

# Notes on the Cana story (John 2:1–11)

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Draft

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Figure 1: 14th c. mosaic, Chora Church, Constantinople

## 1 DRAFT IDEAS

These are notes taken while working on *Six stone jars*, a paper on this detail in John 2:6. I share them in the hope that summaries of the scholarship and the bibliography might be useful to research. The outline of my paper was as follows:

1. state the problem posed by the mention of six stone jars, the volume involved, the reason for number, material, and volume, as well as for the comment that follows. What is really the difficulty? The paper focusses on the number and on the material: why six and not seven? Compare the Hebrew Bible.
2. then, summarize the approaches of the problem and the various interpretations given in modern and ancient commentators:
  - a) modern interpretations: difficulty of the problem, when or if it is perceived (examples of its being swept away). It is given various solutions: dismissed or explained as:
    - i. calendar speculation (number), on which one can already see the efforts of Origen and Augustine;
    - ii. in the context of tense relations with Jewish authorities: as fulfillment, etc.
  - b) ancient interpretations: various meanings affixed to this detail of the story.
3. The difficulty is resolved if the body of Jesus is taken to be a hidden seventh jar. This paper then explains the mention of six jars, the volume, and the note on purification in light of the metaphor of Jesus as container or crucible; What was the author's intention?
  - a) The stone jars, their aspect, especially volume question:
    - i. Distribution (literature on the question);
    - ii. relationship of this artefact to the temple? What can one say regarding the use of stone?
    - iii. volume of jar and human body;
    - iv. fullness aspect;

- b) Jesus' body as seventh container: cf. well, pointed at by absence and lack of visibility (point of gospel: absent father, absent-to-be son of man, spirit only present); Container/spring, like the temple;
- c) the inclusio, John 19:35;
- d) placement of temple episode;
- e) literary structure of gospel, and sacramental theology.

En résumé: l'idée a trait au petit détail des six jarres de pierre. Pourquoi pas sept, chez un auteur qui donne peu de détails matériels à moins qu'ils ne soient symboliques? Bien des exégètes symbolisent donc le "six", souvent dans une direction qui est anti-judaïque. Je pense que l'auteur veut nous amener à découvrir qu'il y a en fait sept jarres dans l'histoire, la septième étant le corps de Jésus. C'est probablement la raison principale que le passage sur les noces est suivi de l'épisode au temple. C'est sûrement pourquoi le corps de Jésus est transpercé au chapitre 19 (mais la tradition textuelle hésite et ne dit plus: mis en perce) et que le sang et l'eau y coulent dans le sens inverse de Cana (eau et vin). Le travail de découverte et d'approfondissement que l'auteur offre à l'audience est déclenché par cette absence.

## 2 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE

In regard to whether the six jars pose a problem, and whether it has a solution (other pbs are: the displacement of the temple episode; comments on 19:34–35; and finally the sacramentary issue), here is a summary of the positions taken by previous commentators:

- (1) there is a problem, but no easy solution.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bultmann; C. K. BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John: an introduction with commentary and notes on the Greek text*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1978), 191; (drawing on Barrett, and fairly typical): L. MORRIS, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1995), 160–62, who notes the number, the fact that seven meant perfection in Judaism, and the symbolic explanations given by commentators, among which the imperfection of Judaism. Continues with this important (typical) objection: "the narrative contains nothing that would symbolize completeness, which would surely be required to correspond to

- (2) no attention paid to the particular problem.<sup>2</sup>  
 (3) the particular problem not raised, but symbolism of the gospel and the scene usefully discussed.<sup>3</sup>

### 3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON JOHN

Many developments occurred in the scholarship on GJ in the past sixty years which are reviewed in a number of publications: P. N. ANDERSON, “John and Qumran: discovery and interpretation over sixty years”, in *John, Qumran, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: sixty years of discovery and debate*, ed. M. L. COLOE and T. THATCHER (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 15–49 (15–16). Aside from Anderson,<sup>4</sup> see R. KYSAR, *The fourth evangelist and his Gospel: an examination of contemporary scholarship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975); and R. KYSAR, *Voyages with John: charting the Fourth Gospel* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2005), ch. 5–8.

The influential commentaries of the second half of the twentieth c. are listed and aptly related to each other and to the larger history of exegesis by D. M. SMITH, “Johannine studies”, in *The New Testament and its modern interpreters*, ed. E. J. EPP and G. W. MACRAE (Fortress Press, 1989), 271–

the incomplete. Jesus does not create or produce a seventh pot.” Schnackenburg; Brown;

Lindars; Moloney; B. M. NEWMAN and E. A. NIDA, *A handbook on the Gospel of John* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1980), 59 (for translators): notes in passing that some scholars interpret six as meaning the imperfection of Judaism, but that this is not clear and unimportant for translation proper.

<sup>2</sup>R. H. LIGHTFOOT, *St. John's Gospel; a commentary*, ed. C. F. EVANS (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 100–2; T. L. BRODIE, *The Gospel according to John; a literary and theological commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 172, is silent on this particular fact but reflects much on the meaning of the wine and wedding; C. S. KEENER, *The Gospel of John, a commentary* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), 511–12 esp. mentions in passing Augustine's explanation (6 periods of history), but doesn't appear to see a problem though his delineation of profusing detail on purification rules leads him to misread, or “read in” what should be expected. Not helpful at all.

<sup>3</sup>For instance, the theological reflections in D. M. SMITH, *The theology of the Gospel of John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 25;

<sup>4</sup>See also P. N. ANDERSON, “Beyond the shade of the oak tree: the recent growth of Johannine studies”, *The Expository Times* 119 (2008): 365–73

96 (271–73). Bultmann comes first and sets the agenda for the time being (from 1941, esp. from the ET on, i.e. until today). Then Dodd, Brown and Schnackenburg, Barrett, Boismard, Martyn, Moody Smith, Haenchen.

One important change was brought about by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Qumran excavations, and the study of the Essenes. Anderson for instance asks whether Bultmann would have propounded the same source theories if he had written after the Qumran discoveries, which showed there was no need to go outside Judaism to find tensions and dualism in the cosmology and theodicy of the time.<sup>5</sup> From the potentially most hellenized text (Alexandrian or Gnostic), the fourth Gospel became the most Jewish of all gospels for some.<sup>6</sup>

Very good summary in R. KYSAR, “John, the Gospel of”, in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. FREEDMAN, vol. 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 912–31. On structure and contents: the accent nowadays is not on seeking to restore a better original order—there is no need to go after this white whale of an original—than the present structure, but to “see purpose in the present order.” (913). He seems to accept the basic two parts of a “book of signs” and a “book of glory” (respectively 1–12 and 13–20). Seven or eight signs, depending on the count of signs in 6:16–21 (one or two?): page 915. About style (915): repetition, meditative quality, chiasmic structures (e.g. 6:36–40), use of inclusion. An example of a large-frame inclusion is the word god for word in 1:18, and Thomas confessing Jesus to be god in 20:28. I think the water into wine and blood and water flow belong to this kind of inclusions too.

On the symbolic dimension of this gospel (917): metaphorical speeches, use of dualism (above and below e.g.), and especially symbolism of Jesus' actions. Often left to the reader to “exploit the full meaning of the action of Jesus.” So, for instance, the cleansing of the temple represents the cleansing of the Judaism of his time (i.e., the source of purification is other). In this story, Jesus is presented as replacing the temple which had been destroyed (also). The

<sup>5</sup>ANDERSON, “John and Qumran”, 15.

<sup>6</sup>BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John*; J. H. CHARLESWORTH and R. E. BROWN, *John and the Dead Sea scrolls* (New York: Crossroad, 1990).

problem for the interpreter is that symbolism opens the door to speculation. “There is, consequently, a certain open-endedness to the meaning of the Gospel of John” (917).

Purpose of the gospel? strengthen the faith of a community that felt besieged, in difficult historical circumstances since 70, and in need of confirmation as well as redefinition, after having suffered expulsion from the synagogue?<sup>7</sup> This is appealing, but what then of the clear Jewish character of this Gospel? Origins then in a Jewish Christian community?

Finally, about sacraments (929): The debate rages on because baptism and eucharist do not appear clearly in the text (or at all), yet there are passages that speak of these sacraments in veiled manner. For instance, a number of commentators understand 2:1–11 to be a veiled allusion to baptism. “19:34 is also taken by some to mean that the water of baptism and the blood of the eucharist come from the side of Jesus as a result of his death.” Was the evangelist a sacramentarian, an anti-sacramentarian, or just interested in the spiritual meaning of these sacraments?

#### UNKNOWN RECENT WRITER

The Cana sign is not about the miraculous transformation of water into wine but about the provision of a definitive, superior wine. The glory remains hidden, “embodied in a human being.” The author concludes from the stone jars and servants that the reference is to a well-to-do family that would be expected to provide for the feast. The A. explains the sharp rebuke as expressing Jesus’ sovereignty in making decisions. Jesus would be taking his distances from his mother as he will do with his brothers???. Unconvincing. But correct: the miraculous aspect of the change remains mysterious and hidden. The A. recuses the interpretation that the wine of the gospel has replaced the water of the law... but the comment on the good wine points to the notion of salvation. The move is not lateral (replacement) but forward. The Hebrew Bible and Judaism had

<sup>7</sup>But see the recent criticisms of setting this position as general when it may have expressed local conditions. Attached to that criticism: the Martyn hypothesis of a two-stage gospel is found less than convincing.

a built-in expectation of a new transformative era: not a replacement but a fulfillment. Good point that grapes and leaves plus cup often represented on coins of the two revolts. There is a materiality to the signs that cannot be “spiritualized away.”

#### ANDERSON, PAUL

Et al. Numerous recent publications tending to recognize John as terra incognita that deserves the attention of historians. The work, according to Anderson, is the product of a dialogical author whose tradition goes back, in parallel with that of the synoptics and sometimes in conversation with them (Mark), to the earliest level of the Jesus tradition. So, consequently, the time structure and events of the narrative (four visits to Jerusalem) have as much chance to be historical as the synoptic framework. The early confrontation at the temple (meaning at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, Anderson’s word) could well be historical. It looks very much like a bunch of inferences. It remains that indeed the Gospel of John should not be left to theologians but be studied by historians even at its most dialogical or dialectical and symbolic. But this involves another kind of history, not a laying out of events in Jesus’ life, which will end up being a long list of suppositions.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>See first of all the papers published in a series of three consecutive volumes: P. N. ANDERSON, F. JUST, and T. THATCHER, eds., *Critical appraisals of critical views*, vol. 1 of *John, Jesus, and history*, Society of Biblical Literature symposium series (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007); ANDERSON, JUST, and THATCHER, eds., *Aspects of historicity in the Fourth Gospel*, vol. 2 of *John, Jesus, and history*, Society of Biblical Literature symposium series (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009); ANDERSON, JUST, and THATCHER, eds., *Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine lens*, vol. 3 of *John, Jesus, and history*, SBLSS (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011); also P. N. ANDERSON, “Introduction to Part I: Aspects of historicity in John 1–4”, in *Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine lens*, ed. P. N. ANDERSON, F. JUST, and T. THATCHER, vol. 3 of *John, Jesus, and history*, SBLSS (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 9–14; as well as Anderson’s own works: ANDERSON, *The fourth Gospel and the quest for Jesus: modern foundations reconsidered* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2006); ANDERSON, “Beyond the shade of the oak tree”; and recently (for me): ANDERSON, *The riddles of the Fourth Gospel: an introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

The account of 2:1–11 is superficial.<sup>9</sup> A “party miracle” at the beginning of ministry (again!), not found in synoptics, but appearing in Apollonius of Tyana (exactly how?). “...theology seems to trump history on this account” (by pointing to the raising of Lazarus and his own resurrection). Yet, “the mundane character of the details in this sign is also striking: the purification jars are made of stone, and their capacity [...] is explicitly emphasized.” Independent source or even alternative beginning of ministry (!) from the author’s perspective. Duh!

Regarding the confrontation at the temple, 2:13–23: McGrath renvoie dos à dos John and Mark (Mt and Lk following the latter), as both capable of theological as well as historical structuration.<sup>10</sup> He argues that GJ may have access to an earlier tradition regarding the event: we seem to be back to Ranke and his “was geschehen ist” with ontological, christological, concerns in the background. This is not history but a strange epiphenomenon.

#### ASHTON

Ashton gives an extensive review of the literature in the first chapters of his book.<sup>11</sup> The first (and second?) chapter survey the beginning of modern scholarship on John, which is dominated by German works: especially Bauer and Strauss.<sup>12</sup> It is a very useful assessment of the main ideas, their advantages and drawbacks. Bultmann looms large, and so do Brown and even Martyn, much less so Dodd.

I add a more recent participation by Anderson in a volume where the contribution of Dodd to the problem of the historicity of John is discussed from various angles: P. N. ANDERSON, “Incidents dispersed in the Synoptics and cohering in John: Dodd, Brown, and Johannine historicity”, in *Engaging with C. H. Dodd on the Gospel of John. Sixty years of tradition and interpretation*, ed. T. THATCHER and C. H. WILLIAMS (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 176–202.

<sup>9</sup> ANDERSON, “Introduction to Part I”, 10.

<sup>10</sup> J. F. MCGRATH, “‘Destroy this temple’: issues of history in John 2:13–22”, in *Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine lens*, ed. P. N. ANDERSON, F. JUST, and T. THATCHER, vol. 3 of *John, Jesus, and history*, SBLSS (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 35–43.

<sup>11</sup> J. ASHTON, *Understanding the fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> More generally, see my notes on John in the Gospels folder.

P. 86: Regarding M. E. BOISMARD, *Moses or Jesus: an essay in Johannine Christology* (Minneapolis / Leuven: Fortress Press / Peeters Press, 1993) and the need to consider the growth of the Johannine community. This program of research was systematically and successfully done by R. E. BROWN, *The Gospel according to John (I–XII). Introduction, translation, and notes* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), and also by J. L. MARTYN, *History and theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003) in a different way.

90–91, note 55: commenting on authorial (singular) genius and romantic understanding of it, in relation to Homer, and applying to John: not likely

that the same person composed both the signs source alluded to in John 2 and the brilliant dramatic dialogue of John 9.

94: important question is asked by Bultmann: Was is das erste Rätsel? How to bridge the gap between the Signs or Signs-like source(s) and the “elaborate christology” we find in the gospel?

95: syncretism in John? Or in Roman Empire in general? Its nature? conditions? See Selden now on the notion of “text networks”. It is a historical question: what is the milieu for such a syncretism? Vicious circle.

105: Ἰουδαῖοι, with its various meanings. Judaeans, especially the Judaeans authorities at the Temple (still a geographic component here), but also the Jewish people of Roman Palestine, and even including the Hellenized Jews of the diaspora? There is a whole literature on what the word means in the gospel. See next section below.

On Martyn and Bultmann: What is pointed to by the signs is the glory of God. Glory, that is to say the transformation of the person (flesh) into something radically different and inebriating. ἀρχή, i.e. first of the signs, and also prototype, principle, foundation. Thought regarding the grounding of the audience and readership question in history (form and social background): the explanation of the evolution of the text as a corollary of the evolution of the milieu has its limits, whether we are considering the insiders (the communities of Brown and/or Martyn) or outsiders (in the sense of the history of religion



school, since Bousset especially; see the summary of the positions by Ashton). What is surprising to me, when attempting to provide a social explanation of the Cana story (hmm, not really an explanation but a coloring really, nothing more), is the difficulty of the task or, put differently, the distance the author keeps from the social aspects. For instance, one could argue that the wine represents a level of agriculture that summarizes all that is so difficult in the distribution of labor and consumption. But the gospel helps little with this.

