing ministry of the risen Lord by means of the Holy Spirit. The *Paraklētos* (the Comforter/Advocate/Helper) is present in the meeting for worship as an effective guide, leading believers into the truth. He brings to remembrance the teachings of Jesus, and he continues to lead believers in the ongoing work of the church. Deconstructed in this material is the structural leadership associated with Peter and those following in his wake. Peter is portrayed as returning the keys of the kingdom to Jesus (John 6:68–69), and the mother of Jesus is entrusted to the Beloved Disciple at the crucifixion as a familial and relational symbol of church authority (19:26–27). Apostolicity is bestowed upon a plurality of Jesus' followers (20:21–23), and believers are imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit and the authority to be forgivers of sins. In these ways, the continuing voice of Jesus leads through the supple-

79 Anderson, "*Sitz im Leben*," 24–57. Contra John 9, where only one set of situation-dialogues is reflected, John 6 displays four or five sets of dialectical tensions within the later Johannine situation.

mentary material, but the content of the message declares undeniably that this ongoing voice leads beyond the confines of any written text.

The Writing of the Epistles by the Elder

A great riddle of Johannine composition is the relation of the Johannine Epistles to the Gospel. Were they written by the same person or by different hands? Whatever the case, how do we know which was written first? Did they reflect the same situation or different ones? Obviously, scholars will differ as to their approaches to these questions, but some of them force disjunctive choices on the matter unnecessarily. For instance, if there may have been more than one community in the larger Johannine sector of the church, which there probably was, might these communities still have faced similar issues, even if not identical ones? Probably so. Also, if a first edition of the Gospel were written around AD 85, and the final edition was produced around AD 100, might it have been likely that the Gospel was written *before and after* the Johannine Epistles? This is what the present theory suggests.

1 John: A Circular for Community Cohesion in the Light of Defections and False Teachings

Whoever the author of the first Epistle may have been, 1 John is clearly a circular sent to a cluster of churches, probably in Asia Minor or in a similar setting. At least one community has suffered defections, whereby schismatics broke off and severed their ties of fellowship with Johannine Christians. These are called "the antichrists" in 1 John 2:18–25, and they apparently have clung to their monotheistic faith, rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and returned to the synagogue out of preference for "the Father." The Elder, however, challenges such defections and argues that if one rejects the Son, one forfeits the Father, but if one receives the Son, one receives the Father too. This crisis, however, appears to have been largely passed at the time of the writing.

Apparently, a second crisis is developing in the Johannine situation at the time of the writing, and the Elder seeks to stave off the next threat, which is characterized by false prophets and teachers who teach an Antichristic doctrine of Jesus' non-humanity (1 John 4:1–3). This is obviously a docetic threat (not necessarily a Gnostic one—that movement developed later), and the Elder writes to try to keep these false teachers away from local fellowships. This second threat seems less associated with schismatics, and more associated with invasionists. Rather than keeping them in the church, the Elder appears to want to keep them out. This crisis is related to an earlier crisis in the Johannine

situation—alluded to by 1John 5:21. Here the Elder puts clearly what he has been saying throughout the entire letter—*stay away from idols!* Idolatry would have played a role in the rising expectation of emperor worship during the reign of Domitian, but it would also have related to civic festivals and local guilds and pagan traditions. Here the Elder's admonition to love not the world calls Gentile believers to behave in ways more acceptable to Jewish standards in their commitment to following Jesus and walking in the light.

2John: An Encouragement to a Particular Community against Assimilation

The second Johannine Epistle continues a few of the main themes of 1John, but it is written to "the Chosen Lady and her children." Was this a woman leader serving as an organizer of a house church within the larger Johannine situation? It is possible, although this could also be a feminine reference to the church. Whatever the case, 2John is written to a particular community and its leadership exhorting them to stay together and to reject the false teaching of the docetic antichrists. Their having "gone out" into the world (2John 7) refers not to a schism; it is simply a reference to their being "out there" as a menace. They are to be kept out, not to be kept in the church. As a contrast to the usual emphasis of the evangelist's exhortations to abide in Christ, the Elder exhorts this fellowship to abide in *the teachings about Christ*, reflecting a different approach to faithfulness.

3John: A Comfort to a Particular Leader

The third Epistle of John is written to Gaius, a church leader who has been spurned by "Diotrephes who loves to be first" (3John 9–10). Apparently, Diotrephes has forbidden Johannine Christians from coming to his church, and he is even willing to excommunicate members of his own community who show them hospitality. The Elder advises Gaius to extend hospitality to others, despite having been denied it himself, but he makes several important comments as well. He mentions having written to the *ekklēsia* (the church) about Diotrephes' abuse of positional authority, and this may have been done because Diotrephes was drawing, from a centralizing church organization, his own hierarchical power as a means of seeking to hold his community together. On the positive side of things, Diotrephes may have seen the older, familial approach to organization as old-fashioned and ineffective, and he may have been following the pattern set by Ignatius of Antioch, who, about this time, wrote letters to churches encouraging them to appoint a single bishop who would act as the representative of the Lord. In the light of docetizing threats, it is understandable why he appealed to a hierarchical model of church gov-

ernance, and thus, why he was threatened by Johannine Christians. It was not that he regarded them heretics, or even old fashioned, but he was likely threatened by their egalitarian and spirit-based approach to church leadership—and well he should have been, because it threatened his very strategy for holding his church together.

The Final Edition of John—A Pastoral Gospel

The Gospel of John as we know it today was finalized by an editor seeking to preserve the witness of the Beloved Disciple for the benefit of the larger Christian movement. His work appears to have been conservative, in that rough transitions and aporias are left in the text while preserving the evangelist's witness inclusively. For instance, he does not iron out the difficulty with the abrupt ending of John 14:31 ("Let us arise and depart"), although he apparently has modified the introduction to the garden scene in John 18:1 by mentioning Jesus having finished praying before arriving at the garden. He also leaves the original ending as it was (20:31), but then imitates the style of the evangelist in constructing a second ending at the end of ch. 21 (v. 25). This is why he might better be called a compiler. His work functions to conserve the Beloved Disciple's material, and most of the editorial additions appear to be clarifications of meanings rather than insertions of new ones. The importance of finalizing and circulating the Fourth Gospel, however, is highly ideological. In doing so, the compiler presents to the larger Christian movement an ecclesial manifesto advocating the effectual means by which the risen Lord continues to lead the church.

The Death of the Beloved Disciple and the Preservation of His Witness

Apparent in the closing of the last chapter of John is an indirect comment upon the death of the Beloved Disciple: "Jesus never said that this disciple would not die [implying that he has died], he only said, 'What is it to you if I want him to live until I come again?' " (21:23). As well as explaining the apparent death of the Beloved Disciple, the compiler asserts that the Synoptic (Markan) prediction that Jesus would return before the death of the eyewitness generation hinged upon a Petrine-associated misunderstanding. Rather than explain the delay of the *parousia* in other terms, the compiler asserts that Jesus did not promise to return before the death of the apostles, including the Beloved Disciple. Rather, such a misunderstanding emerged from Jesus' dialogue with Peter (John 21:15–23), implying a Petrine origin of Mark 9. Nonetheless, the death of the Beloved Disciple did force at least two further crises: first, the need for

preserving his remaining teaching and writing, and second, the need to point to the ongoing work of the risen Christ within and beyond the community of faith.

The Addition of Supplementary Material by the Compiler

Barnabas Lindars helpfully refers to this material as "supplementary" because it appears to have been added to the earlier material in the first edition. Of course, the first edition may have gathered already-developed units, and there may have been other editions between the first edition and the final one. Therefore, "the addition of supplementary material" is intentionally left vague, allowing alternative possibilities for consideration. Against Lindars's view, though, rather than seeing the evangelist as editing his own work, the evidence seems strongest to go with another hand: that of a compiler. The evangelist may have written and gathered some of the supplementary material by then, and he may even have done some preliminary supplementation, but the final hand seems to have been that of another, adding the following material.

- *The Logos Hymn as Prologue* (1:1–18). While the Johannine *Logos* Hymn serves as an engaging introduction to the Gospel narrative, it also reflects a corporate response to its content by Johannine Christians. Most similar to 1John 1:1–3, this worship piece integrates Jewish and Hellenistic worldviews into the saving-revealing mission of Jesus as the Christ. Like the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke, and similar to the Christological hymns of Colossians, Philippians, and Hebrews, the Johannine *Logos* Hymn affirms God's breaking into human history with the mission of Jesus, and new audiences are welcomed into the believing family of faith by their response to the divine initiative. Here we also see a cross-cultural adaptation of the Mosaic agency motif—rife throughout the narrative—couched in terms friendly to those familiar with the views of Heraclitus, Philo, and Genesis 1. Just as God's *Logos* creates order out of chaos (Heraclitus) and has been active since the beginning of the world (Philo and Genesis 1), so God's saving-revealing work continues from the incarnation of the Word to the saving light of Christ—available to all and inviting a response of faith. What seems to be three stanzas of the Johannine Christ-hymn appears to have been crafted around the descriptions of John the Baptist's ministry (John 1:6–8, 15), and the otherwise mundane beginning of the first Johannine edition is now supplanted by a beginning more similar in thrust to Matthew and Luke than the earlier beginning of Mark.[80]

80 Paul N. Anderson, "On Guessing Points and Naming Stars—The Epistemological Origins

– *John 6; the Feeding and its Implications*. This unit was inserted between John 5 and 7, following the saying that Moses wrote of Jesus (5:46) and the healings he had performed upon the sick people (6:2→4:46–54; 5:1–17). Within this material, however, responses to the unfolding needs of Johannine Christians are apparent, as they are invited to receive the life-producing food which Jesus gives (v. 27). This involves (a) the eschatologically present workings of God over and against the ways he has acted in the past and in Scripture, (b) the willingness to suffer with Jesus and to ingest his flesh and blood over and against the cheap grace posed by Docetists, and (c) the willingness to attend and adhere to the life-giving words of Jesus over and against the promises of structural approaches to church leadership. (d) And, of course, seeking the significance of Jesus' works rather than another feeding (they ate and were satisfied—the result of all five Synoptic feeding accounts—is countered directly by Jesus in John 6:26) is the authentic way to remember Jesus' signs, over and against the Synoptic valuations of his ministry. In that sense, John 6 offers a two-level history of several crises faced by Johannine Christians, and in each of them the way forward is the same: adherence to Jesus as the life-producing Bread.[81]
– *The Great Discourse and the High-Priestly Prayer* (chs. 15–17). Here the ongoing ministry of Jesus though the Holy Spirit comes through with striking clarity. Reflecting the teachings of the Beloved Disciple on the will of Jesus for the church, these chapters focus centrally on the importance of abiding in Christ, and Christ's abiding in the believer, as the only means of attaining and retaining Christian vitality. As the Father has sent the Son, so the Son sends his followers as witnesses in the world, that they may know the One who sent the Son, and that they may believe and become apostolic agents themselves. Jesus prays for his disciples, that they would be in the world but not of it, and that they would be protected from it. Believers even become one with Jesus, as he is one with the Father, and those who know his will and obey it are called his "friends" (15:14–15).

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of John's Christological Tensions," in *The Gospel of St. John and Christian Theology* (ed. Richard Bauckham and Carl Mosser; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 311–345.

81 Over and against J. Louis Martyn's two-level reading of John 9, where a single contextual engagement is revealed (with the local synagogue), a two-level reading of John 6 exposes four or five engagements within the evolving Johannine situation: debate over the meaning of Jesus' miracles, tensions with local Jewish leaders, contrasting Jesus' leadership to political agendas, antidocetic thrusts, and correctives to rising institutionalism in the late first-century situation (cf. Anderson, "*Sitz im Leben*," 24–57).

- *Post-Resurrection Appearances and Commissions as the Epilogue* (ch. 21). Chapter 21 contains important appearance narratives and also completes the Gospel in an important set of ways. Rather than leaving the end of the Gospel with an invitation towards belief, the addition of the Epilogue emphasizes the continuing work of the church beyond initial commitments. Again, the role of the Beloved Disciple is telling here: he points the Lord out to Peter, leading to Peter's leadership being restored (albeit ambiguously), and the Beloved Disciple is then credited with the authority behind the final presentation of the Fourth Gospel (21:23–24). Instructive to the reader would have been Jesus' corrective words to Peter: love the flock and follow Jesus, and these represent the domestication of the Johannine evangel.
- *Editorial Clarifications*. Within the material added by the compiler, several clarifications and additions are made. The compiler adds the *Beloved Disciple passages* and connects the authority of the Gospel to the *eyewitness motif*—especially noting the blood and water that come forth from Jesus' side (19:34–35). Thus, the teachings of the Docetists are wrong; Jesus did indeed suffer, and his followers must be willing to do the same. *Restoring Peter* is also a concern of the compiler. While he deconstructs Peter and the authority structures associated with his memory, the compiler also presents Peter as a witness to the ongoing work of Christ, which happens by means of the work of the Holy Spirit and of leadership done faithfully. *Sacramental clarifications* may also have been introduced by the compiler, such as the point of clarification in John 4:2, but the compiler also asserts that in Jesus the sacramental presence of God is revealed, furthering the incarnational sacramentology of the evangelist. *The paradoxical glorification of the Son of Man* becomes a final theme emphasized by the compiler as a continuing reminder of the way God's plans work themselves out in the world. Jesus' followers must thus be willing to ingest his flesh-and-blood-ness, if they expect to be raised with him on the last day; the way of life invariably involves the way of the cross.

The Incarnation of the Word—An Anti-Docetic Corrective

Within the material added to the earlier edition, the message for John's audience is the incarnation of the Word. This would have had striking impacts upon the rising threat of Docetism and the false teachings of its preachers. The central appeal of Docetism was not simply a new heresy that was attractive as a novelty, or even as an accommodation of Hellenistic metaphysical views. It was not. The existential appeal of Docetism was that, if Jesus did not suffer, neither do his disciples need to do so. This implication was what made the debates so important. Whether in the face of growing demands upon new Christians to

worship the emperor during the reign of Domitian, or whether as an appeal for assimilation in the world among the later Pauline mission churches, Docetism posed a serious threat to the ethical core of Christian discipleship. The Johannine Gospel, however, addressed this threat head on with a fresh emphasis upon the fleshly humanity of Jesus and its implications for believers. If we expect to be raised with him in the afterlife, we must be willing to ingest the bread he now offers: his flesh and blood, given for the life of the world on Golgotha.

Jesus Alone Has the Words of Eternal Life—A Corrective to Rising Institutionalism within the Late First-Century Church

In a very real sense, the Fourth Gospel was finalized and circulated as corrective to rising institutionalism in the late first-century church. This was done not as an opposition to apostolic Christianity, but in the name of apostolic Christianity and its more primitive character. In Johannine perspective, proto-Ignatian moves toward structuralization and hierarchical leadership were regarded as aberrations of the way of the Spirit brought by Jesus. Granted, Spirit-based organization has its headaches, but the Johannine witness holds firm that in the post-resurrection consciousness of the church, the present leadership of the resurrected Lord continues as an accessible reality—even a normative one. Christ's leadership is thus available to all believers, not just a few, and they are called to continue his redemptive ministry in the world as apostles, priest, and partners of the risen Lord.

Abiding in the Word—A New Emphasis of "Belief"

In all, the supplementary material added to the first edition of John not only adds material which was a part of the Beloved Disciple's own ministry, but it also transcends it to the time when there are no more apostles, or even disciples of apostles, active within the community of faith. Here, the message of the Fourth Gospel continues from generation to generation, inviting believers not to a nominal form of religion, whereby the adherents emulate the experience of the founder; John is a unique document in the history of religions, for it calls for nothing short of the experiencing of *the founder*.[82] In that sense, the final edition still emphasizes belief, but rather than an initial invitation for evangelism, the completed Gospel invites the reader to abide in the living Word, continuing in Christ as an ongoing experience of faith. This accounts for some of the differences between John's apologetic thrust and its maintenance

82 Robert Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel* (3rd ed.; Louisville: Westminster, 2007), 37.

concerns. They are both rooted in history and continue to evoke new meanings and histories in the lives of John's readers in every generation.

John's Dialogical Autonomy—Implications for Interpretation

Whether the Gospel of John was a "seamless robe" or a collection of "leftover fragments," the work deserves to be regarded as a whole. As Barrett points out, the work did make sense to *someone* in its final form, and it behooves later interpreters to wrestle with the Gospel in its final form, whatever its composition history might have been. On the other hand, some of those rough transitions and aporias become far more understandable in the light of a modest theory of composition-history. Assuming there was an early Johannine tradition, interactive with the pre-Markan material yet pervasively independent, helps one appreciate the distinctive development of the Johannine witness. Moreover, considering the first edition of John as an augmentation of Mark solves many of the riddles connected with John's similarities with, and pervasive differences from, Mark. Also, appreciating the writing of the Epistles as occurring between the writing of the two editions of John casts valuable light on the history of Johannine Christianity, and it helps us make sense of the stylistic similarities between the Gospel and the Epistles as well as significant differences, in reflecting on the life of faith. Finally, to see the hand of the Elder as the compiler, who prepares and circulates the testimony of the Beloved Disciple as an encouragement and a challenge to the broader Christian movement, casts new light on the material included and the striking juxtaposition of Peter and the Beloved Disciple. Inferring a second edition also makes sense of the major aporias with a minimal amount of speculation. Within this theory, an earlier edition of John can be seen to have had an apologetic and evangelistic thrust, seeking to show Jesus as the authentic Jewish Messiah, while the later material reflects more internal concerns with community maintenance and abiding in Christ and his community as the measure of faith. Whatever the case, the Fourth Gospel becomes finalized around the turn of the first century by the compiler, proposing effectual means by which the risen Christ continues to lead the community of faith. This becomes, then, John's genius *and* its enigma.

The Question of Aporiai or Cohesion in the Fourth Gospel: A Response to Urban C. von Wahlde

David I. Yoon

Introduction

One of the central issues in Johannine studies which has garnered much attention in the past several decades or so is the authorship of the Fourth Gospel (or [the Gospel of] John),[1] and related to that, the question of whether John is one complete document or a composite document from different stages of composition and redaction. The question of authorship and composition also extends to the other three Gospels as well, since none of them contain any inherent claims to authorship, at least ostensibly; in other words, they are formally anonymous. But even if the Gospels did contain statements of attestation to authorship in them, there may still be questions of authenticity perhaps based on internal criteria and inconsistencies that are found in the text—even the letters in the New Testament that identify Paul as their author are scrutinized in this manner—so internal claims to authorship will not necessarily solve this problem to everyone's satisfaction, although I do think that explicit statements of attestation to authorship should be taken seriously. This study, however, is limited to the Gospel of John. The recent discussion of authorship and origins of John has in some ways been popularized by the interest of Richard Bauckham in his *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*[2] and *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple*,[3] where he posits that the author of John was not the traditionally-held son of Zebedee, and hence one of the Twelve, and neither was the author an unknown redactor and compiler of a later period, but instead, he argues that the author was a lesser-known disciple of Jesus who was an eyewitness of his life and ministry, who later came to be a significant elder of the early church. This view

1 Generally, the term "Fourth Gospel" is used, though not always, to refer to the Gospel by disassociating it from the person John. Here, I will refer to the Fourth Gospel by the various nomenclatures "John," "the Gospel of John," or "John's Gospel," without any implication to its authorship.

2 Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

3 Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

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has been adopted by others besides Bauckham,[4] and seems to be an attractive alternative to the traditionally-held view that it was John the Apostle. But what seems to be missing in many of these discussions by those who argue for authorship by a single writer, whether John the Apostle or John the Elder, is that there are very many options that have been proposed throughout scholarly history on this topic, besides these two. For example, in Johannine studies, there are many who still hold to the view that John is actually a composite volume consisting of various stages of composition and/or redaction.[5] More notably, James Charlesworth has noted at least twenty-two possible candidates for the authorship of John—although he uses the nomenclature "Beloved Disciple."[6] This number may seem by some to be gratuitously large, but given the fact that there are no internal claims to authorship within John itself and that there are numerous potential individuals that may fit in one way or another the criteria usually given for the author of John, it seems that the extent of the list is justified.

This brings up an important point regarding the identity of the Beloved Disciple in relation to the identity of the author of John.[7] Although many contend that the two figures overlap, some arguing or simply assuming that the two are one and the same, there are others who see these two as distinct, unrelated identities, especially those who view the Beloved Disciple as a literary *typos*, a fictional character created by the author(s) of John as a literary device.[8] For instance, R. Alan Culpepper states that the Beloved Disciple should be viewed as an "idealized characterization of an historical figure."[9] It is not my interest in this essay, at least directly, to solve the problem of the Beloved Disciple in relation to the authorship of John, except to mention that solving the Beloved

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4 E.g., Paul Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007; originally published in Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 254.

5 E.g., Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (ECC; 3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), argues for three editions of this Gospel; also Rudolf Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964 [1941]); A.T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John* (BNTC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 17–26; among others.

6 James H. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1995), 127–224.

7 The disciple whom Jesus loved, or the Beloved Disciple, shows up in a number of places in the Gospel of John: 1:35–40; 13:23–26; 19:25–27, 35; 20:2–10; 21:2, 7, 20–24, and perhaps 18:15–16. Cf. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 393.

8 E.g., Hans Lietzmann, *The Beginnings of the Christian Church* (trans. B.L. Woolf; 3rd ed.; London: Lutterworth, 1953 [1937]), 233; cf. Charlesworth, *Beloved Disciple*, 12–14.

9 R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 42–49, esp. 47.

Disciple problem does not necessarily resolve the authorship and/or composition problem. But if the Beloved Disciple is the author of John, it seems to rule out the possibility that John is a composite document resulting from multiple stages of edition and redaction.

All this to say that while the authorship question is quite complex involving various factors, the focus of this essay is a bit narrower than solving this problem; I want to simply address one of the contentions that John is a composite document resulting from several stages of redaction. It seems the "single document" camp interacts very little with the "composite document" camp (if I may call them that), as evidenced by a number of commentators who advocate a single document, and hence single author, and who either simply dismiss the notion that John is a composite document or interact only minimally with it.[10] I do not necessarily blame these commentators, but there seem to be enough scholars who still advocate a composite document view, and it seems necessary to address that view as a plausible theory for the authorship and composition of John.[11] My goal in this essay, then, is to offer an argument, or more accurately a response, by addressing the composite document theory of the composition of John from a linguistic perspective, using Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan's theory on linguistic cohesion.[12] I will show that a composite document theory that is based on arguments that John contains too many irregularities, awkwardnesses, or inconsistencies is without basis, in view of the framework of linguistic cohesion I will lay out. As a primary conversation partner, I will summarize and respond to Urban C. von Wahlde, who has recently published a three-volume commentary on the Fourth Gospel, which is based on his theory of three editions.

10 Among those who argue that John is a single document, but do not really interact with composite document views (i.e., form- and redaction-critical views) of John, include Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (rev. ed.; NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 4–25; Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 6–7; F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 1–6.

11 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:1–55, who argues that the Gospel of John was written within an approximately 40-year span in three different editions by the Johannine Community.

12 The linguistic methodology in the next section comes primarily from M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (English Language Series 9; London: Longman, 1976), although other supplemental sources will be utilized as well.

