

“The Gospel of John in Modern Interpretation is a wonderful introduction to the fascinating world that is the New Testament study of John’s gospel. Tracing the general history of the gospel’s treatment, and focusing on the contribution of several key scholars, this book also traces the discussions that drive the gospel’s study and how best to read it. The gospel of John has been an outlier in Jesus studies. This work explains why that should not be so, and what one must pay attention to in reading this crucial gospel. It is well worth a careful read.”

—Darrell L. Bock,
Senior Research Professor of New Testament Studies,
Dallas Theological Seminary

“This is a very worthwhile volume, because instead of viewing ‘modern interpretation’ as an abstraction, it looks at eight, carefully chosen modern *interpreters*, with their whole careers and scholarly contributions in view—not merely their work on John’s gospel. Three of them (Rudolf Bultmann, C. H. Dodd, and Raymond E. Brown) are obvious choices. Five others have been either half-forgotten (B. F. Westcott), unfairly neglected or underappreciated (Adolf Schlatter and Leon Morris), dismissed as idiosyncratic (John A. T. Robinson), or pigeonholed as a ‘mere’ literary critic (R. Alan Culpepper). They all deserve better, and this collection calls attention, once again, to their substantial contributions. A much needed and promising correction. Thank you, Stan Porter and Ron Fay, and your authors!”

—J. Ramsey Michaels,
Professor of Religious Studies Emeritus,
Missouri State University, Springfield

“Here is an extremely well-chosen collection of vignettes of major Johannine scholars from the late 1800s to the present. Not only do we learn of their contributions and significance, but we get a feel for their lives and social contexts. This is exemplary scholarship modeled in a fashion not quite paralleled anywhere else. If the series this volume inaugurates can continue this quality of offering, it will be of extraordinary value.”

—Craig L. Blomberg,
Distinguished Professor of New Testament,
Denver Seminary

“In these valuable treatments of eight leading scholars over the last century or more, diverse approaches to the gospel of John in modern scholarship are here laid out in clear and helpful ways. Given the hugely diverse ways that top scholars have engaged and addressed John’s notorious riddles (theological, historical, literary), a collection such as this provides interpreters a helpful guide in sorting out such subjects as John’s authorship, composition, relation(s) to the Synoptics, situation, and meaning. New Testament readers and scholars alike are thus indebted to Stanley Porter and Ron Fay for gathering this fine collection, which shows that as much as some things change in biblical scholarship, many others remain the same.”

—Paul N. Anderson,
Professor of Biblical and Quaker Studies,
George Fox University

MILESTONES IN NEW TESTAMENT SCHOLARSHIP

THE
GOSPEL OF JOHN
IN MODERN
INTERPRETATION

Stanley E. Porter and Ron C. Fay
EDITORS

 **Kregel**
Academic

The Gospel of John in Modern Interpretation

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To All Those Johannine Scholars
Who Have Gone Before Us

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SERIES INTRODUCTION

The *Milestones in New Testament Scholarship* (MNTS) series fills a necessary place between a proper biography and a dictionary entry. Each person chosen as a subject of a chapter has had a major influence upon how scholarship, and usually along with it lay readers, have thought about a specific book, group of books, or topic in the New Testament. The history of scholarship leaves certain fingerprints that stand out more than others; yet many times some important makers of fingerprints are overlooked due to the time period in which they lived, the circumstances in which they wrote, or the influence of one of their contemporaries. MNTS will often shine a light on significant scholars who have been overlooked, while also giving space to those whose names are nearly synonymous with the books they studied.

The vision for this series is to cover numerous books and topics in the New Testament, with each volume providing a small snapshot of milestones in New Testament scholarship. We seek to balance canonical studies with textual and theological studies. This series will produce brief biographies of scholars who have had an impact on the study of a given book, corpus, or major issue in New Testament studies, and thereby established a milestone in the area. By looking at the lives of these scholars, the impact of their work can be felt. We have intentionally utilized an extended chronology for the chosen scholars, in order to show how their impact is felt by subsequent generations. Each article tells the story of a single person. It communicates the life circumstances, the influences on the person, and how that person impacted the specific area in New Testament studies. In turn, each volume of this series then tells multiple stories forming a timeline, and thus a narrative of the subject of each volume can be seen through the intellectual progression within the topic.

These volumes will then create a history of New Testament studies. In order to see how work in the Johannine literature has progressed, one would read the volume on John. To see how New Testament studies in general have progressed and to diagnose general trends, the entire series would be necessary. This allows both a deeper understanding of each individual subject and a more comprehensive view of how change in each subfield of New Testament studies has occurred. This makes MNTS perfect for those studying for comprehensive exams; those examining why certain trends in specific fields have occurred, wanting to understand the history of New Testament studies; or those wishing to see ideas embodied in the stories of the participants rather than simply in didactic material.

Our goal for MNTS, to fit in scope between a single biography of a certain scholar and an encyclopedia or dictionary of various New Testament interpreters, means that these volumes allow for a quicker read than a biography¹ but greater depth than a dictionary.² Each volume also allows the reader to approach each chapter individually, as each is a story with a beginning and an end. Since the chosen scholars are treated separately, researchers have a place to start when working on bibliographies. Since each chapter is written by someone working in the field, the nonspecialist gains a glimpse at how an expert understands and assesses an important scholar.

The purpose of MNTS is to open historical vistas normally closed to non-experts, without having to dig into sources not readily available. This approach gives the student shoulders on which to stand, the expert a quick reference tool, and the biographer a short sample. Our hope is that MNTS brings joy and information to all who use the series.

—Stanley E. Porter and Ron C. Fay

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1. For example, Konrad Hammann, *Rudolf Bultmann: A Biography* (Farmington, MN: Polebridge Press, 2012).
 2. For example, William Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993–2013).

PREFACE

Stanley E. Porter and Ron C. Fay

We are pleased to be able to present these essays on milestones in the history of Johannine scholarship. These essays originated in the invited papers of the Johannine Literature Consultation (now Section) delivered at the Evangelical Theological Society annual meetings in 2014 and 2015. We were very pleased that the individual contributors were willing to include their papers in revised form in this volume. Johannine scholarship has not received as much notice as other areas of New Testament scholarship have over the last century or so. However, there are positive and encouraging signs that Johannine scholarship is gaining interest, with significant research being done by a number of important scholars. This scholarship promises not only to once again bring to the fore a number of major topics already discussed over the course of Johannine scholarship, but also to bring to scholarly attention new topics for exploration. We look forward to that continuing research and writing.

This volume, however, is not geared toward the future of Johannine scholarship, but to its past. We have included eight scholars who rightly belong in a volume that attempts to represent milestones in previous Johannine interpretation. The scope of their work extends well over a century and a half, from the mid-nineteenth century to the twenty-first. We do not believe that any of these scholars requires justification, even

if some of them are more widely known than others, some of their positions are more positively viewed than others, and some of them may fit more widely known or endorsed theological paradigms. Brooke Foss Westcott will always be remembered as one of the major English scholars of the nineteenth century, and his work in the Johannine literature is only a part of a wide range of important scholarly research. Adolf Schlatter, though less well known in English-language scholarship, was in many ways a German counterpart to Westcott, as he tended to argue for traditional positions in the face of strong opposition from his colleagues within mainstream German New Testament scholarship. C. H. Dodd, another Englishman, was also a scholar of widespread interest and expertise, often translating ideas developed in German scholarship for an English audience. However, his views in Johannine studies pushed the discipline forward in a number of ways that have endured to the present. Rudolf Bultmann is simply Rudolf Bultmann—a scholar to whom most scholarship still must react, not because his conclusions have necessarily endured, but because the force of his scholarship has cast a long and enduring shadow over all of New Testament studies. This includes especially his Johannine studies, where his commentary on John's gospel continues to arouse deeply felt responses. John A. T. Robinson is known as a theological liberal who argued for conservative critical biblical positions. These are seen most significantly perhaps in his view of John's gospel and its relationship to other traditions about Jesus. Raymond E. Brown was also a scholar of wide-ranging interests, but some of his most important work was saved for the Johannine literature, where he was one of the formative figures in thinking about the notion of a Johannine community and its influence. Even though this position has been widely criticized in recent scholarship, it has been a dominating paradigm for more than fifty years in Johannine studies. Leon Morris represents the finest of evangelical scholarship. Not known as a critical innovator, he was a thorough and dedicated advocate of traditional conservative conclusions on the basis of detailed knowledge. He continues to represent what evangelical scholarship at its best can look like. Finally, R. Alan Culpepper marks a major change in Johannine studies, when he brought literary criticism to bear on the fourth gospel. He was at the forefront of a movement that has continued to provide an alternative to historical-critical readings.