Ashton gets into the meat of the topic, chapter 4, where he begins in earnest his inquiry into what he calls the possible sources, influences, and background to help illuminate this most extraordinary text. Basic question: how does one jump from Jesus (synoptically rendered, and self-consciousness?) to the view of Jesus found in the Fourth Gospel? Everyone assumes there is a chasm to be explained. Well, Hengel doesn't think so: see M. HENGEL, *Studies in early christology* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995). In this book, Hengel asserts that the ultimate source of the triune christology has its kernel in Jesus and was already somewhat developed by Paul (his understanding of God "is open to trinitarian terms", p. ix). This conservative theologian and historian has a point here. Let me quote Ashton from my journal:

That there was a religious genius behind and beneath the work of the fourth evangelist is a truth whose significance is often neglected. But the contribution of Jesus to his thought is not easily demarcated, and in any case is better characterized as an influence than as a source.<sup>13</sup>

What is meant here by "religious genius"? the admittedly complex forms yet direct, authoritative and singular language? The great difference from the simpler (i.e. passibles d'une ou plusieurs explications historiques) Synoptics? The influence the work has had on subsequent believers and writers? The point is well taken, however, namely that there is something *sui generis* in the gospel. Which means, therefore, that all the research on sources, influences, and more general background is bound only to help

explain why there is genius at work, but can't explain it. But then, one also sees more clearly that to speak of genius is a presupposition which stops the critical enterprise dead in its tracks.

"The contribution of Jesus to his thought is not easily demarcated." This is a strange way to say it, when a basic concept of the author is *faith*, not "thought". Ashton's language is that of acquisition, standing over or under, which is absent from the gospel. It would behoove us to follow the gospel itself and respect its own language before imposing other categories which run the risk of completely misunderstanding it.

In the middle of an otherwise interesting development on the history of belief in Jesus' messiahship, an odd statement regarding Eusebius *HE* 2.23.9-18, on James' martyrdom:

What is striking about this passage is that the indignation of the Jews could be excited simply and solely by James' teaching that Jesus was the Messiah.<sup>14</sup>

A little comment in order: the Jews here (not for Eusebius, hostile as he is to the whole nation, but for his tradition, or at least some of it) are the authorities. But what is missing in all this discussion is the political assessment of messiahship under client-kings, direct rule, after the temple's fall, etc. One has to take seriously the idea that this was a paramount concept for the Jewish people, be they in Judaea, Gaulanitis, Galilee, neighboring cities like Antioch (see Josephus on these tensions), and in parallel the Taheb for Samaritans.

The key, I propose, is that the Jewish believers in Jesus' messiahship—or prophecy, or son of man: see Hegesippus again—had plenty of motivation, because of their fidelity to their own people and community (see Stephen, James, Paul), to deepen the meaning of messiah in the direction of spiritual goods, while preserving or sheltering the political meaning. Thus, they hoped not to separate themselves from family and social groups, etc. especially in view of a history of gentile hostility, mockery, pressure which

<sup>14</sup>*ibid.*, 249. Compare the situation in Acts 7, and in Hegesippus quoted by Eusebius, further in *Pseudo-Clementines, recognitiones* 1.36.2. Are the latter to be definitely attached to the 2d c. Pella community?

<sup>13</sup>ASHTON, *Understanding the fourth Gospel*, 126.

surely didn't go away, on the contrary, after the fall of the temple in 70 CE. In this there is also a fidelity of sorts, or faith in other words. In other words, whereas other figures held to be prophetic or messianic had clearly failed—and we only have Josephus' words on this—the failure of Jesus' messiahship was only apparent, and actually part and parcel of the real messianic figure (part of the forgiving, withdrawing, etc.: already in Paul's developed view).

And it is interesting in this respect to remember that some Judaeo-Christian communities didn't claim that Jesus was a messiah, certainly not divine, but rather a prophet foretold by Moses (Ps.-Clementines).

Only later will the evangelist take the radical step, perhaps in response to the breach described by Martyn et al, of altering the political meaning of messiahship in a new direction. He will carve out a divine "territory" for Jesus son of man for a larger, hostile, world (à la Paul in Romans then?) beyond nationality, using a dualist language at times, and with good reason to paint the "Jews" as hostile rather than in error.

#### BARRETT

Barrett, in his introduction to the second edition of his commentary, is very clear about the recent trends, esp. regarding sources (Bultmann), the relationship of John to Synoptics or its absence, and the impact of the DSS discoveries, and as clear about the tenuousness and fragility of the conclusions drawn by many modern commentators after Bultmann.<sup>15</sup>

Notes on his introduction: P. 8: refers to Schweitzer 106 re. "the pericopae 2:1–10, 13–19; 4:46–53; 12:1–8, 12–15 seem to stand out from the rest of the gospel, though they have certainly been worked over by the author of the whole." Many of the specific stylistic features of John lead to a judgement of integrity of the whole. The point of 2:13–22 "is not the purification of the Temple but the prediction that the killed and risen body of Jesus would take the place of the Temple."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup>BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John*.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 13.

Regarding Nicodemus, Barrett has it right in his introductory summary: what is pointed out in the story is that "Israel" (Nicodemus) "cannot expect simply to pass into the Kingdom of God through the mere lapse of time."<sup>17</sup> Rebirth is needed. In chapter 4, the theme is kept up, of water from Jacob's well as a "shadow" before "worship in Spirit and in truth" (neither at Jerusalem or Samaria, I note). The miracle of the return of life to a gentile in 4:46–54 parallels that of Cana (by location).

"Those, it should be noted, who reject John's knowledge of Mark are in even deeper darkness." (17!) That is, than those like CKB who posit a knowledge of Mark, however transformed to suit the GJ author's theology.

Regarding the Bultmann *σημεῖα* Quelle or source in which Jesus would have been portrayed as *θεῖος ἄνθρωπος*. Linguistic grounds are not sufficient for its reconstitution, as Bultmann himself recognized.<sup>18</sup> In the end, regardless of the other pointers (2:11: first of the signs; 4:54: second sign; plus style as Schweitzer showed), Barrett thinks the suggestion of a "signs-source intended to evoke faith in Jesus as wonder-worker" (19) is possible but cannot be proved.

On displacement which is an issue in my case because of the placement of the temple episode in 2:13–22 immediately after the Cana story: Barrett asks the logical question, if it's actually impossible to identify sources, how can one then speak of displacement? This question of course could only arise from the older belief or presupposition that the author of GJ had the Synoptics before him. But if the GJ author had at most a parallel tradition to that of the Synoptics before him (and Barrett still thinks it's Mark, as even a naïve reading of GJ in Greek, especially in a synopsis, makes quite clear, at least to me), one is hard put to suppose a displacement. Wahlde's reconstruction doesn't address that issue, that I can tell, meaning there is no explanation by displacement in his view. He sees this story as entirely part of the second edition of the gospel. I find it difficult to believe that what is characteristic of the third edition in Wahlde's reconstruction,

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 18–19.

namely the notion of atonement, Jesus as lamb of God laying down his life, and even the necessity for the Paraclete to remind people of what Jesus said, and glorification, is not already in the story of Cana which W. put in the first edition. He does mark in red (2d ed.) the phrase on glorification of Jesus after the Cana sign, but my interpretation of the stone jars and Jesus in continuity with it means that the story teller already views Jesus' death as atonement, as necessary.

#### BEUTLER

One more commentary: J. BEUTLER, *Das Johannevangelium: Kommentar* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2013), 118–26 for the chapter on Cana (first sign). Follow some notes on this recent commentary that adds little to what has been said before. Synthetic rather and unsurprising. Speaks of a book of signs (119) with Lazarus' resurrection story in 11:1–44 as the highest point and a conclusion. Quotes Michèle Morgen re. the Cana banquet and the last meal of John 13:1–30.<sup>19</sup> He notes the inclusion from 2:1–11 to 19:25–27. Who else? He notes also the difficulties raised by the mother/Jesus exchange and the multiple hypotheses made (christology? marianic? salvation history? feminism?), page 120.

Page 121: doesn't note the relationship of women to lack. Harsh answer (with biblical background: Judg 11:12; 2 Sam 16:10; 19:22; 1 Kgs 17:18) or positive spin, "what is mine is yours", as in Stramare, "La riposta", 185. Beutler sees Jesus' answer as declarative, not a question. Notes that it is not the filling that constitutes the miracle (or triggered it), but it happens on the way to the master of ceremonies and guests.

Page 123: the literary-critical questions have been adequately covered by Lütgehetmann 41–122. Two directions that he sees in the interpretation of the historical background: a) the biblical background, sufficient for the story, underlined by R. E. Brown

<sup>19</sup>M. MORGEN, "Le festin des noces de Cana (Jn 2, 1–11) et le repas d'adieu (Jn 13, 1–30)", in *Nourriture et repas dans les milieux juifs et chrétiens de l'antiquité: mélanges offerts au professeur Charles Perrot*, ed. M. QUESNEL, Y.-M. BLANCHARD, and C. TASSIN, *Lectio Divina* 178 (Paris: Cerf, 1999), 139–54.

101–110, and the stories of multiplication of bread, both in Joh and syn. Perhaps influence of 1 Kgs 17:1–16 (widow of Sarepta, and son's life involved in a similar way, I think) and 2 Kgs 4:42–44 (Elisha). No wine however in those miracles and difference too in the nature of the need. Yes, but formal similarity. b) Hellenistic background (p. 125), adduced by a growing number of authors, vs Noetzel, who accept the influence of the Dionysios cult (since Bultmann). Pages 125–26: follows Hengel on the matter.

#### BRODIE

BRODIE, *The Gospel according to John; a literary and theological commentary*, 171–76, contests Schnackenburg's structuring of this little drama into three scenes. He thinks this view misses two fundamental ideas of time and secrecy. "There were there," takes up the "there" of the beginning. Extraordinary joy liberated in the Cana story, whereas the following story of the temple intimates a sense of death: both are tightly woven together. He accepts Bultmann's idea that the wine motif was influenced by the Dionysus legend (ref. to Bultmann 118–20; further discussed by Hoskyns 190–92; Lindars 127; Schnackenburg 1:338–40). "Jesus did not multiply vinegar at a funeral" (172)! References to the third day, hour and glory point to Jesus' death and resurrection. The word "sign" points to the importance of the meaning (not of the miracle per se).

#### BRUNER

Large one-volume commentary that gives a strong historical overview and shows wise judgment most of the time but lacks a sociological and ethnographic dimension.<sup>20</sup> GJ 2:1–11 and 2:13–22 are a diptych for Bultmann, *John*, 112.<sup>21</sup> The aspect of creation is inherent to a story of nuptiality. Unfortunate tongue-in-cheek remark on "meddling Jewish mother" to explain the tone of the mother's remark: is it a command or a request, however? It remains a mystery.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup>F. D. BRUNER, *The Gospel of John: a commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2012).

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 128, 129.

Is Jesus' answer to be considered a rebuke? a refusal? or a wondering question? In any case, it is to be read with 19:25–27 in mind. The *hour*: that of the beginning, or that of the end on the cross? [my answer: it has to do with the view of history that humans project themselves into, as they don't know in advance the costs of "miracles."] As for the six stones: imperfection of six (a question, for this author), vs the multiplication and joy of the new era?<sup>23</sup> In his reflections on choice wine and inferior wine, no discussion, surprisingly, of the new instant wine being a choice wine. Like many others, he quotes Augustine on the notion of miracle and seasonality of it: *John* 8:1 (NPNF 7:57). He agrees with Schnackenburg 1:327–28 that it is not clear that the mother of Jesus is asking for a miracle from her son. *She is calling attention to the shortage*. But not with a tone of rebuke that Schnackenburg sees in Jesus' answer. He agrees with Schnackenburg's idea that there is no symbolism (narrowly so) in the number 6, meaning that they do not stand for Jewish rituals. Yet there is symbolism in the large stone jars (that is: in their size, material, and even number).<sup>24</sup> It points to body(-ies) and the expectation of salvation, which is bound to the temple. This is against older commentaries like Barrett's (192), Bultmann 120, Brown 1:105 more gingerly, and Haentchen 1:179.

As for the possibility that the sacrament of the Eucharist is indicated by the scene? Yes for some fathers, see Dodd, *Tradition* 224.

#### CLAUSSEN

Essay in Charlesworth and Pokorný collection:<sup>25</sup> The least historical of the four Gospels? (74) Yet detailed in certain respects.<sup>26</sup> Tension between this apparent un-historicity and provision of certain de-

<sup>23</sup>BRUNER, *The Gospel of John*, 130–31.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>25</sup>C. CLAUSSEN, "Turning water to wine: re-reading the miracle at the wedding in Cana", in *Jesus research: The first Princeton-Prague Symposium on Jesus research, Prague 2005*, ed. J. H. CHARLESWORTH and P. POKORNÝ (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 73–97.

<sup>26</sup>He quotes Hengel, *Johannesevangelium*, 297–334; as well as G. THEISSEN and A. MERZ, *The historical Jesus: a comprehensive guide* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2005) = German third edition of 2001, p. 51.

tails not available in other sources (75). Recent return to take seriously its historicity or the historicity of some of its components.<sup>27</sup> So, turn page 76 to the two miracles, out of seven, that are not paralleled in other gospels. Why so much emphasis on this miracle that is not mentioned elsewhere (in first place, and evoked again in 4:46, plus mention of Cana in 21:2).

Claussen then reviews the embarrassed comments of mostly protestant exegetes such as D. F. Strauss, etc. re. this mysterious or enigmatic account (76, n21). The author proposes to look at possible historical data in the text (after Hengel, etc), and at its theology. His thesis (79): "inseparable fusion of history and theology in the Fourth Gospel."

He explores the two avenues presently favored after the dropping of the *semeia* source (or a two-sign source theory):<sup>28</sup> the Dionysus tradition, and the scriptural background. Those who accept the christianized Dionysiac approach, besides Bultmann (and predecessors): Morton Smith, Barrett 211–12, Jeremias, Lütgehetmann 261–82, Margaret Davies, Theissen and Merz, Dodd prudently. Against: Noetzel, Schnelle, Beasley-Murray, Meier 2:1021–22, n255, where a good summary of arguments is found. Close parallels are hard to come by (82). Claussen is negative on the Dionysus tradition (86). That John 2 probably had an impact on people familiar with Dionysian stories is another matter entirely.

What of the scriptural and para-scriptural background? Claussen goes through Noetzel's arguments, ap of Bar, Gen 49, etc. (87). Aber, no change of water in wine. Book of Esther, after Aus, *Water*, and the Purim celebrations already known by then? No change of water into wine, however. In conclusion, the story's background would come from another tradition (88).<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Besides Theissen, Merz, and Hengel: Fredriksen, Tovey, Anderson, Ehrman, Chilton, Moloney, and Meier. See below.

<sup>28</sup>CLAUSSEN, "Turning water to wine", 80.

<sup>29</sup>Or perhaps, as Dunn suggests in his book on 4Gospel, page 182, the lack of synoptic parallels suggests that it is a "miracle type" not "rooted in specific event(s)."

R. F. COLLINS, “Cana (Jn. 2:1–12)—The first of his signs or the key to his signs?”, *Irish Theological Quarterly* 47 (1980): 79–95 (89): sees a running theme, “namely that Jesus has come to replace the institutions of Judaism:” temple, rabbinic, Samaritan or Jewish worship, sabbath, manna, lights of feast of Dedication. Some of the gospel’s formulations point in that direction. Others indicate a deeper meaning, not simply rejection or replacement. This way of putting it falls short of what the text of the gospel says, and that is quoted by Collins himself. For in 1:16–17, “grace in place of grace...” (“grace upon grace?”) The filling up to the rim, it seems to me, is key, and the text of the prologue means fulfillment (ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν, καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος ·), not replacement. Continuation and transformation, with the dynamics of absence and fulfillment. That is why the six stone jars are framed as they are in the story. They point to a seventh container, present, but unrecognized by most, and whose body is the source of the miraculous acceleration of water into wine. Collins’ note 51, page 94, is even more telling:

The inadequacy of these rites is indicated by the evangelist’s notation that there were six stone jars. Six i.e. seven (the number of perfection) minus one, is a symbol of imperfection.