Linguistic Cohesion[13]

Linguistic cohesion refers to the linguistic devices by which speakers or writers communicate their message in a related manner, connecting and weaving statements together to form a meaningful discourse. Identifying cohesion helps us understand what parts of the text are connected to each other and in what ways they are connected to each other.[14] An analysis of cohesion involves the task of identifying how language is used to create cohesive and coherent communication.[15] It is used to connect levels of text to one another in varying degrees of connectedness. Halliday and Hasan write: "The potential for cohesion lies in the systematic resources of reference, ellipsis and so on that are built into the language itself."[16] The importance of cohesion is seen in the following quotation by Halliday and Hasan: "When we consider cohesion, therefore, we are investigating the linguistic means whereby a text is enabled to function as a single meaningful unit."[17]

Halliday and Hasan identify five types of cohesive ties: (1) reference, (2) substitution, (3) ellipsis, (4) conjunction, and (5) lexical cohesion.[18] Porter and O'Donnell offer three categories of cohesive ties—reference, conjunction, and lexical cohesion—similar to Halliday and Hasan's categorization, but they amalgamate the categories of substitution and ellipsis into reference.[19] Reed, on the other hand, presents a slightly different taxonomy of cohesive ties, but it seems to be "overly complex" to digest.[20] In addition, Reed includes

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13 This section is taken from my forthcoming publication in *Filología Neotestamentaria*.

14 Geoff Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar* (2nd ed.; New York: Arnold, 2004), 147–162; Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*; M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), esp. 72–85; Jeffrey T. Reed, *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians: Method and Rhetoric in the Debate over Literary Integrity* (JSNTSup 136; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 89–101.

15 *Cohesive* refers to structural togetherness, whether the grammar and lexis of a language are used to connect a text together; *coherent* refers to content or semantic togetherness, whether a text "makes sense."

16 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 5.

17 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 29–30.

18 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 4.

19 This is taken from an unpublished manuscript: Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, *Discourse Analysis and the Greek New Testament* (forthcoming), 175. I see why they have decided upon this, but because I see enough differences among the three categories, I will maintain Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy.

20 See Porter and O'Donnell, *Discourse Analysis*, 175.

logico-semantic relations such as parataxis and hypotaxis in his taxonomy which may arguably be more related to the ideational metafunction (more specifically the logical subcategory within the ideational metafunction[21]) than the textual metafunction. This may be one example of how a textual meaning (e.g. a type of cohesive tie) can have implications for an ideational meaning (e.g. parataxis vs. hypotaxis).[22]

Reference

Reference is the category of cohesion that is composed of linguistic items, which, by nature, *refer* to something else in the text. “In the case of reference the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, the identity of the particular thing or class of things that is being referred to; and the cohesion lies in the continuity of reference, whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time.”[23] The most common references that are found would probably be personal pronouns, although, since in Greek personal pronouns are not necessary (since the subject is often conveyed through the verbal form), this may not necessarily be the case.

There are roughly three types of reference Halliday and Hasan identify.[24] The first type is *personal reference*, which is reference by means of “function in the speech situation, through the category of person.”[25] Examples of a personal reference in Greek are personal pronouns such as αὐτός, or the referential ὁ that is quite common. The second type is *demonstrative reference* which is reference

21 See Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 29. Whether the “logical metafunction” resides in the ideational or textual metafunction is beyond the scope of this paper; however, I would argue that depending on what aspect of “logical” one is talking about, it may refer to either. In other words, if one is talking about the “logical” progression of the writer’s argument or discourse, then it fits in the ideational metafunction; but if one is talking about the logical structure of the discourse, then it should relate to the textual metafunction. See also Thompson, *Functional Grammar*, 35.

22 Reed, *Philippians*, 89–101. To delve into this discussion would require exceeding the word-count limits of this paper, but certainly would be something to look at in a future work.

23 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 31.

24 Although Halliday classifies references into two major categories, exophoric (situational) and endophoric (textual), I will not include exophoric references in this section because the context of situation is impossible to derive from an ancient text such as the New Testament outside of the text itself; in fact, every reference *must* by nature be textual, or endophoric, for the New Testament, so my discussion here will be limited to types of endophoric references.

25 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 37.

by means of "location, on a scale of proximity."[26] It is "essentially a form of verbal pointing."[27] Examples of this would be lexemes such as τοῦτο (this), ὧδε (here), or νῦν (now). And third is *comparative reference* which is reference by means of "identity of similarity."[28] Some examples of this include μείζων (greater), or μικρότερον (smaller).

Furthermore, references may be either anaphoric or cataphoric.[29] Anaphoric references are references to an item in the preceding discourse, while cataphoric references are to an item in the following discourse. For instance, in the sentence, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him," "him" is a personal reference that is anaphoric, referring to "Lazarus." An instance of cataphoric reference might be: "Now someone was ill, Lazarus of Bethany," where "someone" is a personal reference to a following item, "Lazarus."

Substitution

Substitution in some ways is similar to reference, in that the former refers to "the replacement of one item by another."[30] The difference between the two, Halliday and Hasan point out, is that "[s]ubstitution is a relation between linguistic items, such as words or phrases; whereas reference is a relation between meanings. In terms of the linguistic system, reference is a relation on the semantic level, whereas substitution is a relation on the lexicogrammatical level, the level of grammar and vocabulary."[31] Ellipsis, in addition, is a specific *type* of substitution—a substitution by zero—but will be dealt with in the next subsection.

To help distinguish between reference and substitution, Porter offers the following example. In the sentence, "*Jesus* came into the village, and *he* began to teach," *he* is a referential tie to *Jesus*. In the related sentence, "*Jesus* came into the village, and *the Lord* began to teach," *the Lord* is a substitutionary tie to *Jesus*. They state that cohesion by reference is identified when "the reader looks back in the text for the item that is semantically identical," while in substitution "the reader does not have to look back in the text to discover the identity of the

26 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 37.

27 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 57.

28 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 37.

29 Jeffrey T. Reed, "The Cohesiveness of Discourse: Towards a Model of Linguistic Criteria for Analyzing New Testament Discourse," in *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: Approaches and Results* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey T. Reed; JSNTSup 170; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 28–46, esp. 37.

30 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 88.

31 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 89.

substituted item."[32] In substitution the latter term would provide additional information to the former term.

Ellipsis

If there is any type of substitution in Greek that is not related to reference, it would be ellipsis. I have stated that Halliday and Hasan consider ellipsis to be a type of substitution, namely a substitution by zero; I have also stated that they consider the difference between substitution and reference to be that between lexico-grammatical and semantic relations, respectively. Since I do not see that elements of substitution (e.g. nominal, verbal, or clausal) are categories that are helpful for Greek, the semantic relations that result in a cohesive tie would fall under this category of ellipsis.

Halliday and Hasan state: "An elliptical item is one which, as it were, leaves specific structural slots to be filled from elsewhere."[33] The example from English they supply is: "Joan brought some carnations, and Catherine some sweet peas." While the phrase "Catherine some sweet peas" may seem ambiguous if it stood on its own, its collocation (or juxtaposition) to the previous statement "Joan brought some carnations" helps the reader understand that the implication is that "Catherine brought sweet peas." One example in Greek may be: τῷ τύπτοντί σε ἐπὶ τὴν σιαγόνα πάρεχε καὶ τὴν ἄλλην (to the one who strikes you upon your cheek, turn also the other; Luke 6:29). The identity of the ellipsis—the other what?—is inferred from the previous statement about turning the cheek. The latter clause would not make sense without the previous clause.

Conjunction

Halliday and Hasan state that this final type of *grammatical* cohesion is unique from the previous ones in that it does not simply convey an anaphoric relation. They state:

> Conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by virtue of their specific meanings; they are not primarily devices for reaching out into the preceding (or following) text, but they express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse.[34]

32 Porter and O'Donnell, *Discourse Analysis*, 179.

33 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 143.

34 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 226.

In addition, Porter and O'Donnell state: "A conjunctive device serves to indicate how the text following the conjunction is related to that which has gone before."[35]

Types of conjunctions are classified in a variety of ways. Reed labels the conjunctive system of language as organic ties and identifies two types: paratactic and hypotactic (see above), along with further subdivisions within those types.[36] Louw and Nida, in their lexicon based on semantic domains, identify five categories of discourse markers: transition, emphasis, attention, direct address, and identification and explanatory clauses (epexegetical).[37] Halliday and Hasan identify four types of conjunctions: (1) additive, (2) adversative, (3) causal, and (4) temporal.[38] While Halliday and Hasan's system is quite complex, the four broad categories do not seem to address some other possible functions that conjunctions may have.

While developing a full classification of types of conjunctions is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to note that conjunctions signify cohesion between items before and after the conjunction and that there are a variety of functions these conjunctions have in the text. Some of these functions include: adversative, causal, comparative, conditional, connective (usually paratactic), consecutive, emphatic, explanatory, inferential, or temporal.[39]

Lexical Cohesion

A final type of cohesive tie that is not grammatically based is lexical cohesion (similar to if not synonymous with what Reed calls componential ties).[40] Halliday and Hasan write: "This is the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary."[41] They identify two major types of lexical cohesion: (1) reiteration (of which there are four sub-types) and (2) collocation.[42] Reiteration involves the reoccurrence of a particular word and consists of four types: (a) same word

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35 Porter and O'Donnell, *Discourse Analysis*, 175.

36 Reed, *Philippians*, 89–93.

37 J.P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 2:811–813.

38 See chart in Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 242–243. Within these broad categories, they include various other subdivisions, which seem overly atomistic and complicated, but the overall structure of four categories seems to be helpful.

39 Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 204–217, esp. 205.

40 See Reed, *Philippians*, 93.

41 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 274.

42 Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 288.

(repetition), (b) synonym, (c) a superordinate word, and (d) a general word. Some examples of these are as follows:

(a) *Repetition*: *μακάριοι* οἱ πτωχοὶ … *μακάριοι* οἱ πενθοῦντες … *μακάριοι* οἱ πραεῖς … *μακάριοι* οἱ πεινῶντες … (*blessed* are the poor … *blessed* are the mourners … *blessed* are the gentle … *blessed* are the hungry; Matt 5:3–6), where "blessed" is repeated a number of times here.
(b) *Synonym*: ἵνα ἀφῇ ἡμῖν τὰς *ἁμαρτίας καὶ* καθαρίσῃ ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ *πάσης ἀδικίας* (in order that he should forgive us our *sins* and cleanse us from all *unrighteousness*; 1John 1:9), where "sins" and "unrighteousness" are synonymous with each other.
(c) *Superordination*: εἰ δὲ *τις χήρα* τέκνα ἢ ἔκγονα ἔχει, μανθανέτωσαν πρῶτον τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον εὐσεβεῖν καὶ ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι *τοῖς προγόνοις* (but if *any widow* has children or grandchildren, let them first realize to show godliness to their own family and repay their *parents*; 1Tim 5:4), where "parents" is a superordinate word of "widow."
(d) *General word*: καὶ εὗρεν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ *τοὺς πωλοῦντας βόας καὶ πρόβατα καὶ περιστερὰς καὶ τοὺς κερματιστὰς* καθημένους, καὶ ποιήσας φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων *πάντας* ἐξέβαλεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ (and he found in the temple *sellers of oxen, sheep, pigeons, and the money-changers* sitting, and making a whip of rope he drove *everyone* out of the temple; John 2:14–15a), where "everyone" (or "all") is repeated for "sellers of oxen, sheep, pigeons, and the money changers."

In the above brief discussion on cohesion, it is important to note that there is much more that can be said on this topic. In fact, as Porter and O'Donnell note, much has already been said on this topic, in relation to other areas of discourse analysis like prominence, for example.[43] But I have provided a brief outline of cohesion, and in my analysis below, the main cohesive devices that seem to be present are reference and lexical cohesion. This will be spelled out further in the next section.

43 Porter and O'Donnell, *Discourse Analysis*, 161.

Aporiai and Cohesion in the Fourth Gospel

There are quite a few authors who hold to a composite document theory of the composition of John.[44] Ever since Julius Wellhausen at the start of the twentieth century proposed that what we have now as the Gospel of John is a product of various editions, many scholars have argued similarly, including Bultmann who probably constructed the most well-known theory regarding the composition of John.[45] I will in this essay interact with Urban C. von Wahlde, who recently published a three-volume commentary on the Gospel and Letters of John, arguing that John was composed in three different editions.[46] He argues that "indications that such editing has occurred in the Gospel of John are both numerous and compelling."[47] These literary "problems," called *aporias* or *aporiai*, "are features that prevent a smooth, consistent reading of the material."[48] The alleged ubiquity of these kinds of texts in John causes him to conclude that "it is unrealistic to attempt to treat the text of the Gospel as a simple, unified, and coherent composition emerging from the work of a single hand."[49] On the other hand, he states that not all aporiai are as clear as others, and they probably exist on some sort of cline from clear to unclear. One basis of this contention that John is the product of levels of editing is the commonality of multiple layers of authorship in ancient writings. But the examples he provides of these so-called common documents include such works as the Pentateuch, Matthew and Luke, and Paul's letters, all of which are hardly uncontested products of multiple authorship and editions. The Pentateuch is not a single document, first of all, but a collection of five separate books, so the comparison does not exactly fit (he compares in essence apples to oranges). Whether Matthew and Luke used Mark and Q has been taken for

44 E.g., Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*; Lincoln, *John*; Rudolf Schnackenberg, *The Gospel according to St John* (trans. Kevin Smyth; 3 vols.; New York: Seabury, 1980), esp. 1:75–118; von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*.

45 Julius Wellhausen, *Erweiterungen und Änderungen im vierten Evangelium* (Berlin: Reimer, 1907); H.H. Wendt, *Die Schichten im vierten Evangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911); Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*.

46 Dwight Moody Smith (*The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel: Bultmann's Literary Theory* [New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1965]) responded to Bultmann (*Das Evangelium des Johannes*), a response which was based on source criticism; this is my attempt at responding to von Wahlde's commentary in this short amount of space.

47 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:10.

48 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:10.

49 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:12.

granted, but recent scholarship suggests alternative theories of the origins of Matthew and Luke that are based not on redactional activity but on oral tradition or eyewitness testimony.[50] And whether Paul's letters contain elements of multiple strata of authorship is also debated within scholarship, with many concluding on the basis of linguistic features that his letters actually signify a unified whole.[51] Thus, it is difficult to say that multiple authorship of works presented as single documents was all that common in the first and second centuries.

The subject of my major interaction, however, is the so-called aporiai and disjunctions in John. It is impossible to address all of the aporiai that von Wahlde identifies within the confines of this paper, so I have chosen three major passages in John that von Walhde claims contain some "clear" aporiai. I interact primarily with these aporiai since almost all scholars who hold to a composite document theory take these to be the primary markers of editing, thus the most significant evidence of multiple layers and authors.[52] Von Wahlde also includes other criteria for determining layers, such as *Wiederaufnahme* and other resumptive devices, but they are not dealt with much in this essay.[53] The three passages which von Walhde claims contain aporiai include the parable of the good shepherd (John 10:7–13), the first farewell discourse (John 13:33–37), and the second farewell discourse (John 14:18–22). These three passages will be examined and analyzed through the lens of the theory of linguistic cohesion as outlined above to determine whether von Wahlde's claims of aporiai deserve merit.

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50 Cf. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*; Bo Reicke, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Christianity in the Making 1; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); among others.

51 E.g., Christopher D. Land, *Is There a Text in These Meanings? The Integrity of 2 Corinthians from a Linguistic Perspective* (NTM; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2015).

52 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:17.

53 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:24–25. *Wiederaufnahme* means "repetitive resumptive" and refers to such markers as "when therefore" (ὡς οὖν, ὅτε οὖν), accompanied by material from a previous section in order to resume a smooth sequence of events. Other resumptive devices include phrases like "having said these things" (ταῦτα εἶπον), which "appears in contexts where it creates an abrupt transition between unrelated ideas and as such is almost surely an indicator that an author is either adding material or resuming the sequence of an earlier edition" (25). These devices, however, seem to be circular in nature and dealing with these is outside the scope of this essay.

The Parable of the Good Shepherd (*John 10:7–13*)

Von Wahlde states that one of the most "striking examples [of aporiai in John] occurs in the interpretation of the parable of the shepherd in John 10:7–13."[54] For heuristic purposes, I have reproduced the text as it appears in the commentary, including the two typefaces, which serve to demonstrate the "awkwardness of the present text."[55]

> 7 *So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you,* **I am the gate for the sheep**. 8 *All who came [before me] were thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them.*
>
> 9 **I am the gate. If someone enters through me, that person will be saved and will go in and come out and will find pasture**. 10 *The thief does not come except to steal, slay, and destroy. I came so that they might have life, and have it abundantly.*
>
> 11 *I am the good shepherd.* **The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. 12 Someone hired, who is not the shepherd, for whom the sheep are not his own, seeing the wolf coming, leaves the sheep and flees—and the wolf grabs them and scatters them—13 because he is hired and does not have a concern for the sheep."**

Von Wahlde identifies several reasons why he sees aporiai in this passage. First is that two major images from this parable are developed, Jesus as the gate, and Jesus as the shepherd, but it seems as if the first image of the gate is hardly developed here. Second, and more striking, he states, is the relationship between v. 7 and v. 8. After referring to himself as the gate in v. 7, Jesus says that "all" who came before him were thieves and bandits. The "all" would seem to be in reference to "gates," but of course that is nonsensical, and it seems to relate to a further development of the shepherd metaphor, according to von Wahlde. A third proposed problem for a smooth reading of this passage comes in v. 9, where Jesus apparently shifts back to developing the gate metaphor, ignoring the content of v. 8. Verse 10 goes back to the shepherd metaphor, von Wahlde says, in contrast with the thieves. The next verse, however, for the first time introduces Jesus as the shepherd—I suppose the previous developments of the shepherd metaphor, such as in v. 8, were merely precursors to this more explicit introduction. Not only is the shepherd

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54 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:10.

55 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:10; see also 2:451–469 for an extended analysis but essentially containing the same basic contentions as in 1:10.

metaphor introduced here, but the "hireling" is also introduced in v. 12. As a summary, then, von Wahlde writes:

> It is apparent from the way the original parable is developed that the image of the sheep and the shepherd was so meaningful to the Johannine community that it was developed in several ways, each of which had its own valuable lesson. But only one of these was truly the "original" interpretation of the parable! The other interpretations either developed features that were secondary in the original parable (but inconsistent on a literary level with the original interpretation) or added features not present in the original. The theological purpose of each is readily understandable. The literary technique is evident: the text consists of an original interpretation together with two later reinterpretations.[56]

In the next paragraph, he concludes: "such passages demonstrate that it is unrealistic to attempt to treat the text of the Gospel as a simple, unified, and coherent composition emerging form the work of a single hand."[57] Besides the fact that von Wahlde is simply begging the question or assuming the conclusion from the start, I want to examine more specifically this final contention that these aporiai prohibit the reader from seeing the text of the Fourth Gospel as a coherent—and, by relation, cohesive—text, based on the principles of linguistic cohesion.

The first, and foundational, observation made by von Wahlde regarding aporiai in this passage is that there are two images of Jesus in this parable, that of gate and that of shepherd, and that the gate image or metaphor is not necessarily developed. The major problem posed by von Wahlde here is that this gate metaphor is hardly developed and that in the original parable, it is primarily the images of shepherd and thieves that play an important role. Some of this is simply assuming multiple layers from the outset, but an initial response is that the gate image has a close relation to the shepherd and thieves images as well. If one considers the entire picture that Jesus provides here, there are not only shepherds involved, but sheep, gates (within which the sheep would apparently be kept so they would not stray and to protect the sheep from outside threats), wolves, thieves, and possibly other related images. In short, the two purported images of shepherd and gate should not be considered

56 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:11–12.

57 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:12.

two *separate* images, but two images related to the whole parable regarding the pastoral or bucolic life. This imagery or parable contains various images, including shepherd, sheep, wolves, thieves, grass, a shepherd's rod, etc. They are part and parcel of a bigger pastoral theme.

A more pertinent contention that von Wahlde provides is of the dissonance between v. 7 and v. 8, where the referent "all" should seem to refer to gates—if the whole of the passage were a cohesive text—but in the co-text, he contends that it seems to refer to the shepherd metaphor. Going back to Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy of cohesive devices, "all" might be classified as a *reference* here, whereby "all" refers to another item in the co-text. The use of reference evinces some sort of cohesion here, but the major question still needs to be answered: what does "all" refer to? All what/who? All shepherds, or all thieves, or all gates, or all sheep? Von Wahlde seems to simply assume that the reference "all" must be anaphoric, that is, a reference to an item in the previous co-text, i.e., the gate. But a reference can be cataphoric as well, as I have noted above; in this case, I argue that "all" is not an anaphoric reference to gates, so that Jesus is not saying all other "gates" who came before him are thieves and bandits. In this case, von Wahlde may seem to be correct that a reference to "all gates who came before me" is nonsensical. But laying aside the possibility of an anaphoric reference, and considering a cataphoric reference, there are many possibilities: "all" could be a reference to the thief, or perhaps even the hireling or the wolf. Or as von Wahlde suggests, "all" could be related to the shepherd metaphor that is more fully developed in v. 11. Even if von Wahlde's suggestion is correct, it is still a type of phoric reference, displaying some degree of cohesion here. It seems, however, that considering the various options, "all" is a reference to the thief (and bandit); in fact, the meaning of the sentence seems to equate the two. "All … are thieves and bandits …" The point of my response here is not to establish the precise referent of "all," although I have just made a suggestion, but to object to von Wahlde's contention that there is a lack of cohesiveness in this discourse because of a seeming dissonance between v. 7 and v. 8. In fact, the (cataphoric) reference here seems to suggest cohesion.

The third problem for von Wahlde is that Jesus seems to shift from the gate metaphor in v. 7 to the shepherd metaphor in v. 8, and then back to the gate metaphor in v. 9. This problem is solved, however, if (1) one does not consider the gate and shepherd metaphors to be exclusively separate but part and parcel to a larger pastoral metaphor (as I have argued already), and (2) one considers that v. 8 is not strictly about a shepherd metaphor—in other words, Jesus is not saying "all shepherds who came before me" but "all (thieves) who came before me"—as discussed above.

A final objection to von Wahlde's proposal in this parable is the continuity, or lack of continuity, in v. 11. He uses two different typefaces in v. 11, but I am not sure why he has differentiated two different layers here. There is obviously lexical cohesion here, the repetition of the lexeme "shepherd" in both these purported layers; in fact, the entire word group "the good shepherd" (ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός) is repeated in v. 11, not just the lexeme "shepherd." There are other lexemes in the bolded section that are repeated from the italicized section, such as "sheep" and "life."

In short, von Wahlde's proposal that this good shepherd parable contains too many inconsistencies and that they reveal the multiple developments of the final text seem to be unfounded, based on an analysis of cohesion, specifically reference and lexical cohesion. This does not necessarily mean that there was not (a) later editor(s) who came and amended, extended, or interpreted the "original" parable, but it does mean that von Wahlde's purported evidence or reasons for concluding so based on inconsistencies is not found to be compelling for the above reasons, at least in this passage.[58]

The First Farewell Discourse (*John 13:33–37; esp. 34–35*)

This is another passage in which von Wahlde claims that the "present text of the passage is quite awkward when examined closely."[59] Again, for heuristic purposes, the text as presented by von Wahlde is reproduced below, including the two different typefaces.

> 33 "… *yet a little time I am with you. You will seek me, and as I told the Jews, 'Where I am going you are not able to come,' I also tell you now*. 34 **A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; as I loved you, you also should love one another**. 35 **By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."**
>
> 36 *Simon Peter said to him, "Master, where are you going?" Jesus responded* [*to him*], *"Where I am going, you are not able to follow me now, but you will follow later*."[60]

58 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 2:462, states, "when the material of each edition is read, using the distinctive typefaces provided, the different ways in which it has been developed will become clear." I think I have shown that it is not as clear as von Wahlde has claimed.

59 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:35.

60 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:35 is slightly different from the suggested division he has in 1:591, where 1:35 has Jesus' response in v. 36 as the original, but 1:591 has it as a later addition/edition.