We of course realize that there are many other worthy and able scholars who could have been included in this discussion. This is not

the place to list such names. We realize that any books similar to this one—and the editors involved—will have various opinions on what constitutes true milestones in Johannine scholarship, but the list of worthy scholars would far exceed the confines of a single volume such as this one. We, however, are more than satisfied with our list of major scholars. These scholars represent a variety of methods, some of them innovators and others solidifiers. They represent various current issues in Johannine scholarship of their times, some of them on the avant-garde and others in defensive response to the onslaught. They represent some new departures and some well-established paths of endeavor. They also represent some new findings and able defenses of traditional viewpoints. One of the common threads that emerges in this series of essays is that each of these scholars endeavored to interpret the Johannine literature for his day and age, and as a result brought insights to the discussion. Our contributors are to be commended for their efforts to capture the sense of each of these scholars, whose work represent milestones in Johannine scholarship.

The editors wish to thank the contributors for their chapters in this volume. We wish also to thank those of the steering committee of the Johannine Literature Consultation/Section for their developing this program of papers over the years. We finally wish to thank those who attended our sessions, for their probing and critical questions that have helped to make these individual papers better representations of the work of these milestone figures in Johannine interpretation.

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INTRODUCTION TO *THE GOSPEL OF JOHN* IN MODERN INTERPRETATION

Stanley E. Porter and Ron C. Fay

INTRODUCTION

Several histories of Johannine scholarship have been written, although not as many as is perhaps warranted by the intriguing scholarly history that attaches to the Johannine corpus, and in particular John's gospel.¹ This volume attempts to be one of those historical volumes. In this volume, we include scholarly presentations of eight scholars whose work constitutes milestones in the history of Johannine scholarship. We recognize that others might have chosen an entirely different group of scholars for consideration, and if we were to

1. See, for example, the older works of Benjamin Wisner Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate: A Series of Essays on Problems concerning the Origin and Value of the Anonymous Writings Attributed to the Apostle John* (New York: T. Fisher Unwin, 1910) and Wilbert Francis Howard, *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation*, 4th ed., rev. C. K. Barrett (London: Epworth, 1955 [1931]); the more recent Klauss Scholtissek, "The Johannine Gospel in Recent Research," in *The Face of New Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research*, eds. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 444–72; and Stanley E. Porter and Andrew K. Gabriel, *Johannine Writings and Apocalyptic: An Annotated Bibliography*, JOST 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013). The account we offer here is coordinated with the modern interpreters recounted in this volume.

produce further volumes on milestones in Johannine scholarship we would wish to include many other scholars as well. However, we make no apology for those who are presented here. Each of them clearly represents a significant figure in the development of Johannine scholarship. We recognize, nevertheless, that scholarship does not exist without context. Context in this volume indicates the personal context of the given Johannine scholar and the wider contexts of Johannine and New Testament scholarship and the world in which such scholarship is undertaken, both as a response to these factors and as a provocation to others. As a result, rather than simply presenting a variety of different ideas that have emerged in Johannine discussion—ideas related to dating, audience, historicity, origins, sources, community, relation to the Synoptics, theology, etc.—we have chosen to represent the development of Johannine scholarship through the work of particular scholars so that we may take their personal and larger scholarly contexts into consideration. The ideas that are central to Johannine scholarship are all to be found embedded within the work of individual scholars, and some of those scholars are the ones that form the content of this volume. In order to understand the history of Johannine scholarship more clearly—and with it, to place the individual scholars included in this volume within it—in this introduction we present a brief history of some of the major figures within Johannine studies, especially study of John's gospel. For the sake of discussion, we divide this history into seven periods, recognizing that these are not firmly fixed categories but represent general movements and trends within Johannine scholarship, especially as it is focused upon John's gospel. This framework will provide a suitable context into which to place the eight scholars who are represented in more detail in the essays presented in this volume.

THE EARLY CHURCH

At the outset, the early church recognized the place of John's gospel and its importance as a witness to the life, teaching, and ministry of Jesus Christ. From the earliest evidence that we have, John's gospel was placed together with the Synoptic Gospels, constituting the fourfold Gospel. However, the early church also recognized that there were differences between John's gospel and the Synoptic Gospels, even if these were not a hindrance to its being accepted as a reliable source for

understanding of Jesus.² From the second century on, there is evidence, even if it is not as abundant as one would like, of the early church fathers knowing John's gospel, as evidenced through their various types of citations of it (e.g., Ignatius, *Magn.* 8.2; Justin Martyr, *1 Apology* 61), to the point that Irenaeus (AD 130–202)³ places John's gospel with the other three gospels as reflecting the four directions of the compass (*Adv. Haer.* 3.11.8). It is only natural that their similarities and differences incited thought regarding their relationship. Clement of Alexandria (AD 150–215), probably writing soon after Irenaeus, inadvertently identifies three features of John's gospel that have persisted as critical questions regarding that gospel: authorship, date, and characteristics. Clement states "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" (*apud* Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.14.7 LCL). Clement is also attributed with saying that, of the gospel writers, John "at last took to writing," after the "three gospels which had been written down before were distributed to all including himself" (*Hist. eccl.* 3.24.7 LCL). The belief that John, the son of Zebedee and disciple of Jesus, was the author of the gospel, had a direct bearing upon the possible date of composition. Irenaeus states the influential view 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 cited in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.23.3–4), and that he published his gospel last from Ephesus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1). Jerome (347–420) adds that John died in the sixty-eighth year after Jesus's death (*De vir. Ill.* 9).⁴ On the basis of this evidence, the date for composition of John's gospel from early on was interpreted as occurring around AD 80–100, what has come to be identified as the traditional or middle date, although with some early church writers perhaps suggesting a slightly earlier date. However, its differences in some characteristics, in particular its theol-

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2. For a concise and helpful history of discussion of John's gospel among the church fathers, see D. Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 2nd ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 6–10; and also Stanley E. Porter, "The Date of John's Gospel and Its Origins," in *The Origins of John's Gospel*, JOST 2, eds. Stanley E. Porter and Hughson T. Ong (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 11–29, esp. 13; cf. also D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity, 1992), 23–29; and Ruth Edwards, *Discovering John* (London: SPCK, 2003), 8–12.
 3. We provide dates of birth and death for those writers other than contemporaries, so far as we can determine them, to help establish the relative chronology of the various movements that we are recounting.
 4. See John A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 257, who disputes whether these references to John, Ephesus, and his age mandate a late date of composition.

ogy (as a spiritual gospel), resulted in a number of different proposals about how John related to the other gospels. Clement, as noted above, posited that John's gospel was written last, and took the Synoptics into account in writing a gospel inspired by the Spirit. Eusebius later wrote, reflecting the opinions of others, that the Synoptics as a whole were to be welcomed but that they did not contain the material about Jesus from before he began his preaching—something that John's gospel captured (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.24.7–13). Origen (AD 185–254) took the occasion of differences between John and the Synoptics as an opportunity to reinforce the spiritual nature of John's gospel by noting how these discrepant passages could be interpreted anagogically, in which a mystical sense of the passage was found (Origen, *Commentary* 10.2). This view of John's gospel as written by John the son of Zebedee—and at a time that necessitated some understanding of a relationship between John and the Synoptics—was generally held both by the church and by scholarship at least until the first half of the nineteenth century, and by many still after that date.

On the basis of the reception of John's gospel among the early church fathers—including the supposition that it is mentioned less frequently among various writers compared to the Synoptics—the history of Johannine scholarship has for the most part endorsed the notion that John's gospel was early on cited and, more importantly, authoritatively used by heterodox Christians, in particular the Gnostics and Valentinians. It therefore was, so it is said, at first widely neglected by the early church until the time of Irenaeus and some other early church fathers. The reasons for this would revolve in particular around the spiritual character of John's gospel, as well as other dimensions of its thought such as its soteriology and eschatology. The major scholarly proponent of this viewpoint was the German scholar Walter Bauer (1877–1960). Charles Hill has traced the course of this scholarly discussion, which he calls “orthodox Johannophobia,” dividing it into three periods: “Foundations: Bauer to Braun (1934–1955),”⁵ “Heyday: Schnackenburg to Koester (1959–90),”⁶ and “Uneasy Supremacy: Hengel to Nagel (1989–2000).”⁷ The only

5. Including Walter Bauer, J. N. Sanders, and C. K. Barrett.

6. Including Rudolf Schnackenburg, Melvyn Hillmer, Hans von Campenhausen, T. E. Pollard, Ernst Haenchen, Raymond Brown, D. Moody Smith, Harry Gamble, F. F. Bruce, and Helmut Koester.