In time, good wine can become superior as well as turn into vinegar. Human life and history was often seen as a story of irremediable loss and entropy, with the blessed isles, the garden, or a perfect stoicist equilibrium at the origin. In any case, outside the reach of normal human beings. The story of the turning of water into wine redeems a long history of faith and failures and proposes to look at a radical transformation beyond repetitious circumstances.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Another way of expressing this is that it was a way to express hopes, as in the biblical stories of Jacob and others, rather than fulfillment. There was fulfillment, undeniably, as the image of the liquids indicate, but not as accumulated capital. Rather, it was a story of dynamic transformation (a pouring out).

Very interesting remarks on the nature of the symbolism of the gospel of John in M. L. COLOE, “Witness and friend: Symbolism associated with John the Baptist”, in *Imagery in the Gospel of John; terms, forms, themes, and theology of Johannine figurative language*, ed. J. FREY, J. G. van der WATT, and R. ZIMMERMANN (Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 319–32. Here are notes on this chapter. Formulas like “history is now radiant with the glory of God,” or “Words and deeds, places and times, will be both mundane, in that they refer to things of this world, and symbolic, in that they, at the same time, look to the transcendent to find their fuller meaning.”<sup>31</sup> This was already the notion put forth by Augustine in his commentary on John (?):

For even as that which the servants put into the water-pots was turned into wine by the doing of the Lord, so in like manner also is what the clouds pour forth changed into wine by the doing of the same Lord. But we do not wonder at the latter, because it happens every year: it has lost its marvellousness by its constant recurrence. And yet it suggests a greater consideration than that which was done in the water-pots. For who is there that considers the works of God, whereby this whole world is governed and regulated, who is not amazed and overwhelmed with miracles?<sup>32</sup>

She has written on a number of topics in the fourth gospel. For instance on temple symbolism: She sees the Temple and Jesus are intrinsically linked, of course. More, she conceives of the Temple as a character in the “symbolic world created by the narrative.”<sup>33</sup> With her insistence on symbolism and rhetorical creativity of the author, she, like many recent exegetes, is avoiding an evolutionary and dichotomous interpretation of the gospel according to which the temple was to be replaced by the spirit.

<sup>31</sup>COLOE, “Witness and friend”, 319.

<sup>32</sup>*Homilies on the Gospel of John* 8.1, quoted by MORRIS, *The Gospel according to John*, 162, note 35. Translation from P. SCHAFF and H. WACE, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975).

<sup>33</sup>M. L. COLOE, *God dwells with us: Temple symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 2001), 6.

Yes, the Johannine community, she thinks, needed to interpret the destruction of the temple, like other Jews. But the link between the temple and Jesus is not a simple equation, because Jesus, like the temple is also absent (??). Rather, there is transfer of the temple “from the body of Jesus to the community of believers.”<sup>34</sup> She suggests that the placement of the temple incident right after the story of the Cana miracle is influenced by wedding customs in which the bridegroom takes the bride to his father’s house. I’m giving another reason, namely that the missing stone in the Cana story, the body of Jesus, is self-revealed as the temple. Those reasons are not exclusive of each other.

More recently, she has written on the mother and the servants in John.<sup>35</sup> She shows that a major point of the story of the sign of Cana is to point to the deeper identity of Jesus. She alludes to Ritva Williams article in *CBQ* and follows her analysis.<sup>36</sup> Coloe doesn’t mention the role of women in noting lack, or the possible sacrificial view. Allusions to ex 19 I have to unravel.

#### CULPEPPER

R. A. CULPEPPER, *The anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: a study in literary design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), has been an important book in moving away from all too naïve a historical and now sociological inquiry in the Gospel of John. The preface argues that a better understanding of the literary and historical significance of this work will permit a renewal of its theological import. In this book, he follows the continental school of linguistics and literary analysis—R. Jakobson, Gérard Genette,

<sup>34</sup>COLOE, *God dwells with us*, 7.

<sup>35</sup>M. L. COLOE, “The mother of Jesus: a woman possessed”, in *Character studies in the fourth gospel. Narrative approaches to seventy figures in John*, ed. S. A. HUNT, D. F. TOLMIE, and R. ZIMMERMANN (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 202–13; COLOE, “The servants / steward at Cana: The whispering wizard’s wine-bearers?”, in *Character studies in the fourth gospel. Narrative approaches to seventy figures in John*, ed. S. A. HUNT, D. F. TOLMIE, and R. ZIMMERMANN (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 228–32.

<sup>36</sup>R. H. WILLIAMS, “The mother of Jesus at Cana: A social-science interpretation of John 2: 1-12”, *CBQ* 59 (1997): 679–92.

Wayne Booth, etc.—in examining the structure of the gospel.

He makes a difference between the real and implied author(s). The real author is the one usually discussed in the exegetical literature, and who is represented by a name and a few scraps of information gathered from the ancient witnesses, without anything adding to human understanding, but re-conducting the view that proximity to the source of holiness is sufficient in guaranteeing the truth and thereby the significance of the work. “The implied author is always distinct from the real author and is always evoked by a narrative.” He is “the sum of the choices made by the real author in writing the narrative.”<sup>37</sup> There is a single implied author, no matter the number of “real authors”, or, I would add, the changes in the life of the single real author... The implied author might also coincide with the real author, with his deepening understanding of fidelity.

On Cana: pages 27, 31, 90, 110, 117, 133, 134, 138, 216. Page 31: use of tenses; the present is used within the story even though narrating the past. “Even when the present tense is not used consistently in a particular sense, it serves to stop the movement of time.” (compare a slide show: 1. we went to X; 2. here we are; we are doing this; 3. so this is what happened, lights on!).

Page 90, re plot and John 2: “The plot emerges more clearly with Jesus’ dramatic opposition to the abuse of the temple.” I would think the framework of 6 + 1 also creates an expectation. A seventh is to come, an even bigger transformer and giver of life (incorporating water and wine): what is it going to be, Temple or Jesus? [the temple as source of water of life: see Euopos fresco]. It is also a source of sanctifying power, metonymically, for stone or chalk vessels (see below the section on this topic).<sup>38</sup> Jesus’

<sup>37</sup>CULPEPPER, *The anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 15–16.

<sup>38</sup>Question however: were the stones for jars from local quarries? Presumably, we have evidence for that. Yet, the development of these vessels, coupled with Herodian lamps, funerary customs, and the first-century synagogues (especially the Migdal synagogue and its torah-reading support stone covered with temple symbols, including an Ezekielian chariot)—see A. Berlin’s papers—make it possible to argue that vessels, lamps, ossuaries, etc., were seen as part of an extended sacred aura of the temple. The use of stone quarries in Galilee, for instance near Nazareth, remains a problem for my thesis,

death is foreshadowed in chapter 2, but not only in vv. 21–22. Also by the formula “my hour”, and the wine “out of season...”

Important: page 133, reacting to Dodd’s opinion that there is no symbolism in the scene at the foot of the cross: “That some symbolism is intended is indicated, however, by the symbolic overtones of both of the scenes in which Jesus’ mother appears.”<sup>39</sup> Cf. Lindars, in spite of some reservations regarding symbolism “à tous crins”.

Page 224: in his synthesis of the portrait of the implied reader, Culpepper concludes that “on the whole, a remarkably coherent and consistent picture of the intended reader emerges from the narrators’s comments.” Unity of thematic development, not of plot development (page 234). Perhaps with an eventually broader gentile Christian readership which would be less familiar with Judaism.

One of the purposes of the gospel was to convince or confirm the community and persuade others outside the community that Jesus is the divine revealer (page 225). So, *if seven stone vessels* had been present in the story, it would have been too obvious a stratagem, something to marvel at, but closed, not to puzzle or wonder over (except allegorically or midrashically, that is, open to power games of interpretation).<sup>40</sup> Further speculations on seven: Seven steps of understanding (see page 233 also, in summary fashion)? 1. Outside, marvelling; 2. synagogue: understand some but are blinded; 3. Those who understand but turn away; 4. Understand, but at different degrees: the Samaritan woman, 5 Martha, 6 Mary, and finally, 7, the Beloved Disciple. The gradation in seven degrees also is part of the staging of scenes such as the judgment of Jesus in Pilate’s court.<sup>41</sup>

however.

<sup>39</sup>This in reaction to C. H. DODD, *The interpretation of the fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 428, note 2.

<sup>40</sup>Put this in conclusion of paper, at end of reasoning on why Jesus suggested as number seven. Another thought: if seven stone vessels, then danger of seeing the transformation performed by Jesus as completely outside the Jewish tradition? The existence of six jars makes Judaism and early Christianity structurally related, while the story of seven jars would have signalled completion and closing.

<sup>41</sup>F. J. MOLONEY, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville, Min-

So, and this is my comment, in the 6 +1 stone jars, we have 6 jars in which a transformation occurs. The readers are invited to consider what looks like instant fermentation [yet is prepared by Jewish history] and understand that a more miraculous and necessary transformation happens in the unmentioned, implicit, seventh vessel—the body of Jesus.<sup>42</sup>

Page 226: I agree with Culpepper when he says that this gospel deals with the relationship between Jesus and the divine logos in a clear, non-docetic way. The A. insists both on pre-existence and incarnation. The evangelist borrows this language because he can’t stay with a purely Jewish language, I think. Yes, a divinity from above, not from *this* world [of people, *insist*], the *logos* from before [what does that mean in terms of cultural, Weberian development?]. Yet, also died a human death. Culpepper quotes R. E. BROWN, *The community of the beloved disciple* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 110–20.

Level 7 of understanding and following, the “Beloved Disciple.” Note: he witnesses the blood and water which flow after Jesus’ death, as other guarantors of witnessing are given for Cana (but weaker, as is termed differently the “showing of glory”. Compare to 7:39). Note also that the exaltation of the *logos* makes even more scandalous the chasm created by the crucifixion.

### *On literary and historical criticism*

A recent collection on the influence of Culpepper’s book on the study of the literary structure of John, several authors reflect back on the influence of source-

nesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 492–97. discussion of the chiasmic arrangement and seven stages in R. E. BROWN, *The Gospel according to John (XIII–XXI). Introduction, translation, and notes* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), 802, 857–59; discussed by Brown and partially accepted by him is A. J. de VAREBEKE, “La structure des scènes du récit de la passion en Joh. xviii–xix”, *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, 38 (1962): 504–22. Non vidi. See also M. J. MENKEN, *Numerical literary techniques in John: the Fourth Evangelist’s use of numbers of words and syllables*, Novum Testament Supplementum 55 (Leiden: Brill, 1985), ch. 1. Non vidi.

<sup>42</sup>See comments by Moloney on 19:35, his translation of the *κοιλία* = cavity, from thorax to intestines, as “heart”. The same word is used for “womb” in 3:4; Moloney’s ET of the scriptural quote in 7:39: “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.”

and historical criticism and wonder whether it is to be definitively abandoned, or rather conjugated (wed to? linked to?) with the literary approach: T. THATCHER and S. D. MOORE, eds., *Anatomies of narrative criticism. The past, present, and futures of the Fourth Gospel as literature* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008).

Reinhartz reflects that Kysar has clearly moved away from the Martyn's hypothesis about envisioning the Johannine community as coming out of an expulsion out of the Jewish synagogue(s?).<sup>43</sup>

My thoughts: I agree with the critics who think that "historical criticism" has proved to be too narrow especially when it is only interested in the real author and replacing it in a religious or cultural context that is stripped bare and reduced to a set of intellectual and religious ideas disconnected from the life of people of the time, let alone the "communities" for which these texts must have been significant (after all, they were transmitted). It was salutary to pull back from this overwrought avenue of research and see the text again as whole and ask questions from the text as one has it now. Yet, it is possible, I believe, to continue to ask questions of a historical nature, though only if they are broadened. In doing this, one has to be careful not to replace a type of dry historicism with another kind, be it sociological inquiry content with summary contexts. So, as Kysar says, the question of authorship can still be contemplated "in terms of the broader questions of the locus of textual meaning and the authority of different interpretations."<sup>44</sup> But where I part with all of those commentators is when they show that they are still concerned with the role the 4G has to play as basis for their belief. All historical questions become ancillary then. *I think the construction has to start from the other end: 4G as source for a better understanding of the history of the middle*

<sup>43</sup>A. REINHARTZ, "Building skyscrapers on toothpicks: the literary-critical challenge to historical criticism", in *Anatomies of narrative criticism. The past, present, and futures of the Fourth Gospel as literature*, ed. T. THATCHER and S. D. MOORE (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 55–76 (68).

<sup>44</sup>R. KYSAR, "John is dead, long live John!", in *Anatomies of narrative criticism. The past, present, and futures of the Fourth Gospel as literature*, ed. T. THATCHER and S. D. MOORE (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 137–46 (144).

*and end of the first c. CE.* No past outside what we reconstruct through language and discourse, agreed. Granted, history and ideology cannot be easily separated. Kysar speaks of the "ponderings of the early Christians,"<sup>45</sup> and I agree: this is the point of departure for the historian, allowing then the anthropologist's look into a broader society.

### *On symbolism*

See R. ZIMMERMANN, "Imagery in John: Opening up paths into the tangled thicket of John's figurative world", in *Imagery in the Gospel of John; terms, forms, themes, and theology of Johannine figurative language*, ed. J. FREY, J. G. van der WATT, and R. ZIMMERMANN (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 1–43. Important books and articles on the topic of symbolism and the "enigmatic quality of the language of the Fourth Gospel" (expression from Hamid-Khan quoted by Zimmermann, p. 8). Zimmermann sees three periods in regard to the development of an analysis of the johannine symbolic world. a) a negative outlook in the early twentieth century, due mainly to the influence of Jülicher's research on parables and the notion that 4G is a thicket that doesn't fit the categories (allegory, parable, examples). b) then, the linguistic turn, leading to Wead, Ollson, Culpepper. c) finally, since 1995, with Koester, Coloe (already Dodd?), etc. a more systematic look at imagery's structure, under the influence of theories of metaphor and figures.

The author of the gospel is self-aware: doesn't use παραβολή, but παροιμία, σημεῖον, ἀληθινός, with *paroimia* opposed to *parrhisia*. Consequently, the *paroimia* is not to be seen as an obstacle or a stumbling-block for audiences but an opportunity to deepen the understanding of hearers (who are in the situation of the servants dipping in the six water-filled jars, I add).

Other idea I have regarding body and temple: ancient shrines had images of the deity. They were not only a dwelling, but related the image to the dwelling.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 146.



C. DIETZFELBINGER, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Teilband 1: Johannes 1–12* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2001), 66–73: This author explains the motif of the change from water into wine as the product of a competition between the Jewish-Christian community and an ecstatic dionysiac cultic association, in Cana, no less.<sup>46</sup> Because of the power of attraction exercised by such a cult, the Johannine community protected itself by proposing that Jesus could do what Dionysus was reputed to have done, and much more (or more abundantly). This rests on the assumption that the Dionysus cult was well implanted in Palestina (Galilee? Samaria? Judaea? Decapolis?). Examples given (after Bultmann?): Scythopolis claimed to be the birthplace of the god. Coins bear the god's image (one has to ask: where and when exactly?). Dionysiac festivals were celebrated in cities of the area (Palestine).<sup>47</sup> But the author pushes the evidence when he claims that the 3d c. Dionysus-motif mosaic in Sepphoris (Dio-Caesarea) surely followed an earlier tradition regarding Dionysus followers, and the possibility (“dann stellt sich die Vorstellung ein,”) that the Christians in Cana would have had contact with them and responded to them with this story. The problem is that this involves a triple supposition (early Dionysus cult in Sepphoris, a Christian community in Cana, and contacts between both: geographically and socially possible for the latter, no doubt, however). The wonder of water into wine could be denounced in Judaism as magic, says the A (p. 71, quoting Billerbeck 1.631–1023ff). This miracle story was taken over by the evangelist (but the A. wonders if the purity aspect was inherited or added), who takes over and transforms the aspects of fullness and in relation to Jewish purity rituals: the water of Jewish purification is superseded and surpassed through the wine given by Christ.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup>DIETZFELBINGER, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Teilband 1*, 70.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>*ibid.*, 71: Das Wasser der jüdischen Reinigung wird durch den von Christus gespendeten Wein abgelöst und weit überboten. This reading is too narrow. Water, as chapter 19 shows, is a much broader concept. Augustine was closer.