The major disagreement here with a cohesive text is in vv. 34–35, where it seems like the giving of a new commandment seems out of place. Von Wahlde states: "When the verses about the new commandment are removed, a clear and consistent sequence emerges."[61] That itself may be true, but one can omit verses from just about any text and have the result maintain a clear and consistent text. This does not mean, however, that the omitted text is not original or unrelated.

On the other hand, von Wahlde's contention still needs to be dealt with, that vv. 34–35 are awkward and do not fit with the rest of the surrounding co-text. A main reasoning for this contention is that Simon Peter's response does not even address Jesus' new commandment, and instead the response is to what Jesus says in v. 33, "where I am going you are not able to come." The major question, then, that needs to be answered is: is there any connection of vv. 34–35 to the rest of the passage?

There is actually evidence of lexical cohesion between vv. 34–35 and the rest of the passage, with the words "disciple" (μαθητής or μαθητεύω) and "follow" (ἀκολουθέω). Louw and Nida, in their lexicon, treat them as synonyms under the same semantic domain (36.31: to follow, to be a disciple),[62] so the new commandment statement is not completely unrelated to the rest of the passage. Jesus first relates to them a new commandment to love one another, in order to be a follower, and then speaks of his followers not being able to follow him until later. What Jesus seems to be saying is that his followers are not able to follow him where he goes, but it is not necessarily a geographical location that is in primary view (perhaps "heaven" is a secondary inference here). In other words, Jesus is "going" to lay down his life for them, but they, at that time, will not be able to do the same, that is, follow him by laying down their lives for him. But as he loves them, Jesus requires his followers to love others in the same manner.[63] So there is some lexical cohesion here between the use of the two words, disciple and follow.

What is more significant is Peter's response to Jesus' new commandment statement. Von Wahlde contends that Peter seems to ignore what is purportedly said in vv. 34–35 as if it is not a part of the "original" discourse. He states: "The introduction of the love commandment is not prepared for in the prior text, nor is there any reference to it in what follows, where the topic returns to

61 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:35.

62 Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*.

63 Cf. Bruce, *Gospel of John*, 294.

the departure of Jesus."[64] I would agree that if the discourse ended at v. 36, it would indeed seem as if Peter has no knowledge of Jesus' new commandment statement. But this is not the case; the discourse continues on in v. 37 (and following), where after Peter asks Jesus where he is going and Jesus responds, not directly but indirectly, that Peter cannot follow him (lexical cohesion with "disciple"), Peter replies, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you" (v. 37). Not only does this response contain lexical cohesion with the rest of the passage ("follow"), not to mention other types of cohesion such as reference ("Lord" with "Jesus"), there is a semantic continuity with Peter's statement "I will lay down my life for you," and Jesus' new commandment. This should be explained in greater detail.

The new commandment, which is not so new as 1 John 2:7–8 clearly explains, is to love one another. Later in 1 John, a connection which von Wahlde himself makes with this passage,[65] the author says, "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers" (1 John 3:16). Even in John, within the same farewell discourse, Jesus says, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lays down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Clearly, the greatest act of love is conceived of by one laying his or her life down for another. Jesus' farewell discourse can be seen in those terms as well; Jesus is about to die for humanity, and it is the greatest act of love. Jesus warns his followers that they could not follow him in this way, but that later, they would. When Peter says "I will lay down my life for you," it should not be interpreted in isolation from the previous co-text, as if Peter is simply exhibiting a random passion and excitement for Jesus; it should be interpreted in light of Jesus' command to love one another. Peter, in essence, is saying that he will practice this new commandment of love towards Jesus himself in the greatest way possible, by laying his life down. While there is not any particular lexeme in this last statement of Peter that is cohesive with the previous co-text, semantically, it coheres well with the "inserted" love commandment.

Again, I do not disagree that omitting vv. 34–35 maintains a coherent and cohesive text. But that does not prove that the omitted text is not a part of the original—it simply means that vv. 34–35 can be omitted and sense can still be made of the remaining text, but it does not say much regarding a second or third edition of the text. A main reason for suggesting that it is not a part of the original discourse is that it is awkward and seems unrelated to the surrounding co-text, but I have presented a plausible way in which vv. 34–35 fit in to the rest

64 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 2:623.

65 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 2:617.

of the discourse to make it cohesive. Again, this does not necessitate a single author, but it does argue against vv. 34–35 being awkward and inconsistent.

The Farewell Discourse 2 (*John 14:18–22; esp. 21*)

A third and final example of a text containing apparent awkwardness and editions is within the Farwell Discourse in John 14:18–22. Again, the text with von Wahlde's proposed two typefaces is reproduced below.

> 18 *I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.* 19 *In just a little time the world will no longer see me, but you will see me because I live, and you will live.* 20 *On that day, you will know that I am in my Father*, **and you in me, and I in you.** 21 **The one possessing my commandments and keeping them is the one loving me. And the one loving me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him.**
>
> 22 *Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him, "Master, what has happened that you are about to manifest yourself to us and not to the world*?"[66]

Von Wahlde does not say as much regarding this passage but simply states that "the sequence becomes much clearer when the editorial addition (v. 21) is removed."[67] However, he does note three "substantial reasons" for considering v. 21 to be the work of a later (third) author.[68] First is that it parallels the function of v. 15, which is deemed to have been associated with the third edition. Second is that it interrupts the sequence between vv. 19–20 and v. 22. And third is that it is consistent with the commandment texts in the Gospel being associated with the third edition.

The first and third "substantial reasons" are really not that substantial, since they already presuppose a second and third edition. It is thus a circular argument because it assumes a third edition to begin with. The second reason, however, can be addressed, since as in the first two example passages above, it deals with purported inconsistencies or interruptions in the sequence of the text. How I will argue this is by showing some degree of cohesion between v. 21 and the rest of the discourse, in a similar manner as I have done with the two previous examples.

My response to von Wahlde is that there is some lexical cohesion between v. 21 and the rest of the discourse in the following repeated words: *Father*, *me*,

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66 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:592.

67 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:35.

68 I have not made much of this so far because it is minimally related to my responses, but von Wahlde has identified three layers (and authors) to the Gospel.

and *you*. There is mention in v. 20 of the unity between the Father, Jesus, and whoever Jesus is addressing (i.e., "you"), and all three characters appear in v. 21. All three characters, the Father, Jesus, and you, are evident in v. 21 and the rest of the discourse.

There is also lexical cohesion with *manifest*, where Judas responds to Jesus' statement in v. 21 about manifesting himself to those who love him by asking Jesus why he would manifest himself just to them and not to the world. Von Wahlde notices the continuity there, but explains it by identifying it as an "attempt to resume the sequence from v. 19."[69] But again, this is based on assuming the conclusion at the outset; the circularity and unnecessary assumption of redaction is clearly evident here. More plausible is that Jesus actually said that, and Judas actually responded to Jesus' statement of manifesting himself. This is clearly another evidence of lexical cohesion. Furthermore, if the repetition of "manifest" in v. 22 coheres with v. 21 and provides a smooth transition, I would expect it to be a part of v. 21 instead of the original text. But von Wahlde has assigned different typefaces between v. 21 and v. 22.

Conclusion

Von Wahlde anticipates some objections to his method by including a (short) section (a half page) on circularity of argument. He notes that the reader might object to his method as being circular, and by wishing the results, the interpreter gets what he wants. The eye sees what it wants to see. His only explanation, at least in this section, is simply to say that "[e]very attempt has been made to proceed in as objective a way as possible, beginning from linguistic features and proceeding to ideological and then to theological characteristics."[70] This does not really address the problem of circularity, however, except to basically state that "I tried to be objective as much as I could," to which any objector could respond, "I too." It seems to me that the problem of circularity is a glaring flaw in the composite document theory, at least the one that von Wahlde presents, and conclusions are often based on assuming the redaction from the start. I hope to have shown that the purported places of awkwardness and dissonance are really not that awkward nor dissonant.

What linguistic data and statistical analyses cannot prove is who the author of the document was, or whether it was a single- or multiple-author document.

69 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 2:649 n. 7.

70 Von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, 1:42.

Frankly, no linguistic analysis can prove such things, and such studies that claim that it definitely proves a particular author or authorial "style" go too far in their conclusions. At the same time, there are analyses that contend for multiple authorship based on internal criteria or variations in style or content. Many of these studies are based on purported awkwardness or observable dissonances in the text. The modest aim of my essay has been to address the awkwardness of parts of the Gospel of John, using von Wahlde's recent commentary as a conversation partner. In the first part of my essay, I laid out a framework based on Halliday and Hasan for identifying cohesion in a given text, what sort of criteria can be applied to show how cohesive a given text is, and then using that framework, I investigated some of the claims of von Wahlde, who holds to a multi-stage origin and composition of the Fourth Gospel. What I have hoped to have shown in my essay is that the Fourth Gospel is a cohesive document that is not characterized by awkwardness and dissonance in certain places. In other words, I hope to have shown that the main argument for multiple authorship is without linguistic grounding, since cohesion can be shown. Discussion of whether a single author or multiple authors are responsible for the Fourth Gospel is beyond the scope of my essay, although it may appear from the cohesiveness of the book that a single author is highly plausible.

Irenaeus and the Authorship of the Fourth Gospel

Lorne Zelyck

It is widely acknowledged that Irenaeus considered the Fourth Evangelist to be the Apostle John,[1] yet Richard Bauckham has consistently argued that Irenaeus distinguished John, the son of Zebedee, from John, the disciple of the Lord.[2] The former is an apostle and member of the Twelve, while the latter is the aged, Beloved Disciple who authored the Fourth Gospel and was associated with Ephesus where he was buried.[3] This distinction coincides with Bauckham's erudite analysis of other Asiatic traditions in the second century, and it challenges the consensus view that has "commonly been assumed and sometimes argued," but is now "vigorously contested."[4] In support of the consensus view, and as a response to Bauckham, this essay will argue that Irenaeus does not make this distinction and that he identifies the Apostle John as the author of the Fourth Gospel, which provides legitimacy and authority to Irenaeus's own arguments against his opponents.[5]

1 J.N. Sanders, *The Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), 5; R.E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (AB 29, 29A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 1:lxxxviii; C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: SPCK, 1978), 101; M. Hengel, *The Johannine Question* (London: SCM, 1989), 3; R.A. Culpepper, *John, the Son of Zebedee* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 124; E. Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 176; C.E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 96; A.J. Köstenberger and S.O. Stout, "'The Disciple Jesus Loved': Witness, Author, Apostle—A Response to Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*," *BBR* 18 (2008): 209–231, esp. 223–225; B. Mutschler, "John and His Gospel in the Mirror of Irenaeus of Lyons," in *The Legacy of John* (ed. T. Rasimus; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 319–343, esp. 323; D.J. Unger, trans., *St. Irenaeus of Lyons: Against the Heresies*, Book 3 (New York: Newman, 2012), 123 n. 7.

2 Bauckham first made this argument in "Papias and Polycrates on the Origin of the Fourth Gospel," *JTS* 44 (1993): 24–69, esp. 67–69; however, it has been reiterated in *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 452–471, and *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 70–72. Bauckham's conclusions have been followed by P. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 252–258.

3 This argument was previously made by C.F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922), 138–142; J.J. Gunther, "Early Identifications of Authorship of the Johannine Writings," *JEH* 31 (1980): 407–427, esp. 418–419.

4 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 458.

5 I have omitted a critical discussion of the sources and historical reliability of Irenaeus's claims,

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Three "Johns"

Irenaeus identifies three "Johns" in *Against Heresies*—John Mark, John the Baptist, and John the Apostle. It is necessary to elucidate how Irenaeus describes these individuals so that their identities are not conflated or confused.

John Mark

In support of the claim that Luke faithfully transmitted Paul's teachings, Irenaeus notes that Luke was a constant traveling companion of Paul and then paraphrases material from Acts 15–16: "For he says that when Barnabas, and John who was called Mark, had parted company from Paul, and sailed to Cyprus, 'we came to Troas'" (*Adv. Haer*. 3.14.1). This is the only time John Mark is mentioned, and Irenaeus is certainly dependent on Acts 15:37 to identify this "John."[6]

John the Baptist

Quoting Matt 11:11 in *Adv. Haer*. 3.10.1, Irenaeus mentions "John the Baptist" and refers to him as "John" seven times in the chapter. Irenaeus also identifies him as "the forerunner" twice in 3.9.1 and once in 3.11.4, where he also refers to him as "John" four times. Quotations from the Gospels are attributed to "John" (the Baptist by implication) (1.3.5; 3.9.1; 3.10.2) and "John the Baptist" (4.4.3; 4.7.2; 5.17.4; 5.32.2).[7] Irenaeus twice mentions the "baptism of John" (1.21.2; 3.14.3) and indicates that the "law terminated with John [the Baptist]" (4.4.2).

When Irenaeus refers to "John" without an epithet, how can we be sure that this is "John" (the Baptist) and not another "John"? There are three criteria available to determine that the "John" to which Irenaeus refers is "John" (the Baptist).

(1) *The association of "John" with an epithetic John*. In 3.10.1, Irenaeus refers to "John" three times before quoting Matt 11:11, which mentions "John the Baptist." It is reasonable to conclude that, based on the context, Irenaeus is referring to the same person and "John" is simply an abbreviated form of "John the Baptist."

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as well as their relationship with other early Christian authors, in order to focus on the claims of Irenaeus himself, which is what Bauckham has called into question.

6 All quotations of *Against Heresies* are from A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, and A.C. Coxe, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1: Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Ireneaus* (repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994); the Greek and Latin texts are from A. Rousseau, ed., *Irénée de Lyon: Contre Les Hérésies* (SC 100, 153, 211, 264, 294; Paris: Cerf, 1965–1982).

7 The identity of the referent is placed in parenthesis and is based on this author's interpretation.

(2) *Assumed knowledge of the biblical text*. Irenaeus attributes a quotation of Luke 3:17 to "John" in 1.3.5, and then refers to "John" six times before a reference to "John the Baptist" is introduced in 3.10.1. This suggests that Irenaeus assumed his audience was familiar with the biblical text and knew that the "John" who spoke the words of Luke 3:17 was John the Baptist, even before he is identified with the epithet.[8]

(3) *Quotations attributed to the same "John."* Irenaeus attributes a quotation of Matt 3:7–9 to "John" in 3.9.1, but a quotation of Matt 3:9 is attributed to "John the Baptist" in 5.32.2, which indicates that the "John" of 3.9.1 is the same person as "John the Baptist" in 5.32.2.

These three criteria are useful in that they help us identify "John" with "John the Baptist," and they also reveal that Irenaeus regularly refers to "John" instead of the epithetic "John the Baptist." Yet when Irenaeus refers to "John" without an epithet (outside the above examples where it is to John Mark or John the Baptist), it is impossible to prove that he is referring to anyone other than the Apostle John.

John the Apostle

Irenaeus identifies the Apostle John as "John" (the son of Zebedee), "John, the disciple of the Lord," and the author of the Fourth Gospel. Despite the varying epithets and descriptions, it is apparent that Irenaeus is referring to the same individual.

1 "John" (the Son of Zebedee)

Irenaeus never refers to a person called "John, the son of Zebedee" in *Against Heresies*. A certain "John" is grouped with James and Peter at the Transfiguration (2.24.4), and these three are also associated with all the events of Jesus' ministry (3.12.15). Irenaeus also pairs a "John" with Peter in a paraphrased account of Acts 3–4 (3.12.3–5). Does Irenaeus differentiate these Johns—one "John" who is a member of the inner three and another "John" who is a ministry partner of Peter? Bauckham agrees that these passages are "unequivocal references to John the son of Zebedee,"[9] but it must be emphasized that Irenaeus only refers to an individual named "John" without explicitly stating that he is the son of Zebedee. Although Irenaeus does not indicate that he is quoting

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8 Furthermore, Irenaeus must have assumed that his audience was familiar with the biblical text and able to recognize that "John, the disciple of the Lord" (3.11.1) is "John" (the disciple of the Lord) (3.11.2), but not "John" (the Baptist) (3.11.4) who is "John the forerunner" (3.11.4).

9 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 458. See also Gunther, "Authorship," 418.

any particular text, Bauckham has made the logical assumption that Irenaeus is following the biblical text (see criterion 2 above), which indicates that John, the son of Zebedee, is a member of the inner three and presumably is the same John who ministered with Peter in Acts.

The term "Zebedee" only occurs once, and this is when Irenaeus states that his opponents indicate there is a second baptism because of Jesus' response to the question posed by the mother of the "sons of Zebedee" (1.21.2). Irenaeus does not indicate that this is John and James, but this is the logical conclusion if it is again assumed that he is following the biblical text (Matt 20:20–28; Mark 10:35–45).

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that Irenaeus identifies the "John" who is grouped with Peter and James, paired with Peter, and one of the "sons of Zebedee" as "John" (the son of Zebedee). It is important to note that in all three groupings, Irenaeus considers "John" (the son of Zebedee) to be an apostle. Peter, James, and John are "the apostles, whom the Lord made witnesses of every action and of every doctrine" (3.12.15); Peter and John are "the apostles" who preached to the people, were dismissed by the chief priests, and "returned to the rest of their fellow-apostles and disciples of the Lord" (3.12.4–5); and "the apostles" that "left the ship and their father, and followed the Word" (4.5.4) is surely a reference to James and John—the sons of Zebedee (Matt 4:21–22; Mark 1:20).

It must be emphasized that Irenaeus only refers to this apostle as "John." Based on the knowledge of the biblical text, Irenaeus expects his audience to know that the Apostle John is the son of Zebedee.

2 John, the Disciple of the Lord

However, one runs into identification problems when Irenaeus attributes traditions and epithets to "John" that are not found in the biblical text. Three examples will show how this problem is specifically related to the identification of "John" (the disciple of the Lord).

First, in response to his opponents' claim that Jesus' ministry lasted only a year, Irenaeus takes an overly literal interpretation of John 8:57 and concludes that Jesus was over forty years old when he suffered. His argument is as follows:

> Now, that the first stage of early life embraces thirty years, and that this extends onwards to the fortieth year, every one will admit; but from the fortieth and fiftieth year a man begins to decline towards old age, which our Lord possessed while He still fulfilled the office of a Teacher, even as the Gospel and all the elders testify; those who were conversant in Asia with John, the disciple of the Lord, (affirming) that John conveyed

> to them that information. And he remained among them up to the times of Trajan. Some of them, moreover, saw not only John, but the other apostles also (*Quidam autem eorum non solum Iohannem, sed et alios apostolos uiderunt*), and heard the very same account from them, and bear testimony as to the (validity of) the statement.
>
> *Adv. Haer*. 2.22.5

Irenaeus not only appeals to "the Gospel," which is presumably John 8:57 (see 2.22.6), but also the testimony of all the elders in Asia who claim that "John, the disciple of the Lord" and the "other apostles" testified that Jesus was over forty years old when he suffered. The association of "John, the disciple of the Lord," who is also referred to as "John," with the "other apostles" indicates that Irenaeus considered him to be an apostle.

Second, this association is also apparent in the letter to Victor, bishop of Rome (preserved by Eusebius), concerning the Quartodeciman controversy. Irenaeus claims that Polycarp's practice was based on the traditions of "John the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles with whom he had associated" (Ἰωάννου τοῦ μαθητοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν, καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀποστόλων οἷς συνδείτριψεν) (*HE* 5.24.16).

Third, Irenaeus defends the succession of apostolic tradition throughout the Asiatic churches and indicates that he has heard from others a tradition told by Polycarp:

> There are also those who heard from him [Polycarp] that John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bath-house without bathing, exclaiming, "Let us fly, lest even the bath-house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within." And Polycarp himself replied to Marcion, who met him on one occasion, and said, "Do you know me?" "I do know you, the first-born of Satan." Such was the horror which the apostles and their disciples (οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτῶν || *Apostoli et horum discipuli*) had against holding even verbal communication with any corrupters of the truth … Then, again, the Church in Ephesus, founded by Paul, and having John remaining among them permanently until the times of Trajan, is a true witness of the tradition of the apostles.
>
> *Adv. Haer*. 3.3.4

The coupling of "John, the disciple of the Lord" and Polycarp with "the apostles and their disciples" indicates that Irenaeus considered "John, the disciple of the Lord" to be one of "the apostles" and Polycarp to be one of "their disciples."

Irenaeus also identifies "John" and Paul as the apostles who deposited the apostolic tradition in the church of Ephesus. The association of "John, the disciple of the Lord," who is also referred to as simply "John," with "the other apostles" indicates that Irenaeus considered him to be an apostle.[10]

These three examples reveal that Irenaeus considered the Apostle John to be "John, the disciple of the Lord." However, it has also been shown that Irenaeus considered the Apostle John to be "John" (the son of Zebedee). If the following formula is fundamentally coherent: a = b, c = b, a = c, then (a) "John" (the son of Zebedee) who is (b) an "apostle" must be equated with (c) "John, the disciple of the Lord" who is also (b) an "apostle," unless of course, Irenaeus thought there were two apostles named "John" or the category of "apostle" (see below) extends beyond the Twelve.

3 The Apostle "John, the Disciple of the Lord" is Not the Same as the Apostle "John, the Son of Zebedee"?

Bauckham has argued that "John, the disciple of the Lord" is not "John, the son of Zebedee," since the latter is never associated with the former. He states: "We should add that none of these references to John the son of Zebedee [see above] apply to him Irenaeus's characteristic identifying epithet for the author of the Gospel of John: 'the disciple of the Lord.' "[11] Yet this is a straw-man argument. First, as already noted, Irenaeus never refers to "John, the son of Zebedee"; he simply refers to "John." Identifying "John" with "John" (the son of Zebedee) is an interpretive decision based on the comparison of Irenaeus's description of "John" with the biblical text's description of "John." Second, "the disciple of the Lord" is an epithet that never refers to one person in the biblical text. Therefore, it is impossible to associate "John, the son of Zebedee" with "John, the disciple of the Lord" because the former is only found in the biblical text and not in *Against Heresies*, while the latter only exists in *Against Heresies* and not in the biblical text.

In order to determine if Irenaeus identifies "John, the son of Zebedee" with "John, the disciple of the Lord," we may apply the three criteria used to identify "John" with "John" (the Baptist), but they are not entirely helpful in these instances.

The first criterion, the association of "John" with an epithetic John, produces skewed results. As the above examples show, Irenaeus can refer to "John, the

10 Eusebius twice reiterates Irenaeus's account of the bathhouse incident in *Ecclesiastical History*. In 3.28.6, he paraphrases Irenaeus and refers to the "apostle John," but in 4.14.6–7, Eusebius follows Irenaeus more closely and refers to "John, the disciple of the Lord."

11 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 459.

disciple of the Lord" as "John"—the same way he refers to "John" (the son of Zebedee). Since the epithet "the son of Zebedee" does not exist, it can be argued that every occurrence of "John" refers to "John, the disciple of the Lord" because there is no other option (except "John" [the Baptist]). "John" (the son of Zebedee) cannot ever be associated with the epithet "John, the son of Zebedee," while "John" (the disciple of the Lord) can always be associated with "John, the disciple of the Lord." It is impossible to prove that "John" refers to anyone except "John, the disciple of the Lord," unless the second or third criteria are employed (such as in 2.24.4; 3.12.3–5, 15, where it refers to "John" [the son of Zebedee]).

The second criterion, assumed knowledge of the biblical text, is also irrelevant for the identification of "John" in the examples above (2.22.5; 3.3.4). Although we are able to resort to the biblical text to confirm that the "John" grouped with Peter and James was the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, this option is unavailable, since Irenaeus recounts traditions that are not recorded in the biblical text. We are unable to resort to the biblical text to determine if Irenaeus is recounting an event of "John" (the son of Zebedee) but applying to him the epithet, "the disciple of the Lord."