7. Including Jean-Daniel Kaestli, Jean-Michel Poffet, Jean Zumstein, R. Alan Culpepper, Michael Lattke, James H. Charlesworth, and Gerard Sloyan.

major scholars that Hill cites who call this consensus into question are F. M. Braun, Martin Hengel, Wolfgang Röhrl, René Kieffer, and Titus Nagel, before Hill's own effort to show that the Johannine writings, including John's gospel, were not overlooked by the early church but were in fact rising in acceptance during the second century and not the source or possession of those within various gnostic circles.⁸ Hill's work has had a strong effect on calling the previous consensus into question. The scholars he cites as advocates of the disputed hypothesis are not themselves early church authors, but their understanding and reconstruction of the Johannine church within early Christianity has had an important effect on critical scholarship, to the point of influencing scholarly engagement with the early church authors.

THE RISE OF HISTORICAL CRITICISM

As mentioned above, the state of discussion of John's gospel remained relatively consistent throughout the ensuing several hundreds of years, with traditional authorship of John's gospel being endorsed, and with it a date within the lifetime of an early follower of Jesus. The situation changed radically with the rise of historical criticism within Enlightenment thought. The seeds of historical criticism were laid with the rise of Deism and then the emergence of theological liberalism, with historical criticism as the eventual triumph of this philosophical reorientation. Deism created an intellectual vacuum that required filling with new theological, philosophical, and scientific thought. Encouraged by the Renaissance, a broad range of human intellectual exploration resulted, such as the rise of rationalism, naturalism, revived interest in classical knowledge, a distinction between dogmatic theology and the study of ancient texts, interest in recently discovered ancient texts other than the Bible, and advances in other areas of human learning that influenced questions of understanding and interpretation. Some of the areas that were most directly affected were: the nature of interpretation, textual criticism, the rise of the historical-grammatical method that ushered in historical criticism, questions of canon, the development of the field of "introduction" in biblical studies as an area

8. See Charles E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), esp. 13–55, for the discussion of the categories above. See Hill for reference to the particular works by these scholars.

concerned with questions of dating, provenance, and authorship, the Bible as literature movement, and the rise of biblical theology, among others. There were two major responses to such developments. The first was development of historical criticism and the other was a pietist response, with each of them evident in various forms in the responses to historical-critical thought regarding John's gospel.⁹

The result for textual interpretation was the desire to apply the same critical standards to the biblical texts as were being applied to other realms of human knowledge. Two major figures stand out in the transformation generated by historical criticism. In many ways, the history of Johannine scholarship has been a series of responses, both for and against, to their reconsiderations of the Johannine literature. The first major figure to argue for a major reconception of John's gospel in light of historical-critical thought was David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874) in first his *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, and then his *A New Life of Jesus*. He placed John's gospel in the mid-second century and dismissed its historical value, along with any supernatural elements. He saw early affinity between John's gospel and various gnostic authors (as have many since; see above), as well as with developments in Hellenistic thought, and treated John's gospel as not historical but mythical, a work of what he called "fiction."¹⁰ Strauss's work caused such controversy that he was fired from his university position and ended up in German politics after a career as a popular writer.¹¹ Nevertheless, his views were highly influential not only because of the boldness of his statements, but because he captured the tenor of the increasingly skeptical times. However, in some ways more important were the similar findings of Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860), the first major scholar to argue rigorously for such a position and who functioned within the mainstream of academic theology. Baur examined the various levels of tradition and dated John's gospel to the mid-second

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9. This paragraph is dependent upon Stanley E. Porter, "The History of Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Conspectus," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 2 vols., McMaster Biblical Studies Series 2, eds. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016), 1–70, esp. 3–4 (the same pagination in either volume 1 or 2); cf. also 12–23 on historical criticism.
10. See David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, trans. George Eliot from fourth German edition (London: George Allen, 1848), 71–73, 365–86, and *passim*; Strauss, *A New Life of Jesus*, 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1879), 1:33–36, 77–101. For some reason, Carson (*John*, 30) says that *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* was not translated until 1973.
11. William Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992–2013), 1:246–58.

century, perhaps around AD 160–170, a point at which its developed theology was confirmed and any connection with apostolic authorship was completely severed.¹² This marked a major transformation in Johannine scholarship, in which a number of scholars then adopted late dates for John's gospel, with the concomitant conclusions that the gospel was written independent of apostolic tradition. This relatively late date fluctuated from around AD 110–170, and included such well-known scholars, among others, as the highly skeptical and arch-critical Bruno Bauer (1809–1882), who followed Baur's date; Eduard Zeller (1814–1908), Baur's student, who argued for around AD 150; and the French polymath Ernest Renan (1823–1892), who argued for the gospel being written by a later follower who constructed the gospel around fictitious discourses; among numerous others.

The highly skeptical view of the Johannine writings, including John's gospel, became the mainstream of much critical scholarship, certainly in Germany, but increasingly elsewhere in western scholarship in the latter part of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. We do not include any contributor to our volume who has addressed the work of any of these important early critical scholars. However, in the essays we do make clear that many of them are responding, in some cases directly, to the views first propounded by Strauss and Baur, and promoted by many since.

TRADITIONAL REACTION

It would be unfair to say, however, that historical-critical skepticism swept all of scholarship away before its mighty brush. Almost from the outset, there were those scholars who disputed such findings. They were not as skeptical about any of the major issues regarding John's gospel. Hence, many of them reaffirmed traditional authorship or at least authorship by a close associate of John the son of Zebedee, did not doubt the fundamental historical reliability of the gospel even if

12. F. C. Baur, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien, ihr Verhältnis zueinander, ihren Character und Ursprung* (Tübingen, 1847), *passim*, according to Werner Georg Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*, trans. S. MacLean Gilmour and Howard Clark Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), 137, 428, an opinion Baur apparently came to in 1838 and published by 1844. See also Baur, *The Church History of the First Three Centuries*, trans. Allan Menzies, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1878–1879), 1:177–81. See Hughson T. Ong, "Ferdinand Christian Baur's Historical Criticism and *Tendenzkritik*," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:118–38.

they recognized its differing orientation and more theological stance (than the Synoptics), and did not place its date of composition so late as to sever the tie to apostolic tradition.¹³ Some of the scholars who held to this traditional position (usually including a date of around AD 80–100) but who preceded Strauss and Baur were such scholars as Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752), Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791), who argued for an early date around AD 70, and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). Concurrent with or after Baur, others who held to similar traditional views, usually including a date of composition of around AD 80–100, were such noteworthy scholars as Henrich Eberhard Gottlob Paulus (1761–1851), one of the major scholars against whom Strauss argued, Wilhelm Leberecht de Wette (1780–1849), Eduard Reuss (1804–1891), and Carl Weizsäcker (1822–1899). Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) not only considered John's gospel more reliable than the Synoptics but thought that it was written earliest of the Gospels.¹⁴

The publications of Strauss and Baur, as mentioned above, led to a seismic shift in Johannine studies so that many scholars began to assert a later date and a less reliable gospel disconnected from apostolic tradition. In light of this movement, there were two major lines of reaction. The first major response was that there were many scholars who continued to argue for the middle date of around AD 80–100, the connection of John's gospel with the Synoptics and apostolic tradition, and usually historical reliability. These Johannine scholars included such well-known authors as some of the early major commentators, the German Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (1800–1873) and the Frenchman Frédéric Louis Godet (1821–1900), along with Constantine Tischendorf (1815–1874), 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), Adolf Harnack (1851–1930), Adolf Schlatter (1852–1938), and the important Roman Catholic scholar Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855–1938), among others.¹⁵ Tischendorf published

13. For this section, see Porter, "Date of John's Gospel," 13–16. See also Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vols. 1 and 2, for more detailed treatment of the scholars mentioned.

14. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 1:208–20; and Jan H. Nylund, "Friedrich Schleiermacher: His Contribution to New Testament Studies," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:91–117.

15. See Porter, "Date of John's Gospel," 14. See also Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vols. 1 and 2, for more detailed treatment of the scholars mentioned.

a popular booklet or pamphlet in 1865, entitled *When Were the Gospels Written?*, in which he disputes the findings of Renan and Strauss, and probably Baur, regarding the date and reliability of John's gospel. Tischendorf places high credibility in the testimony of Irenaeus as a student of Polycarp to have known the authenticity of John's gospel. Tischendorf believes that this testimony indicates that John's gospel was written by an eyewitness to the events it reports, by a close acquaintance of Jesus, and independent of the other gospels.¹⁶ One would not normally mention a popular level book as significant in this discussion, except that Tischendorf's aroused the ire of some of those scholars who were arguing for a later date. Edward Zeller refers to Tischendorf's booklet in a footnote to his book on the findings of the time, where he calls it a "pretentious and superficial pamphlet." He claims that his own view regarding the external evidence of John's gospel is not "in any way shaken." The reason is that "The most in this pamphlet is nothing more than a repetition, in a very confident tone, of apologetic observations long since controverted; while what the composer has lately added is so untenable, that it cannot cause any serious difficulties whatever to any one who has surveyed this department with a critical eye."¹⁷ Lightfoot wrote three essays or lectures on what he called the "authenticity and genuineness" of John's gospel.¹⁸ The first essay, which was delivered in 1871 and then published in 1890, discusses the internal evidence.¹⁹ The second essay, which consists of

16. Stanley E. Porter, *Constantine Tischendorf: The Life and Work of a 19th-Century Bible Hunter. Including Constantine Tischendorf's When Were Our Gospels Written?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 137–39, for the pages in *When Were Our Gospels Written?*, summarized on 96–97. See also Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 1:322–28.