For his interpretation of the steward's reaction, see below, under “Steward of the feast”. On the motif of the changing of water into wine, this author—like many others—sees wine as fulfilment and joy of messianic time and brings up the usual comparative material from Jewish tradition: Gn 49:11 (on Judah), *SyrBaruch* 29:5; and refers to Billerbeck 1.517ff; 4.1154–65.

## DREWERMANN

E. DREWERMANN, *Das Johannes-Evangelium: Bilder einer neuen Welt. Erster Teil: Joh 1–10* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2003), 99–115: Different kind of commentary, literary and psychological. He starts from the premise that there is a signs source with six stories put together. What was so impressive or miraculous in this first sign at Cana? He is quick on dismissing historicity and expanding on symbolism: “Die Mutter Jesu ist für Johannes keinesfalls die historische Maria aus Nazaret.<sup>49</sup>” But then why the mentions of the brothers, and of motherhood (almost widowhood) at the foot of the cross? It is both symbol and reality. Drewermann seems to go for an endlessly figural interpretation, though his depth psychology is not meant to mask his deep interest in social justice, on the contrary. Of course, I agree with Drewermann's comment on Jesus' mother: it is impossible to go along with the concept of sacrifice made gladly and knowingly by the mother (cf. Abraham).<sup>50</sup>

Good suggestion regarding the extraordinary first scene at Cana, on the increase or plenitude of joy, which is also the real reason for Jesus' end and spilling of his blood. Sixth day, six stone jars, six signs rather than seven (?), and a death on the sixth day.<sup>51</sup> How to avoid seeing the heptad as a logical fulfillment, and the whole scene as the setting into motion of a sacrificed Jesus? Are Mary and Jesus, as characters in the minds of ancient readers, I remind myself, aware of the cost involved in bringing fullness rather than accept penury? One may think of Mary

<sup>49</sup>DREWERMANN, *Das Johannes-Evangelium*, 104.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>51</sup>*ibid.*, 104. The latter by the way can be seen as an objection to my idea of the body as seventh stone container: but should the evangelist be completely coherent in his symbolism?

as doing what she thinks is right in the circumstances, not what social and cultural grids are telling her to do (pursuit of honor and security). While hoping to enhance everyone's honor, she may also be aware of the costs...

#### FEHRIBACH

No doubt that the analysis Fehribach makes of the nuptial-messianic theme and the patriarchal re-appropriation and reinforcing of birthing and motherhood imagery is important.<sup>52</sup> Her analysis of the piercing of the side (John 19:34) as possibly being a birthing is based on Greek views, however (Thomas Laqueur's work, especially; see T. W. LAQUEUR, *Making sex: body and gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990)).

Fehribach argues that a first century audience of the Cana story would have interpreted the interaction between Jesus and his mother according to the then-dominant values of honor and shame (after Malina 1986 and esp. 1998 on John). Furthermore, she suggests that the implied author of the gospel used a character type from the Hebrew Bible, defined by the author as the "mother of an important son."<sup>53</sup> In such a scene, the mother's concern is her son's honor (and hence her own). So, the mother's agency would have been seen (by implied readers?) as similar to Sarah's or Rebekah's on behalf of their respective sons.

I'm less sure of all this or rather I think more crucial issues are at stake, of which the honor/shame complex is but a subset. The conversation between his mother and Jesus has exercised the ingenuity of many commentators.<sup>54</sup> The fact that she notes

<sup>52</sup>A. FEHRIBACH, *The women in the life of the bridegroom. A feminist historical-literary analysis of the female characters in the fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, Minn: The Liturgical Press, 1998).

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 25; see below about this idea and another possibility.

<sup>54</sup>Latest one in my readings on Wednesday 02/08/2012: B. MALINA and R. ROHRBAUGH, *Social-science commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998), 100 or so, who reads correctly the honor/shame dynamics but may misread the lack of name for the mother as a lack of attention or authority which we may grant but seems contradictory

or notices the lack of wine has been interpreted in different ways. Concern for the people? Concern for the honor of her family? Her bringing the lack to Jesus' notice can be read as compassion, sense of honor, etc. all wrapped into one.

But it is also a risky demand. To note a lack is not simply factual but implies the need for correction. It implies that the situation can be remedied. To correct a situation of lack in this ancient society, however, means something has to give elsewhere. Explanation: "limited good" idea in practice, with opposite, divine largesse. But this divine largesse, imitated by fathers and kings (or to be imitated by them), comes at a cost. This is especially true when a disruption in the labor-intensive process of food-production is caused by non-paternal figures.

The mother has set in motion the need to remedy the situation and hence the need to pay for it in some fashion. This is what the "hour" remark by Jesus alludes to. Its meaning is that it is not the time or season.<sup>55</sup> It is outside of appointed time (for something like wine for which time is absolutely critical). Miracles must be compensated (invisibly) because they are part of an invisible economy. The fact that the evangelist presents a mother, the mother of a miracle worker, triggering the chain of events, is remarkable. She is in the position of Abraham.<sup>56</sup>

ὕστερῆσαντος οἴνου... Shame of family, friend, groom, etc., is looming? Isn't it like the case of the workers in the vineyard lacking, who are being fed (satiated) by the son "out of season," that it to say, ἐξ ὥρα, while the father is away (and his honor is very much in play)?<sup>57</sup> Here, we are not dealing with a protective role by the mother (except perhaps the

with the synoptics' views.

<sup>55</sup>See the fig story in the synoptics where the point of the out of season gets lost also.

<sup>56</sup>Unless we imagine the author to be presenting a Jesus who is rebuking her for arrogating to herself the power to decide over the economic process. Difficult to believe. Rebuking or alerting the reader to what is involved in shaking up the basic economic and social structures? Remember that the "hour" means the time when Jesus gave himself completely in fulfillment of the father's will and opens the way to the father: E. HAENCHEN, *John 1: a commentary on the Gospel of John, Chapters 1-6*, vol. 1, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 178.

<sup>57</sup>This is to be presented very much as a suggestion, and theorized.

concomitant concern about honor, see Malina et al?), but with the accelerating of a history “out of season.” To summarize my idea: the messianic expectation (like that of the bridegroom) is fulfilled (satiety), but this satiety has a price, that of the son/bridegroom being sacrificed.<sup>58</sup>

To explain further my idea about the lack of wine (aorist participle? about to lack?): the father is absent, the mother, who is the ultimate (unrecognized) provider in that world also (or are we seeing here a revolutionary idea of the father provider?), represents those who lack, yet doesn’t know the “hours.” Is it really a matter of honor, of defending or promoting her son? Yes (Fehribach 28), but this expectation is perfectly in line with the rest. Fehribach follows Malina here.<sup>59</sup>

ὥρα: the time. Not yet the time, a key expression of the dynamics of history to be explored in broader fashion than just within Jesus’ life. A messianic reading here, but part of Jewish understanding.<sup>60</sup> Is καίρος used by John?

To speculate on the structure of messianic history and what it means: there is an absence at the center, figured as a father (see Malina quoting Carroll—which? not in biblio—on this aspect), with authority over wife, children, servants or slaves, and tenants if he has significant property holdings. In other words, with authority from inside to outside, though he is “absent” or “distant” from those in the house and absent in other ways from those outside. This authority must be believed (trusted) to deliver the goods, the more absent it is. This trust is most important, as it is the source of the father’s power.<sup>61</sup> This authority and its status above and outside the daily going-ons means that it may not be as alert to needs as for instance the women of the household. So, the story of Cana concerns the extension of trust previously placed in the father-king figure to that of

the “son,” a trust sealed or guaranteed by suffering.

There is now the promise of a fulfillment, abundance, a renewed presence: a banquet and nuptiality (a sharing of the abundance and a renewal of contract), with the return or presence of the father.<sup>62</sup>

The promise is not fulfilled, or appears not to be fulfilled: lack (without hysteria). This key word, ὑστερέω, needs to be examined. The six stone vessels, even when full and transformed, point to the lack of a seventh. The son steps in but this replacement or substitute is also a possible displacement, a claim of authority which we find built in the Hebrew scriptures and in folktales more generally (Joseph, David, Absalom, the younger son generally).

In the traditional story, the lack is noted by the absent father (in Bible: what stories? God noticing barrenness, oppression, anguish?) or simply expressed directly by workers. In the end, the father is still here in person, even though temporary substitutes occur: prophets, or the temple, which is massively there (with the kingship and priestly authorities behind, all landowners). As are the six stone vessels, ready to be filled, yet something lacking permanently in this arrangement. In this story, however, the lack is brought to the attention of the son by his mother, not the majordomo who might have watered down the wine and made it last. As woman and mother, she understands better than anyone else what it means to lack. She is on the front lines of a society built around and against lack. She is aware not only of its social significance but its radical danger for everyone because she is the food preparer (cf. the widow of Sarepta). Against the later talmudic story, but with the Hebrew scripture, she takes over as both god-like or father-like (noting the hunger), and anti-father-like by expecting the son to fill the lack, i.e. risking her son’s life, because of the out-of-season component. It is not only a matter of defending her son’s honor but more fundamentally to avoid shame for everyone, especially the groom and bride as well as their families. Add

<sup>58</sup>Check on nuptial customs in Roman Palestine. First, Mt 25:5 about the groom delayed. Or S. KRAUSS, *Talmudische Archäologie*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Gustav Fock, 1911), 37–42, spec. 41, which describes the long preparations.

<sup>59</sup>MALINA and ROHRBAUGH, *Social-science commentary on the Gospel of John*.

<sup>60</sup>FEHRIBACH, *The women in the life of the bridegroom*, 31–32.

<sup>61</sup>See Testart about social evolution.

<sup>62</sup>But notice that the mother signalling the socially dangerous lack is in character with “Mediterranean mothers” of Malina. The mothers are supposed to guard the stored provisions and know exactly what the quantities are: they are kept inside the house, where they spend most of the day, whereas fathers keep their distances.

to the preceding hypothesis that this attention to the situation is coming from a woman who has been shamed at the birth and death of her son (in the view of potential readers). She is risking confrontation with the absent husband, father, or its figurative substitutes (the authorities).

More about this business of the father's absence. The absence of the father and his remoteness are exaggerated in elite contexts.<sup>63</sup> In the home, de facto power is in mother's hands and the father is ineffective.<sup>64</sup> One cannot be sure, however, as the mother would be younger than the father and still primarily a foreign woman until her *sons* would be grown up and support her. She would then have daughters-in-law herself, a reversal of her own situation. Strange remark by Malina: "No indication that the author of John's gospel knew the name of Jesus' mother," yet mentions her at Cana. He could have inquired! He does give a few women's names, also quoted in the synoptics, and it is difficult to gauge his putative ignorance. This remark inadvertently raises the issue or contrast between the vagueness of the "woman's" mention and the details given about the jars.

Additional note: On the father's absence and the mother's intimate knowledge and control of the home, see Fehribach (summary in my notes on Cana), and Carroll she quotes.<sup>65</sup> On the wine: better wine vs watered down wine which would have been served to make it last. How does the "mother" notice the lack? By listening to servants? Small signs? Presumably the master of ceremonies also knew?

#### GEYSER

Talking about water use for washing and purification, let's mention the theory that the stone jars are a negative marker of the lesser dispensation given by the Baptist and his followers: A. GEYSER, "The semeion at Cana of the Galilee", in *Studies in John*

<sup>63</sup>MALINA and ROHRBAUGH, *Social-science commentary on the Gospel of John*, 107. Malina doesn't address the matter of elites in this page.

<sup>64</sup>*ibid.*, quoting J. T. CARROLL, *Response to the end of history: eschatology and situation in Luke-Acts* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 50.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*

*presented to Professor Dr. J. N. Sevenster on the occasion of his seventieth birthday*, vol. 24, Supplements to Novum Testamentum (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 12–21 (18). Geysler writes:

The water vessels are specifically qualified as purification vessels to counter the attachment of the baptist disciples to Jewish practices, and to answer their reproaches against the Jesus followers on this score.

One can accept the argument regarding the anti-baptismal polemic as described by Geysler in his chapter, but only to a degree. It seems rather clear to me that the key here is transformation, not opposition. As for the relation between Jesus and the Temple, it is not enough to speak of it in general terms and hope thereby to explain why the GJ presents it so early in the story. The reason is that the old prophetic view of the temple as guarantee of fertility and abundance (Ezekiel, Joel, Zech, etc.) is invited to transport itself and focus on the body of Jesus as such.

Still, I learn from Geysler quoting Spicq that the heavenly logos incarnates itself as symposiarch. In Philo's *De somniis* 2.249, the heavenly Logos is the οἰνοχόος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ συμποσίαρχος λόγος about to pour wine (itself). So, Jesus as parallel to the *architriklinos*? unspoken groom at the same time? Also, see *Leg. Alleg.* 3.2: the Logos, "typified by Melchizedek, will produce wine instead of water." Geysler's conclusion:

Be this as it may, the superiority of Jesus, the incarnated pre-existent Logos, οἰνοχόος τοῦ θεοῦ and priest over the Aaronite priest, John the Baptist, is demonstrated by the wine miracle at Cana of the Galilee.<sup>66</sup>

It is tempting to go fishing in Philonic texts, but the influence of a story of post-Platonic inebriation by the logos is unlikely. Things are presented very differently in our gospel. The logos and the inebriation are there, but none of the refined metaphors of the intellectual and socially mastering world of Philo. The cross is in view, and its blood/wine. I don't see any of that in Philo. There is probably

<sup>66</sup>GEYSER, "The semeion at Cana of the Galilee", 20–21.

help to be found regarding that point in DODD, *The interpretation of the fourth Gospel?* *of John, Chapters 7–21*, vol. 2, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

GIRARD

MG, in his two-volume commentary of the gospel, not only develops systematically the symbolic meaning of numbers and parallel, syntactic structures, but also tends to subject the whole analysis to a preceding or transcendent divine will. The theology tends to override everything and encourages to find complex parallel structures where they are not necessarily helpful. This said, his main argument about the presence of seven signs built in an open, progressive, concentric structure, needs to be analyzed. I think that my interpretation of the six Cana stone jars as pointing to a seventh body or transformative fountain of life goes along with his idea of six signs built into a crescendo leading to a seventh sign in chapter 19.

In his interpretation of the opening of Jesus' *side*, MG uses the creation text (woman from the side of man, and helper), and a birthing metaphor that is broad enough for both the creation of humankind and the birth in blood and water (reverse direction?) of all humans.

His commentary in 2 volumes is reviewed in *RB* 124 (2017): 457–59 and 125 (2018): 612–19.<sup>67</sup> The GJ would be structured in seven weeks. The last hours of Jesus belong to the sixth week. The seventh week corresponds to John 20:1–31. The flowing of blood and water in 19:17–37 is considered the seventh sign.<sup>68</sup> The *RB* reviewer is not convinced by the two main hypotheses given by the A.: the division of the gospel in seven weeks, and the structural arrangement in seven signs. The A. seeks to show the coherence and unity of the text as we have it.