The third criterion, quotations attributed to the same "John," is unhelpful because the above examples are the sole occurrences of these traditions in *Against Heresies*. We are unable to determine if Irenaeus attributes the source of these traditions to anyone other than the Apostle, "John, the disciple of the Lord," who is also referred to as "John."

Since it is impossible to prove the association of "John" (the son of Zebedee) with "John, the disciple of the Lord," it is a moot argument to claim that Irenaeus distinguishes them because he never associates them.[12] Irenaeus identifies both "John" (the son of Zebedee) and "John, the disciple of the Lord" as an apostle, so the burden of proof is on those who would seek to differentiate the Apostle John.

4 Author of the Fourth Gospel

Irenaeus also indicates that the Apostle John is the author of the Fourth Gospel. Bauckham appears to concede this point when he states, "If we look for any possible clues that Irenaeus identified John 'the disciple of the Lord' with John the son of Zebedee, one of the Twelve, the only evidence that is even possibly relevant is Irenaeus's references to John the author of the Gospel as

12 One plausible way Irenaeus could have explicitly identified "John" (the son of Zebedee) as "John, the disciple of the Lord" would have been to attribute the words of "John" (the son of Zebedee) from the biblical text (Mark 9:38, 10:35, 37, 39, 13:4; Luke 9:49, 54) to "John, the disciple of the Lord." However, Irenaeus does not quote these passages.

'the apostle' or as one of a group called 'the apostles.' "[13] Yet this is a red-herring. The identification of "John" (the son of Zebedee) with "John, the disciple of the Lord" is not dependent on the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. Without referring to the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, the previous examples have shown that Irenaeus considers "John" (the son of Zebedee) and "John, the disciple of the Lord" to be an apostle.

However, Irenaeus does attribute the authorship of the Fourth Gospel to the Apostle John, whom he refers to as "John, the disciple of the Lord" or simply "John." In *Adv. Haer*. 1.8.5, Irenaeus describes how Ptolemaeus[14] exegetes the prologue of the Fourth Gospel in order to reveal the Ogdoad. Irenaeus indicates that Ptolemaeus is referring to the teachings of "John, the disciple of the Lord," and Ptolemaeus's teaching begins like this: "John, the disciple of the Lord, wishing to set forth the origin of all things, so as to explain how the Father produced the whole, lays down a certain principle …" The rest of the pericope records Ptolemaeus's quotation and interpretation of John 1:1–5, 14. All the quotations of John 1:1–5, 14 are simply attributed to "John," but the introductory remark indicates that this is "John, the disciple of the Lord" (see criterion 1). In *Adv. Haer*. 1.9.1, Irenaeus points out their hermeneutical errors, and in 1.9.2, he repudiates Ptolemaeus's exposition of John 1:1–5, 14, which claims that "John" was not speaking about Jesus but rather the primary Ogdoad and other Pleromic beings. Irenaeus then paraphrases John 1:1–5 and states:

> Thus it is that, wresting from the truth every one of the expressions which have been cited, and taking a bad advantage of the names, they have transferred them to their own system; so that, according to them, in all these terms John makes no mention of the Lord Jesus Christ. For if he has named the Father, and Charis, and Monogenes, and Aletheia, and Logos, and Zoe, and Anthropos, and Ecclesia, according to their hypothesis, he has, by thus speaking, referred to the primary Ogdoad, in which there was as yet no Jesus, and no Christ, the teacher of John. But that the apostle (ὁ ἀπόστολος || *Apostolus*) did not speak concerning their conjunctions, but concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he also acknowledges as the Word of God, he himself has made evident. For, summing up his statements respecting the Word previously mentioned by him, he further declares, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14)

13 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 461.

14 The conclusion to 1.8.5, "Such are the views of Ptolemaeus," is only extant in the Latin version.

> … Learn then, you foolish men, that Jesus who suffered for us, and who dwelt among us, is Himself the Word of God. For if any other of the Aeons had become flesh for our salvation, it would have been probable that the apostle (τὸν ἀπόστολον || *Apostolum*) spoke of another … But flesh is that which was of old formed for Adam by God out of the dust, and it is this that John has declared the Word of God became.
>
> *Adv. Haer*. 1.9.2–3

Irenaeus attributes the same passages that his opponents misinterpret to "the apostle" twice and "John" once. Since Ptolemaeus attributes John 1:1–5, 14 to "John, the disciple of the Lord" (1.8.5), and Irenaeus paraphrases these passages and attributes them to "John" and "the apostle" (1.9.2–3), it is evident that "the apostle" who authored John 1:1–5, 14 can be referred to as either "John" or "John, the disciple of the Lord."[15]

When one examines how Irenaeus introduces quotations of John 1:1–5, 14 (see criterion 3), he regularly attributes the quotation to either "John" or "John, the disciple of the Lord," but never to "the apostle" outside 1.9.2–3.[16] Yet it is presumptuous to conclude that every time Irenaeus attributes a quotation from the Fourth Gospel to "John, the disciple of the Lord," he is somehow distinguished from the Apostle John. Furthermore, this mitigates Bauckham's claim that "Irenaeus's characteristic identifying epithet for the author of the Gospel of John [is] 'the disciple of the Lord.'"[17] Although Irenaeus considers the author of John 1:1–5, 14 to be the Apostle John, he can simply refer to him as "John" before introducing a quotation of John 1:3 (see 3.8.3), without a proximal relationship to "John, the disciple of the Lord." The nearest previous reference to "John" is to "the apostle" in 3.3.4, and "John, the disciple of the Lord" is not mentioned until 3.11.1. Irenaeus does regularly refer to the author of the Fourth Gospel as "John, the disciple of the Lord," but this is not entirely characteristic since he also refers to him as "the apostle" and "John."

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15 In *Epid*. 43, Irenaeus attributes a quotation of John 1:1–3 to "His disciple John." In *Epid*. 31, Irenaeus states that "the Word was made flesh," but does not indicate that he is quoting a source, yet in *Epid*. 94, he also attributes a quotation of John 1:14 to "His disciple John."

16 In five instances, Irenaeus does not specify the source of his quotation (1.22.1, John 1:3; 3.10.2, John 1:14; 3.16.2, John 1:14; 3.21.10, John 1:3; 3.32.1, John 1:3 [introduced with "as we read in the Gospel"]; 5.1.3, John 1:13–14). In three instances, these passages are simply attributed to "John" or the Gospel of John (3.8.3, John 1:3; 3.11.2, John 1:14; 3.11.8, John 1:1, 3), and in five instances, these passages are attributed to "John, the disciple of the Lord" (1.8.5, see above; 2.2.5, John 1:3; 3.11.1, John 1:1–5 [paraphrase]; 3.11.3, John 1:14; 5.18.2, John 1:1–3, 10–12, 14).

17 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 459.

The Apostles

It has so far been shown that Irenaeus explicitly and implicitly indicated that the author of the Fourth Gospel is the Apostle John, whom he can refer to as either "John" or "John, the disciple of the Lord." Bauckham is willing to allow for the possibility that Irenaeus identified the author of the Fourth Gospel as an apostle, but then argues that Irenaeus does not consider "the apostles" to be limited to the Twelve. Rather, this broad category includes: Paul, Barnabas, the Seventy, and John the Baptist.

Paul

Bauckham states: "'the apostles' for Irenaeus are not just the Twelve, as his frequent references to Paul as 'the apostle' make absolutely clear …"[18] However, this is not only the opinion of Irenaeus; it is a claim found within the biblical text. Irenaeus is simply following the biblical text, which indicates that it is the Twelve that are apostles, and that Paul, who is not a member of the Twelve, is also an apostle (Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1). This is a biblical paradox that cannot be attributed to Irenaeus—is it the name of Judas, Paul, or Matthias that will be engraved on the twelfth foundation stone of the celestial city's wall (Rev 21:14)?

Barnabas

Bauckham briefly states: "Barnabas is also for Irenaeus an apostle (3.12.14), as he was for Paul (1 Cor 9:1–6)."[19] It is entirely unclear how Bauckham arrives at this conclusion. Irenaeus simply narrates the events of Acts 15 where Paul and Barnabas went to the apostles in Jerusalem (3.12.14). Nothing in this pericope indicates that Barnabas is an apostle.[20]

The Seventy

Bauckham also indicates: "The Seventy whom Jesus sent out in addition to the Twelve are also apostles."[21] In 2.21.1, Irenaeus is mocking his opponents' claim that the Duodecad of pleromic beings was signified by the Twelve apostles, and he attempts to outwit their number-crunching with his own.

Irenaeus questions the logic of identifying "the apostles" with the Duodecad only, since there is a Tricontad of pleromic beings. He questions why, if the

18 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 462.

19 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 462.

20 Bauckham omits this example in *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple*.

21 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 462.

number of apostles is representative of one portion of the Pleroma, did Jesus not appoint eight and ten other apostles to indicate the Ogdoad and Decad, so that the entire pleromic Tricontad may be identified?[22] The obvious conclusion is that Jesus did not call eighteen other apostles because the apostles are not symbolic representations of the Pleroma. To show the absurdity of their claim, Irenaeus states: "For (He made choice of no such other number of disciples; but) after the twelve apostles, our Lord is found to have sent seventy others before Him (Luke 10:1). Now seventy cannot possibly be the type either of an Ogdoad, a Decad, or a Triacontad" (2.21.1). In order to show that his opponents do not attribute meaning to "seventy" but are primarily interested in the numbers "eight, ten, and twelve," totaling thirty, he continues, "But if the twelve apostles were chosen with this object, that the number of the twelve Aeons might be indicated by means of them, then the seventy also ought to have been chosen to be the type of seventy Aeons; and in that case, they must affirm that the Aeons are no longer thirty, but eighty-two in number" (2.21.1).

Irenaeus never explicitly indicates that the Seventy are in fact apostles, rather, this is as close as he gets—a mocking interpretation of a hypothetical situation whereby numbered groups represent pleromic beings.[23] He indicates that, if the twelve apostles represent Aeons, then his opponents should conclude that the Seventy (never called apostles) also represent Aeons, so that there would be eighty-two Aeons, if they were being consistent. However, Irenaeus's point is that his opponents' pleromic cosmology is inconsistent, but not that he considers the Seventy to be apostles. It is difficult to agree with Bauckham that Irenaeus "leaves no possible doubt that he considered the Seventy to be apostles like the Twelve."[24]

John the Baptist

Lastly, Bauckham concludes that Irenaeus considered John the Baptist to be an apostle.[25] In 3.9.1, Irenaeus sets out to prove that the prophets and apostles proclaimed the same God. He continues this argument to 3.11.4 where the primary issue is the validity of the witness of "John" (the Baptist). Irenaeus states the issue and provides a response: "John, therefore, having been sent by the

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22 Irenaeus elucidates his opponents' pleromic cosmology in 1.1.1–1.2.6.

23 Irenaeus does not associate the Seventy with the Twelve apostles in 3.13.2, but states, "For why did the Lord send the twelve apostles to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, if these men did not know the truth? How also did the seventy preach, unless they had themselves previously known the truth of what was preached?"

24 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 462.

25 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 462.

founder and maker of this world, how could he testify of that Light, which came down from things unspeakable and invisible? For all the heretics have decided that the Demiurge was ignorant of that Power above him, whose witness and herald John is found to be. Wherefore the Lord said that He deemed him 'more than a prophet'" (3.11.4). The issue is: How could "John" (the Baptist), who was an emissary of the Demiurge, speak about the true God? Irenaeus responds with a quotation of Matt 11:9//Luke 7:26 which indicates that he was "more than prophet"; he was more than an emissary of the Demiurge.

In order to validate the witness of "John" (the Baptist), Irenaeus explains that he was "more than a prophet," which, based on the ordering of offices listed in 1 Cor 12:28, must mean that he was an "apostle." "For all the other prophets preached the advent of the paternal Light, and desired to be worthy of seeing Him whom they preached; but John did both announce (the advent) beforehand, in a like manner as did the others, and actually saw Him when He came, and pointed Him out, and persuaded many to believe on Him, so that he did himself hold the place of both prophet and apostle. For this is to be more than a prophet, because, 'first apostles, secondarily prophets;' but all things from one and the same God Himself" (3.11.4). It is difficult to imagine that his exegesis would have been convincing to his opponents (or allies!), but it still does not indicate that Irenaeus considered John to be in the same category as the Twelve. If Irenaeus used the term "apostle" functionally and wanted to validate John's role as an eyewitness, then there is nothing to suggest that Irenaeus considered him to be categorically linked with the Twelve. This appears to be the rationale behind Irenaeus's explanation that the prophets preached about the "paternal Light" which they had not seen, as John had done until he saw the light himself, and then, like the twelve apostles, he too became an eyewitness to the "advent of the paternal Light" and proclaimed what he saw.

This interpretation aligns with Irenaeus's repeated emphasis that John the Baptist is a reliable witness to Jesus (see 3.10.5). In 3.10.1, Irenaeus quotes Matt 11:9 and applies it to "John." "For whom, then, did he prepare the people, and in the sight of what Lord was he made great? Truly of Him who said that John had something even 'more than a prophet,' and that 'among those born of women none is greater than John the Baptist;' who did also make the people ready for the Lord's advent, warning his fellow-servants, and preaching to them repentance, that they might receive remission from the Lord when He should be present, having been converted to Him, from whom they had been alienated because of sins and transgressions" (3.10.1). Irenaeus again identifies "John" (the Baptist) as "more than a prophet," but there is nothing in this pericope

to indicate that he considered "John" (the Baptist) to be an apostle. Rather, he is a reliable witness who warned "his fellow-servants" of the advent of the Lord. Furthermore, while Luke 1:41 indicates that John leaped in Elizabeth's womb when she heard the greeting of Mary, Irenaeus interprets this event and indicates that John "recognizing the Lord, saluted with leaping" (3.16.4). This indicates that Irenaeus is able to interpret biblical passages in a way that emphasizes the stature of John the Baptist as a reliable witness. Therefore, it is probable that Irenaeus's inference that John the Baptist was an apostle is simply related to his function as a reliable witness to Jesus, not that he is categorically equivalent to the twelve apostles.

The Twelve

When one evaluates Irenaeus's use of "apostle," it consistently refers to the Twelve. Judas is the twelfth apostle, since there are "twelve apostles mentioned by name in the Gospel" (2.20.4). Irenaeus refers to "the election of the apostles, for of these there were twelve" (1.3.2), and his opponents recognize there are twelve apostles and that Jesus appeared to the ten apostles after his resurrection, since Thomas (and obviously Judas) were absent (1.18.3). Irenaeus clearly considers the Twelve to be "the apostles" when he recounts the election of Matthias. "The Apostle Peter, therefore, after the resurrection of the Lord, and His assumption into the heavens, being desirous of filling up the number of the twelve apostles, and in electing into the place of Judas any substitute who should be chosen by God, thus addressed those who were present [see Acts 1:16–17; Ps 69:25, 109:8] … [and] thus leading to the completion of the apostles, according to the words spoken by David" (3.12.1). Irenaeus considered the apostles to be the Twelve, and after the defection of Judas, the election of Matthias was the "filling up of the number of the twelve apostles" which provided "the completion of the apostles." If Irenaeus considered apostleship to be a broad category, it is difficult to understand how the election of the twelfth apostle would provide "the completion of the apostles."

The Apostles and Disciples

It should also be noted that Irenaeus consistently refers to the same individuals as apostles or disciples.[26] John is the "disciple of the Lord," but all of the (twelve)

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26 One cannot assert that a disciple is not an apostle, without qualification. Irenaeus indicates that Judas is "the twelfth in order of the disciples" and then states that "Judas the traitor is the twelfth in order, is agreed upon by all, there being twelve apostles mentioned

apostles are categorically disciples of the Lord. Irenaeus claims that some of the Carpocratians "declare themselves similar to Jesus; while others, still more mighty, maintain that they are superior to his disciples, such as Peter and Paul, and the rest of the apostles (τινὰς δὲ καὶ διαφορωτέρους τῶν ἐκείνου μαθητῶν, οἷον Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀποστόλων || *qui sunt distantes amplius quam illius discipuli, ut puta quam Petrus et Paulus et reliqui apostoli*), whom they consider to be in no respect inferior to Jesus" (1.25.2). Irenaeus himself also categorizes the apostolic Gospel authors as disciples:

> Since, therefore, the tradition from the apostles does thus exist in the Church, and is permanent among us, let us revert to the Scriptural proof furnished by those apostles who did also write the Gospel, in which they recorded the doctrine regarding God, pointing out that our Lord Jesus Christ is the truth (John 14:6), and that no lie is in Him (1John 2:21). As also David says, prophesying His birth from a virgin, and the resurrection from the dead, "Truth has sprung out of the earth" (Psalm 85:11). The apostles, likewise, being disciples of the truth, are above all falsehood (*Et apostoli autem discipuli Veritatis exsistentes extra omne mendacium sunt*).
>
> *Adv. Haer*. 3.5.1

All the apostolic authors of the Gospels are "disciples of the 'truth' (= Lord Jesus Christ)" and proclaim the same doctrine, but it is noteworthy that the Gospel passage Irenaeus alludes to is from John, the disciple of the Lord. He does not make a categorical distinction between the authorship of John and the other Gospels or the disciple of the Lord and the disciples of truth; all are apostles.

The Apostolic Authority of John, the Disciple of the Lord

It is necessary to clarify why Irenaeus regularly refers to the author of the Fourth Gospel as "John, the disciple of the Lord." As a general claim, Irenaeus attributes the canonical Gospels to the apostles (2.6.1; 3.5.1; 3.11.9), but when he desires to draw attention to their apostolic authority, it is somewhat odd that he does not explicitly identify the Fourth Evangelist as an apostle. In order to refute his opponents, Irenaeus appeals to the writings of: "Matthew the apostle" (3.9.1); "Luke also, the follower and disciple of the apostles" (3.10.1); "Mark, the

by name in the Gospel" (2.21.4). Just because Irenaeus refers to John as "the disciple of the Lord," it cannot be argued that he is therefore not an apostle.

interpreter and follower of Peter" (3.10.5); and "John, the disciple of the Lord" (3.11.1). Matthew is "the apostle," Luke and Mark are the followers of Paul and Peter (see 3.21.3)—the "blessed apostles" (3.3.3), but John is simply "the disciple of the Lord."[27] Irenaeus reveals the significance of this epithet in 3.1.1 where he draws attention to the apostolic authority of the Synoptic Gospels, and then indicates: "Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia."[28]

John Has an Intimate Knowledge of Jesus

The identification of "John, the disciple of the Lord" with the Beloved Disciple (whom Irenaeus refers to as the one "who also leaned upon His breast"; see John 13:25; 21:20) may indicate that Irenaeus thought that the epithet "disciple of the Lord" carried greater apologetic weight than "the apostle." Bauckham correctly asserts that "the disciple of the Lord" epithet "conveys his special closeness to Jesus, both historically during Jesus' ministry and theologically in his Gospel. Probably, like the modern term 'Beloved Disciple,' it is an abbreviated allusion to the Gospel's more cumbersome phrase: 'the disciple Jesus loved'."[29] Instead of always referring to the Apostle John as the author of the Fourth Gospel, it is probable that Irenaeus used the epithet "the disciple of the Lord" to indicate that he is the most intimate of all the apostles, and therefore, an authoritative and reliable witness to Jesus.[30]

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27 In order to validate that Isa 7:14 refers to a "virgin" instead of a "young woman," Irenaeus appeals to the apostles responsible for the Gospels, which includes John; he states: "For the apostles, since they are of more ancient date than all these [heretics], agree with this aforesaid translation; and the translation harmonizes with the tradition of the apostles. For Peter, and John, and Matthew, and Paul, and the rest successively, as well as their followers, did set forth all prophetical [announcements], just as the interpretation of the elders contains them" (3.21.3).

28 Irenaeus uses this same detail to identify the author of the Apocalypse: "But when John could not endure the sight (for he says, 'I fell at his feet as dead;' that what was written might come to pass: 'No man sees God, and shall live'), and the Word reviving him, and reminding him that it was He upon whose bosom he had leaned at supper, when he put the question as to who should betray Him, declared: 'I am the first and the last, and He who lives, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of hell' " (4.20.11).

29 Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 459.

30 See Mutschler, "John and His Gospel," 321–322.

John Established the Rule of Truth

The apostolic authority of John, the disciple of the Lord, is foundational to Irenaeus's own authority as an exegete and heresiologist.

First, John established the apostolic rule of truth, particularly the articulation of the one creator God.[31] In opposition to his opponents, Irenaeus claims, "The rule of truth which we hold, is, that there is one God Almighty, who made all things by His Word, and fashioned and formed, out of that which had no existence, all things which exist. Thus says the Scripture, to that effect 'By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established, and all the might of them, by the spirit of His mouth' (Psalm 33:6). And again, 'All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made' (John 1:3)" (1.22.1). The doctrine of the one creator God was clearly handed on by the apostles: "The Universal Church, moreover, through the whole world, has received this tradition from the apostles" (2.9.1), and "The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith" (1.10.1). But Irenaeus emphasizes that "John, the disciple of the Lord, preaches this faith" and "The disciple of the Lord therefore desiring to put an end to all

31 In the *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*, Irenaeus also describes the "rule of faith" that "the elders, the disciples of the apostles, have handed down to use" (*Epid.* 3). After describing the role of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (*Epid.* 4–5), he summarizes: "And this is the drawing-up of our faith, the foundation of the building, and the consolidation of a way of life. God, the Father, uncreated, beyond grasp, invisible, one God the maker of all; this is the first and foremost article of our faith. But the second article is the Word of God, the Son of God, Christ Jesus our Lord, who was shown forth by the prophets according to the design of their prophecy and according to the manner in which the Father disposed; and through Him were made all things whatsoever. He also, in the end of times, for the recapitulation of all things, is become a man among men, visible and tangible, in order to abolish death and bring to light life, and bring about the communion of God and man. And the third article is the Holy Spirit, through whom the prophets prophesied and the patriarchs were taught about God and the just were led in the path of justice, and who in the end of times has been poured forth in a new manner upon humanity over all the earth renewing man to God" (*Epid.* 6). On Irenaeus and the rule of truth, see V. Ammundsen, "The Rule of Truth in Irenaeus," *JTS* 13 (1912): 574–580; J. McRay, "Scripture and Tradition in Irenaeus," *ResQ* 10 (1967): 1–11; E. Osborn, "Reason and the Rule of Faith in the Second Century AD," in *The Making of Orthodoxy* (ed. R. Williams; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 40–61, esp. 48–51; R.M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (London: Routledge, 1997), 46–53; T.C.K. Ferguson, "The Rule of Truth and Irenaean Rhetoric in Book 1 of 'Against Heresies'," *VC* 55 (2001): 356–375; R.J.R. Paice, "Irenaeus on the Authority of Scripture, the 'Rule of Truth' and Episcopacy," *Churchman* 117 (2003): 57–71, 133–152; A. Stewart, "'The Rule of Truth … which He Received through Baptism' (*Haer.* 1.9.4)," in *Irenaeus* (ed. P. Foster and S. Parvis; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 151–158.

such doctrines, and to establish the rule of truth in the Church, that there is one Almighty God, who made all things by His Word, both visible and invisible; showing at the same time, that by the Word, through whom God made the creation, He also bestowed salvation on the men included in the creation; thus commenced His teaching in the Gospel: [John 1:1–5 quotation]" (3.11.1). In the seven instances that Irenaeus explicitly refers to the "rule of truth" (1.9.4; 1.22.1; 2.27.1; 3.11.1; 3.12.6; 3.15.1; 4.35.4), this is the only occurrence where he attributes it to a specific person, which manifests John's authority.