17. Eduard Zeller, *Strauss and Renan: An Essay* (London: Trübner, 1866), 38.

18. Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1893), 1–44, 45–122, 123–93, and additional notes 194–98. On Lightfoot, see Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:66–73; Ronald Dean Peters, "Brooke Foss Westcott, Fenton John Anthony Hort, and Joseph Barber Lightfoot," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:139–62, esp. 147–49. All three of Lightfoot's essays are reprinted, along with the notes for Lightfoot's commentary on John's gospel (previously unpublished), in J. B. Lightfoot, *The Gospel of St. John: A Newly Discovered Commentary*, The Lightfoot Legacy Set 2, eds. Ben Witherington III and Todd D. Still (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 41–78, 205–327. However, the first essay has had an inexplicable change in title, as well as having headings added presumably so that it serves as the introduction to the commentary. Similarly, a comparison of the photographs of the Lightfoot manuscript (between pp. 48 and 49) shows that at least in transcribing this particular portion of text the editors have not created a verbatim transcription of the manuscript but have taken large interpretive liberties, nowhere explained in the edition so far as we can tell.

19. This essay was also republished in Ezra Abbot, Andrew P. Peabody, and J. B. Lightfoot, *The Fourth Gospel: Evidences External and Internal of Its Johannine Authorship* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1892), 131–71, along with an essay by Abbot, "The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel: External Evidences," 3–108, that is also a major and enduring essay on the topic.

lecture notes from 1867–1872, discusses the external evidence. The third and final essay (1867–1868) also discusses internal evidence. In print form, these essays total nearly two hundred pages, and provide one of the most thorough examinations of authorship of John's gospel, certainly to that point but also since. In the first of his essays, Lightfoot states that, until within a generation of his writing (clearly referring to the historical-critics mentioned above), there had been only one exception (the Alogi) to the universal attestation of John's gospel being written by John the son of Zebedee, a position he himself then argues for at length. Although late in his life he claims that he was wrong on John's gospel, earlier in his career Sanday wrote two books in which he argued for a more traditional view.²⁰ In the first book on John's gospel, Sanday takes an inductive approach that leads him to the conclusion that the work was by an eyewitness who was familiar with Palestine and who had seen the events recorded, and that the author was the beloved disciple, John the son of Zebedee.²¹ Sanday later returned to John's gospel, where he presents a similar view, even if perhaps slightly tempered in light of German criticism, of John's gospel, but where he continues to endorse its reliability and use of the Synoptics.²²

A few scholars of this time even argued for an early date for John's gospel (pre-AD 70), and thus for a more intrinsic connection to apostolic tradition. The number arguing for this position remains relatively small, as the early date, apart from perhaps Schleiermacher, has remained outside of the major debate over the traditional or later date. Of these scholars, perhaps the best known during this period is Alfred Resch (1835–1912), the German theologian known for his several volumes on the words of Jesus and extracanonical texts, who argues for a date of around AD 70.²³ One of the possible reasons that such an early date is often dismissed is that it is usually argued on the basis of the supposed use of a present-tense-form verb in John 5:2 with regard to the pool of Bethesda still being in existence at the time of writing, an argument no longer supportable.²⁴

20. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:263–64, esp. 264.

21. William Sanday, *The Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel Considered in Reference to the Contents of the Gospel Itself: A Critical Essay* (London: Macmillan, 1872).

22. William Sanday, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel: Eight Lectures on the Morse Foundation, Delivered in the Union Seminary, New York in October and November, 1904* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905).

23. See James Moffatt, *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1918), 581–82, for others. Most of them apparently were pastors writing more popular works.

24. This argument relies upon treating the Greek verbal tense-forms as time-based, as well as analyzing

Despite the onslaught of continental, and especially German, historical criticism, there were those, especially but not entirely in the English-speaking world, who resisted its allures. This does not mean that they did not benefit from the rigors of German scholarship. Nevertheless, a number of scholars continued to argue for the traditional or even early date of John's gospel. This volume presents the work of two of those who responded to the developments within especially German historical criticism, Westcott and Schlatter. Westcott, the close friend of both Lightfoot and Hort, was an English scholar who not only held to similar positions as his Cambridge colleagues, but did so on the basis of his own prolonged study of John's gospel. He too wrote one of the enduring arguments regarding authorship of John's gospel by John the son of Zebedee.²⁵ Schlatter, who wrote a wide variety of volumes on various areas of the New Testament, was well known in German scholarship of the time for his traditional and conservative critical opinions. He is perhaps less well known in English-speaking scholarship especially on John, because his major commentary has never been translated from German into English. This volume hopes to help redress the imbalance in our knowledge of Schlatter.²⁶

THE HISTORY OF RELIGION MOVEMENT

The history of religion movement had a significant influence upon Johannine scholarship. As William Baird states, the history of religion school "was a school without a teacher and without pupils."²⁷ The history of religion school is, therefore, an informal conglomeration of scholars with varying yet compatible beliefs about the development of early Christianity, comprising scholars associated in various ways with the

the verb εἶμι, "be," as a tensed rather than aspectually vague verb. Neither of these suppositions is necessarily true.

25. Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John: The Authorized Version with Introduction and Notes* (London: John Murray, 1881), v–xxxii. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:73–82; Peters, "Brooke Foss Westcott," 140–44.
26. Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Johannes: Wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt: Ein Kommentar zum vierten Evangelium* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1975), originally published in 1930; Schlatter, *Das Evangelium nach Johannesausgelegt für Bibelleser* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1899). See Werner Neuer, *Adolf Schlatter: A Biography of Germany's Premier Biblical Theologian*, trans. Robert W. Yarbrough (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995); and Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Theodor Zahn, Adolf Harnack, and Adolf Schlatter," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:163–88, esp. 174–80.
27. Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:222; cf. Porter, "History of Biblical Interpretation," 20–21.

university at Göttingen at the end of the nineteenth century. Some of the most important biblical scholars associated with the history of religion movement are William Wrede (1859–1906), Johannes Weiss (1863–1914), Hermann Gunkel (1862–1932), Albert Eichhorn (1856–1926), Wilhelm Heitmüller (1869–1926), Wilhelm Bousset (1865–1920), and Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976). Non biblical scholars associated with the movement included Franz Cumont (1868–1947), an expert in oriental religions; and Richard Reitzenstein (1861–1931), an expert in mystery religions and other ancient religions; and the classicist Eduard Norden (1868–1941). The essential unifying factor for the school, such as it was, was their common approach to the study of religion. The history of religion school made a clear distinction between theology, which they associated with systematic theology, and religion, and they sought to study Christianity as an example within the larger notion of the history of religion. As a result, Christianity was viewed from the standpoint of the development of its traditions, rather than the literary relationships among its sources, and lines of connection and influence were often drawn to other religions, especially Greco-Roman religion and other oriental religions (such as Egyptian), to the point (in some extreme versions) of Christianity being seen as a syncretistic religion.²⁸

In many ways, the history of religion movement was a result of the naturalism and rationalism of the Enlightenment regarding Christianity, especially in its rejection of traditional dogmatic or systematic theological categories. Wrede is best known for his work on the so-called Messianic Secret in Mark and on Paul as the second founder of Christianity, both of which have had a tremendous influence upon New Testament studies. Wrede, however, also wrote a significant work on John's gospel during the course of his abbreviated career. Wrede thinks that no book in the New Testament is so popular yet so misunderstood as John's gospel, which introduces a foreign world to the reader. For him, John's gospel is not a depiction of the historical Jesus in his humanity but an apologetic work in defense of Jesus as a divine character.²⁹ Weiss was ambivalent regarding his relationship

28. Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:222–23; cf. 2:223–29, 238–53.