HAENCHEN

HAENCHEN, *John 1*, and E. HAENCHEN, R. W. FUNK, and U. BUSSE, *John 2: a commentary on the Gospel*

<sup>67</sup>M. GIRARD, *Évangile selon Jean : structures et symboles. 1, Jean 1–9* (Montréal: Médiaspaul, 2017), and GIRARD, *Évangile selon Jean : structures et symboles. 2, Jean 10–21* (Montréal: Médiaspaul, 2017).

<sup>68</sup>GIRARD, *Évangile selon Jean 1*, 30–32.

These are notes on the passion story. No mocking, hatred or irony in 19:25–27 (see also 2.199). The passage about thirst from Ps 69:21 (22) suits the synoptic context but not John's gospel (2.193). 19:28f.: "Holding a sponge filled with vinegar up to Jesus' mouth does not conform to the Johannine picture of the death of Jesus" (2.193). "The use of hyssop in connection with the Passover has also been suggested, and a play on Jesus as the true paschal lamb conjectured" (2.194). Haenchen disagrees (rejects it both on historical grounds—the soldier couldn't have known what it meant—and symbolical possibilities). Nothing on the vinegar except the elimination of mockery in the presentation. Even about the *cru-rifragium*, refuses its interpretation as reference to the true paschal lamb and just accepts it refers to the suffering innocent portrayed in Ps 34:20 (2.195). About the spear and blood and water flow (2.195): accepts they are references to "the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper."

In his overview, Haenchen quotes Büchsel (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, 1935<sup>2</sup>) who wrote that "the emergence of blood and water probably imply nothing more than he is really dead and was a man like other men" (2.200). In other words, the anti-docetic message. Haenchen prefers to see primitive Christian "erudition" at work about the suffering innocent (Ps 34:21). Together with the recall of Zech 12:10 about piercing. Important mark of the resurrected Jesus? [Of course, I think it comes from a notion of the body as spring, container, temple qua container, see Ezekiel, which some exegetes quote. Or at least it is a reasonable hypothesis].

And I will pour out a spirit of compassion and supplication on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that, when they look on the one whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. (Zech 12:10)

The blood and water had no scriptural attestation (Exodus??), so appeal to testimony.

HENGEL

Starts with the “first sign” as a sort of σημεῖον ἀντελεγόμενον. Refers to the work by OLSSON.<sup>69</sup> “Mysterier” indeed, as Hengel says. Doubts on the reality of the miracle: “profane”, “strange.”

Developed analysis of the literature and exposé of his firm and definitive views on the semeia source, sacraments, history and symbolical realm, in M. HENGEL, “The interpretation of the wine miracle at Cana: John 2:1–11”, in *The glory of Christ in the New Testament: studies in Christology in memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. HURST and N. T. WRIGHT (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 83–112. He begins by rejecting arguments that John would be dualist and denigrates body and matter (88–90, with Irenaeus). About sacraments in this gospel, he thinks that much is related to the Eucharist and is not simply “associations,” as Schnackenburg says.<sup>70</sup> Regarding historicity and symbolism: not an either or. He accepts Ruckstuhl’s argument regarding the unity of the gospel (92). I note that Kysar in his later writing also inclines to that view (as being that of many exegetes in recent decades).

Hengel rejects the *semeia* source as being too complicated a hypothesis (or forcing complicated and ultimately improbable verse by verse choices: 90–95). No help in understanding the author’s thought. Rather obscures the text. For instance the excessive features of John 2:1–11 are rejected on the source and are not johannic therefore. About excessive features: interesting that protestants alone have tended to see the story as offensive (104).

Hengel takes issue with Gnllka who thinks the feast took place in (and is representative of) poor circumstances. With Reed et al on that: the servants, head of ceremonies, stone jars, etc., would be marks of higher status (104).

On the debate tending to oppose the influence of a Dionysus cult to that of the Hebrew and Judaeon (Jewish?) tradition: he doesn’t reject the dionysiac

<sup>69</sup>B. OLSSON, *Structure and meaning in the Fourth Gospel: A text-linguistic analysis of John 2:1–11 and 4:1–42* (Lund: Gleerup, 1974).

<sup>70</sup>I note this is also the view of C. F. D. MOULE, “The individualism of the Fourth Gospel”, *NT* 5 (1962): 171–90 (185).

influence (reviews the evidence), but doesn’t see it necessary (108–12, esp. 111).<sup>71</sup> Important in Asia Minor, definitely in Ephesus, and this had an influence? Nice image in Dionysus’ stories: αἷμα βότρυος: the blood of the vine. See Sean Freyne, passim, perhaps already in S. FREYNE, “Jesus and the Urban Culture of Galilee”, in *Texts and contexts: Biblical texts in their textual and situational contexts: In honor of Lars Hartman* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 597–622.

JOHNSON, LUKE

Interesting pages on religious sentiment in John in L. T. JOHNSON, *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman religion and Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 153–57. He stays close to R. Brown, justifiably so. His enquiry into Gentile religion(s) (I don’t care about his use of the word Gentiles, which gives up the game right from the beginning, in a research project aiming at neutrality) provides an interesting viewpoint from which to say a few things on Christian writings and especially on the extent of what they have in common with Greco-Roman views and practices. I think it might be more fruitful to go back to A. J. FESTUGIÈRE, *L’idéal religieux des Grecs et l’évangile* (Paris: Gabalda, 1932), which I read years ago (was I still on the farm?) and so impressed me then, or A. J. FESTUGIÈRE, *Personal religion among the Greeks*, vol. 26, Sather Classical Lectures (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954) (iam non vidi) for the general topic.

Summary of Johnson (pages quoted above): He reviews the broad tendencies of exegesis regarding the fourth gospel. First, how distinctive it is from the synoptics (and not simply by cataloguing the usual things: no parables, three years, etc.)? How does one explain this: because of its Hellenistic feel? Contacts with Greek philosophy? with Gnosticism (early Christian gnosticism? how early?)? On the other hand (Brown), its Palestinian aspects are not negligible, and the dualism exists in Qumran. There is no need to go far afield to explain everything odd.

<sup>71</sup>M. HENGEL, “Der ‘dionysische’ Messias”, in *Jesus und die Evangelien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 568–600.

Johnson proposes “to read John from the perspective of Greco-Roman Religiousness A.” Meaning: participation in the divine benefits... rather than his “Religiousness C,” which is the withdrawal, fleeing the world (or transcending it). Concerning the second, which is a reaching for divine power hidden from the world entirely, or beyond it, one has to contend with a gospel where the world is still loved by God, and 1:14 is in the way: *καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν*. In other words, Johnson makes the choice made by many other commentators, including Dodd whom he seems to criticize: the dualism and heteronomy in John is not to be explained by early forms of gnosticism or orphic and platonic ideas (how different are these options, by the way?). And he is right that it is not “self-knowledge” that defines sonship but faith in Jesus son of God.

His positive argument: divine power is shown to be active in the world as it is everywhere in creation. Those who participate see divine glory and receive the “power to become children of God.” Jesus is a *θεῖος ἀνὴρ*, with prophetic and thaumaturgic powers. Johnson’s reading of the miracle at Cana misses the important point made by the story regarding the immanence of the divine in the world. He sees it as Jesus providing “pleasure to the company by the transformation of water to wine at a wedding.” The ancient commentators, on the other hand, make it clear that what is impressive is the transformation of water into wine, not the fact that many can continue to feast...

#### KÖSTENBERGER

A. J. KÖSTENBERGER, *John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2004), 93–101: commentary by a devoted Baptist professor of scripture and theology, whose approach is similar to that of Keener (most recent) and others, though cleaner, more controlled than Keener’s. Refuses all critical approach (except rhetorical criticism, and some level of history, when it is not problematic), Bultmann’s demythologizing (skirts around this monumental issue), the notion of a Johannine community by Martyn and Brown, which is a complex way to answer Bultmann’s reconstruction and exegesis. Wants to hold on to authorship by John the Apostle: doesn’t seem to think much

of the hesitations expressed by R. Brown, who goes over this issue in detail and is certainly not radical (doesn’t appear to be mentioned in regard to this particular issue). When it comes to the detailed passage on Cana: has read most everything and so is interesting in that sense (sociology of knowledge: what is read and studied or avoided), but is unhelpful in understanding the passage at greater depth. I’m back in church, which is fine, but little consolation.

#### KOESTER

Influential book by Koester on symbolism.<sup>72</sup> For Cana, see 82–88, on new wine and new temple. He argues there is no suggestion that Mary is demanding a miracle.<sup>73</sup> I would think it is *implicit*. “My hour” is cryptic, at least for moderns, less so for ancients so attuned to timeliness of seasons and work. Wine etiquette of the ancients: they would do their utmost to provide best wine throughout.<sup>74</sup> See Ollson, *Structure of meaning*, 62–63. Ref. to Gen 49:10–11: “washes his garments in wine and his robe in the blood of grapes.” Wine miracle: messianic sign and sign of divinity. Legends of Dionysus do not explain the origin of the story but help understand how it could be received in the wider Greco-Roman world.<sup>75</sup>

He sees the story of the cleansing of the temple in 2:13–25 as a “companion piece to the miracle at Cana.”<sup>76</sup> The temple of his body image in 2:21: pointing to the sacrificial system and its abuse, or to the true location of the mechanism of absence and presence in his society (when markets and coinage came to the rescue of another type of dynamics of presence and absence). Let’s look more closely at it, page 87. Money and merchandizing of victims was done because of the distance from the temple and the transformation of society, paralleled by the transformation of the temple under the Herods and Roman pressure into a global place (see Exod 30:11–16: redemption by 1/2 shekel. No selling/buying of animals. See Dt

<sup>72</sup>C. R. KOESTER, *Symbolism in the fourth Gospel: meaning, mystery, community*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, 86.

12). The body as temple image is a radical recentering by which glorification (sublime) and sacrifice (I mean construction of holiness) can take place in a way not so different from origins. I mean by this that the sacrifice of animals and products were directly related to the body (intense domestication and food production, all locally done, including the pottery), and therefore intimately bound to notions of self (however deeply incorporated in a kinship system).

I don't agree with Koester's interpretation of Jesus' action, pp. 87–88: "By temporarily disrupting *the trade necessary for sacrifices*, Jesus foreshadowed the permanent cessation of sacrificial worship in Jerusalem and its replacement by his own death." The author and audience know the end of the temple. The point was not to allegorize. Something more fundamental was at work, of which Jesus' death was the seal: another trading or sacrificial system were needed, between human beings, another system of recognition and values, another kind of mediation.

#### LINDARS

On the miracle at Cana, see B. LINDARS, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972), 123–33. Also: B. LINDARS, *John* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990).

Something new has happened that "overshadows all the past" (123), though partly hidden (hence the hiding of the seventh, and the need to puzzle over it?).

Most interesting and appropriate remarks regarding the displacement of 2:13ff. from its structural placement in the synoptic accounts (following Brown et al; the arguments seem sound). The failure to convert the Jews is one of the "engines" of this gospel... hence the recasting of the temple episode. One consequence of interpreting the six stone jars as I do is that it adds strength to the arguments brought in favor of the displacement of the temple episode.<sup>77</sup>

The meaning of the Cana story is to be found in its symbolism though there is the risk to go too far in seeing symbolism in everything mentioned (Schnackenburg warns against this danger of reading

<sup>77</sup>See LINDARS, *John*, 50. Against J. A. T. Robinson and esp. C. H. DODD, *Historical tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

too much into the story). I pass the note on the historicity, which is not my problem (Lindars opts to drop it also). But the historical aspect of the text (see my note just above) might include the sense of hope, glory, and sharing in the excitement of a new life (tud nevez e brezhoneg), perfectly captured or figured rather by the movement from water to wine in the reality of the first century agriculture (and nicely phrased by Augustine), though framed within tradition (Isaiah 5). On symbolism (124–25): timing of the third day; the wedding banquet as symbol of the eschatological banquet (cf. Mk 2:19: can the wedding guests fast...?); the wine motif (new and old wine, but no bursting here). It is "a hidden sign" (125).

Can one go further and relate the wine and marriage feast to the Eucharist as Dodd et al do (125)? Lindars sees no clear warrant for it. As for a "reference to the blood of Christ shed in his Passion", which is supported by the allusion to the 3d day and Jesus' remark on his hour, Lindars is not convinced (126):

But John does not use the theme of the blood of Christ in this way; the reference to the Passion is too muted to be taken as the controlling factor in the interpretation of the whole piece.

That is precisely what my interpretation of the Cana sign and the scene at the cross is changing: the reference to the Passion is not so muted and *is* most important.

As for Lindars' form-critical reconstruction of an original parable such as

the kingdom of God is like a wedding-feast; and the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him.... Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.

I'm not convinced by this idea, even when considering a subsequent narrative setting as folk-legend concerning the early life of Jesus, with "influence from pagan sources" (127). Lindars accepts that some form of the legend regarding Dionysus had an



influence at this point, though not as an outcome of simple competition with surrounding traditions.<sup>78</sup>

The wine ran out (page 128): “this presumably represents the failure of the Jewish Law” (and of all religion before Christ, à la Bultmann?).<sup>79</sup> Lindars interprets the synoptics’ story of the fig-tree similarly. But the other aspect of this failure, that is, the miracle expected from Jesus (out of season, not yet the hour), has the tragedy of the passion built in: someone will need to pay for the disturbance of order. No suggestion that the wine was refused or not good enough! The disturbance of the social and political equilibrium has to be compensated somewhere.

Six stone jars (130): notes that the number 6 is taken to be symbolical “by some” (“inadequacy of the Law”). L. doubts that it is symbolical. He thinks that the detail on the material and its purpose is for the sake of Gentile readers. Yes, but why bother to talk about the number, material, the *volume*, etc., by an author not given to small talk, if it is not for a symbolical reason (plus: sign!). On the other hand, he sees “to the brim” as symbolic.

On the Temple episode (133–44): From the Cana episode to the conversation with Nicodemus, a

<sup>78</sup>Lindars follows Dodd who remarks this kind of apologetic is from a later period (Justin?). See now M. THEOBALD, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Kapitel 1–12* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2009), xx, for details of the Dionysus cult in the wider Hellenistic cultural sphere and especially in Roman Palestine, after the recent studies of A. LICHTENBERGER, *Kulte und Kultur der Dekapolis: Untersuchungen zu numismatischen, archäologischen und epigraphischen Zeugnissen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), especially 128ff. on Nysa-Skythopolis, 145–52 on Dionysus at Skythopolis, 290–92 on the broader place of Dionysus in the Decapolis. Theobald answers yes to the question of influence because he finds the evidence collected by Lichtenberger impressive and indicative of a pervasive cult and story-telling that must have been indeed seen as direct competition. See also W. EISELE, “Jesus und Dionysos. Göttliche Konkurrenz bei der Hochzeit zu Kana (Joh 2,1–11)”, *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 100 (2009): 1–28, in the same spirit. See page 41 below. I maintain that the internal Jewish explanation is sufficient however.

<sup>79</sup>I find all of this strange: the wine threatened to lack but was clearly a success until then! If one speaks of failure, then it must be added that all societies fail to provide ever-springing life: social life and its customs or systems are limits on life, or its channelling into distant futures, forever more distant, whether projected by the right or the left of the political spectrum.

crescendo in the break with the past. Discusses the historicity of the Temple episode page 134. The author argues that the cleansing of the temple story has been moved from chapter 12 to its present position (see page 50). No consensus over this question, however. [note: My interpretation of the details of the Cana sign provides a reason for the displacement of the temple episode]. His argument page 135 is clear:

When we note further that chapter 3 has clear links with chapter 1, and continues thematically from 2:1–11, but has no obvious connection with the cleansing of the Temple—however suitable it may seem to be—it begins to be probable that 2:14–22 did not originally stand in its present position.