John's Authority Validates Ireneaus's Own Authority

Second, the apostolic authority of John is foundational to Irenaeus's own authority, which he traces back most importantly through Polycarp, but also through Papias and other eyewitnesses of "John, the disciple of the Lord."

1 Polycarp

The letter to Victor has already been discussed (see above), but it is useful to recall that Polycarp's tradition was based on that of "John the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles" (*HE* 5.24.16), with John being singled out.

In another letter preserved by Eusebius (*HE* 5.20.1–8), Irenaeus writes to Florinus to dissuade him of the errors of the Valentinians by appealing to the authority of Polycarp and his relationship to John:

> These doctrines, the presbyters who were before us, and who were companions of the apostles, did not deliver to you. For when I was a boy, I saw you in lower Asia with Polycarp, moving in splendor in the royal court, and endeavoring to gain his approbation. I remember the events of that time more clearly than those of recent years. For what boys learn, growing with their mind, becomes joined with it; so that I am able to describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp sat as he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and the manner of his life, and his physical appearance, and his discourses to the people, and the accounts which he gave of his intercourse with John and with the others who had seen the Lord (καὶ τὴν κατὰ Ἰωάννου συναναστροφὴν ὡς ἀπήγγελλε, καὶ τὴν μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν τῶν ἑωρακότων τὸν Κύριον). And as he remembered their words, and what he heard from them concerning the Lord, and concerning his miracles and his teaching, having received them from eyewitnesses of the 'Word of life' (1 John 1:1), Polycarp related all things in harmony with the Scriptures. These things being told me by the mercy of God, I listened to them attentively, noting them down, not on paper, but in my heart. And continually, through God's grace, I recall them faithfully. And I am able to bear witness

> before God that if that blessed and apostolic presbyter (ἀποστολικὸς πρεσβύτερος) had heard any such thing, he would have cried out, and stopped his ears, and as was his custom, would have exclaimed, O good God, unto what times hast thou spared me that I should endure these things? And he would have fled from the place where, sitting or standing, he had heard such words.
>
> *HE* 5.20.4–7

Although Irenaeus and Florinus were both eyewitnesses to the teachings of Polycarp, Irenaeus's authority is based on not only his impeccable memory, but also the fact that Polycarp (a companion of the apostles, specifically John) had never taught or would ever endure these Valentinian doctrines.

In a similar manner, Irenaeus also appeals to the succession of apostolic teaching through Polycarp to combat Marcion and other heretics:

> But Polycarp also was not only instructed by apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ but was also, by apostles in Asia, appointed bishop of the Church in Smyrna, whom I also saw in my early youth … having always taught the things which he had learned from the apostles (ταῦτα διδάξας ἀεὶ ἃ καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἔμαθεν || *haec docuit semper quae ab apostolis didicerat*), and which the Church has handed down, and which alone are true. To these things all the Asiatic Churches testify, as do also those men who have succeeded Polycarp down to the present time,—a man who was of much greater weight, and a more stedfast witness of truth, than Valentinus, and Marcion, and the rest of the heretics.
>
> *Adv. Haer*. 3.3.4

Irenaeus then recounts from "those who heard from him [Polycarp] that John, the disciple of the Lord" confronted Cerinthus at the bathhouse in Ephesus (see above).

In a final example, Irenaeus indicates that "a presbyter, a disciple of the apostles," which is likely a reference to Polycarp,[32] maintained that "there was no other God besides Him who made and fashioned us" (4.32.1). Although his opponents claim otherwise, Irenaeus argues that "if any one believes in [only] one God," which he supports with quotations of Gen 1:3, John 1:3, and Eph 4:5, 6, "then shall every word also seem consistent to him, if he for his part

32 Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 356; J. Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 62.

diligently read the Scriptures in company with those who are presbyters in the Church, among whom is the apostolic doctrine, as I have pointed out" (4.32.1). Surely Irenaeus would place himself in this group due to his relationship with Polycarp, which validates his own interpretations against his opponents.

The apologetic motif of these examples is clear. Irenaeus is able to condemn the teachings of "Valentinus, Marcion, and the rest of the heretics," since it does not align with the testimony of "all the Asiatic churches,"[33] but more importantly, it does not agree with the teaching of "John the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles," who handed it down to Polycarp, who handed it down to Irenaeus. Universality and antiquity are not the only criteria of authenticity for Irenaeus, since his own authority is just one step removed from the apostles, specifically John, through the testimony of Polycarp.[34]

2 Papias and Other Eyewitness

While Polycarp is the most important authoritative source for Irenaeus, he also confirms that his interpretations are validated by Papias and other eyewitnesses of John. In order to bolster his claim of an eschatological, renewed creation, Irenaeus claims that "the elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard from him how the Lord used to teach" regarding the abundant production of vines; a non-biblical saying of Jesus (5.33.3). He also indicates that "these things are borne witness to in writing by Papias,[35] the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp" and "the Church in Ephesus, founded by Paul, and having John remaining among them permanently until

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33 Irenaeus appeals to apostolic authority, so that the "Gospel of Truth" can be outright rejected, since it is "totally unlike those which have been handed down to us from the apostles" (3.11.9), and even though the opponents use the "words of the apostles," their interpretations are false, since they proclaim something "which neither the prophets announced, nor the Lord taught, nor the apostles delivered" (1.8.1).

34 Behr, *Irenaeus*, 66.

35 Eusebius's rejection of chiliasm leads him to claim: "The same writer [Papias] gives also other accounts which he says came to him through unwritten tradition, certain strange parables and teachings of the Saviour, and some other more mythical things. To these belong his statement that there will be a period of some thousand years after the resurrection of the dead, and that the kingdom of Christ will be set up in material form on this very earth. I suppose he got these ideas through a misunderstanding of the apostolic accounts, not perceiving that the things said by them were spoken mystically in figures. For he appears to have been of very limited understanding, as one can see from his discourses. But it was due to him that so many of the Church Fathers after him adopted a like opinion, urging in their own support the antiquity of the man; as for instance Irenaeus and anyone else that may have proclaimed similar views" (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.11–13).

the times of Trajan, is a true witness of the tradition of the apostles" (5.33.4). Irenaeus can appeal to the authority of John through the elders, which is also validated by Papias and presumably by the church in Ephesus.

As mentioned above, Irenaeus's interpretation of the length of Jesus' ministry was based on "those who were conversant in Asia with John, the disciple of the Lord," who also "saw not only John, but the other apostles also, and heard the very same account from them" (2.22.5). Similar to the role of Polycarp for his response to Valentinus, Marcion, and other heretics, Irenaeus traces his own authority through these other witnesses against Ptolemaeus: "Whom then should we rather believe? Whether such men as these, or Ptolemaeus, who never saw the apostles, and who never even in his dreams attained to the slightest trace of an apostle" (2.22.5)? Again, Irenaeus can claim that his own authority is just one step removed from the apostles, specifically John, through the testimony of these eyewitnesses.

Conclusion

In *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, Bauckham has made a convincing argument that the author of the Fourth Gospel was the Beloved Disciple whom Irenaeus equated with "John, the disciple of the Lord." However, his argument is weakened by the assertion that Irenaeus distinguished the disciple, "John, the disciple of the Lord," from the apostle, "John" (the son of Zebedee)—an assertion that is impossible to prove. It has been shown that Irenaeus knew three Johns: John Mark, John the Baptist, and the Apostle John who is referred to as "John" (the son of Zebedee), "John," and "John, the disciple of the Lord." Furthermore, Irenaeus considered the apostles to be the Twelve, and he probably used the epithet "the disciple of the Lord" to refer to the Fourth Evangelist because it carried greater apologetic weight by identifying him as the Beloved Disciple—the apostle who had the most intimate relationship with Jesus and provided reliable eyewitness testimony. Finally, it is inconceivable why Irenaeus would appeal to John, via his personal acquaintance with Polycarp and other eyewitnesses of John, and also would pair him with "other apostles" if he knew that John was not an apostle. In order to oppose the fallacious expositions of the Valentinians and any others who "made copious use of that according to John" (3.9.7), it was necessary for Irenaeus to validate and emphasize the authority of his own interpretations and traditions by tracing them back to the author of the Fourth Gospel, the apostle John, who was the disciple of the Lord.

Johannine Anti-Judaism
and the Son of Man Sayings

The Repetition of History? A Select Survey of Scholarly Understandings of Johannine Anti-Judaism from Baur until the End of the Weimar Republic

Jonathan Numada

Johannine origins are closely tied to the issue of anti-Judaism due to its implications for the *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel. Numerous theories in dozens of works that attempt to deal with this problem have appeared in the last forty years. In 1931, W.F. Howard, writing "before Bultmann,"[1] concludes his survey on then-recent critical Johannine scholarship with the following remark:

> originality rather than probability has been the guide of life, and in the desire to sustain a novel hypothesis important factors are often sacrificed, not because they are disproved, but because they are old-established. At the same time, these keen-scented sleuths of the chase keep scholarship on the move.[2]

In Howard's eyes, Johannine scholarship was continuing to advance but was not necessarily expanding knowledge. This mirrors the present situation as attempts to historically situate Johannine anti-Judaism are becoming ever more novel and increasingly contingent on complex historical reconstructions. This complexity is evident in multiple works, from post-colonial readings that depict John as a protest against the Roman Empire[3] to the Martyn-Brown com-

1 John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 10.

2 Wilbert Francis Howard, *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation* (London: Epworth, 1931), 103.

3 Warren Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 19–42; 67–75, where the Jews are Roman collaborators, and the Johannine Christians are opponents of Roman imperial power. One wonders, however, how this figures in to the numerous Jewish revolts against Rome or various negative portrayals of imperial power found in Jewish literature.

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munity hypothesis of a synagogue expulsion,[4] or in reader-response readings that attempt to make the Gospel somehow "pro-Jewish."[5]

This paper will examine how anti-Judaism in John's Gospel was understood by select conservative authors and scholars from the latter nineteenth century until 1933, when Nazi Germany superseded the Weimar Republic. First, I will categorize recent approaches that attempt to provide context for interpreting Johannine anti-Judaism, with examples documented in the notes. For the sake of comparison, I will then give an overview of *religionsgeschichtliche* approaches to John's cultural backgrounds that have set the stage for the challenges it posed to John's historicity and Christology. I will then provide a survey of some of the conservative reactions to the threats to orthodoxy posed by the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* (or the History of Religion School), illustrating how these parallel post-Holocaust approaches deal with Johannine anti-Judaism. I will demonstrate that as a sub-field of Johannine studies, investigations into Johannine anti-Judaism lack historical self-awareness. This produces the ironic result that scholarly responses continue patterns that existed in scholarship prior to the Holocaust. I will then suggest that this evidence supports proposals by scholars such as Judith Lieu, C.K. Barrett, and the early John Ashton for engaging in further investigation of Johannine anti-Judaism.[6]

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4 Especially J.L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 46–66. Martyn's hypothesis (later shared by Brown) has a high degree of probability but is vulnerable in the particulars. Namely, the attempt to link the synagogue expulsions in John 9, 12:42, and 16:2 to the *Birkath ha-Minim* has been contested heavily by Katz, who broadens the applicability of the benediction and questions whether the sages at Yavneh would really have been able to exert control over other parties (Steven Katz, "Issues in the Separation of Judaism and Christianity after 70 C.E.: A Reconsideration," *JBL* 103 [1984]: 42–76).

5 Motyer is the most persistent and outspoken proponent of this position. See Stephen Motyer, *Your Father the Devil? A New Approach to John and "the Jews"* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997); idem, "The Fourth Gospel and the Salvation of Israel," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel* (ed. Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt, and Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 83–100.

6 Judith M. Lieu, "Anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel: Explanation and Hermeneutics," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 101–117; esp. 112–117; C.K. Barrett, "St. John: Social Historian," *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 10 (1986): 26–39; John Ashton, "The Identity and Function of the *Ioudaioi* in the Fourth Gospel," *NovT* 27 (1985): 40–75. I use the phrase "the early Ashton" in reference to the fact that, in the second edition of *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, Ashton proposes that the term "the Jews" be understood as a coalition of High Priests and Pharisees who attempted to exert control over Judaism in Palestine (John Ashton, *Under-*

Strategies for Contextualizing Johannine Anti-Judaism

Most scholars engaged in study of this topic are interested in ending anti-Judaism, not in limiting damage caused by it. However, limiting anti-Judaism's extent is used to provide historical perspective so that it does not unduly influence exegesis. In scholarly reconstructions, polemic against "the Jews" is variously portrayed as directed towards (1) a specific Jewish group,[7] (2) all Jews but in a very specific historical context,[8] or (3) "the Jews," who are depersonalized and made into part of a theological-ontological construct, sym-

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standing the Fourth Gospel [2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007], 64–78). He uses an essay by Daniel Boyarin to build his case (Daniel Boyarin, "The Ioudaioi in John and the Prehistory of 'Judaism'," in *Pauline Conversations in Context: Essays in Honor of Calvin J. Roetzel* [ed. J.C. Anderson, P. Sellew, and C. Setzer; JSNTSup 221; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002], 216–239).

7 The most obvious body of literature that employs this strategy is the numerous articles on the Johannine Jews that seek to explain Johannine anti-Judaism as a specific group, typically some form of Jewish leadership. This approach attempts to specify and localize οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι as recipients of its polemic, and thereby exonerate others. The literature on this topic is immense, and it is impossible to provide a comprehensive survey. The following constitutes a selection from some major articles on this topic. Additionally, the volume edited by Bieringer et al. (*Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*) devotes five essays to this difficult issue. For review articles covering even more literature on this topic, see Urban C. von Wahlde, "'The Jews' in the Gospel of John: Fifteen Years of Research (1983–1998)," *ETL* 76 (2000): 30–55; Michael J. Cook, "The Gospel of John and the Jews," *RevExp* 84 (1987): 259–271; and idem, "The Johannine 'Jews': A Critical Survey," *NTS* 28 (1982): 33–60.

Lowe suggests that οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in John should be translated as "Judeans," meaning alternately the people of Judea or its leadership (Malcolm Lowe, "Who were the Ἰουδαῖοι?" *NovT* 28 [1976]: 101–130). Similarly de Boer argues that the use of the term "the Jews" is an ironic or sarcastic reference to the emerging Pharisaic leadership class which rejected Jesus and claimed that following him was antithetical to Judaism. This group of people is to be distinguished from "the crowd" (ὁ ὄχλος) which also consisted of Jews (Martinus C. de Boer, "The Depiction of 'the Jews' in John's Gospel: Matters of Behavior and Identity," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 141–157). Warren Carter maintains that the Johannine Jews are Diaspora Jews and synagogue leaders who collaborate with the Roman authorities against the Johannine Christians in order to preserve the legal privileges that allowed them to preserve their cultural distinction (Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, 19–42).

8 For example, this is favoured by Motyer (in *Your Father the Devil?*), who argues that John is engaged in "prophetic polemic" to evangelize either Jewish readers or Jewish associates of the Gospel's audience. It is also favored by von Wahlde, who describes Johannine anti-Judaism

bolizing the general state of unbelief ("the ontological approach").[9] The newcomer in the post-Holocaust era is (4) the cathartic approach, where Johannine anti-Judaism is acknowledged and readers are encouraged to understand it, condemn it, and disassociate themselves (i.e., the church) from it.[10]

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as "stereotyped apocalyptic polemic" against Judeans who failed to believe in Jesus. Such a polemic, von Wahlde says, is not to be taken historically or as absolute, as the objects of such polemic could change their position (Urban C. von Wahlde, "'You are of Your Father the Devil' in its Context: Stereotyped Apocalyptic Polemic in John 8:38–47," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel: Papers of the Leuven Colloquium, 2000* [ed. Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt, and Frederik Vandercasteele-Vanneuville; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2001], 418–444). Martyn also adopts a similar position, as it is part of a response by the Johannine community to a synagogue expulsion (D. Moody Smith, "Introduction" to Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 19–20), as does Brown (Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979], 22–24, 40–43).

Collins argues that the use of "the Jews" and messianic titles for Jesus serve to add further irony to the rejection motif in the Gospel of John. As such, Johannine polemic is directed against all Jews but in specific literary circumstances (Raymond F. Collins, "Speaking of the Jews: 'Jews' in the Discourse Material in the Fourth Gospel," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 158–175).

9 Rudolf Bultmann (*The Gospel of John* [trans. G.R. Beasely-Murray, R.W.N. Hoare and J.K. Riches; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971], 294–295) popularized this position, although it is not original to him (see below). Kierspel performs a statistical analysis of occurrences of ὁ κόσμος and οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι that strongly supports this position (Lars Kierspel, *The Jews and the World in the Fourth Gospel* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006]).

10 A definitive expression of this position can be found in R. Alan Culpepper, "Anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel as a Theological Problem for Christian Interpreters," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 61–82, although its leading advocate is Adele Reinhartz. Reinhartz holds John to be inherently anti-Jewish (if not by intent then by its effect on a reader sympathetic to Christianity), although this is a secondary product of its Johannine Christianity's separation from Judaism, its strong soteriology, and exclusivist Christology (for example, see Adele Reinhartz, "'Jews' and Jews in the Fourth Gospel," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 213–227; also idem, "The New Testament and Anti-Judaism: A Literary-Critical Approach," *JES* 25 [1988]: 524–537).

Similarly, Tomson surveys the use of the terms "Jew" and "Israelite" in Christian and Jewish literature, and notes that the term "Jew" is consistently used by outsiders. In light of the negative portrayal in John's Gospel, Tomson suggests that John is inherently anti-Jewish in its orientation. The task of expositors is to criticize and correct John (Peter J. Tomson, "'Jews' in the Gospel of John as Compared with the Palestinian Talmud, the Synoptics, and Some New Testament Apocrypha," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 176–212). See also Raimo Hakola, *John, the Jews, and Jewishness* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

Recently, scholars have produced hybrid proposals using various combinations of the above.[11]

Background to the Pre-Weimar Debate

Nineteenth-century critical German studies of John's Gospel display certain well-known peculiarities. This is manifested particularly in their relative inattention to Jewish themes and traditions in favor of investigating Gnostic and Hellenistic backgrounds. In part, this is due to the influence of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule's* latent but pervasive anti-Semitism, a legacy that has had lasting influence up until the time of Rudolf Bultmann.[12] What is presented here is to serve as a point of contrast for the survey of conservative scholarship that follows. What is important for our purposes is to see that German critical scholarship undermined two factors that are important for Christian theology: the Jewish cultural identity of the author of the Fourth Gospel (and thereby its historicity), and the Jewishness (and therefore theological authority of) Johannine Christology.

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11 Stanley E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming), ch. 6, attempts to merge various approaches. Urban C. von Wahlde contends "the Jews" are insertions that replace parties such as the scribes or Sadducees present in earlier editions of John (*The Gospel and Letters of John* [3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010], esp. 1:144–151, 194). A similar approach is also pursued by C. Bennema in "The Identity and Composition of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in the Gospel of John," *TynBul* 60 (2009): 239–263. H.J. de Jonge employs both historical and ontological approaches, arguing that the Johannine Jews at times represent members of another Christian sect against whom Johannine polemic is directed, but he also maintains that, in many cases, Jewish characters are ahistorical literary creations who fulfill narrative functions (Henk Jan de Jonge, "'The Jews' in the Gospel of John," in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, 121–140). Footnote 4 on p. 121 has bibliography for those who hold similar views. Meanwhile, R. Alan Culpepper employs both ontological and cathartic approaches to understanding anti-Judaism. See idem, "The Gospel of John and the Jews," *RevExp* 84 (1987): 273–288; idem, "Anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel," 61–82.

12 See especially A. Gerdmar, *Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism: German Biblical Interpretation and the Jews: From Herder and Semmler to Kittel and Bultmann* (SJHC 20; Leiden: Brill, 2008); and Jörg Frey, "Auf der Suche nach dem Kontext des vierten Evangeliums: Eine forschungsgeschichtliche Einführung," in *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums: Das Vierte Evangelium in religions- und traditionsgeschichtlicher Perspektive* (ed. Jörg Frey and Udo Schnelle; WUNT 175; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 3–45; Shawn Kelly, *Racializing Jesus: Race, Ideology and the Formation of Modern Biblical Scholarship* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

Numerous social and historical factors contributed to German critical scholarship's neglect of Jewish influences in the study of John's Gospel. These include nationalism,[13] orientalism,[14] and Germany's move towards more democratic

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13 German historicism's development can be traced to Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, where, in an odd form of pantheism, history has both a divine commission operating apart from but also for God; as such, history is essentially immoral. In his concluding sentence, Hegel writes, "That the History of the World, with all the changing scenes which its annals present, is this process of development and the realization of Spirit—this is the true Theodicaea, the justification of God in History. Only this insight can reconcile Spirit with the History of the World … that what has happened, and is happening every day, is not only not 'without God,' but is essentially His Work" (G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* [trans. J. Sibree; New York: Colonial, 1899], 526). Iggers, who composed the definitive work on German historicism, defines the three major features of German historicism as (1) the acceptance of the nation-state as an end in itself, (2) the rejection of normative terms in favor of cultural peculiarity, and (3) the rejection of conceptualized thinking. History is not subject to universal principles as in the natural sciences (abandoning sociological functionalism) because it cannot account for the human factor in terms of either the individual, or the unique psych-cultural tendencies innate to a group's collective behavior (*Volkerpsychologie*). See Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1968), 5–10; also D.W. Bebbington, *Patterns of History: A Christian View* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 92.

Notions of cultural peculiarity developed in tandem with nationalist thought, where the history of nations was part of the cosmic evolution of humankind (Herder) that was actualized in conflict between nations (von Ranke). Naturally, the numerous nation-states within the confined area of Europe implied its superiority due its more intensely competitive environment. Indeed, Humboldt even went so far as to say that the ultimate competition, war, brought out the best in a nation (Friedrich Engel-Janosi, *The Growth of German Historicism* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1944], 23; Iggers, *German Conception of History*, 47). In the English world, while prejudice continued to thrive especially in the forms of racism and orientalism, scholars attempted to treat culture and history far more clinically than in Germany, although tainted by the lenses of inevitable progress and divine providence.

14 The term "orientalism" represents a negative attitude towards things non-Western, and generally manifests itself through a sense of intellectual or cultural superiority. What constitutes "the Orient" differs among western cultures. Europe's "Orient" consists of the Middle East, while North America's is the Far East. Typically in the scholarship of the nineteenth century, "the Orient" was seen as manifesting backwardness, stagnation, and a lack of intellectual vibrancy while "the Occident" manifested that which was dynamic, liberal, and free, as per the Western intellectual values of Europe. Another form of orientalism may take the form of romantic nostalgia for the "primitive" (Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*

forms of government,[15] which has consequently influenced German scholars to value the intellectual heritage of Greece over that of Israel. Furthermore, German historicism influenced the spiritualizing tendencies of German liberal theology, seen in Baur's adherence to Hegelian dialectic and how it manifests itself in his interpretation of early Christian history.

Baur and the Tübingen School represent a discernible, though heavily-contested, trend that can be detected in German Johannine studies up until the time of Bultmann. He understood the religious situation of the ancient Mediterranean in terms of a dichotomy between Judaism and Paganism-Hellenism. Judaism was a "form" of religious expression that was superior to paganism on account of its ethical monotheism, although it was restrictive, particularistic, and burdened by its insistent adherence to laws. Meanwhile, though somewhat immorally lawless and theologically confused, paganism held to Greek virtues such as freedom, openness, and the importance of an intellectually and spiritually free religious life. Over a long period of time Israelite religion decayed and degenerated from its pure form into Judaism, which, due to reasons of pride and nationalism, demonstrated a strong resistance to Hellenism. Judaism's collective obduracy put it in no position to influence the course of human history.