29. W. Wrede, *Charakter und Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1933), originally published in 1903. On Wrede, see Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:144–51; Stanley E. Porter, *When Paul Met Jesus: How an Idea Got Lost in History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 51–56; and Dieter T. Roth, "William Wrede and Julius Wellhausen," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:189–98.

to the history of religion school, in that he wished to study Christianity and its beliefs in relationship to previous Jewish and Greek thought, but he did not wish to see it merely as the product of these other forms of religion.³⁰ Weiss is perhaps best known today as arguing for Jesus's realized or thoroughgoing eschatology (or apocalyptic view of Jesus), developed more fully in the thought of Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965).³¹ More important here, however, is the fact that he was the teacher of Bultmann when Bultmann was a student at Marburg, where Weiss taught before leaving for Heidelberg. Bultmann wrote his initial doctoral dissertation on cynic-stoic diatribe and Paul's preaching style under the initial supervision of Weiss (though it was completed under Heitmüller).³² Gunkel began as a New Testament scholar under the influence of the history of religion approach before becoming an Old Testament scholar, and was arguably the person who drew the group or movement together through his influential book, *Creation and Chaos*. This book argues that the creation account in Genesis 1 is dependent upon ancient Babylonian creation myths, and that this explains Revelation 12.³³ This approach clearly demonstrates the history of religion method. Gunkel's development of form criticism, in which language is varied in its use depending upon circumstance (or *Sitz im Leben*), was also a contribution from the history of religion. The best known of all members of the history of religion school, however, was Bousset. Bousset wrote many books that reflect the history of religion approach, but the best known today is his *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*. Bousset takes an evolutionary approach to religion, in which Christianity, even if it was the highest form of religion, was nevertheless the result of a developmental process. In *Kyrios Christos*, he traces how the complex religious environment of the first century developed into the worship of Jesus as the Christ, and then how it

30. Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:223, 229.

31. Ibid., 2:229–37; and Andrew W. Pitts, "Albert Schweitzer: A Jewish-Apocalyptic Approach to Christian Origins," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:211–38.

32. See Rudolf Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910); cf. Porter, *When Paul Met Jesus*, 57–58; Stanley E. Porter and Jason C. Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 226–37; and James D. Dvorak, "Martin Dibelius and Rudolf Bultmann," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:257–77.

33. Hermann Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12*, trans. K. William Whitney Jr. (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), originally published in 1895. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:238–39.

developed further under the influence of Greek thought in the Pauline churches, and then finally into the realized eschatology and deification of believers in John's gospel.³⁴

Bultmann is the only figure associated with the history of religion school that is included in our volume, and not necessarily because of this association. There has been continuing question whether Bultmann is even to be considered a member of the history of religion school. Baird conveniently divides Bultmann's career into two, with the first part acknowledged as having been strongly influenced by the history of religion approach, and the second part, under the later influence of Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), given to his hermeneutical and theological period.³⁵ However, this bifurcation may not be entirely accurate, as Bultmann evidenced the influence of the history of religion approach throughout his career.³⁶ The influence of the history of religion approach on Bultmann has been well-substantiated, and is especially true of its influence upon his approach to John's gospel. The initial influence of the history of religion school is seen in Bultmann's doctoral dissertation on cynic-stoic diatribe. This is a study of comparisons among various schools of religious thought based on their texts. This reflects the influence of Weiss, even if Bultmann did not go as far as Weiss wished that he had gone, and was useful in establishing the influences upon and style of Paul as author.³⁷ The second area of correlation is seen in Bultmann's development of New Testament form criticism. This reflects the influence of Gunkel upon his thought, in which he seeks to define how the New Testament gospel authors and the early Christian community shaped the discourse of Jesus according to transmissional patterns that crossed religious

34. Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970; repr., Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013), a translation of a work originally published in 1913. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:243–51, esp. 249–51.

35. Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:280 n. 221; cf. 2:280–86 and 3:85–117. On Heidegger, see Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 57–69; and Edward Ho, "Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Paul Ricoeur," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 2:96–118.

36. See Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 233–35, depending upon the convincing arguments of Helmut Koester, "Early Christianity from the Perspective of the History of Religions: Rudolf Bultmann's Contribution," in Koester, *Paul and His World: Interpreting the New Testament in Its Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 267–78.

37. Konrad Hammann, *Rudolf Bultmann: A Biography*, trans. Philip E. Devenish (Salem, OR: Polebridge, 2013), 46–48.

boundaries.³⁸ The third is Bultmann's development of his view of demythologization.³⁹ His views of demythologization are both an acceptance of the need to demythologize and hence distance oneself from the mythology of the ancient world, but also an endorsement of the history of religion approach toward Christianity as a form of expression of ancient myth as also found in a variety of religions. The fourth area is Bultmann's broad conception of how Christianity fits with other ancient religions, seen in his 1949 publication of *Primitive Christianity*.⁴⁰ The fifth and final area of influence is in his approach to John's gospel. Bultmann wrote on John's gospel numerous times before he wrote his well-known commentary.⁴¹ However, his commentary, despite being written relatively late in his career, still reflects the history of religion approach in a variety of ways.⁴² This includes his claim that it is dependent upon Mandaean Gnostic thought. Even if Bultmann did not accept all the major tenets of history of religion methodology (such as the irrationality of religion), he did examine the New Testament from a mythological and eschatological viewpoint that minimized historicity and emphasized various types of religious syncretism.

NEW SOURCE-CRITICAL PROBLEMS

A revival of interest in various areas of Johannine studies occurred in the twentieth century. We are characterizing them here according to the development of new source-critical problems. We wish to identify

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38. Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), originally published in 1921.
 39. Rudolf Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," in *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*, ed. Hans Werner Bartsch, trans. Reginald H. Fuller (London: SPCK, 1953), 1–44, an essay originally published in 1941.
 40. Rudolf Bultmann, *Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting*, trans. Reginald H. Fuller (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1956), originally published in 1949 with the title: *Das Urchristentum im Rahmen der antiken Religionen* (Zurich: Artemis, 1949) or "Early Christianity in the Setting of Ancient Religions."
 41. Rudolf Bultmann, "Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prologs um Johannes-Evangelium," in *EUXARISTHRION: Hermann Gunkel zum 60. Geburtstag*, 2 vols., ed. Hans Schmidt, FRLANT 36 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1923), 2:3–26 (in English as "The History of Religions Background of the Prologue to the Gospel of John," in *The Interpretation of John*, ed. and trans. John Ashton, 2nd ed. [London: T&T Clark, 1997], 27–46); and Bultmann, "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums," *ZNW* 24 (1925), 100–46.
 42. Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), originally published in 1941.

several of these problems of particular value: synoptic relationships, other sources, and multiple communities.

The question of the relationship of John's gospel to the Synoptic Gospels has undergone significant change over the last one hundred or so years.⁴³ The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Johannine scholarship tended to argue for a dependent relationship between John's gospel and the Synoptics. As we have observed above, this relationship was virtually always seen as John's gospel being later, sometimes much later, and dependent upon the Synoptics in some form, whether one or more gospels. This conclusion is consonant with the view of John's gospel as historically unreliable due to its lack of relationship to apostolic tradition either through authorial or historical connection. There were exceptions to this perspective, especially among those who still argued for the moderate or even early date of composition of John's gospel; however, they were often considered, at least by many, as outside of the mainstream of critical scholarship.⁴⁴ The consensus in the early twentieth century was represented by B. H. Streeter (1874–1937), in his highly influential *The Four Gospels*, where he argued that John was dependent upon Mark and Luke.⁴⁵

In 1938, the British scholar Percival Gardner-Smith (1888–1985) published a small book in which he argues, contrary to the consensus, that John's gospel is independent of the Synoptic Gospels. Gardner-Smith's approach is simply to acknowledge the consensus, but then go through John's gospel section by section to show what he considers a lack of dependence. His approach is forthright and straightforward, simply calling into question the assumed consensus.⁴⁶ The single most important scholar to accept Gardner-Smith's conclusions and develop his ideas further was C. H. Dodd (1884–1973). Dodd argued that

43. For various summaries and references to representative scholars in this section, see Smith, *Jesus among the Gospels*, *passim*; Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel: An Examination of Contemporary Scholarship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), 54–67; Edwards, *Discovering John*, 14–15; and Stanley E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus: In Pursuit of the Johannine Voice* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 64–67.

44. An exception is Julius Schniewind (*Die Parallelerikopen bei Lukas und Johannes* [Leipzig: O. Brandstetter, 1914]). See Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 88–91.

45. Burnett Hillman Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins Treating of the Manuscript Tradition, Sources, Authorship, and Dates*, rev. ed. (London: Macmillan, 1930 [1924]), 393–426. On Streeter, see Paul Foster, "B. H. Streeter and the Synoptic Problem," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:278–301. Other scholars of the time who made convincing cases for this were Benjamin Bacon and V. H. Stanton.

46. P. Gardner-Smith, *Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938). See Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 37–43.

John's gospel made use of independent, previous oral tradition.⁴⁷ If Dodd is the single most important scholar to pursue this line, perhaps its most provocative is John A. T. Robinson (1919–1983). First in his *Redating the New Testament* and then in his *The Priority of John*, Robinson argues for John's gospel being independent of the Synoptics, which allows for a pre-AD 70 date for the composition of the gospel (as well as all of the books of the New Testament).⁴⁸ Robinson's notion of priority indicates that John had access to traditions at least as early as those available to the writers of the Synoptics.