The episode must have belonged originally to the same place as in the Synoptics for a variety of reasons that he reviews. He refers to Brown who argues in a similar way.

Is the final reason he gives for the transfer to chapter 2—the raising of Lazarus as climax of signs and setting as the reason for the final tension—the proper one? It supposes a signs source and two editions.... I’m arguing that the equivalence made by the author between body and temple as transforming agents and sources of life is the main reason for this displacement (a juxtaposition of a hidden allusion to the seventh “stone hollowed jar” and the overt equivalence), and to the insertion in the passion story of the piercing or opening of the body in 19:34–5. [Furthermore, a thorough historical analysis will show, after Martyn et al, that this late in the post-70 political situation of the eastern Roman empire, marks of Jesus’ messiahship weren’t anymore the cause of his death but something much deeper?] And now the historical aspect (137): attacking the whole cult? like Jeremiah? but not necessarily rejecting the Temple: indeed, he is fulfilling what it is supposed to be, I would say the claim of the evangelist is. *Metaphor of temple as body was commonplace* (page 144).

On the deposition and burial (19:31–42), pp. 583–89 especially. He underlines the uniqueness and significance of the incident in which a soldier pierces Jesus’ side and causes a flow of blood and

water. The author emphasizes it by insisting on the testimony (to the reader), and citations of the OT (583). No explanation by those verses, however, of the flow of blood and water. 1 Jn 5:6–8 is considered too obscure to be of help: \*5 τίς [δέ] ἐστὶν ὁ νικῶν τὸν κόσμον εἰ μὴ ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ; \*6 Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἐλθὼν δι’ ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός· οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι μόνον ἀλλ’ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι καὶ ἐν τῷ αἵματι· καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν τὸ μαρτυροῦν, ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια. \*7 ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, \*8 τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν. “there may well be some connection between them” (583). Did the water and the blood refer to “spiritual cleansing” (583–84), Lindars asks. Yes and no: it is the temple working, so the blood is part of it, but as something entirely new, I think.

On the piercing, pages 584–89: uncharacteristically long development on verse 19:34, the spear-thrust (586–89). I pass on the brief discussion of the medical and historical possibilities. The question is essentially: why does the author mention *both* liquids? not for anti-docetic purpose (blood would be enough), but to suggest—with water—the “opening of a fountain of grace” (cf. Cana, Samaritan woman, etc.). There is plenty of water in John! The author could have done it differently? but how? I’d like to know. Then discussion of the mention of blood as pointing to the eucharist (586–87). But more likely, given that blood alone (bread?) is a bit strange as a mention (see recent article on cannibalism in John, in *JBL*), that the meaning of it is sacrificial, Jesus being the true paschal lamb, with “the efficacy of an atoning sacrifice” (BL notes: “as a result of inner-Christian development”).

Similarly, discusses page 587 the meaning of water, “generally regarded as a symbol of baptism.” But this is far from certain also. One problem is the order: blood before water, i.e. eucharist before baptism for the sacramentalists, which is the wrong order. The difficulty cannot be escaped by claiming that the order water-blood appears in some mss (Boismard *RB* 60[1953] 348–50). They were probably influenced by 1 Jn 5:6 (Schnackenburg). Lindars comments:

On the other hand the thematic connection

with 1:29 is an argument in favour of the baptismal interpretation. The flow from Jesus’ side is symbolic both of his atoning death and of the act whereby men are put in relation with it.

I think the connection I make with Cana reinforces this view but adds to it an anchor with Cana that makes the view of the author even more interesting and profound.

As to the matter of fulfillment of 7:38ff, which Lindars disputes, as being accomplished only in 20:22, not in 19:34.<sup>80</sup> He says that

‘Out of his heart’ (lit. ‘belly’, *koilia*) is not the same as **his side** (*pleura*). There is no connection between the two passages. (LINDARS, *The Gospel of John*, 587)

On the contrary, it can be argued that there is a connection, but mediated through the story of Cana: the vocabulary of hollowness (*koilia*) would go well with the notion of seventh body-container undergirding Jn 2, 7, and 19.

As to the blood and water connection made by rabbinical literature in regard to Moses striking the rock in Num 20:11 and turning water into blood in Ex 4:9, I agree it’s not that obvious and it’s asking much from the reader-author connection in Jn. But the connection wine-blood was surely common, and the water-wine also.

Agreed that it is difficult and unwise to read 1 Jn 5:6–8 back into Jn 19:34.

Further notes from LINDARS, *John*, 71: on eternal life, **בא העלם** which is, according to Lindars, a “lasting state,” so either “eternity” or “epoch of time.” What of the root: what is hidden, beyond the horizon? Greek αἰῶν: see Mk 10:10, rewards in this life and in the αἰῶν... of eternal life. I agree with this passage:

John’s preference for this expression (αἰῶν) shows a decisive shift away from the future reference, but without denying it altogether, as we have seen. But John is more concerned with

<sup>80</sup>See J. MARCUS, “Rivers of living water from Jesus’ belly (John 7:38)”, *JBL* 117 (1998): 328–30: text referring to Isaiah 12:3, and the willful confusion of the Hebrew/Aramaic for springs and entrails or belly?

the present experience of life in the rich sense suggested by 10:10. (71?)

LÜTGEHETMANN

Extensive commentary on Cana miracle by W. LÜTGEHETMANN, *Die Hochzeit von Kana (Joh 2,1–11): zu Ursprung und Deutung einer Wundererzählung im Rahmen johanneischer Redaktionsgeschichte*, BU 20 (Regensburg: Pustet, 1990). He does not agree with the sense of incompleteness found in the number “six” by Boismard, Lamouille, Girard, or alluded to by Barrett, or Gnilka.<sup>81</sup> This explanation seems short to him, as it did to Barrett, since Jesus is not portrayed as adding a seventh jar. Justement tout le problème. He thinks that a symbolic interpretation should integrate the three numbers in verse 6. He suggests (remote possibility?) that not only is this number not a symbol of incompleteness but rather that of completion. He follows Philo’s *Die Creatio* 89 and others in suggesting this.<sup>82</sup> Perhaps a symbol of creation bound to the nuptial event? Contra: the Bible provides sufficient evidence for the number 6, beginning with the week of creation and the insistence on the completion right between sixth and seventh day...

The notion of replacement of the Jewish purity system in verse 6 is part of a broader theme, found in the prologue (1:17), in the passage about the lamb in JB story (Jesus is the true paschal lamb, the replacement of the old alliance), temple episode, end of the old wisdom in 3:1–21, end of all ancient cults in 4. Add: repeal of sabbath laws (5:9–16), living water of 7:37–39, divine word via Jesus instead of Abraham (8:33–46), healing on sabbath and Mosaic law (9), etc.

MARTYN

Interesting summary by Martyn of his two-stage drama (the *einmalig* and the Christian community of the evangelist’s time), the one stage reverberating

<sup>81</sup>321. This symbolic link is made or rather repeated by many authors: for instance A. GRASSI Joseph, “The wedding at Cana (John II 1–11): A pentecostal meditation?”, *Novum Testamentum* 14 (1972): 131–36 (135). Refused on the other hand by

<sup>82</sup>See Cohn’s German translation and annotation.

on the other and the whole creating an impression of depth and permanence (?):

Theologically the boldest step we have seen John take is the “doubling” of Jesus with the figures of Christian witnesses in his own community. Since we are acquainted with Luke’s second volume in which a part of the postresurrection history of the church is narrated, it strikes us that John could have narrated the history of his own church in a direct and straightforward manner. Instead, we find him presenting a two-level drama in which it is not an apostle but rather Jesus himself who ministers to Jews known to John as men who have suffered the fate of excommunication from the synagogue. Jesus also acts the part of the Jewish-Christian preacher who is subjected to arrest and trial as a beguiler. Jesus engages in the debates which John’s church has with the Jewish community regarding his own identity as the Mosaic Messiah. It is also the Risen Lord himself who insists that the messianic issue is not midrashic and who terminates these debates with his awesome use of the numinous-laden “I am.”<sup>83</sup>

MCHUGH

See the detailed commentary by McHugh.<sup>84</sup> My initial impression is that he takes the story to be the inauguration of the new reign of God. He doesn’t accept that the mention of the third day points to the resurrection of Christ. Rather, he thinks that the sign of Cana points to the sixth day of the first week and its parallel in the last week. The mention of the third day could represent the sixth day of the first week or Jesus’ public life and hearken to the first week of Gen 1 (with a climax on the sixth day), as well as announce the sixth day of the final week of Jesus’ life.<sup>85</sup> He considers the wedding rather than the change of water into wine a fundamental image that continues a well-known theme. His sense of the episode between the mother and Jesus is that of a question: “What relationship is there, woman,

<sup>83</sup>MARTYN, *History and theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 124.

<sup>84</sup>J. F. MCHUGH, *A critical and exegetical commentary on John 1–4*, ed. G. N. STANTON (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 176–97.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*, 177.

between you and me, now that my hour is approaching?” He doesn’t see anything particular in the stone or the volume. He thinks that the number is “almost certainly symbolic.”<sup>86</sup> Is the number six imperfect, though, or perfect? The better wine: the best wine. He reads ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων as meaning pre-eminent, primary, the inaugural sign rather than the first in time.

This symbolic narrative (p. 195) is one of a kind. He dismisses the argument of the school of the history of religions regarding Dionysus. No need to go outside of the Jewish tradition to be inspired by a story of a wedding and its abundance of wine.<sup>87</sup> The tradition looked at the divine covenant as a wedding, with YHWH as the bridegroom (always). Seven days for the wedding feast: Judg 14:12; Tob 11:19. “The wine stands for Jesus’ teaching” (his interpretation of the Torah’s essential texts. McHugh refers to Augustine’s observation that an even greater miracle occurs every year when rain water is transformed into wine, and nobody sees in it anything extraordinary. I note that McHugh doesn’t consider the materiality of the images: wine is a mix of god-given elements and human labor, with the particularity, like for bread, that it ferments. He doesn’t mention the vinegar passage either.

#### MEIER

J. P. Meier analyzes the story for its historical value (narrowly constructed as the reality of the event, the event being what is surface meaning and deeper, theologically defined meaning?): J. P. MEIER, *Mentor, message, and miracles*, vol. 2 of *A marginal Jew: Rethinking the historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 934–50. Little in the commentary proper. In footnote 235 (pages 1017–18), however, a substantial discussion of the sacramental interpretation of the wine of Cana. He remains “sceptical about a eucharistic reference in the first Cana miracle.” Contra: A. FEUILLET, *Johannine studies* (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1965), 33–34 (in article: “The hour of Jesus and the sign of Cana”); M. RISSI, “Die

Hochzeit in Kana (Joh 2,1–11)”, in *Oikonomia. Heilsgeschichte als Thema der Theologie*, ed. F. CHRIST (Hamburg-Bergstedt: Herbert Reich Evang. Verlag, 1967), 76–92 (87, 90–91); and other authors quoted in that note by Meier (more generally Cullmann, who tended to see sacramental references in John’s gospel where they may not have been intended by the author; tendency criticized by Klos 1970, according to Meier). See below my short discussion of sacramental aspects. Then Meier continues:

More to the point, the first Cana miracle uses the symbol of wine without ever mentioning blood,<sup>88</sup> while the eucharistic part of the bread of life discourse (6:51–58) uses the graphic images of eating Jesus’ flesh and drinking his blood without ever mentioning wine. In other words, since the Fourth Gospel lacks the Synoptic eucharistic words of Jesus at the Last Supper, which identify the wine with his blood, *one looks in vain for a single passage in John that connects the two images of wine and blood. Without this connection somewhere in the Fourth Gospel,*<sup>89</sup> it is difficult to show that John intended a eucharistic reference in 2:1–11. On the various attempts by modern exegetes to see references to a sacrament (baptism, eucharist, or matrimony) in John 2:1–11, see Smitmans, *Das Weinwunder von Kana*, 50–54. (MEIER, *Mentor, message, and miracles*, 1018, n235; my emphasis)

[note: the connection is not obvious. In my paper, I argue that the interpretation of Jesus as seventh jar implies an idea of internal, invisible transformation. In Jesus, water becomes super wine, and blood becomes water. The meaning of the seventh jar then if of grace upon grace, not replacement of something that was misguided but rather a transformation.]

Meier insists on the allusive nature of the story (934–36): it is laconic, the miracle is alluded to indirectly, the conclusion is also indirect (the master of ceremonies doesn’t know what happened). “only miracle story ... in which Jesus’ mother is involved” (935). I would add that the mother’s presence in

<sup>88</sup>(GH) But the seventh jar-body is the source of the transformation of water into wine.

<sup>89</sup>But on the contrary, I insist that the parallelism is clear of the passage from water to wine in the Cana story and from blood to water at the moment of death in 19:34.

<sup>86</sup>McHUGH, *A critical and exegetical commentary on John 1–4*, 185.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, 189.

19:25–27 is also part of the miracle or continues the story. Meier assigns this whole story to the “Evangelist.” Notes the “theological correspondence between the two scenes” featuring the mother (939). He thinks that “The mother of Jesus is kept in a sense at arm’s length ... because the decisive hour of the cross is not at hand.” (939) But why mention her at all, then? Moreover, why mention her as mother, woman, nameless? I read it (tentatively) as her playing the role of women concerned about reserves and lack, and triggering, knowingly, *the new economy*. In any case, one gets a sense of a larger composition of John’s Gospel (not coming from tradition). And perhaps a creation of the Evangelist, given the absence of a synoptic parallel (whereas all the other miracles in 4G do have a parallel).<sup>90</sup>

Page 941: the superabundant and exquisite wine would point to the messianic banquet and the transcending of the ritual institutions of Judaism, “symbolized by the water of purification that has been transformed into wine.” My view: it enacts their implied meaning, the tension that already exists in them, from inside them (the seventh jar), a continuation, a fulfillment, and a transformation or transfiguration (not transcending): grace upon grace, once more. This goes back to a vision of creation and human power in the end (cf. Augustine).

We have seen already how an early metaphor about a joyful wedding was turned by the Christian tradition into a reference to the presence and then absence of Jesus the bridegroom because of his passion and death (Mark 2:19–20) [...]. It is significant that the vast majority of passages where Jesus is explicitly said to be a bridegroom or is placed at a wedding come from the second Christian generation (Ephesians, Matthew, Revelation, and the Gospel of John). (MEIER, *Mentor, message, and miracles*, 943)

Comment: what is also pointed out here is that the essential aspects of food are nature (creation) and human labor, inextricably bound, especially in bread and wine. Unnamed, unrecognized, absent, yet at the heart of what is ingested. Wedding banquet:

<sup>90</sup>Page 1020, n254. Reference to R. T. FORTNA, *The Fourth Gospel and its predecessor: from narrative source to present Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 52.

joy and celebration of the real origins of life. Final, messianic banquet (Mt, Rev)? 4G puts it at the beginning: the bridegroom coming to claim his bride Israel.

Page 944: Meier sees the headwaiter as praising the anonymous bridegroom (or happy and ignorant). And

Within this context of eschatological abundance and fulfillment, the stone jars of v 6 may play their symbolic role as well. (945)

Meier sees the note re. purification and the change of water into wine as pointing towards “the replacement of Judaism by Christianity.” I see rather a transformation from inside, no matter the all-too-broad argument about the separation of Christian communities from the synagogues at that time. Rather than “replace,” I see a hidden revelation and transformation of its secret content, a revelation of its capacity.

Like Meier 947, “I do not think it necessary to invoke a signs source to explain the enumeration in 4:54.” The whole passage seems to be the creation of the Evangelist (or circle?). Anyway, I agree with Meier that there is a patterned theology and language at work.