According to pantheistic Hegelian theology, the universe is a manifestation of God, and history acts as the outworking of God's self-discovery.[16] For Baur, the emergence of Gentile Pauline Christianity represented the victory of the Spirit in the world,[17] and the emergence of Christianity represented a more evolved and superior form of God-consciousness and divine self-knowledge than more primitive Judaism. This religious form would migrate into the Hel-

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[London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1978], esp. 1–19; Alexander Lyon Macafie, *Orientalism: A Reader* [New York: New York University Press, 2000], 2).

15 See Halvor Moxnes, *Jesus and the Rise of Nationalism: A New Quest for the Nineteenth-Century Historical Jesus* (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2012).

16 Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 164–167. This is echoed in Baur where he writes that "[t]he forms [*die Formen*], in which religious life functioned up to this time, disintegrate more and more; finally they become totally empty forms, void of the content that used to fill them, but only because they have become too narrow and confining to the Spirit that employed them for the mediation (*Vermittlung*) of its religious consciousness [*Bewußtsein*]. When something old disintegrates, something new is always already there to take its place" (Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Das Christenthum und die christliche Kirche der drei ersten Jahrhunderte* [3rd ed.; repr., Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1966], 9–10). This translation is that of Gerdmar, *Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism*, 99.

17 Gerdmar, *Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism*, 100.

lenistic world by means of the Jewish diaspora, become a more enlightened form of religious consciousness, and then migrate back to Palestinian Judaism by means of the *therapeutae* and Essenes, where they would be in a position to influence the religious thought of Jesus, and later, Paul.[18]

The bearing this has on the study of cultural traditions and influences in John is that Baur would eventually come to argue that John was scarcely influenced by Judaism at all. Baur argues for this on the basis of supposed Johannine mistakes of detail, such as the length of Caiaphas's being high priest, geographic errors, and differences between the language of John's Gospel and Revelation (which he believed to have been composed by the apostle John). Furthermore, Baur's John was too universalistic to have been a Jew, and is therefore among the least Jewish of the New Testament writers.[19]

After discussing John's Gospel in *Das Christenthum*, Baur makes a telling statement by next exploring evolutionary development of Christology. He points to the development of Gnosticism, where he examines the Platonic and Gnostic conceptions of the demiurge, which he describes as the personification of the divine mystical creative power, and as a popular reflection of Hellenistic and Gnostic religious consciousness.[20] Baur then argues that the Johannine Logos is the product of the Johannine editor merging elements of Philonic Alexandrian philosophy with Christian-gnostic conceptions of the demiurge, so that Jesus may now function as the unmediated revealing agent between the divine and creation.[21] Accordingly, for Baur, New Testament Christology reached its zenith on account of Hellenistic influences that provided the necessary means for expressing Jesus' ideals.

Baur's position, as expressed here, is structurally predisposed to anti-Jewish bias. Not all German scholars followed Baur in his Hegelian interpretations of Christian history,[22] and Baur would later seek to distance himself from Hegel's influence and take an independent course by focusing on religion as ethics.[23] However, what would be of lasting influence are the continuing effects of orientalism and German historicism.[24] In short, Baur robbed Judaism of any

18 Baur, *Das Christenthum*, 3–5, 16–21; Gerdmar, *Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism*, 98–117.

19 Baur, *Das Christenthum*, 151–153; Harris, *Tübingen School*, 194.

20 Baur, *Das Christenthum*, 186–187.

21 Baur, *Das Christenthum*, 322–328.

22 Baur's Hegelianism, the influence of German historicism, as well as traditional Christian ideas of supersession over Judaism, can clearly be seen in the first chapter of his *Das Christenthum*, 1–41.

23 Harris, *Tübingen School*, 165.

24 For a comprehensive survey of preceding and subsequent German scholarship, see Gerd-

positive contribution to Christianity and mitigated Christian appreciation of its Jewish heritage, while his Hegelian dialectic leaves one with the predetermined conclusion that something is wrong with Judaism. It is simply a matter of figuring out what it is.

An early dating of Mandaism or the Hermetic literature would situate the emergence of theological motifs such as eternal life, ethical dualism, and high Christology outside of Judaism and deprive them of their unique revelatory (or Jewish) character. This would universalize and de-historicize the Christian message, making the Christ event part of the realization of a broader evolutionary process rather than as the climax of God's working with humanity through Judaism. When taken in conjunction with the contentions that John is fundamentally a polemical rather than a theological document, it is no wonder that such historical reconstructions would be perceived as particularly threatening to theologically conservative Christians.

Conservative Responses

The conservative reactions to German critical scholarship were initially very strong but subsided as moderates began to entertain and adapt some of their findings. Most of the attempts to interpret Johannine anti-Judaism use historical approaches. Holding to apostolic authorship is not universal, but the influence of church traditions concerning Johannine authorship continued, namely, traditions of Ephesian provenance and the elderly age of the author. Further, the picture of the author behind John is frequently colored by popular conceptions of the apostle Paul, who endured persecution and punishment at the hands of his Jewish co-religionists. The result is that the author of John's Gospel is sometimes understood as a very old apostle Paul who had lived a long life of ministry and controversy, and this is used to explain Johannine anti-Judaism. When traditions of apostolic authorship are completely disregarded, it is sometimes claimed that John was either a Jewish priest or was associated with influential Jerusalemites. An additional factor is the influence of conceptions of an early "parting of the ways" between Christianity and Judaism, so even though the author is seen as a Jewish Christian, the controversies with "the Jews" are interpreted as a distant and somewhat ahistorical memory at the time of composition.

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mar, *Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism*; Frey, "Auf der Suche nach dem Kontext des vierten Evangeliums."

Christof Luthardt 1853 (English 1876): An Ontological Reading

Christof Ernst Luthardt was a conservative German scholar, who, while seeming to be mildly anti-Jewish in personal sentiment,[25] offers some interesting interpretations on Johannine anti-Judaism. Writing in response to the critical scholarship of the Tübingen School, he seeks to preserve John's historicity and theological authority. In a theme that will become familiar, he conceives of the author of John as a Jewish Christian, whose first language was Hebrew or Aramaic, and who composed the Gospel in Greek. Luthardt considers this Greek Gospel composition not astonishing, as bilingualism was widespread in Galilee. He also duly notes that John is steeped in Jewish thought, imagery, and the fulfillment of prophecy. John's unique style is reflective of John's theological subject matter.[26]

He thinks it unfounded that John was opposed to the Old Testament or Judaism *per se*, and is sympathetic to the misunderstandings of Jewish characters in the Gospels. "How should they understand [Jesus]?" Luthardt asks rhetorically, "In not understanding these words they are but little worse than the disciples, of whom much the same thing is reported."[27] He states that the tone of the dialogues and distance from Judaism in John is not one of hostility, but of necessary opposition.[28]

While occasionally conflating contemporary Jews with those in the narrative and mildly indulging in stereotypes, Luthardt nonetheless stresses that the escalation of hostility in John is two-sided, albeit with Jesus having the more noble motives.[29] He traces the source of hostility to Jesus' claims of divinity and disregard for the Sabbath.

Luthardt understands John as a theological-history where history is not absent but doctrine is the primary concern.[30] He does not see the Gospel's anti-Judaism as any stronger than the Synoptics. John's primary purpose is to communicate Christology and salvation to a Gentile audience (since Jewish

25 Christof Ernst Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel: Described and Explained According to its Peculiar Character* (3 vols.; trans. Caspar René Gregory; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1876), 130 (German: *Das Johanneische Evangelium nach seiner Eigenthümlichkeit* [2 vols.; Nürnberg: C. Geiger, 1853]). All references in this section refer to the first volume, where most of the discussion pertinent to his understanding of anti-Judaism takes place.

26 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 57–61.

27 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 124–125.

28 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 124–126.

29 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 128–130.

30 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 149–151.

Christianity had disappeared),[31] and his Gospel is not specifically a polemical or apologetic document: "It presents to us the person of Christ. And this it does without regard to the distinction between the Gentile Christian element and the Jewish Christian element of the church of Christ."[32] Luthardt goes on to state that the Johannine Jews are to be understood ontologically—that is, not as historical Jews but as generalized representatives of unbelief:

> Jesus himself, however, when upon earth, came in contact with the unbelief of the world in the Jews. Therefore the evangelist, in the history of Jesus, cannot speak of belief in Him without opposing to it the unbelief of the Jewish people. Such is the internal necessity of this opposition, which has been misinterpreted in so many ways.[33]

The Jews are a subgrouping of "the World," and as such, they are attacked for their unbelief on account of the fact that they happen to be there and that the author sought to contrast belief with unbelief. Luthardt writes, "We cannot say that the aim of the gospel is an attack on the Jews of its day. They are only considered by it as representatives of unbelief."[34]

What is interesting about Luthardt's discussion of Johannine anti-Judaism is that a number of interpretive approaches current in the present day are covered. Luthardt first emphasizes the Jewishness of John's Gospel and its many connections to Judaism. He then identifies its Jewishness to a certain degree with the Jewish characters in John's Gospel. Finally, he interprets the Johannine Jews as representatives of "the World." He thereby limits Johannine anti-Judaism through dehistoricizing and abstracting them into the ontological status of unbelief, so that the Jews in John cease to be real Jews.

Hugo Delff (1890): A Specific Group of Jews

Ein Authentischer Bericht über Jesus von Nazareth, the subtitle of Delff's *Das Vierte Evangelium*, demonstrates the work's polemical and somewhat outspoken character. Responding to the theological implications of Baur's Hegelianism, Delff accuses modernity and critical scholarship of being monistic. In his

31 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 168–171.
32 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 177.
33 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 185.
34 Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, 186.

introduction, Delff denies that nature reveals the divine and asserts that only the Spirit of God is a vehicle for Revelation, and only the Gospels reveal the identity of Jesus.[35]

John's Jewish origins play a very important role in protecting the authenticity of its testimony, and Delff reads the Prologue literally to avoid attributing influence to Hellenism, stating that ὁ λόγος simply refers to the word of God and is not an allusion to Wisdom traditions or its Philonic or Stoic equivalents.[36] Likewise, he takes the unusual step (for this time) of trying to separate Johannine dualism from Platonism.[37] He asserts that the resurrection of Lazarus and the healing stories in the Gospels are authentic.[38]

Delff denies the tradition of an Ephesian provenance and also denies that John was composed with a Gentile audience in mind, drawing the conclusion from John 20:31 that the use of the term "Messiah" (ὁ χριστός) would not be meaningful for Gentile readers. Rather, the title "Messiah" would only be meaningful for a Jewish audience, which Delff conceives of as not Jews in general, but specifically Jewish priestly circles. According to Delff, John does not name the specific parties involved and uses the term "the Jews" because he claims the priesthood completely rejected Hellenism.[39] He even claims on the basis of a Hebrew retroversion from 1John 2:2 that ὁ κόσμος refers only to Israel on the basis of its singular usage in John (ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου = אומות העלם). Therefore John conceives of Jesus as the Messiah for Israel. For Delff the ἀποσυνάγωγος passages (John 9:22; 12:42) further demonstrate a solely Jewish concern in John, as the opponents are only Jews,[40] which is further supported by the fact that Gentiles are never mentioned. Not only that, since Delff does not see any references to the temple's destruction, he draws the conclusion of an early date of composition of the Gospel.[41]

Delff draws on a combination of geographic details—the author's apparent privileged access to high officials and the Sanhedrin, a claimed knowledge of secret believers among the Jewish leadership (John 12:42–43), and an important statement from Polycrates[42]—to argue that the author of John was a

35 H.K. Hugo Delff, *Das Vierte Evangelium: Ein Authentischer Bericht über Jesus von Nazareth* (Husum: C.F. Delff, 1890), v–vi.

36 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, vii.

37 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, xii–xiii.

38 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, viii.

39 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, ix–x.

40 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, viii, 21.

41 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, ix.

42 Eusebius, *HE* 5.24.2; Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, 2.

priest.[43] For Delff, in John "the Messiah is now the Heavenly Genius of the people of Israel" and has "an organic connection to the people of Israel," yet still chooses to undergo suffering at their hands.[44] In his commentary on John 8:44 no mention is made of Jews being of negative status; Delff confines himself to discussing the character of hate, sin, and the Devil in general terms. Delff concludes his argument by pointing to passages in the Talmud that describe Jesus as one of the "unrighteous in Israel" who is justly punished in the afterlife. But he implies that Jews are not to be scorned for their rejection of Jesus, as society and scholarship blaspheme Jesus through similar religious ignorance and indifference.[45]

Delff's at times eccentric argument seeks to refute the claims of German critical scholarship by pointing, at every opportunity, to the Jewishness of John's Gospel. Passages and phrases normally seen as suggesting anti-Judaism are understood either within a Jewish framework or as suggesting a Jewish audience. For Delff, John's Jewishness is the key to maintaining the Gospel's authority and reliability. Delff's understanding of Johannine anti-Judaism is that it is directed towards a priestly readership as an implicit rebuke for the priestly class's role in the crucifixion of Jesus in an attempt made by the author to have them converted to Christianity.

Ernst Dobschütz (1904): All Jews but in a Specific Context

Dobschütz's *Probleme des Apostolischen Zeitalters* is not concerned solely with John's Gospel or the Johannine community but with the early history of Jewish-Christian-Gentile relations, and is of some influence in the Johannine scholarship of his time. Dobschütz sees a strong Palestinian Jewish-Christian movement reflected in Johannine Christianity, against a critical scholarship that, he says, usually finds "pure Hellenism."[46] While John was not composed by the son of Zebedee, it was composed by a close associate from Jerusalem. The Gospel was perhaps composed by a conventicle in or from Palestine, as reflected in John's thoroughly Jewish thought and style, that later migrated to Asia Minor. The neglect of the Law in John is not problematic, given analogies in Paul, Peter, and other early believers.[47]

43 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, viii.

44 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, 23.

45 Delff, *Vierte Evangelium*, 28–29.

46 Ernst Dobschütz, *Probleme des Apostolischen Zeitalters* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrische, 1904), 91.

47 Dobschütz, *Probleme des Apostolischen Zeitalters*, 91–93.

Dobschütz maintains that Jesus' mention of synagogue expulsion in John is anachronistic in that it concerns neither the author nor their community, but Jesus' immediate disciples and other Jews who believe in him. Noting the social, religious, legal and political functions of the synagogues in this period, Dobschütz intimates but does not explicitly state that such an event would be traumatic for a Jew. However, Dobschütz does survey evidence in the Synoptics, Paul, and Rabbinic literature to conclude that it was not an isolated phenomenon, and that it reflected an enmity between Christianity and Judaism from a very early stage.[48] The Hellenistic elements detected in John are part of its Jewish response to the issues of the Gentile environment of churches in Asia Minor,[49] while the perceived exclusivity of the community is a response to Hellenistic libertarianism.[50] For Dobschütz there is therefore nothing particularly remarkable about Johannine anti-Judaism or its treatment of "the Jews," as it is a thoroughly Jewish document that responds to its circumstances in Jewish ways. Controversy with Jews and expulsion from the synagogue had occurred in its earliest days and were simply part of its memory. Johannine anti-Judaism is therefore understood as directed towards all Jews but in very specific contexts: it is due to the separation of the church from the synagogue.

James Drummond (1904): All Jews but in a Specific Context

Writing in 1904, James Drummond, a Unitarian minister who would seem to have little invested in the Gospel's authenticity, staunchly defends the Jewish authorship of John. He proceeds to do so on the basis of internal theological evidence. The author was familiar with the festivals, and he had a Jewish conception of the Logos doctrine. Indeed, for the Fourth Gospel, "Christianity is an expression of the highest aspiration of Judaism, and a fulfillment of its prophecies."[51] However, the Fourth Gospel was composed among and for a Gentile audience.[52]

Presupposing that the author was John the Son of Zebedee, Drummond attributes anti-Judaism in John to personal bitterness. Placing heavy weight on church tradition, John is embittered and frustrated towards his own people over

48 Dobschütz, *Probleme des Apostolischen Zeitalters*, 35–36.

49 Dobschütz, *Probleme des Apostolischen Zeitalters*, 94.

50 Dobschütz, *Probleme des Apostolischen Zeitalters*, 93–94.

51 James Drummond, *An Inquiry into the Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Scribners, 1904), 353–357.

52 Drummond, *Fourth Gospel*, 417.

the crucifixion of Jesus and the later martyrdom of his brother James. Indeed, Drummond thinks something would be amiss if such attitudes and emotions were not present in John. He then proceeds to downplay the influence of Hellenistic philosophy on the Gospel.[53] He also notes that, while portrayals of "the Jews" are generally negative, this is not universal, even among the priests and Pharisees.[54] Against the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, Drummond writes:

> Lastly, under this head, we must observe that the universalism, which is thought to be so anti-Judaic in this book, *is distinctly Jewish in its conception*. It is quite conceivable that a Jewish Christian might turn completely against his own people, and treat their ancient claims as the result of prejudice and arrogance; for converts are not always just and tender towards the party they have left.[55]

Drummond's Johannine community is conceived along the lines of a Pauline community, that is, a mix of Jew and Gentile, and faces a number of doctrinal issues as demonstrated in the epistles. Anti-Judaism was not a part of the community's social dynamics, but reflects the emotional state resulting from the difficult life experiences of the Gospel of John's Jewish author.

William Sanday (1905): All Jews but in a Specific Context

In *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel* (1905), much of Sanday's attention is directed towards refuting the claims of German critical scholarship, which tended to reject authorship by an apostle or apostolic associate. As such, Sanday's argument defends Jewish theological influences on Johannine Christology,[56] while also advocating authorship by an apostolic associate who was an eyewitness.[57] Sanday's overarching concern is to defend the authenticity and reliability of John's Gospel, which in his eyes was primarily a theological but not an historical document.

Sanday concludes that the author was the leader of a number of house churches in Ephesus,[58] and sees individual members of the audience as suffer-

53 Drummond, *Fourth Gospel*, 415–418.

54 Drummond, *Fourth Gospel*, 358.

55 Drummond, *Fourth Gospel*, 358 (emphasis mine).

56 William Sanday, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Scribners, 1905), 186–197.

57 Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, 97–134.

58 Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, 253.

ing sporadically from synagogue expulsions.[59] Sanday believes that John maintains theological continuity with Judaism, especially in light of its early date of composition.[60] As the community is situated in the Hellenistic Diaspora, it is natural for there to be Stoic or other Greek influences on the message of John. Controversies with Judaism are rooted in the broader enterprise of apologetics, rather than in the community being the victim of a synagogue expulsion.[61]

Sanday does not regard the Fourth Gospel as being particularly anti-Jewish. He sees the polemics of John 7 and 8 being reflective of an early stage in Christian self-differentiation from Judaism and only discusses the ἀποσυνάγωγος passages (John 9:22; 12:42) in passing.[62] As for the Law, he does not see John as abolishing it. He writes in an earlier commentary that:

> St. John's relation to the Law is really less negative than St. Paul's, and is not otherwise than in accordance with the historical facts. Dr. Keim exaggerates very much when he says, 'Jesus is represented as having abolished the Law while still upon earth, and as having called heathens by the side of Jews.' On the contrary, it is precisely in the fourth Gospel that the Law is represented as most scrupulously observed; [and] the prerogative position of Israel is throughout recognized.[63]

Sanday does not perceive John as being anti-Jewish. Adhering to a traditional understanding of an early breach between Christianity and Judaism, Johannine anti-Judaism is to be considered a reflection of social tensions in the earliest days of Christianity when it separated from Judaism.

E.F. Scott (1906): All Jews but in a Specific Context

In 1906, Scott argues that the Gospel of John represents a controversial and theologically-contextualizing document. Scott held to a strong distinction between Hellenistic Judaism and Palestinian Judaism. For Scott, the author of the Gospel was a Jew educated in philosophical and religious schools similar

59 Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, 115.
60 Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, 129.
61 Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, 168–199.
62 Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, 133.
63 William Sanday, *The Authorship and Character of the Fourth Gospel* (London: Macmillan, 1872), 279–280.

to those of Philo.[64] Like Paul (according to Scott), John engages in allegorical interpretation,[65] making him a descendant of the Pauline theological tradition.[66] The Gospel reflects a polemic with contemporary Jewish opponents, but the breech between Johannine Christianity and Judaism had occurred long ago.[67] The incorporation of Hellenistic philosophical and cultural categories represents attempts to meet the spiritual needs of a now-Gentile audience.[68] The Logos-identity of Jesus appears throughout the whole Gospel, evidencing itself in terms of Jesus' divine power, the importance of Jesus' words conveying life, the act of creation, and the Johannine Jesus' aloofness and total self-determination. Scott regards John's use of Philo's adaptation of the Stoic Logos doctrine to be crude and haphazard but a noble attempt at contextualizing the Christian message for knowledgeable Greeks while remaining true to its historical heritage in Judaism's Wisdom traditions.[69]

We can extrapolate from Scott's work that the Johannine community, as reflected in his description of its author, was a Hellenized Diaspora Jew. John both defends and assaults Judaism with ideas that originated in the Jewish tradition.[70] The use of the term "the Jews" reflects controversies the Johannine Community had with its non-Jewish neighbors, since the author and their community had a distinctly Christian identity. John synthesizes Jewish and Christian theology with elements of its broader culture to meet contemporary spiritual needs in an act of theological contextualization, and this synthesis does not reflect a negation of John's Jewishness or ambivalence to the parent faith. John is therefore not anti-Jewish, but is simply arguing with Jews while trying to evangelize Gentiles.

Latimer Jackson (1906 and 1918): All Jews but in a Specific Context

Also in 1906, Jackson touches on Johannine anti-Judaism in a review of then-recent critical scholarship. Jackson places a great emphasis upon John's Jewish heritage and advocates for the traditional position that John was composed

64 E.F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel: Its Purpose and Theology* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, repr., 1920 [1st ed., 1906; 2nd ed., 1908]), 75.
65 Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, 14, 46–56.
66 Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, 97.
67 Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, 74–78.
68 Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, 5.
69 Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, 146–176.
70 Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, 75.

by the Beloved Disciple, though not necessarily the son of Zebedee, and was a Palestinian Jewish eyewitness to Jesus' ministry.[71] Originally from Jerusalem, the author later migrated to a Greek city with a large population of Jews, such as Ephesus. In the course of the author's ministry, the Gospel was composed for the Christian communities of Asia Minor using what they knew of Hellenistic culture, including philosophical language similar to Philo's.[72] Like Scott, Jackson understands John primarily as a reinterpretation of Judaism along Christian lines for a Greek audience.[73]

In Jackson, the Fourth Gospel's reconstructed author is a figure similar to Paul, and the Gospel's anti-Judaism is to be understood along lines similar to readings of "the Jews" in Romans 2 and 3. Jewish Christianity is seen as a marginal movement, with the parting of the ways considered a distant memory.[74] For Jackson, John is not a polemical document:

> In so far as a controversial element is discernible in it we can but agree that it is mainly directed against the mass of unbelieving Jews in their bitter hostility and persistent efforts to discredit Jesus. The main purpose is to give a comprehensive demonstration, in opposition to the objections of the Jews, of the proposition Jesus is the Christ and to declare its significance. It presents an apology for the Christian Faith as opposed to Judaism.[75]

Noting that some find Johannine anti-Judaism to be quite strong, he states:

> [some say that] incessant allusions to "the Jews" are so acrimonious and so objective in their nature as to suggest that he differentiates himself from their race. Yet … it does not at once follow that he who records the saying: "Salvation is of the Jews" was obviously himself of Jewish origin. Adverse voices are not silent; yet the general trend of scholarship is [that he] originally belonged to, Jewish Christianity. John, like Paul, was a Jew; there is nothing to preclude his Jewish birth, his style and methods of representation favour its admission. And such is really the case.[76]

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71 Latimer Jackson, *The Fourth Gospel and Some Recent German Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 83–88.