As a result of this contrary view (found mostly in British scholarship), there are several streams of thought that have developed regarding John's relation to the Synoptics. The first stream is those who have continued to argue for a relatively direct relationship between John and the Synoptics. One of the key figures in this discussion is John Bailey (1929–1981). Although Bailey also thinks that John's gospel was dependent upon Mark, he argues strongly for its dependence upon Luke.⁴⁹ The position of Johannine dependence continues to be followed by C. K. Barrett (1917–2011) in his important and enduring commentary on John's gospel.⁵⁰ In this respect, even though he has written one of the most influential commentaries on John's gospel in the second half of the twentieth century, at the time of writing (certainly the second edition) Barrett's commentary was outside of the mainstream of critical thought regarding the relationship between John and the Synoptics. However, in some ways he foreshadowed further developments by maintaining his view of dependence.

The second stream regarding dependence is far more complex, in that it posits that John's gospel had a complex relationship with Synoptic material, possibly including the Synoptics themselves but

47. C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), but also in his earlier *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), especially his analysis in part III of the argument and structure of John's gospel. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 2:265–66; Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 53–62; Beth M. Stovell, "C. H. Dodd as New Testament Interpreter and Theologian," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:341–66.

48. Robinson, *Redating*, 254–311; Robinson, *The Priority of John*, ed. J. F. Coakley (London: SCM, 1985; Oak Park, IL: Meyer Stone, 1987).

49. John A. Bailey, *The Tradition Common to the Gospels of Luke and John*, NovTSup 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1963). See Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 93–96.

50. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978 [1955]), 42–54. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3:538–81.

not necessarily.⁵¹ This broad category includes a wide range of proposals.⁵² For example, Günter Reim argues for a two-stage compositional process of John's gospel, with John's original framework being supplemented by material that is from a synoptic gospel now unknown to us.⁵³ The French scholar Émile Boismard (1916–2004) argues that John's gospel originated independent of the Synoptics but, through a multi-stage developmental process, it utilized the Synoptic material and even the Gospels at various points along its way, until the final gospel itself is dependent upon the Synoptics.⁵⁴ Frans Neiryck (1927–2012) sees a similar complex relationship between John and the Synoptics, but instead sees the Synoptic Gospels as fundamental sources for the gospel of John at the outset.⁵⁵ With these major works of the 1970s, the consensus that had formed around Gardner-Smith's proposal broke down, so that there were a number of proposals that continued to develop regarding John and the Synoptics. One of the most significant of these theories is that of interlocking tradition. Rather than seeing the relationship between John and the Synoptics as a developmental or chronologically linear one, even if complex in nature, those arguing for interlocking or mutually informing tradition see a shared tradition being utilized by both, so that in some instances the Synoptics and in some instances John's gospel seems to assume knowledge of the other. This view was first proposed by Leon Morris (1914–2006), and has been followed by a number of more conservative scholars, such as the conservative Roman Catholic scholar Rudolf Schnackenburg (1914–2002) (although without apparently knowing Morris's position), D. A. Carson, and Craig Blomberg.⁵⁶ A somewhat

51. There are more variations on these theories than we can discuss here. For example, F. Lamar Cribbs ("St Luke and the Johannine Tradition," *JBL* 90 [1971]: 422–50; "A Study of the Contacts That Exist between St. Luke and St. John," *SBL Seminar Papers 1973*, 2 vols. [Cambridge, MA: SBL, 1973], 2:1–93) argues that Luke may have used John's gospel. See Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 99–103.

52. See Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 141–58.

53. Günter Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums*, SNTSMS 22 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); repr. with further essays as *Jochanan: Erweiterte Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (Erlangen: Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission, 1995).

54. M. E. Boismard and A. Lamouille, with G. Rochais, *L'Évangile de Jean: Commentaire*, vol. 3 of *Synopse des quatre Évangiles en français* (Paris: Cerf, 1977).

55. Frans Neiryck, "John and the Synoptics," in *L'Évangile de Jean: Sources, rédaction, théologie*, ed. M. de Jonge, BETL 44 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1977), 73–106; and Neiryck with Joël Delobel, et al., *Jean et les synoptiques: Examen critique de l'exégèse de M.-E. Boismard*, BETL 49 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979).

56. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*, vol. 1, trans. Kevin Smyth (London: Burns

similar view, though not one that depends upon the interlocking of tradition, is proposed by Robinson, who argues that both the Synoptics and John's gospel make use of independent tradition, with Robinson arguing that John's gospel is also an early witness to this tradition.⁵⁷

For those who treated the sources as independent of the Synoptics, alternative source theories were needed. Many of these have concentrated upon the supposed signs source, but have considered other sources as well (besides the Synoptic Gospels). Although he certainly was not the first to propose sources,⁵⁸ Bultmann in his commentary on John's gospel marks a turning point in source criticism of John's gospel, in his identification of three major sources: a signs source, the discourses, and the passion and resurrection accounts, along with some other minor sources. Bultmann was not the first to identify such sources, but was the first to argue as methodologically rigorously for such sources.⁵⁹ Source analysis has been continued by numerous Johannine scholars. Three important ones to note who have been formative of the discussion are Robert Fortna, W. Nicol, and Howard Teeple.⁶⁰ Fortna has authored two major books on the sources of John's gospel. The first one, concentrating on the signs source and the death and resurrection narratives, uses a variety of analytical stylistic criteria to establish and reconstruct the pre-gospel narrative signs source. In the appendix to his first volume, he provides his reconstructed text. He refines his analysis further in his second volume. In this volume, he builds upon his previous analysis but draws upon redaction criticism to provide a commentary on John's gospel. Nicol provides a more modest proposal than does Fortna (or Teeple; see below), and goes

& Oates, 1980 [1965]), 42; Leon Morris, *Studies in the Fourth Gospel* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1969), 15–63, esp. 40–63; Carson, *John*, 51–52; and Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 53–54. On Schnackenburg, see Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3:396–407.

57. Robinson, *Priority of John*, *passim*. Robinson had a further formative influence on Johannine scholarship with his article, "The New Look on the Fourth Gospel," in *Studia Evangelica*, TU 73, ed. Kurt Aland (Berlin: Akademie, 1959), 338–50 (originally a paper given in Oxford in 1957), repr. in Robinson, *Twelve New Testament Studies*, SBT 34 (London: SCM, 1962), 94–106.
58. See Howard M. Teeple, *The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John* (Evanston, IL: Religion and Ethics Institute, 1974), 30–41, for predecessors.
59. Kysar, *Fourth Evangelist*, 14–16.
60. Robert Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel*, SNTSMS 11 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988); W. Nicol, *The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Redaction*, NovTSup 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1972); Teeple, *Literary Origin*, part 2. See Kysar, *Fourth Evangelist*, 17–37, for presentation and analysis.

through a three-stage process of identifying or separating out the signs source. Finally, Teeple identifies four sources: a narrative source (he calls S), a Hellenistic mystical source (G), the work done by an editor (E), and the work of a redactor (R). Teeple then provides an analysis of the entire gospel differentiating these four sources, along with several other features. Arguably the most extensive effort to define Johannine sources is found in the relatively recent work of Urban C. von Wahlde, who argues for three editions of John's gospel.⁶¹ In his first major book on the topic, he concentrates upon the Johannine gospel of signs as the original form of the gospel that was editorially expanded in subsequent editions. In his much larger and more developed commentary, he uses the aporiai and seams of John's gospel to analyze its three editions. There has been much critical response against these various source theories, with much of it focusing upon the ability of contemporary scholarship to identify stylistic features and various aporiai that might indicate sources, as well as the ability to reconstruct such a source without a means of verification.⁶² Nevertheless, with current developments in Johannine studies (see below) such source theories seem to have decreased in significance.

The final source-oriented development to discuss here is various community theories. Community hypotheses regarding John's gospel are also forms of source theories, but they are less concerned with the positing of earlier documents than they are about reconstructing the early Johannine community that used these documents in the production of the Johannine literature. Although community theories of various sorts preceded him (often associated with sources),⁶³ Raymond Brown (1928–1998) was the first to offer the basis of a tentative community hypothesis regarding composition of John's gospel in five stages, from the traditional material through several editorial periods.⁶⁴ His community hypothesis emerged fully in his later work devoted specifically to the Johannine community. He there argues for

61. Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Earliest Version of John's Gospel: Recovering the Gospel of Signs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1989); von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, ECC, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

62. For a recent example, see David I. Yoon, "The Question of Aporiai or Cohesion in the Fourth Gospel: A Response to Urban C. von Wahlde," in *The Origins of John's Gospel*, 219–38.