He is less convincing when questioning the existence of the “headwaiter” or the rule concerning the good and ordinary wine: pages 948–49. A social or anthropological analysis is needed. Meier’s judgment on the historical reality of the story is right in part (a creation of the theologian-author), but too narrowly focussed. The story can be shown to have historical value, but of a broader, deeper kind.

#### MICHAELS

Notes on this rich commentary, which reflects an honest engagement with past great commentaries (first of all Bultmann, see page xi), and detailed examination of most issues, but is very short on literary, social and historical analysis, and shows itself so preoccupied with theological and pastoral issues that the real point of the story may often be buried in the commentary.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup>J. R. MICHAELS, *The Gospel of John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2010), 139–56, esp.

The introduction addresses mostly the question of authorship, and secondarily its genre and main theological ideas.<sup>92</sup>

On the Cana miracle: properly agnostic on “on the third day,” possibly meaning a total of six days.<sup>93</sup> Goes along somewhat with Moloney’s suggestion of the influence of a tradition on the dating of the giving of the law on the third day after four days of preparation, meaning on the sixth day as here in John...

Page 141, on 2:1: the mother’s presence is not explained, except as “a reason for the presence of Jesus and his disciples.” A social analysis would have helped here. Absence of name is not considered surprising. 2:2: doesn’t inquire about Jesus being invited, vs. mother being there.

Page 142: Jesus’ father Joseph not mentioned (or brothers and sisters), but again no ethnographic commentary! Absence of the father in more ways than one.

Page 143, on 2:3: the lack or rather threatening failure (not when the wine gave out) and the mother’s comment are not sufficiently commented. Why is the lack noted (and expressed) by a woman? Malina’s remarks would have helped here, regarding women’s role as keepers of store and even more importantly keepers of honor—not necessarily their own except subsidiarily—, constantly on the alert for its measurement. She is not “simply pointing out a fact,” and furthermore and most important, it seems rash to think the story-teller presents her as “not asking Jesus to do anything.” Michaels treats the event as a secondary social activity and compares it with the more important demands starvation situations would mean. But the reality is that banquets especially marking family and village social contracts and networking were serious affairs and were not divorced from the primary necessity, to stave off hunger. They were not dissociated from it, on the contrary, and it was crucial to avoid shame. There was a continuum from one to the other.<sup>94</sup> This has been underlined recently by several authors, espe-

cially N. MACDONALD, *Not bread alone: the uses of food in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008);<sup>95</sup>

Finally, on 19:34 Michaels is not illuminating.<sup>96</sup> He gives me the idea however that here Jesus gives birth in blood and water (upside down too). And pace his efforts to find otherwise, his remarks make it clear that there was a strong, early textual tradition about the “opening” of the side of Jesus rather than its “puncturing.”

NEYREY

J. H. NEYREY, *The Gospel of John* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 61–69: disappointing. On calendar and honor or shame business, which is important, but could be said differently and doesn’t add (or at least the commentary applying social theory doesn’t show how this improves on arguably less theoretically-aware essays). One good thing, page 68: Neyrey justly comments that in the ancient world, great respect was paid to what was ancient.<sup>97</sup> He gives the example of the Hesiodic degeneration model. So Jesus as a recent phenomenon has a problem: solved by claiming he is old though new (before John, before Abraham, pre-existing even the world). Yet, the new aspect is important too: the wine is better (older?) or has improved (and was hidden in the cellar?), and certainly not vinegar served at the crucifixion.

I copy here a passage of the review of the book, on Cana mostly, in the middle of a negative review of Neyrey’s *The Gospel of John*, by Daniel B. England:

This is a thin, cold commentary, thin in scholarship and cold in tone. In a brief discussion of Jesus as the Lamb of God, for example, the author gives four possible interpretations, none of which include either the blood of the passover nor of the sacrificial system, both of which are extremely important considerations, even if ultimately rejected.

<sup>95</sup>See also P. ALTMANN and J. FU, eds., *Feasting in the archaeology and texts of the Bible and the ancient Near East* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014); V. E. GRIMM, *From feasting to fasting, the evolution of a sin. Attitudes to food in late antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>96</sup>MICHAELS, *The Gospel of John*, 967–69.

<sup>97</sup>Already

148–49 on v. 6.

<sup>92</sup>MICHAELS, *The Gospel of John*, 1–42.

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, 143.

In the miracle at Cana, Mary is reduced to a “role”, with very little help (either in the words themselves or in the interpretation) in why Jesus addresses himself as he does to this mother. Is it less harsh in Aramaic than it sound in English translation. Is there necessary edge here? When it comes to the miracle itself there is a complete lack of discussion of the symbolic importance of the number of pots (6), the number of incompleteness for Jews, nor of the overflowing abundance of the amount of wine (more than any wedding party can drink, thus pointing to overflowing grace). Instead, there is this comment: “Modern readers, however, are socialized by Darwin and evolutionary thinking to think the best is yet to come.” Really? Ask any American or Brit if that’s what they think these days. But anyone can understand why a host would bring out good wine first and the lesser stuff later.

#### O’DAY

G. R. O’DAY and S. E. HYLEN, *John* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 34–36: Nothing of great interest in this commentary meant for pastors. Not very exact either: the commentary talks about water poured into jars (ok) and “wine poured out”: no such thing is done, but a drawing, presumably into a small vase, and taking this to the steward. Only interesting comment: that “The quantity and capacity of the stone jars ... is unusual, even for a large wedding,” but mistaking this for extravagance.<sup>98</sup>

#### PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ

In an interesting essay, Pérez Fernández shows that the fourth gospel is framed by two acts of *hesed* or grace (misericordia): the respect and tribute due the bride and groom at the setting of their new life, and ends with the respect due to the dead.<sup>99</sup> In both cases, disproportionate means are used: wine or myrrh in extravagant abundance. As the author

<sup>98</sup>O’DAY and HYLEN, *John*, 36.

<sup>99</sup>M. PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ, “Las bodas de Caná y la sepultura de Jesús (Jn 2, 11 y 19, 29-40): dos obras de misericordia en el Evangelio de Juan”, in *Signum et Testimonium*, ed. J. CHAPA (Baranain, Navarra: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2003), 119–32 (129).

recognizes, the symmetry is not perfect. Yet, the parallel between the two scenes is even tighter than envisioned by Pérez Fernández.

#### REINHARTZ

Comments by Reinhartz on the GJ.<sup>100</sup> A new edition was published in 2017. Nondum vidi. “John’s Gospel has been called the most Jewish and the most anti-Jewish of the Gospels” (introduction). In the second page of this introduction, R. argues against the two-level reading of analogical stories of Jesus and a putative Johannic community. She rightly questions the evidence for this, which is a presumed expulsion from synagogue(s) sometime in the late first century. No evidence otherwise, however, for this two-stage reading. She goes too far, however, in thinking that the diversity of first-century Judaism would have refrained from exclusions, perhaps not from synagogue(s), and certainly not from “the synagogue,” but possibly from families, professional organizations and assemblies that were so important in Hellenistic cities. Her argument, especially when put in parallel by her with the messianic claims of Bar Kokhba shared by no other authority than Rabbi Akiva, makes too little of the tensions that rose early within Jewish communities regarding messianic claims, and even the tensions that followed upon the failure of Bar Kokhba himself.<sup>101</sup> The messianic claims of the Jesus community could only be read as an impossible one, given the catastrophic war and end of the temple. The political and religious conflicts could be as tense as those between Jews and Gentiles that are described by Josephus in Hellenistic cities. Another cause for the tension would have

<sup>100</sup>A.-J. LEVINE and M. Z. BRETTLE, *The Jewish annotated New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 205–13, according to page numbers on the digital copy I’m using via UCSC library.

<sup>101</sup>See M. HEEMSTRA, “The *Fiscus Judaicus*: Its social and legal impact and a possible relation with Josephus’ Antiquities”, in *Jews and Christians in the first and second centuries: How to write their history*, ed. P. J. TOMSON and J. SCHWARTZ, vol. 13, *Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 327–47 (333–34), on Paul’s awareness of these tensions in his letter to the Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:14–16), and on the views of Frederiksen and Levine.

been the ethnic make-up of the Johannine followers—Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles—and their need to forge a distinct identity in fraught times. This would be in direct competition with the rest of Judaism (however multiple): the superiority over Moses and the need to replace the temple as the dwelling of the divinity sound like points of no-return.

R. gives an excellent account of the meanings and uses of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, according to context. She is right to insist on the “overall rhetorical effect” of the massive repetition of the expression, and contrast it with the favorable use of Israel or Israelite, as well as with the silence on the “Judeity” of the disciples and even Jesus (except in John 4). She is also right to remind modern readers that the author’s use of the expression is part of a process of self-definition at a difficult time.

SANDERS

Traditional commentary.<sup>102</sup> He notes that “woman” appears also in 19:26. The not-yet time: hesitation? Time of death and glorification? Or rather to insist on Jesus’ sovereign purpose?<sup>103</sup> There are delays also at other times. On the six stones, pp. 111–12: not allegorical. Why *six*? It is just a number, “There just *were* six.” In note, p. 112, “no 7 in the story to symbolize the new.”

SCHNACKENBURG

Vol. 1 on the sign of Cana. A story with a deeper meaning, not a simple miracle story (323). It is about the fulfillment of eschatological hopes (325). John 2:4: everyone is puzzled by this line, the aloofness both to the first part and the second part cannot easily be shaken off.

“Hour:” “mysterious saying,” (328) on which depends “the profounder interpretation of the miracle” (ibid.). I think my explanation, though difficult to ground, goes some ways to explain what is at

<sup>102</sup>J. N. SANDERS, *The Fourth gospel in the early church, its origin & influence on Christian theology up to Irenaeus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943).

<sup>103</sup>This is rejected by U. SCHNELLE, *Antidoketische Christologie im Johannesevangelium. Eine Untersuchung zur Stellung des vierten Evangeliums in der johanneischen Schule* (Tübingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 89–90.

stake.<sup>104</sup> The meaning of the comment is that it could be both a statement and a question, i.e. this doesn’t have to be decided. The use of the word “hour” in that ancient culture assumed an understanding of the risks attending the fulfillment of eschatological expectations rather than temporary remedy, especially the payment and sacrificial aspect.

What does “hour” mean: immediate revelation of Jesus’ glory or Jesus’ death? (328).<sup>105</sup> Again, I think it could be both (for whom?). If a question in 2:4b (“Hasn’t my hour already come?”), then the question in 2:4a can be understood partly as a reproach (“You should have known this!”). But the text doesn’t help. It could also be a statement. Jesus’ hour is decreed by the father (329). Then isn’t the mother’s call supererogatory, needed as a trigger yet not entirely necessary (as the father knows everything).

So, if no rhetorical question regarding the messianic work (329),

We are obliged to consider seriously whether when speaking of his “hour”, he is not *alluding mysteriously* (in a way incomprehensible, of course, to Mary) to the full revelation of his glory after the Cross and Resurrection. (329)

This is true of John 7:30 and 8:20.

but this perspective is very remote from 2:4, where Jesus can hardly fear that his action may hasten the hour of his death. (329)

Precisely the opposite! I think that on the contrary the author (implied or not) presents a tragic figure, i.e. knowing subject, both in Mary and Jesus (of course).

All in all, Schnackenburg gives a very useful analysis of *hour* as being governed by the Father’s law and purpose (330). “It can be dictated only by the Father” (330). “Father’s sovereignty over Jesus, asserted precisely in view of Mary.”

<sup>104</sup>The evidence is later texts on similar situation of need, and the sociological analysis of the role of women, mothers, and older sons, as well as thinking of “hour” as season or moment.

<sup>105</sup>See M. É. BOISMARD, *Du baptême à Cana (Jean 1,19–2,11)*, *Lectio Divina* 18 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1956), 157, who thinks it is a question.



For hour = season, a sociological analysis is needed. In history, what is the proper season for radical reconsideration of redistribution of labor and goods, when is the time ripe? Is there a secret calendar to history, and who is privy to it? Women's roles in this regard is to press for an immediate solution, they are most aware of the lacks. But the provider can only be the father figure, who is radically absent. The son presents the case, or figure, of the risky decision making, which entails self-sacrifice so as not to overshadow the fundamental structure (the redistribution of glory around which everyone can keep unified), which rests on paternal distant authority.

Regarding δόξα in 2:4: in John, no transfiguration, "no temporary elevation of Jesus to a heavenly mode of being in John" (336). Right, but in the Cana event, participation in something still massively hidden and transformative. Hidden in what way? first the hidden seventh parabolic container; then the fact this story is the first part of the dyptic the gospel is folded into; the main managers, i.e. groom and majordomo, are unaware, as are the guests; only Mary, the disciples (five?), and the servants, as well as the super-narrator. φανεροῦν here both "in the perspective of the incarnation or in that of (realized) eschatology" (337). Meaning? The real question is what does one understand by πόθεν ἔστιν; Local or distant? Known or unknown? Here (below) or there (above)? The Johannine Jesus is elevated at all times and a further glorification such as is done in the synoptic transfiguration scene would appear naïve and contradictory. He comes from above (3:13, 31; 8:23). All of this, that is, all the expressions regarding Jesus' origin (the question "Whence?" higher origin, from above, from heavenly father, etc.) are important for understanding the notion of the missing 7th: *it is both present and physical, yet hidden to those not seeking to see*. Most important meaning of all of this is that the gospel claims Jesus comes from God and is in perfect union with the father.

On the wine, see p. 338: at the end of a wedding (covenant), precious and copious, i.e. so eschatological gift of the messiah. See Amos 9:13; Hos 2:24; Joel 4:18; Is 29:17; Jer 31:5; Enoch 10:19; Apoc. Bar. Syr. 29:5; Or. Syb. 2.317f.; 3.620–24; 744f. See also Gen 49:11.

Eucharistic wine? "Far-fetched," says R.

SCHNACKENBURG, *Introduction and commentary on chapters 1–4*, vol. 1 of *The Gospel according to St. John* (New York: Crossroad, 1968), 338,

to see in it an allusion to a sacramental usage in which water was taken instead of wine in the holy Eucharist.

This discussion, to my mind, evades entirely the real issue of the relationship between water, wine, and blood. Cf. bread in John 6: lack, question on its origin, satiety, and the gathering of pieces. Schnackenburg comments further:

Wine does not occur in John as symbol of the blood of Jesus, not even in 15:1–6; one could just as well think of baptism on account of the water...

My question: why would the author indicate this directly? The key here is to think symbolically. The association of wine and blood is not made directly in John in the fullness of a symbol (i.e. an equation sign), but by inviting the reader to contemplate the fundamental (creative) nature of what's missing: the seventh jar (ch. 2), the temple (2, end), and the body (19–20).

Schnackenburg 1.340 takes on the history-of-religions explanation of Cana which finds the origin of the miracle in (local) dionysiac epiphany (Bousset, Bultmann, etc.). He rightly rejects the explanation: in John, the revelation of the glory of Jesus is different from the appearance of the godhead coming as savior; the epiphany link is secondary; it is an unnecessary explanation since abundance of wine "is an element of the Jewish expectations."

SCHNELLE

I begin with his Afrikaans article on the signs.<sup>106</sup> For Schnelle, the OT/Jewish influences and Hellenistic and other background militate against the notion of a pre-Johannine *semeia* source. Analysis shows that the A's theology itself explains the use of *semeia* and that they are integrated as a fundamental basis to express this theology. I note that Girard's method goes even further in that direction without implying a

<sup>106</sup>U. SCHNELLE, "Die *Semeia* [tekens] in die Evangelie volgens Johannes", *In die Skriflig* 49 (2015): 1–6.

pre-johannine tradition, except in the broader sense, and certainly without limiting the meaning of signs to miracles. About the signs, Schnelle concludes that: 1) they lead to *doxa*;<sup>107</sup> 2) they point to the unity of father and son.<sup>108</sup> 3) the signs are specific points of incarnation, dense and real. Faith comes through the revelation of Jesus' glory, it doesn't precede. 4) faith and unbelief are triggered by seeing signs; 5) Jesus' suffering is bound to *semeia*, not to the temple's event, as in the synoptics.