72 Jackson, *The Fourth Gospel*, 235–236.

73 Jackson, *The Fourth Gospel*, 237–238.

74 Jackson, *The Fourth Gospel*, 231–232.

75 Jackson, *The Fourth Gospel*, 240–241.

76 Latimer Jackson, *The Problem of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1918), 51.

He goes on to state that he views John as directed primarily towards a Christian (Gentile) audience. Consistent use of the term "the Jews" suggests alienation over their rejection of Jesus, and is not the result of schism with the synagogue. The author of John is essentially seen as a Paul forty years later, harboring a degree of bitterness and frustration that Israel had not accepted the Messiah. Jackson does not discuss the polemic in John 8 in detail, but in general terms attributes its negative language to the author's giving up on successfully reaching out to "the Jews."[77]

Percy Gardner (1916): A Specific Group of Jews/Ontological

Gardner's *The Ephesian Gospel* (1916)[78] demonstrates high levels of personal anti-Judaism on the part of its author, but his offensive remarks will not be recounted here in detail.[79] It is both interesting and ironic that he provides strong discussions on Johannine anti-Judaism in this period, indicating that he considered it a serious theological problem. He notes that in Matthew Jesus states his mission as exclusively to Israel and refers to Gentiles as "dogs" (Mark 7:27) with the initial mission being only to Jews (Matt 10:5–6). He goes to some length to offer an apology for non-Jewish readers by pointing to what he sees as strong universal elements in Jesus' teachings, and claims that some of Paul's strong Jewish tendencies are regressions of Christian liberty. Like others, Gardner also regards John's concept of salvation as Pauline.[80]

Though the author of John was himself a Jew, according to Gardner, John demonstrates some of the strongest anti-Judaism tendencies in the New Testament because of conflicts over Sabbath observance and Jesus' divine claims.[81] However, Gardner also argues that most of the conflicts in John do not stem from the time of Jesus but are literary constructions used for dramatic effect. Above all, Gardner understands Johannine anti-Judaism as non-historical:

> It is clear that such [a] use [of the term "the Jews"] cannot come from the Apostle John, nor any of the Apostles. It can only come from a source

77 Jackson, *The Fourth Gospel*, 233; also idem, *Problem of the Fourth Gospel*, 51.

78 Percy Gardner (d. 1937), not to be confused with Percival Gardner-Smith (d. 1985), who wrote *St. John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938).

79 For example, see Percy Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1916), 114–115.

80 Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, 215–220.

81 Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, 221–228.

> far remote from Palestine. For during the life of Jesus the whole of His following consisted of Jews … [a]nd if the Jews had been consistently hostile, could Pilate have placed on the cross the title "This is the King of the Jews"?[82]

Noting that "Family quarrels are notoriously among the most bitter," he concludes that the controversies between the Johannine Jesus and the Jews are a historical fiction designed to reflect controversies faced by the Ephesian church:

> There is therefore a dramatic propriety in the Evangelist's constant reference … to the Jews. But it is dramatic rather than historic propriety, since the objections which the Jews raise are usually such as belong to the end and not to the earlier part of the first century.[83]

He also maintains that the author was a second- or third-generation Jewish Christian[84] who was writing for a small, unstructured community that in Gardner's description sounds like it could be sectarian.[85] While Gardner seems headed in the direction of the Martyn-Brown hypothesis, what seems to stop him from positing an expulsion of the Johannine community from the synagogue is an early dating for the parting of the ways between Christianity and Judaism.

Gardner is interesting because he is personally anti-Jewish, yet he does not view Johannine anti-Judaism as accurately reflecting the historical realities of Jesus' ministry. Despite his personal views, Gardner still engages the problem of Johannine anti-Judaism and interprets it as the natural response to social conflict—the main presupposition for some of the hypotheses used today. He also sets the ground for a two-level mirror reading of the text such as that found in the Martyn-Brown hypothesis, which limits the scope of anti-Judaism to the specific historical circumstances of the Ephesian church. He also seems to be headed in the direction of the ontological approach to understanding "the Jews" reflected in some of the modern writers surveyed above.

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82 Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, 233.

83 Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, 235.

84 Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, 87.

85 Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, 248–255.

Benjamin Bacon (1933): The Ontological Approach

Bacon is noteworthy because he was a moderate who was heavily influenced by German higher criticism, yet he rejects many of its excesses as untenable. Bacon argues that John represents a natural development of Pauline theology. However, while for Scott the imposition of Logos theology on the incarnation is a natural although somewhat crass attempt at contextualization and theological innovation, for Bacon, it marks a stage in the development of the Jewish Wisdom tradition.[86]

Bacon's John was a well-informed Hellenistic Jew, familiar with popular Stoic philosophy and, perhaps prescient of Borgen, also familiar with rabbinic midrashic techniques.[87] Platonism offered notions of an idealized type of human being, which were used by John to incorporate Samaritan ideologies that held a prophet to be a limited incarnation of the deity. This was in turn blended with the Stoic Logos doctrine and Pauline Wisdom Christology to produce John's high Christology. This was over and against the more primitive Synoptic Christology, which utilized a "simple Lordship doctrine" to explain Jesus' unique status.[88]

For Bacon, the Gospel need not have been composed in Palestine, as the circumstances driving John's numerous polemical agendas would have been present in any Hellenistic city due to the presence of refugees from the Jewish war against Rome in the late A.D. 60's and early 70's. In his *Gospel of the Hellenists*, using a method akin to redaction criticism and reading between the lines of Acts and Josephus, Bacon attempts to trace the journey of the Johannine tradition from the Jerusalem church through the martyrdom of James and John, the missionary work of Philip, the Jewish War, to the tradition's arrival at a Hellenistic city such as Ephesus.[89]

An interesting feature of Bacon's reconstruction of the Johannine tradition's history is that he relies primarily on well-known sources such as Greek writers, Philo, and comparative studies of the various biblical documents. For his time, Bacon had a strong knowledge of Judaism and rabbinic theology and was not reluctant to attribute influence to streams of Jewish tradition. Most notable is that Bacon saw John as part of a continuum of Jewish-Christian tradition, rather

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86 Benjamin W. Bacon, *Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), 289.

87 Bacon, *Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*, 463–464.

88 Benjamin W. Bacon, *The Gospel of the Hellenists* (ed. Carl H. Kraeling; New York: Henry Holt, 1933), 103–110.

89 Bacon, *Gospel of the Hellenists*, 22–93.

than as on one side of a Hellenism-Palestinian dichotomy. To some degree Bacon adhered to the older divide between Palestinian Judaism and Hellenistic Judaism, although not as strongly as most other scholars. Bacon assumes a large degree of Hellenistic influence, and viewing John as composed by a Jewish author who was a witness, prevents him from seeing the Gospel as threatened by a Jewish party. It is hard to find instances of Bacon addressing the issue of anti-Judaism, but he does make a brief note that the Johannine Jews are not real historical Jews because "'the Jews' in this Gospel are always those who misunderstand and misrepresent the Lord,"[90] meaning that the Johannine Jews are representatives of unbelief.

Summary and Observations

There are interesting parallels in the study of John's relationship to Judaism both before and after the Holocaust. Prior to the Holocaust the Gospel of John is perceived to be under attack for *intellectual-historical* reasons. The trend in research represented by Baur has a strong anti-Jewish bias and theologically attempts to amputate Jesus from Judaism. Meanwhile, conservative scholarship attempts to establish strong Christological and cultural links with Judaism. In apologetic attempts to maintain the canonical/theological authority of the Fourth Gospel such as Delff's, as many links to Jews and Judaism are maintained as possible in order to connect John to Jesus, Palestine, eyewitness testimony, and apostolic authority. It is implicit that these are considered necessary by such writers for defending John's historical and theological authority.

When anti-Judaism appears in the discussion, it is usually applied to all Jews but in a specific historical context, either attributed to the negative personal life experiences of the author or the separation of the church from Judaism. The existence and influence of Jewish Christianity is usually but not always neglected, and schisms with Judaism are usually attributed to the distant and almost forgotten past. In the works surveyed here, the Jewishness of the author as an individual is defended, even when a scholar may appear to harbor prejudice. John is never used by scholars to advocate persecution.

Post-Holocaust Johannine scholarship finds itself in a position analogous to the pre-war situation, only the authority of the Gospel is perceived to be questioned due to *moral and historical* reasons. Indirect causal connections are perceived between Johannine anti-Judaism and the Holocaust, and at times

90 Bacon, *Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*, 348.

the Jewishness of the Johannine community is questioned.[91] Modern history is seen as undermining John's moral, and therefore theological, authority. Again, the predominant strategy is usually to emphasize the Jewishness of John's Gospel.

However, it is notable that voices in scholarship have consistently emphasized John's Jewish heritage, even before the Holocaust. This suggests three important points: the first is that, while modern anti-Semitism may have its origins in the Christian tradition, it is in fact a much broader sociological and cultural phenomenon, whose roots run far broader and deeper in the sociological continuum of society than Christianity. This is evidenced by the fact that, for decades before the Holocaust, many scholars were defending Christianity's Jewish heritage, yet tragically, this and attempted interventions by German Christians had little apparent impact on the course of subsequent history. Among the authors surveyed, I have at times noticed a cultural bias against Jews, yet this does not prevent them from appealing to roots in Judaism to establish the authenticity of John.

The second point is that the origins of Christian anti-Semitism clearly lie in the reception histories of Christian documents where anti-Judaism is perceived. The New Testament's frequent polemic is very strong if frames of reference are absent, but is perceived to be conventional in its context.[92] Factors influencing later readers prompted these readers to stop reading polemic according to the text's cultural norms, and to take it as applying more stereotypically to individuals contemporary with the reader in question.[93] Problems where a text is perceived to be the catalyst may actually have origins independent of the perceived catalyst, as people frequently seem to see what they want to see. Stern's *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*[94] provides ample testimony to Greco-Roman culture's anti-Jewish legacy, something that likely influenced later readers to find justifications for their preconceptions in John and provided the stereotypes exploited to advance the sociological concerns reflected in the council of Laodicea or writers such as John Chysostom.

The third point is that investigation into Johannine anti-Judaism at times seems to be prompted by apologetic concerns, when in fact the problem seems to lie in the prejudices of some Christians rather than in their sacred doc-

91 Hakola, *Identity Matters*.

92 For example, Luke Timothy Johnson, "The New Testament's Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *JBL* 108 (1989): 419–441.

93 Lieu, "Anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel," 101–117.

94 Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences, 1974).

uments. Obviously, apologetics may serve as a *motivation* for investigation, but finding answers that solely satisfy apologetic concerns cannot be the primary *goal*. When historical explanations become too neat and tidy, they tend to be extremely hypothetical and vulnerable. Furthermore, they do not really address the problem itself. Investigation of Johannine anti-Judaism must focus on the text and should be understood on its own terms with an honest view of human nature. This must also be accompanied by a degree of theological and sociological introspection on the part of the church, individual Christians, and societies at large regarding groups that function as their "other." It is the acts stemming from John's reception history that are embarrassing, not necessarily John itself. This underlines the validity of the cathartic approach as a course of action for those whom the Gospel of John is of religious importance.

The Way Forward or the End of the Road?

If consistency since Luthardt is any indicator, the ontological approach as an explanation for the phenomena of the Johannine "Jews" is the least vulnerable to changes in reconstructions of Johannine *Sitz im Leben*. Further, Lars Kierspel has statistically shown that it is also a very probable option that the Jews are the local counterpart to "the World." This supports arguments put forward by Judith Lieu, C.K. Barrett, and the early John Ashton that the ontological approach is likely the most productive way to understand the Johannine Jews, followed by seeking plausible motivations for the author's decision to use the Jews as a symbol for unbelief. I am very skeptical of attempts to understand "the Jews" as a particular historical Jewish party. I believe efforts to seek historical context for Johannine anti-Judaism through mirror-readings of Johannine theology—what John is seeking to achieve and his theological reasons for doing so—have probably been more accurate than attempted diachronic readings of reconstructed history.

That said, the quest for *Sitz im Leben* should also be open to a range of converging historical circumstances; it is unlikely that any single historical event would have prompted the author(s) to portray "the Jews" in this manner. If there were a single factor, either it would be named or the author would focus more directly on that party. Jewish theologies and identities are very nuanced and broad-ranging, meaning that secure historical explanations will be multifaceted and complex. Perhaps this may prove impossible to produce definitively, but it is certain that numerous proposals will be offered in the near future. Whatever future scholarship brings, it would be best if we as scholars and researchers do not repeat history.

The Origin of the Johannine "Son of Man" Sayings

Panayotis Coutsoumpos

Introduction

The Johannine "Son of Man" expression in the Fourth Gospel has seldom been the focus of scholarly research. Most scholars have considered the Johannine Son of Man sayings as not having historical worth, and research on this subject in the Gospel of John has developed almost in isolation from research of the Synoptic Son of Man.[1] According to Barnabas Lindars, the Son of Man issue is "the great centre of debate in New Testament studies of the Twentieth century."[2] Generally speaking, the issue in the debate is not simple but complex, encroaching on several research areas, such as, among others, Semitic linguistics, history of religions, the historical Jesus quest, the development of the Synoptic tradition, and the theology of the Gospel of John.

Each area has itself become such a center of debate that no agreed upon solution may be possible.[3] Rudolf Bultmann, one of the best known figures in New Testament studies, divided the Son of Man sayings into three groups—his future coming as judge, his earthly activity, and his suffering.[4] It is not necessary to agree with Bultmann who points also to the Gnostic descending-ascending motif. He also questioned the authenticity of most of the sayings, arguing that those which dealt with Jesus' earthly activity arose from a mistranslation of the Aramaic into Greek, while the predictions of suffering were *vaticina ex eventu*. However, most interpreters are prepared to grant that at least some of the Son of Man sayings find an authentic origin in the teaching of Jesus, but in the most recent studies a renewed skepticism has arisen about the authenticity of some of the Son of Man sayings (i.e., the so-called apocalyptic Son of Man).[5] It

1 To the best of my knowledge, scholars only started to investigate the Son of Man sayings in the Gospel of John just four decades ago. The reason was the lack of literature written on the issue when compared to the several written on the Synoptic Son of Man.

2 Barnabas Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 1.

3 The present skepticism is in contrast to the relative consensus of scholarship two decades ago. Only future sayings had claims for authenticity.

4 Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; New York: Scribners, 1955), 1:30–31.

5 P. Owen and D. Shepherd, "Speaking up for Qumran, Dalman and the Son of Man: Was Bar *Enasha* a Common Term for 'Man' in the Time of Jesus?" *JSNT* 25 (2001): 81–82.

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is not the interest of this study to deal with or defend the authenticity of the "apocalyptic Son of Man" sayings, nor is it my interest to deal with the question of the messianic connotations of the expression Son of Man in first-century Judaism.

Rather than solving the Son of Man problem, the debate has sharpened the issue and in some instances—particularly in the origin of Johannine Son of Man saying—has failed to clarify the issue. If there were no particular form in pre-Christian Aramaic, its origin as a Greek expression also remains unfounded. Frequently, the debate places atomized emphasis on "sayings" without adequate attention to the context and larger literary genre in which the sayings appear. Scholars disagree in their general assessment of the emphasis in the Gospel of John's Son of Man concept. A few scholars propose the view that the difference between the Synoptic and Johannine Son of Man should not be overstated.[6] Robert Maddox asserts that "in spite of considerable differences of vocabulary and imagery, the fundamental significance of the title 'the Son of Man' in John is not different from that which it has in the Synoptic Gospels."[7] However, the exploration of the origins of the Son of Man does not automatically give the solution to the problems, since disagreements over the meaning of possible background material can and do affect scholarly understanding of the Son of Man in John. How then do we explain the major differences between the Johannine Son of Man sayings and those of the Synoptics?

In contrast, some studies have made an attempt also to place the Johannine sayings within the Synoptic Son of Man categories: (1) earthly, (2) suffering, (3) and coming/glory/apocalyptic sayings.[8] The expression "Son of Man" as a reference to Jesus is common to all four Gospels, and this title in the Gospel of John has played a significant part in discussions of early Christology. It is one of those Christological titles, and its origin and meaning have continued to puzzle New Testament scholars.[9] I contend that the Son of Man expression is used in the Gospel of John to refer to and emphasize the humanity of Jesus. In addition, there has long been a debate regarding where the Jewish use of the

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6 Mogens Müller, *The Expression 'Son of Man' and the Development of Christology: A History of Interpretation* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2008), 384.

7 Robert Maddox, "The Function of the Son of Man in the Gospel of John," in *Reconciliation and Hope: Essays on Atonement and Eschatology* (ed. R. Banks; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 186.

8 Müller, *The Expression*, 388.

9 Maurice Casey, *The Solution to the 'Son of Man' Problem* (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 20; Müller, *The Expression*, 1; Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John* (WUNT 2.249; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 1–5; Géza Vermes, *Jesus in His Jewish Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 81–90. John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford:

phrase Son of Man as a messianic title derived its origins.[10] The importance of this title is shown by the fact that according to the four Gospels, it is the only title Jesus applied to himself.[11] Thus, its Christological use actually goes back to Jesus himself. The debate also has focused on the origins and contexts of the term Son of Man. There is a general consensus that this expression always appears on Jesus' lips.[12] Other attempts have approached this problem from a linguistic perspective.[13]

No scholarly research exists in a vacuum, however, and those that address the Son of Man problem are no exception. For this reason, the issues surrounding the Son of Man debate are best understood in their historical context. Some scholars who argued that the Son of Man was a corporate term offer a different approach.[14] Was this Son of Man concept connected to the Old Testament?

The Concept of the Son of Man in the Old Testament

This concept was an offshoot of the traditional concept that Jesus derived the expression Son of Man from Dan 7:13. The term Son of Man is frequently used as a self-expression on the part of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels.[15] In fact, what is striking is that the expression Son of Man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) comes into view over and over again in the mouth of Jesus. The Son of Man title appears 86

Oxford University Press, 2007), 240: "Among the many puzzles presented by the Fourth Gospel one of the most intriguing is the paradoxical contrast between the titles 'Son of God' and 'Son of Man.'"

10 Ben Witherington, III, *The Many Faces of the Christ: The Christologies of the New Testament and Beyond* (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 53. He also observes that "much of the debate centers on the dating and meaning of the early Jewish material we find in 1 Enoch 37–71 and 4 Ezra 13."

11 Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 137.

12 G. Haufe, "Das Menschensohnproblem in der gegenwärtigen wissenschaftlichen Diskussion," *EvT* 26 (1966): 130–141; Müller, *The Expression*, 51. See also Craig S. Keener, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 200.

13 George W.E. Nickelsburg, "The Son of Man," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 6* (ed. D.N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 142.

14 T.W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 259–284; A.T. Cadoux, "The Son of Man." *The Interpreter* 18 (1920): 202–214.

15 Keener, *Historical Jesus*, 202: "Although many scholars agree that Jesus used the title, they dispute the authenticity of one or more of the groups of sayings (especially either suffering or reigning Son of Man sayings) in which the title is used."

times in the whole New Testament, 69 times in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and 13 times in the Gospel of John (with the exclusion of John 12:34, it always appears in the mouth of Jesus), and just 4 times outside the Synoptic Gospels and John.[16]

But these sayings in John, unlike what is found in the Synoptic Gospels, do not necessarily fall into one of the three categories of ministry, suffering and death, or future coming sayings. D. Moody Smith asserts that "Son of Man is the enigmatic title or epithet by which Jesus refers to himself in the Synoptic Gospels, and the problem of the Son of Man sayings in those Gospels has become notorious."[17] In other words, this is one of the most discussed and contested issues in New Testament scholarship.[18] The significance and difficulty of the title is further evidenced by the vast literature to which it has given rise. Most scholars presuppose that the Johannine Son of Man is derivative from the Synoptic, although this may not be the case.[19]

The expression Son of Man does not appear to coincide with a particular function of Jesus' ministry or with a role or status not otherwise dealt with in the Gospel of John. Several of the Johannine Son of Man sayings have to do with Jesus' crucifixion/glorification (3:14; 8:28; 12:23, 34; 13:31) and with the related topic of his descent and ascent (1:51; 3:13; 6:62).[20] The main point of contact between the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels usage is the fact that the title is used by Jesus of himself.[21] It should be noted that the Greek term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is not a genuine Greek idiom. It is generally, though not universally, thought that the Semitic background from which the Greek originates is Aramaic (בר אנש).[22] The most contentious allusion to the Son of

16 James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered: Volume 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 737. He also observes that "of these four, there are quotations from or allusions to OT passages, each of them referring to 'a son of man' and showing no awareness of the consistent articular usage of the Gospels ('the Son of Man'). Only one titular usage ('Son of Man') appears outside the Gospels—in Stephen's vision in Acts 7:56. This is a striking fact: the phrase belongs almost exclusively to the Gospels."

17 D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 131.

18 Cullmann, *The Christology*, 152.

19 Rudolph Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 105.

20 Smith, *The Theology*, 132.

21 Smith, *The Theology*, 133.

22 Vermes, *Jesus*, 81: "Hebrew is in disfavor because, with one possible exception, it never uses the definite article with *ben adam*."

Man in the Old Testament is in Daniel 7.[23] In addition, the Son of Man sayings in John display some similarity to the Synoptic Gospels' sayings, although it is clear that they have been developed considerably in line with John's ideas and theology.[24]

By contrast, some scholars argue that there are two types of authentic sayings: (1) authentic Son of Man sayings are those in which allusion to Daniel 7 is explicit apart from the phrase "Son of Man";[25] and (2) authentic Son of Man sayings are those which conform to the appropriately generic use.[26] Furthermore, some scholars have argued that all of the Son of Man sayings are inauthentic. In every example, they allege that the title Son of Man originated from the Gospel writers or from the church communities represented, instead of from the historical Jesus.[27] In other words, we need to explain the origin of the expression regardless of the question of authenticity. In particular, Casey points out that "the authenticity of the apocalyptic Son of Man has been rejected by many New Testament scholars."[28] By way of contrast, Vielhauer argues that none of the sayings about the Son of Man are authentic. He also mentions that, in every case, Son of Man is used as a designation of Jesus and that this designation is entirely the work of the early church.[29] In my view, however, neither of Vielhauer's views is at all acceptable. The sayings about the Son of Man appear in different variants. On the one hand, they speak of the Son of Man being delivered up, and on the other, of his suffering.[30] But the situation is complicated by the question as to whether Jesus could have used the expression as a kind of title.

The question of whether these sayings go back to the time of Jesus or have been introduced into the Gospel tradition at numerous stages of its history has

23 Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 214.

24 Christopher Tuckett, *Christology and the New Testament: Jesus and His Earliest Followers* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 165.

25 Maurice Casey, *The Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SCPK, 1980), 229.

26 Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World Around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 98.

27 Schreiner, *New Testament*, 222.

28 Maurice Casey, "The Jackals and the Son of Man (Matt. 8:20/Luke 9:58)," *JSNT* 23 (1985): 3–22. See also Owen and Shepherd, "Speaking up for Qumran," 82.

29 Philipp Vielhauer, "Gottesreich und Menschensohn in der Verkündigung Jesus," in *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (Munich: Kaiser, 1965), 51.

30 Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 549.

been answered in different manners.[31] Geza Vermes has observed that there is no example in Aramaic literature of the expression being used as a title.[32] But what about Dan 7:13, we may at once ask, for here we have the expression used in the Aramaic section of Daniel? Scholars have raised a number of questions about the usage of the Son of Man title in the Synoptic Gospels and John.