63. E.g. Streeter, *Four Gospels*, whose theory is based upon geographical locations.

64. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, AB 29, 29A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966, 1970), 1:xxxiv–xxxix. See also Brown, *The Epistles of John*, AB 30 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982). See Kysar, *Fourth Evangelist*, 39–42.

four phases of community development, within which John's gospel and the epistles are placed.⁶⁵

However, the major figure responsible for the community hypothesis is J. Louis Martyn (1925–2015), who published his monograph on it in 1968. In fact, the community hypothesis is often identified with him. The community hypothesis posits a two-level narrative in John's gospel. The prelude to Martyn's analysis is that every telling of the story of Jesus has both a tradition and the unique character of the retelling that accompanies it. Martyn assumes that John's gospel originated with an earlier form of the account, something perhaps like the kind of narrative source that Fortna posits (Fortna was Martyn's doctoral student, when he was working on his narrative signs source). Fortna does not believe that John's gospel used the Synoptic Gospels. The source used was the form of their gospel used by the Johannine community when they were part of the synagogue. However, during their time in the synagogue the group grew in size and significance, to the point where they were expelled from the synagogue. Martyn examines several Johannine episodes that have similarities to the Synoptic accounts and finds that they are told differently in John's gospel, a process that he characterizes as a dramatization. Martyn examines the healing story in John 9 and finds the story and its dramatic development, which culminates in synagogue expulsion, as a template for the construction of the gospel. He then examines other synagogue expulsion accounts and differentiates material that comes from the time of Jesus (around AD 30), the first level of the account, and material that is part of the dramatic retelling that dates to around AD 90, the second level of the drama. Martyn finds similar patterns of dramatic retelling in other accounts, such as miracle stories (John 5 and 7), and likewise concludes in establishing a two-level dramatic narrative.⁶⁶ Whereas the Johannine community hypothesis came to dominate much of mainstream Johannine scholarship for a considerable amount of time (approaching forty years), the theory has

65. 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). See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3:407–23.

66. J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003 [1968]). See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3:604–22. For a different hypothesis regarding a Johannine circle, this one in opposition to one that produced the Synoptic Gospels, see Oscar Cullmann, *The Johannine Circle: Its Place in Judaism, among the Disciples of Jesus and in Early Christianity. A Study in the Origin of the Gospel of John*, trans. John Bowden, NTL (London: SCM, 1976 [1975]).

recently been called into serious question. One of the first to question the notion of John's gospel as a community product produced over time was Richard Bauckham in his attack on the notion of gospels as written for particular Christian communities, rather than for Christians more universally.⁶⁷ His view has been accepted and expanded upon by his student Edward Klink, who questions the idealized view of community and uses in its place a relational view of community that attempts to speak to a wide and varied audience.⁶⁸

In this volume, we discuss several of those many scholars mentioned in this section, in particular Dodd, Morris, Brown, and Robinson. Whereas Dodd is indeed a well-known Johannine scholar, he was also a very diverse scholar who tackled numerous other issues in New Testament studies, such as form criticism, which further links him to the work of Bultmann. Morris, as will be mentioned below in discussing the conservative resurgence, has been part of a wider movement endorsing the historical reliability of John's gospel, and that emerges in his views of source relationships. Brown, though also with other interests, will always be known as a major Johannine scholar, with his commentaries remaining some of the major commentaries written in the twentieth century on John's gospel and the epistles. Although Robinson wrote on a variety of subjects, his work on John's gospel has continued to challenge scholars, not least because, despite his theologically liberal ideas, he advocated a variety of arguably conservative critical positions.

LITERARY AND SOCIAL-SCIENTIFIC THEORIES

There have been two major recent turns that have occurred in New Testament studies as a whole that have affected study of the Johannine literature in particular. The first is the rise of literary criticism and the second is the rise of social-scientific criticism. Although at some points, especially in the critical past, these two fields have had lines of convergence and confluence, in their present manifestations within Johannine studies they represent distinct approaches to the Johannine writings.

67. Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), esp. Bauckham's "For Whom Were Gospels Written?," 9–48.

68. Edward W. Klink III, *The Sheep of the Fold: The Audience and Origin of the Gospel of John*, SNTSMS 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). An apparent revival of at least a form of Martyn's view, but from a viewpoint that wishes to give more credit to the historicity of the first level, is Paul N. Anderson's so-called bi-optic view in *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6*, WUNT 2.78 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996).

In the 1980s, there was a literary turn in New Testament studies that affected studies of John's gospel as well. These developments in other areas of New Testament studies, perhaps combined with general exhaustion over current debates, led to some new directions in Johannine studies that departed from traditional debates over authorship, sources, and history, and introduced new literary interpretive frameworks.⁶⁹

Alan Culpepper was not the first to introduce literary interpretation to gospel studies. That honor probably belongs to David Rhoads.⁷⁰ However, Culpepper was arguably the first to do so for Johannine studies, where his work has had enduring significance. Culpepper's *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* is an exercise in what has come to be widely known as "narrative criticism," but was at its outset an attempt to bring the findings of recent literary theory to bear on interpretation of John's gospel.⁷¹ As a result, Culpepper introduces the new terminology and interpretive categories to Johannine scholarship. Rather than talking about sources, forms, and redactions, Culpepper instructs readers in narrator and point of view, narrative time, plot, characters, implicit commentary, and the implied reader (his chapter headings). His reading of John's gospel directly employs the terminology gleaned from literary theory—narratology, the New Criticism, and the like—but is applied not to works of fiction or poetry but to John's gospel. The categories may not be new, but some of the insights have helped to avoid some of the previous problems of Johannine scholarship, especially as narrative art distances the text from supposed historical problems. The literary approach has had a huge impact on Johannine studies, and has resulted in a quantity of work being produced, even if not all of it has lived up to the promise of Culpepper's initial venture.⁷² Some of the important work to note is Mark Stibbe's *John as Storyteller*, which treats John 18–19 from four different perspectives: practical criticism, genre criticism,

69. See Porter, "History of Biblical Interpretation," 23–32.

70. David Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) with Joanna Dewey being added as one of the writers for the second (1999) and third (2012) editions. See Sean A. Adams, "Loveday Alexander, David Rhoads, and Literary Criticism of the New Testament," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 2:441–57, esp. 441–46.

71. R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, FF (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983). See Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 275–85.

72. See Stanley E. Porter, *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 278–92, for a summary of Johannine literary scholarship.

social function, and narrative-historical approach.⁷³ Few works have been as methodologically clear or as insightful into a passage as Stibbe's. Helen Orchard in her *Courting Betrayal*⁷⁴ recognizes the potential static element in Culpepper's approach—after all, it tends to be a summary of the previous thoughts of a variety of literary theorists, as good as they are—and attempts to introduce a more dynamic element into literary analysis by emphasizing social function. The introduction of social function opens up a new area of potential Johannine scholarship that we will return to below. The final work to note is the ambitious sequential reading of Peter Phillips.⁷⁵ In some ways, Phillips's work represents the apex of literary criticism by his bringing together an intriguing and apparently disharmonious group of theoretical orientations but it also represents the catastrophe of creating a complex brew of various theoretical pullings and pushings. This tends to represent much of what has happened to recent attempts at literary readings of John's gospel. They may avail themselves of various literary-theoretical approaches, but they do not always result in insightful and dynamic readings.

One of the insights of some literary readings of John's gospel is that the social function of the text is an important factor for gaining insight into how to interpret the gospel. The notion of social function fits squarely within the realm of social-scientific approaches to John's gospel.⁷⁶ There have been several attempts to approach the gospel from such a perspective, some of them influenced by literary and linguistic methods and others by historical concerns. One of the earliest social-scientific approaches to John was an essay by Wayne Meeks, entitled "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism."⁷⁷ This article has had a lasting effect on a variety of Johannine studies. However, one of the first monographs to reflect the influence of the social sciences was Jerome Neyrey's *An Ideology of Revolt*.⁷⁸ In this

73. Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel*, SNTSMS 73 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

74. Helen C. Orchard, *Courting Betrayal: Jesus as Victim in the Gospel of John*, JSNTSup 161 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998).

75. Peter M. Phillips, *The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel: A Sequential Reading*, LNTS 254 (London: T&T Clark, 2006).

76. See Porter, "History of Biblical Interpretation," 48–55.

77. Wayne A. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91 (1972): 44–72. See James D. Dvorak, "Edwin Judge, Wayne Meeks, and Social-Scientific Criticism," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 2:179–203, esp. 189–98.