But this question arises: From where does this concept and title originate? Did Jesus apply this title to himself? Did the early church use this title when they spoke about Jesus? What was its meaning to the Johannine community? How does one classify the sayings? Was there, as a matter of fact, a concept of a Son of Man figure before the Gospel traditions? These questions show that the title or expression Son of Man has been a complex issue in recent New Testament interpretation, and the sorting out of the several facets of the problem is not always easy.[33] These questions presuppose also that the reader knows to whom the title refers. In the following section we will try to examine the origin of the expression, as well as the Son of Man sayings in John and their Christological meaning.

The Origin of the Son of Man in John

The Johannine debates mainly deal with the possible origins of the expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου for John and/or his community, the meaning of the expression within the context of the Gospel, and the knowledge of the term for them.[34] The four Gospels demonstrate that Jesus talks very often of himself as Son of Man, a designation originating from Daniel 7.[35] To what extent does the usage reflect the Jewish tradition in Daniel? According to John Ashton, the distant origin of all the sayings in the Synoptic Gospels and John is the Danielic Son of Man.[36] The Danielic Son of Man is generally understood to be in the

31 George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 149.

32 Vermes, *Jesus*, 169–177.

33 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 143.

34 Benjamin E. Reynolds, “The Use of the Son of Man Idiom in the Gospel of John,” in *Who is This Son of Man? The Latest Scholarship on a Puzzling Expression of the Historical Jesus* (ed. L.W. Hurtado and P.L. Owen; London: T&T Clark, 2011), 104.

35 Paul J. Achtemeier, Joel B. Green, and M.M. Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 233.

36 Ashton, *Understanding*, 243.

background of some Johannine Son of Man sayings. Danielic influence can be observed in the Greek term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.[37]

However, we must now differentiate carefully between the vision and its interpretation. The interpretation informs us what the language and imagery in the vision would have meant for the readers. In Daniel 7, the Son of Man is a figure in a vision seen by Daniel, which then receives an interpretation from a heavenly being. Further, that the human figure in Daniel 7 is seen as a royal figure is clear enough from the fact that he is given a kingdom, especially after the discussion which precedes Dan 7:13–14 about other rival kings and kingdoms.[38]

The promise of a kingdom in Daniel 7 finds its fulfillment in Jesus himself, but the means by which the kingdom comes involves suffering for the Son of Man.[39] It is clear that Daniel 7 appears to be presenting an investiture scene. Consequently, it is likely that Jesus could have used the title to refer to the figure expected to come, in view of the prophecy in Dan 7:13; while at the same time, the common use of the title in a personal or generic sense may perhaps have enabled him to use the term non-technically of himself as a representative human being.[40] Daniel also gives us a hint that the Son of Man distinctively and uniquely shares God's rule, for people everywhere serve him (Dan 7:14).[41]

According to Josephus, this is particularly so because it is known that the book of Daniel was extremely admired among Jews in the first-century.[42] Others have sought elsewhere for the background of Jesus' use of the expression. There is a general agreement, however, that 4 Ezra, an apocalyptic document that uses the imagery of Daniel 7, was composed around the end of the first-century AD. So obviously this document could not have directly influenced Jesus, but the Son of Man tradition, which it reflects, could have done so.[43]

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37 Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 66.

38 Witherington, *The Many Faces*, 54.

39 Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 232.

40 I. Howard Marshall, *The Origins of New Testament Christology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1976), 65: "In Daniel 7 the Son of Man is a figure in a vision seen by Daniel which then receives an interpretation from a heavenly being. The manlike figure is interpreted as 'the saints of the Most High' who are to receive kingly power after the demise of the four kings represented in the vision by the four terrible monsters. In present form of the book the 'saints of the Most High' must be the pious people of Israel, although it has been argued that originally the phrase referred to angelic beings."

41 Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 226.

42 Josephus, *Ant.* 10.267–268.

43 Marshall, *The Origins*, 67.

In the apocalyptic literature known as 1 Enoch, the Son of Man was used as a messianic designation, and other Jewish documents at least suggest that identification.[44] This messianic designation was found in 1 Enoch and was a very common feature of the period commonly called Second Temple Judaism.[45] As we can see, it can be shown that the Gospel of John was influenced by several currents in the formation of its concept of the Son of Man, all of them somewhere on the outside limits of the broad band of the Jewish tradition.[46] It follows, however, that John cannot have derived the expression Son of Man from Gnosticism.[47] In fact, the Son of Man has nothing to do with the archetypal "primordial man" and godhead "Man."[48]

It comes from the Christian tradition. Further, since John shows no traces of Gnostic thought as such, the supposition remains without foundation. In fact, Hamerton-Kelly points out that the concept of a heavenly man in early Judaism was the basis of the Johannine Son of Man sayings.[49] However, the formation of the concept and origin of the Son of Man depends upon a tradition in which this figure had already been reinterpreted within the Jewish tradition and the Gospels. Whether the Johannine community had other sources or not, they could not have failed to know the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Generally, scholars seem to agree on the origins of the Johannine use of the title, but do not always agree on its Christological meaning.[50] The variety of uses of the title may have opened the door for Jesus to give the title a new significance.

However, Udo Schnelle observes that the sayings about the coming Son of Man are difficult to assess historically.[51] Actually, when Jesus was called the Messiah or Son of God or both, it was clear that he chose to reply as Son of Man. For this reason, he obviously favored the Son of Man title.[52] All thirteen Johan-

44 Achtemeier, Green, and Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament*, 233.

45 Marvin Pate, *The Writings of John: A Survey of the Gospel, Epistle, and Apocalypse* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 139: "Much of Second Temple Judaism (519 BC to AD 70) expected that Israel would undergo unprecedented affliction immediately before the Messiah came (Dan 12:1; 4 Ezra 7:37; Jub. 23:11; 2 Baruch 55:6; 1 Enoch 80:4–5; 1QM)."

46 Ashton, *Understanding*, 244.

47 Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John, Volume 1* (New York: Seabury, 1980), 541.

48 Casey, *The Solution*, 275.

49 R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man: A Study of the Idea of Pre-existence in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 41.

50 Casey, *The Solution*, 274.

51 Udo Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament* (trans. M.E. Boring; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 152.

52 Witherington, *The Many Faces*, 58.

nine Son of Man sayings are without Synoptic equivalent. But there are equivalent formulations for twelve of the thirteen sayings within the Gospel of John itself, where the expression is absent, however, with the exception of John 1:51.[53]

The Son of Man in John 1:51 shares three of the normal characteristics found in interpretations of the Danielic Son of Man, namely, the identification of the Son of Man, his messiahship, and his being a heavenly figure.[54] The main attribute of the Son of Man in John 1:51 is that the Son of Man is also the Messiah. Although the messianic feature of the "one like a son of man" is implied in Aramaic and the book of Daniel, all of the interpretations of this figure designate him as the Messiah.[55] In fact, a number of interpreters understand the Son of Man saying that follows these messianic allusions to be a kind of Christological corrective.[56] There are, however, some characteristics of the sayings that are particularly Johannine.[57] The following are the twelve instances of the title Son of Man in John:

1:51 The angels of God ascend and descend on the Son of Man.
3:13 Only the Son of Man who has descended from heaven has ascended again.
3:14 Like the serpent in the desert of which he is the antitype, the Son of Man.
5:27 The Son has power to sit in judgment because he is the Son of Man.
6:27 The Son of Man will give the food that remains for eternal life.
6:53 Men must eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood.
6:62 The Son of Man will ascend to heaven.
8:28 The Jews will raise up the Son of Man.
12:23 The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.
12:34 The Son of Man must be raised up (cf. v. 32).
12:34 The people ask who this Son of Man is.
13:13 The Son of Man is now glorified.

53 Joachim Jeremias, "Die älteste Schicht der Menschensohn-Logien," *ZNW* 58 (1967): 159–172.

54 Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 96.

55 Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 91.

56 J.L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 128–130; F.J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man* (Rome: LAS, 1978), 214; M. Sasse, *Der Menschensohn im Evangelium nach Johannes* (Basel: Franke, 2000), 77, 247. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 92, asserts that "What is meant by this is that the disciples' understanding of Jesus as the Messiah is inadequate, and Jesus corrects their faulty understanding with Son of Man."

57 Casey, *The Solution*, 276.

Rudolf Schnackenburg believes that all twelve passages or sayings in the Gospel of John that speak of the Son of Man form a uniform and well organized whole.[58] Nevertheless, it is difficult to specify any features common to all twelve sayings apart from the title itself.[59] It is interesting to note that of the thirteen sayings of the Son of Man in the Gospel of John, most belong to a different world from those in the Synoptic Gospels.[60] There are only three places in Jewish literature where the figure of the Son of Man appears in an apocalyptic context—Daniel 7, 4 Ezra 13:1; 1 Enoch 37–71.

The language and concept of these texts is widely believed to have come from near the end of the first century AD, but it may well reflect earlier thoughts.[61] Obviously, John goes out of his way to emphasize that the revelation given by Jesus far surpasses any other rivals that claim to have been able to reveal the things of heaven.[62]

But in this sense, the sayings in John include further evidence for the authenticity of the use of the expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου by Jesus, whether or not these sayings themselves are considered authentic.[63] These differences in a sense are extreme, and interpreters have been trying to explain them. As mentioned above, this designation is shown by the fact that, according to the Gospel of John, it is the only title Jesus applied to himself. According to Joseph Fitzmyer, "in the Johannine Gospel the arthrous phrase is found on the lips of Jesus in the majority of instances (11 times in all); in three of them it is applied to his being 'lifted up' (3:14; 8:28; 12:34a), and in the others it is used of the exalted 'Son of Man'" (1:51; 3:13; 6:27, 53, 62; 9:35).[64] As mentioned above, the Son of Man sayings, however, have frequently been classified into three sections or groups: (1) ministry sayings; (2) suffering and death sayings; and (3) future coming sayings.[65]

If Jesus used it, could Jesus have simply meant "I," "me," or "this man"? Hence, the Gospels, particularly John, usually echo the language of Daniel rather than 1 Enoch, although occasionally the Enochic form of the text is obvious.[66] It may therefore be that much of the four Gospels' Son of Man tradition originates

58 Schnackenburg, *The Gospel*, 532.

59 Ashton, *Understanding*, 243.

60 Casey, *The Solution*, 274–275.

61 Witherington, *The Many Faces*, 53.

62 Witherington, *The Many Faces*, 53–54.

63 Reynolds, "The Use of the Son," 102.

64 Fitzmyer, *The Semitic Background*, 144.

65 Pate, *The Writings of John*, 60.

66 Nickelsburg, "The Son of Man," 148.

in this kind of context. But how would Jesus' hearers have understood the expression? Did John and his community see Jesus as the Son of Man? What light can be shed on the nature of the Son of Man as he is presented in the Gospel of John?

The Son of Man Sayings in the Gospel of John

The Son of Man in John fits into the exalted Christology of the Gospel as a whole, and bears the distinctive stamp of Johannine theology.[67] Compared with the extensive research on the Son of Man sayings in the Synoptic Gospels, the study of the Johannine Son of Man is more or less a recent development in Gospel scholarship. Benjamin Reynolds asserts that "as recently as forty years ago, introductions to studies of the Johannine Son of Man noted the dearth of published secondary literature. Since that time, the situation has changed significantly with a notable growth in the secondary literature during the late 1960's and 1970's."[68] Further, Jo-Ann Brant also observes that "publications in the 1960's and in the 1970's tended to favor a human identification."[69]

Clearly, one of the main highlights and emphases of the Gospel of John is the humanity of the Son of Man.[70] The growth of this understanding is the result of several opinions on both the origins and the meaning of John's Son of Man. It is interesting to note that Johannine scholars keep on debating whether the Johannine Jesus' use of the expression/title Son of Man points to a human or a heavenly figure. In this case, Jesus makes a contrast of himself with other human figures that supposedly entered heaven, including Enoch, Elijah, Moses, Isaiah, and Ezekiel.[71]

There appears to have been a strong tradition linking Moses with such an ascent into heaven scene, as well as figures like Enoch, Moses, and others.[72] All these human figures entered heaven, only Jesus first descended from heaven.

67 Reynolds, "The Use of the Son," 101; Smith, *The Theology*, 131.

68 Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 2–3.

69 Jo-Ann A. Brant, *John* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 168.

70 J. Coppens, "Le fils de l'homme dans l'evangelie johannique," *ETL* 52 (1976): 28–81; C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 43–44; M. Pamment, "The Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel," *JTS* 36 (1985): 56–66; F.F. Ramos, "El Hijo del Hombre en el cuarto evangelio," *Studium Legionense* 40 (1999): 45.

71 Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters: Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 387–388.

72 Tuckett, *Christology*, 164.

Andreas Köstenberger righty observes, however, that "almost half of the Johannine instances of the Son of Man title form part of a cluster of references commonly called 'the lifted-up sayings'."[73] The Johannine Jesus combines the figure of the Son of Man with several Old Testament images, such as Jacob's ladder (1:51) and the snake that Moses lifts up (3:14), so as to play the homology of the reference to crucifixion and glorification.[74] In contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, John uses the Synoptic tradition of the Son of Man to emphasize Jesus' heavenly connection rather that his humanity.[75] The ascent/descent motif appears in several sections but has created trouble for commentators.[76] The Son of Man's ascent and descent have been understood to be the key to understanding the Johannine representation of this figure.[77]

Clearly, this idea arises most likely from the distinctiveness of this topic for John. At the same time, the ascent/descent terminology appears just in John 1:51; 3:13; and 6:62. Unquestionably, the idea of the Son of Man "ascending" in John is not connected to the language used by John of Jesus as the Son of Man "lifted up on the cross" (12:33). Perhaps the saying closest to the Synoptic sayings is the one in John 5:27, where it is said that God has given Jesus authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.[78] The language is parallel to Dan 7:14, where the "one like a son of man" is given vindication and justice in the heavenly court. On the one hand, the main difficulty of the passage is in v. 13. On the other hand, how are we to elucidate the apparent implication that the Son of Man has already ascended into heaven, when he has, so to speak, just arrived on earth?[79] One way of evading this difficulty is to argue that the Son of Man expression in Greek needs not to mean any earlier ascension on the part of the Son of Man. More remarkable for the Johannine Son of Man sayings is the idea included in them that Jesus *qua* Son of Man is a figure who ascends to heaven.[80]

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73 Köstenberger, *A Theology*, 386.

74 Brant, *John*, 149.

75 Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son*, 223.

76 Ashton, *Understanding*, 252–253.

77 Reynolds, "The Use of the Son," 106.

78 Tuckett, *Christology*, 163: "The saying in John 5 does go further than Daniel 7 in that the Son of Man figure is now the one who actually dispenses judgment though the same move is made by at least some of the Synoptics (notably Matthew: cf. Matt 25: 31) and may be also have been made independently by the authors of 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra."

79 Ashton, *Understanding*, 252.

80 Tuckett, *Christology*, 163.

According to Delbert Burkett, there is not just one single source for the idea of the descending and ascending Son of Man in John's Gospel, but rather three ideas from different Old Testament texts: for John 1:51, Gen 28:12; for John 3:13, Prov 30:4; and for John 6:26–65, Num 11:9 and Isa 55:10.[81] He also observes that part of the Old Testament texts underlying John 3:13 and 6:26–65 are links with the word of Yahweh and with God himself.[82] If Burkett is correct, one should stay away from the inclination of forcing the numerous Johannine references to a descending and ascending Son of Man into a single descriptive framework. The Johannine Jesus is, of course, considered an earthly Son of Man[83] much more emphatically than by the Synoptic Gospels, since he is the Son of Man who has come down from heaven (3:13).

However, there is debate whether the main motif in these sayings is ascending alone, or descending as well as ascending.[84] For John, Jesus being lifted up is identified quite clearly with being lifted up on the cross; the language of being lifted up is to indicate the kind of death he was to die.[85] Therefore, we have additional proof that Jesus' descent from heaven and ascent to God takes place through his suffering and death.[86] Clearly, Jesus' authority as the Son of Man is dependent on his death on a cross. In terms of the origins of the language, it may then be that the language of the Son of Man being lifted up/ascending owes its origins to the Synoptic language about the suffering Son of Man, but John develops it by explaining that the cross symbolizes Jesus' glorification and lifting up.[87]

A distinctive characteristic of the Johannine Son of Man is the use of the verb ἀναβαίνω with this figure, and the meaning of the lifting up of the Son of Man depends on one's understanding of this verb.[88] This verb has the literal meaning of "lifting up," but in the LXX the metaphorical sense "to exalt" is more common. In fact, John's Gospel is known for its use of expressions with double meaning, and ἀναβαίνω is no exception.[89] The first use of the verb in John 3:14 makes this double meaning very clear. Nevertheless, John agrees with the Synoptic

81 Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John* (JSNTSup 56; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991), 56.
82 Burkett, *The Son of Man*, 48.
83 Schnackenburg, *The Gospel*, 536.
84 Tuckett, *Christology*, 163–164.
85 Ashton, *Understanding*, 253.
86 Schreiner, *New Testament*, 228.
87 Köstenberger, *A Theology*, 387.
88 Reynolds, "The Use of the Son," 108.
89 Casey, *The Solution*, 283.

Gospels in considering a suffering and exalted Son of Man. In typical Johannine fashion, there is sometimes a blend of the topics of suffering and of glory (12:23; 13:31).

The true glory rests on exactly his sufferings.[90] According to John, Jesus uses the expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Son of Man) to refer to his ministry on earth, his suffering, and his glorification in the future.[91] In the Gospel of John the use of the expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is a title of Jesus. It is interesting to note that the term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in John's Gospel is a Greek title of Jesus. It refers especially to his humanity as God incarnate.[92] The incarnation is a fundamental concept of the Gospel of John as a whole.

Another argument suggested by the humanity proponents is that the crucifixion is a human event, and therefore, only humans could be crucified. Reynolds asserts that "although the lifting up and glorification of the Son of Man include the crucifixion, this does not mean that 'Son of Man' expression designates Jesus' humanity."[93] Clearly, the point of John is that Jesus, who was both the Son of God and the Son of Man, was crucified. It is also important to note that both titles cannot be separated from one another. Each title further expands our understanding of John's Gospel and the Johannine Jesus, but, at the same time, the Son of Man and the Son of God cannot be separated from one another because they are attached to the same person.[94] Evidently, each term, the Son of God and the Son of Man, presents a different Christological understanding of the person of Jesus in the Gospel of John.[95]

The significance of the event is not merely that a human being died, but that the Son of Man and the Son of God could and did really die.[96] Thus, the Johnnanine Jesus is obviously human. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Contrary to some scholars' opinion, this study from the outset has attempted to show that the Son of Man expression is used in the Gospel of John to refer to and emphasize the humanity of Jesus. What seems to be meant by John is that the Son of Man acts as the connection by which heaven and earth are connected, the implication of which is that the things of

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90 Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 152.

91 Schnelle, *Theology*, 153.

92 Casey, *The Solution*, 313.

93 Reynolds, "The Use of the Son," 120.

94 Reynolds, "The Use of the Son," 122.

95 Some scholars see Son of Man Christology as the main Christology of John's Gospel, whereas others see no Christological meaning of the term.

96 R. Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 31–32.

heaven can be revealed to those on earth.[97] But the Son of Man's descent from heaven gives the impression or implies his prior existence before incarnation, just as the ascent suggests the existence of the Son of Man after Jesus' earthly life.[98] As we have already seen, the Son of Man ascends to heaven, to where he has come from originally and from where he has first descended (3:13; 6:62).[99] John makes a special emphasis on the exaltation and glorification of the Son of Man in suffering.

Indeed, the Son of Man's suffering is the means by which he will have rule over all.[100] This is especially so because we know that this concept is particularly from John. Further, this Johannine idea conveys the image of both suffering and ultimate glory and vindication, of both human rejection and divine support that Jesus saw as defining his mission and ministry. Hence, the authors of the Gospel of John fully intended to rewrite the story of Jesus (the Son of Man) in accordance with the needs of the Johannine community.

Conclusion

In sum, the evidence suggests that Jesus' use of the expression Son of Man in John's Gospel implies a messianic self-understanding. The title Son of Man is found often as a means of self-expression on the part of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels, but even more so in John. Given its frequent occurrence on the lips of Jesus, along with its rare occurrence in the epistolary writings of early Christianity, it is by all accounts the title or expression used by Jesus with the most convincing credentials of authenticity. The extraordinary selection of contexts in which the term appears constitutes important evidence supporting authenticity. Virtually all scholars accept that this form of speaking goes back to the historical Jesus. Obviously, there are similarities between the Synoptic Gospels and the Johannine Son of Man. These similarities imply that the Son of Man has a number of similar functions and characteristics in each of the Gospels. The similarities between the Synoptics and John appear to indicate that these are the two most likely options for understanding their relationship.

There are some clear differences between John's and the Synoptics' portrayals, but these differences tend to be differences of nuance or timing rather than

97 Witherington, *The Many Faces*, 58.

98 A.Y. Collins and J.J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 183.

99 Tuckett, *Christology*, 164.

100 Schreiner, *New Testament*, 232.

contradictory features. All twelve passages in John, which speak of the Son of Man, form a consistent and united whole. The roots of the expression may be different, but the main concept of the Son of Man in John is a unity.[101] In fact, it may be claimed that the view that Jesus spoke of himself by means of this term offers the least problem, and that here we gain a valuable insight into his self-understanding. There is at least a working solution here, which can account for many of the sayings. So far as historical investigation can take us, we have good reason to assume that a nucleus of various forms of Son of Man sayings goes back to Jesus himself. There is a general consensus that the Son of Man's concept originated from the Old Testament book of Daniel. It seems clear that when we examine what the Synoptic Gospels and John teach about the Son of Man, we can place it against the landscape of Daniel 7, and we can see that the Gospel writers apply the most important features of the Son of Man in Daniel to Jesus. The Son of Man in the Gospel of John is particularly important in this regard. Whatever the shape of the Son of Man sayings is as received from the tradition, John interlaces them into a significant and consistent theological pattern. Such a pattern integrates the earthly ministry, the suffering, and the return of Jesus. This pattern may be linked to the origin of the concept of the Son of Man in the Gospel of John.

It should be noted that in John's Christology, where Jesus constantly describes himself as the Son of Man, together with its overtones of solidarity with the human condition, underscores the true humanity of the one who was proclaimed as risen Lord. In fact, discussion of Son of Man in early Christianity must combine reflection on its symbolic power and social function.

The Semitic feature of the expression, however, suggests authenticity. Certainly, the Son of Man expression is characteristically Palestinian and Jewish—traceable, as we have seen, to the Old Testament itself. In this context, the Son of Man grows up as part of the New Testament and the Gospel of John traditions. In addition, the expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in the Fourth Gospel is accordingly a Greek title for Jesus. It refers especially to his humanity as God incarnate. The incarnation is a central feature of John's Gospel as a whole. The author used it when he wanted to refer to the humanity of God incarnate in this particular way. Hence, this indicates how the author of the Fourth Gospel has integrated the use of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου into his theology as a whole.

101 Schnackenburg, *The Gospel*, 532.

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The essays in *The Origins of John's Gospel*, gathered by Stanley E. Porter and Hughson T. Ong, either survey or discuss in detail various areas and topics in Johannine scholarship, especially in the study of John's Gospel. These include the authorship and dating, sources, and traditions of John's Gospel, its structure and composition, the Johannine community, and Johannine anti-Judaism and the Son of Man sayings. Collectively, these essays offer important contributions to various areas and topics of research relating to the origins of John's Gospel.

JOHANNINE STUDIES 2

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