78. Jerome Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt: John's Christology in Social-Science Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988).

book, Neyrey examines the notion of the Johannine community—and in that sense, this is part of the community discussion above—from the standpoint of the sociology of knowledge of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1927–2016),⁷⁹ but in a more specified form used by sociologist Mary Douglas (1921–2007).⁸⁰ Neyrey is therefore interested in the intersection of the historical issues regarding the early Johannine community and a sociology of knowledge that sees Johannine Christology as reflecting the estranged social location of the community. Also reflecting Berger and Luckmann, Norman Petersen has written a small and intriguing book that draws upon the work of Bruce Malina and his interpretation of Michael Halliday’s view of anti-language.⁸¹ Petersen argues that the Johannine community redefines its language into an anti-language, so that the terms have special meaning for the community. The social-scientific trend in recent Johannine scholarship has become more focused in some recent work on questions of empire. In such treatments, John’s gospel is seen as providing a counterargument to the language of empire promoted by the Romans.⁸²

The only scholar from this section discussed in our volume is Culpepper. Nevertheless, Culpepper’s work has not only stimulated much further research into John’s gospel, but his pursuit of literary analysis as opposed to (or in addition to?) the historical criticism in which he was educated marks a significant move in New Testament studies.

CONSERVATIVE RESURGENCE

We conclude with a final section on authors who have been part of what might best be called a conservative resurgence in Johannine studies. The

79. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966).

80. Mary Douglas, *Essays in the Sociology of Perception* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), esp. 1–30. See Dustin J. Boreland, “Mary Douglas: Living in Literature,” in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 2:204–29.

81. Norman Petersen, *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light: Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993), referring to Bruce Malina, “The Gospel of John in Sociolinguistic Perspective,” *Center for Hermeneutical Studies*, Colloquy 48 (Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1985); and Michael A. K. Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning* (London: Arnold, 1978).

82. See, for example, Lance Byron Richey, *Roman Imperial Ideology and the Gospel of John*, CBQMS 43 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 2007) and Tom Thatcher, *Greater Than Caesar: Christology and Empire in the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009).

twentieth century came to be dominated in many ways by discussion of questions of authorship, sources, and, as a result, historicity, whether implicitly or explicitly. These were often tied to the date of composition of the gospel. However, while this discussion was continuing, there were a number of authors who seriously departed in one or more ways from the traditional view, not in literary-theoretical ways, but in their rejection of the dominant hypotheses of Johannine scholarship. This usually meant departure from one or more of either a late or even a middle date, the two-level hypothesis, source dependence, non-apostolic authorship, and the like. For example, even though he attributes the gospel to four sources (Jesus, the Paraclete, the disciples including especially the Beloved Disciple, and the narrator), Paul Minear (1906–2007) believes that John's gospel is a martyrology testifying to the victory of the martyrs, and was written pre-AD 70.⁸³ One of the most important evangelical Johannine scholars of this resurgence was Leon Morris (1914–2006). Morris wrote widely on many areas of New Testament study but is perhaps best remembered for his work on John's gospel. His massive commentary on John's gospel was revised in a second edition, and his Johannine scholarship was also reflected in several important collections of essays.⁸⁴ Some of the other scholars who have followed in Morris's steps include D. A. Carson, who has written several volumes on the Johannine literature, including a commentary on John's gospel. Even though Carson accepts the middle date for composition of John's gospel, he widely disputes the various source hypotheses and gives high credibility to the historical reliability of the gospel.⁸⁵ Craig Blomberg has gone so far as to write a commentary on John's gospel in defense of its historical reliability.⁸⁶ As already mentioned above, the scholar who is perhaps most often and clearly associated with an early date for John's

83. Paul S. Minear, *John: The Martyr's Gospel* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 1984). See Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, 3:500–13, esp. 505.

84. Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971; rev. ed., 1995); Morris, *Studies in the Fourth Gospel*; and Morris, *Jesus is the Christ: Studies in the Theology of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

85. Carson, *John*.

86. Blomberg, *Historical Reliability*. Although not all the contributors or editors are part of the conservative resurgence, the three (to date) volumes in the John, Jesus, and History project organized by Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher (as editors of the volumes), provide the opportunity for a wide range of scholars to participate. These volumes include: *John, Jesus, and History*, Volume 1: *Critical Appraisals of Critical Views* (Atlanta: SBL, 2007); Volume 2: *Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: SBL, 2009); and Volume 3: *Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine Lens* (Atlanta: SBL, 2006). This work was preceded by Paul N. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus: Modern Foundations Reconsidered* (London: T&T Clark, 2006).

gospel is Robinson. First in his book on redating the New Testament and then in more detail in his book on the priority of John, he argues that John's gospel, independent of the Synoptic Gospels but sharing their early date of composition, reflects an early, independent, and reliable witness in its account of Jesus.⁸⁷

The arguably most significant of those who represent the conservative resurgence is Richard Bauckham. An historian by education, Bauckham has throughout his career engaged in rethinking the historical foundations of various areas of New Testament scholarship. We mentioned him above for his view on the gospels being for all Christians, a proposal that he applies to John's gospel as well as the Synoptics. Bauckham has throughout his scholarly career written numerous other works on the Johannine literature. A number of these essays have been gathered together into a single volume as a testament to disputing what he calls the "dominant approach" in Johannine scholarship.⁸⁸ He characterizes this dominant approach as minimalistic regarding traditions and reliability, but emphasizing a complex compositional history involving a staged process invoking the so-called Johannine community, especially Martyn's involving two levels. Bauckham argues against the entirety of the various features of this dominant approach. Rather than seeing a complex and involved process developing over time and involving a range of documents, with the result being an unreliable community product distant from its traditions, Bauckham instead argues for the Beloved Disciple—not one of the twelve disciples but a close follower of Jesus—as the source of John's gospel. This eyewitness testimony of the Beloved Disciple, supplemented by accounts from others of Jesus's closest followers, forms the basis of John's account, which was carefully nurtured until it was released for the benefit of all Christians. The result is that John's gospel, like the Synoptics, is an ancient biography about Jesus, not an apologetic or means of reconstruction of a Johannine community. This eyewitness testimony hypothesis has been extended by Bauckham to the other gospels as well.⁸⁹

A second trend within the conservative resurgence worth mentioning briefly is a revisitation of the theological dimension of

87. Robinson, *Redating*; Robinson, *Priority of John*.

88. Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), esp. 9–31.

89. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), esp. 358–471.

John's gospel. In contemporary scholarship, there had been a recognition of the humanness of Jesus even in John's gospel. In reaction to Bultmann, who saw this human dimension even though he believed that the gospel was written within the purview of gnostic influence, his student Ernst Käsemann (1906–1998) had departed from his teacher in emphasizing the divine depiction of Jesus, verging on Docetism. Käsemann's study, *The Testament of Jesus*, aroused critical response, some of it positive and other of it negative.⁹⁰ The result was an increase of interest in the theology, and in particular the Christology, of John's gospel. Marianne Meye Thompson has been one of the important conservative respondents in this field. In her first book, *The Humanity of Jesus*, she responds directly to Käsemann by establishing the basis of seeing the humanity of Jesus in John's gospel.⁹¹ This has led her, among others, to a revival of discussion of the theological dimension of John's gospel. However, whereas much previous research has been concerned primarily with Christology, the new emphasis, at least according to Thompson, is upon the theocentric character of John's gospel, in which there is a pervasive influence of God the father upon the entirety of the gospel, including especially the relationship between God and Jesus.⁹²

This collection of essays features two of those featured in the conservative resurgence, Morris and Robinson, both already mentioned above. Morris is tried and true in his evangelical credentials, having displayed them on various occasions whether he is dealing with matters of history or theology. Robinson finds common cause with evangelicals in his argument for an early date and independent character of John's gospel, giving it equal priority with the Synoptics. However, for all his conservative historical findings, Robinson was known, through his varied theological writings, to represent a liberal perspective on most matters. Nevertheless, he has raised important questions through the course of his research that merit further discussion.

90. Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17*, trans. Gerhard Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968).

91. Marianne Meye Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

92. Marianne Meye Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); cf. Thompson, *The Promise of the Father: Jesus and God in the New Testament* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000). Her view is, by her own admission (*God*, 46–47), similar to that of Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

CONCLUSION

These are certainly not the only trends and developments that have occurred in Johannine scholarship over the last several centuries. There are no doubt many other areas, as well as individual scholars, that would warrant mention in the summary above, and other scholars will no doubt retell this narrative with other participants as their featured contributors. However, the history of Johannine scholarship as we are treating it in this volume revolves around various milestones in its scholarship that are represented in the essays included.

What we have attempted to provide in this summary of the course of Johannine scholarship is an overview of some of the major trends in especially its last two centuries. The framework that we offer has provided enough distinctions so as to illustrate the representative roles played by the eight scholars treated in more detail within this volume as evidencing milestones in modern Johannine scholarship. We have not tried to balance the categories or provide equal numbers in each of the major developments that we have identified. To the contrary, we have written this history independent of the choices made of participants, as a convenient way of interweaving the complex matrix of what comprises Johannine scholarship so as to help establish further connections among those represented.