On his gospel commentary.<sup>109</sup> Pp. 58–63 on Cana. The Cana wonderworker is no other than Jesus on the cross and resurrected. No explanation for the lack of wine (59). The time would refer to the hour of the passion (60). Yes, but it could refer—at the same time—to the problem posed by doing something out of season, out of the proper time. On “six,” only comment on its perfection in Plutarch, *Moralia* 1018c. Water for purification: information also on another level refers to the replacement and surpassing of the Jewish cult. In his comment on 19:25–30, pp. 288–91, short discussion of verse 26/7: now is the hour that couldn't yet have arrived in the Cana miracle.<sup>110</sup> On ὄξος in verse 29: more or less vinegar. The bitterness of the drink would signal the bitterness of the suffering (?). The hyssop might indicate the Passover, Jesus being the sacrificed lamb. Drinks completely and as fulfilment (antidocetic).<sup>111</sup>

#### SHERIDAN

In a 2016 book, Sheridan points out that the gospel of John persuades and shapes its “implied reader” “by distributing knowledge between characters and readers unevenly.”<sup>112</sup> This is an idea worth thinking

<sup>107</sup>Glory needs to be explained as something beyond the effect of the temple on the believers, for instance.

<sup>108</sup>This is an important aspect to be discussed historically rather than theologically: what does father's will mean and who has access to its interpretation?

<sup>109</sup>U. SCHNELLE, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1998).

<sup>110</sup>I see the problem differently: the hour begins with Cana and is fulfilled in the story of crucifixion and death.

<sup>111</sup>The fulfilment note looks back on the Cana sign and the series of seven that is here completed.

<sup>112</sup>D. ESTES and R. SHERIDAN, eds., *How John works: Storytelling in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 215.

about: the characters' limited knowledge is noted, be it the mother's, the servants', the disciples', the invisible groom's, the master of ceremonies', and of course the crowd's. I argue that the construction of gaps in the knowledge of wine's origin invite the readers or listeners to think of a larger gap, having to do with the origin of the power to change conditions of life. I agree with Moloney's point in the same book that the gospel ends at chapter 20 but “signals” an opening and a request from Johannine disciples to come. As for time, I remain puzzled by the restructuring of time in the story of Cana's miracle. I think that the story doesn't invite the readers to turn back to an original pure time, an hyper-aged wine miraculously preserved as a memory or mark of a mythological golden age, and regret or lament the turning to vinegar of present wine(s), on the contrary. It invites us to imagine a future “old” wine that is *already here* and can be discovered by those who accept to believe. Something somehow old yet new, without any intermediary steps.

#### SIEGERT

Rich commentary in F. SIEGERT, *Das Evangelium des Johannes in seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt: Wiederherstellung und Kommentar* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 246–55. He accepts the Bultmannian notion of a signs source, with seven signs, and reviews its characteristics (246, 249): geographic details, introduction of a single person, an identified need (disease), a statement by Jesus and its follow-up, details about the sequence of events, and the public provides a sort of chorus. Nothing too compelling in that list, all circumstantial details, in reality. I don't see a compelling logic or structure to it.

With many others, S. suggests that the series of signs begins here with what may have been originally part of a parable (247). See Mk 2:22 and Mt 5:39.

Regarding the miracle: John is no historian. Perhaps false in the details (he gives a number of examples in the recent past), but true or “authentisch” (249) in that the living spirit of the group around Jesus is still conveyed. Wine and bread miracle show that Jesus had a concern for social aspects of life. Though the Cana event is presented as a nature

miracle, it is its social aspect that one needs to understand. As in the bread miracle of chapter 5, the miracle is not in the phenomenal increase but in the sharing.<sup>113</sup> Natural wonders of the Bible are not fictions, says Siegert (250). Miracles are condensations of actual experience (ibid.). Yes, Augustine et al say something similar.<sup>114</sup> Let water flow like wine (and vice-versa?). Siegert thinks Q 7:31–35 (children calling people to dance, followed by comparison JB and son of man, eating and drinking, friend of tax farmers and sinners). Messianic connotations of wine (251): Gen 49:10–12; Isaiah 55:1; Jer 31:4–6; Hosea 2:22–24; Joel 4:18–21; Amos 9:13–15; etc.

On stone jars, p. 254: doesn't think they are there for washing of hands but the concern would be for purity of water that was used for drinking. Avoid the problems of fired pottery: see Lev 11:33–35; Num 19:14–18;<sup>115</sup> *mKelim*. Nothing on volume, on stone itself, or on the meaning of six and seven. Speaks of a return to paradise that begins here in the first sign.

On vinegar:<sup>116</sup> Siegert provides no reflection on the matter (an inclusion, the great wine is all in the future). Sees symbolism in the scene. Synoptics' version hints at the Psalm of lament. In John, reference to the Mosaic ritual, with hyssop: idea of purity (even at Roman's hand), see Lev 14:4; Num 19:19; Ps 51 (50).9. So here is another playing of the ideal of purity. Very literary, learned play about the fulfilment of Hebrew scriptures.

Reflecting on Siegert's comments:

1. In wedding feasts, life is celebrated joyfully by the whole community. There is a suspension therefore of calculations, jealousies and envies. They are also symbols of the binding of families and of hope in the future for blessings in the form of children, property, status. More

<sup>113</sup>My note: Sharing multiplies, as does self-giving, in knowledge that perspectival point is outside the picture, yet here.

<sup>114</sup>Wine indeed is such, and especially good wine: condensation of vine, land, water, sun, work, knowledge and capital, and time. But let me go back to the historical question of condensation of nature via human work: the multiplying and sharing of goods are an acceleration or revolution that have to be paid in some fashion?

<sup>115</sup>But see DSS: CD 12:15–18; 11 QT 49:13–16; 50:16–17.

<sup>116</sup>SEIGERT, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 589.

broadly, they symbolize larger natural and historical hopes regarding fertility, peace, expansion of life.

2. the wine is undissociable condensation of work and nature, neither of which can be taken for granted. Yet, the problem of all societies is that the sharing is difficult. We know from *tituli picti*, for instance, that Herod ordered expensive, old wine for banquets which presumably were about the same values of fertility, status, and peace (or at least order).
3. wine as metaphor: as I just mentioned, wine is the condensation or capitalization of best soil, exposure, weather, vines, care, knowledge, capital, enduring, etc. It also needs time, and everything concerning wine is very sensitive to timing. The Cana miracle radically shortens the time normally needed for fermentation and maturation, while structuring a continuation (6 jars). It is a reflection on maturation in history. Why? Because of the need signalled by the mother, in parallel to the need expressed by workers in the field? More on the shunting or radical shortening of the normal wait (the long awaiting of maturation). No more promise of fulfillment and delays (messianic and otherwise), but present accomplishment rendered possible by the fall of the temple. Eschatological time always already here rather than projected on a smooth horizon as renewal or correction to the entropy that is history as seen from palaces and temples? The "dionysiac" interpretation (bracketed by Siegert 247) is a misreading of the messianic idea. Renewal and fulfillment rather than entropy and uncertain (controlled) renewal. Finally, the new wine explodes the old containers: Mark 2:22; 5:39; etc.

In Mark 2:21–22, fermentation is taken to be destructive of old "bags." The point in John 2 is expressed otherwise. No obvious fermentation is assumed to exist, although the six jars can be seen as a gesture in that direction (a long preparation). There is a hidden fermentation, a costly, risky process that breaks bags and bodies and is to come. The burst within history (the glory) is framed as a hidden presence in John (and already in Luke).

SMIT

SMIT<sup>117</sup> analyzes John 2:1–11 as the most important sign and guide to the christology of this gospel. He doesn't assume a signs source (264). The hour theme, the hour of the miracle worker, has been considered by Bultmann 78:85; Haenchen 1980:188; Becker 1990:128. In what way? Says nothing on the number of vessels, the stone, etc. and attempts to be proper in not reading a hostility to Jews in this passage.

An earlier form of this narrative was a gift miracle (266). Utopian amount of wine. Follows Theissen 1974a:111 on this. Here, he follows exegetes opting for a borrowing of Dionysiac vocabulary (not shown however): Labahn, etc.

267: Lack, especially at a wedding (2 families involved) would be a social disaster.<sup>118</sup> By the way, 267n57: is this a master of ceremonies or a best man, or?

Page 268: the interpretation of the story as pointing to incarnation is wrong (word wedding the flesh: Lütgehetmann). Perhaps the way it has been spelled out or conceived, but I see another possibility: the sacrificial bet made on feeding in abundance in the present when some form of payment must be made eventually in the future, in other words: debt writ large.

Bacchic abundance? Smit doesn't see a conscious polemic vs Bacchus or Dionysus (he is very confusing and perhaps confused too) but would like to see a "connection with this ubiquitous deity" taken seriously because of the enormous quantity of wine. This is following Lütgehetmann 1990:261–82, vs Noetzel. See my notes on this long-standing dispute (41).

<sup>117</sup>P.-B. SMIT, *Fellowship and food in the kingdom: Eschatological meals and scenes of utopian abundance in the New Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 263–74.

<sup>118</sup>My thought at this point: the topos of a son feeding the workers in the vineyard while father is away is meant to convey the basic political problem of authority in absentia and solving it. Is the son doing the will of the father? Isn't there a payment or sacrifice to be made for disturbing the seasons of the year and of history? Whereas the "master of ceremonies," who may represent the managers of the society, not so much the providers as those in charge of distribution, claim to know better what is needed and when, the what and when (the hour or season of when to indulge and when to tighten one's belt).

Page 269: what is the theological point (good question)? He doesn't agree with Bultmann's view on the adoption of a Dionysiac myth. Proposes after others that YHWH himself was dionysiac-like, that there was syncretism on the Bacchic side, etc. He appeals to numismatics like others (wine and wreaths). Continues page 270 on this unproven borrowing. Looks at other interpretations: water vs blood (less capable of purity vs really pure, after Keener)? No. Eucharist association (272): but Jesus not identified with wine and there is no trace of eucharistic or liturgical vocabulary (he follows Schnackenburg apparently). "The emphasis on the change from water into wine, however, shows at the same time that the Eucharist is not the dominant interest of Jn. 2:1–11." Oh? theme of the hour? the water in John 19, and the vinegar? The bread left after the miracle in 6? His own interpretation: a utopian interpretation that I find completely unnecessary because it bypasses the question of distributive justice as well as the need for structural analysis of this ancient society. He reiterates the idea of a conflict with influential bacchic festivities with its

utopian abundance of wine, thereby saving the face of the newly weds and their families, entering in competition with Dionysus, etc... (SMIT, *Fellowship and food in the kingdom*, 274).

SÖDING

Thomas Söding, Bochum, commentary on the gospel on the web (course?). Doesn't accept the Dionysiac comparison, calls the miracle rather "Jesuan." Would see in it rather a comedy than a tragedy, with family's honor saved at the end. I don't think so: the presence of the mother at both events ties the nuptial scene to the passion story (with a new diffraction of the liquid).

Page 46 of this website on the six stone jars: I agree that allegorical explanations regarding these jars (end of the law, purity rules, covenant) are wrong. Allegory there is, but the spirit of the story needs to be framed more precisely: water not yet there, needs to be drawn, and needs Jesus' word. The jars contain first the water, then the wine. No destruction or breakage, as synoptic stories about new wine, but realization or fulfillment. Correction

(GH): no breakage except at the end, with the crucifixion and the pouring out of the “spirit.” Jesus doesn’t do the miracle to allow the “party” to go on but so that the nuptial community has access to life. I.e., the lack is not simply a physical lack but one of spirit.

Over-abundant wine, as for bread (6:13). The wine is excellent: how can this be, without preparation or maturation? Indeed. The answer to that question is that maturation was real but hidden (as is all history).

Page 47, on Jesus’ mother. Deeper conflict here than the usual rejection or distance. The name “woman” cannot be a rejection since 19:26 has it too. Is it a reaction similar to the *noli me tangere* of 20:17? It would all be for theological reasons, namely to separate himself completely so he can be perceived as a heroic figure who had to do what he had to do? Söding doesn’t see at all the role of “hour.”

THEOBALD

THEOBALD, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Kapitel 1–12*, 199–220.

Many tie the Cana story to 1:14, and read in it a concern to interpret the Sinai theophany. But otherwise, Jesus’ manifestation begins with Cana, and this has its advantages. The figure of the mother (2:11 and 19:28) then would be at the “beginning” and at the “completion”. Theobald thinks the first cycle of stories in 2–4, with its broad geographical range, functions like an “exposition”.<sup>119</sup>

Starts from the surprise that there is no desert period in John, but direct passage from JB’s company to the wedding feast.<sup>120</sup>

Rhetorical analysis of the structure.<sup>121</sup>

Thesis of the author (after Bultmann, *Joh* 83; Linnemann, *Hochzeit*; Wick, *Jesus*; et al) that the motif of the change of water in wine is connected to the Dionysus cult. Theobald thinks the thesis’ plausibility is reinforced by recent analysis of literary,

<sup>119</sup>THEOBALD, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Kapitel 1–12*, 199.

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*, 202.

archaeological and numismatic finds.<sup>122</sup> The author analyzes in detail this possibility.<sup>123</sup> He concludes that this probable development of the Cana story in competition with the Dionysus cult offers a good example of the “acculturation of faith...”<sup>124</sup>

THYEN

The Signs source theory is contested by Thyen.<sup>125</sup> He is opposed to Bultmann’s theory for a number of reasons. He is particularly impressed by stylistic studies, such as van Belle’s and Ruckstuhl’s.<sup>126</sup> The latter’s studies of Johannine speech and style, beginning with his study published in 1951, show that the whole Johannine corpus forms a characteristic, singular unity. Ruckstuhl’s most recent study used the TLG to compare a corpus of thirty-two authors between 100 BCE and 150 CE. It reworked and completed the catalogue of stylistic markers of the Corpus Johanneum (gospel and letters), into three groups. Conclusion with van Belle who refuses *semeia* source hypothesis “as a valid working hypothesis in the study of the Fourth Gospel.”

See also P.-B. SMIT, “Cana-to-Cana or Galilee-to-Galilee. A Note on the Structure of the Gospel of John”, *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 98 (2007): 143–49.

VON WAHLDE

New massive commentary on John’s gospel and letters by Von Wahlde.<sup>127</sup> The work addresses the aporias in John through systematic source and redaction criticism. His theory explains what kind of authority

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*, 203–9.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, 218.

<sup>125</sup>H. THYEN, *Studien zum Corpus Johanneum*, WUNT 214 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 443–52.

<sup>126</sup>G. van BELLE, *The Signs Source in the Fourth Gospel*, BETL 116 (Leuven, 1994); E. RUCKSTUHL and P. DSCHULNIGG, *Stilkritik und Verfasserfrage im Johannesevangelium: die johanneischen Sprachmerkmale auf dem Hintergrund des Neuen Testaments und des zeitgenössischen hellenistischen Schrifttums*, NTOA 17 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1991).

<sup>127</sup>U. C. von WAHLDE, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, vol. 2 of *The Gospel and Letters of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

(force? theological and community based) is behind the editorial changes. But what would be the status of the text at every one of these main stages? A real edition in use by what communities? But it would also be possible to explain these changes or aporias as “the complex internal dialogue of a single mind,” according to the *RBL* review by Parsenios.<sup>128</sup> See already C. K. Barrett, and more recently Paul Anderson.<sup>129</sup> For them, the paradox is part of a single mind’s reflection on the mystery, with concealment and revelation going hand in hand. [I agree and would put that in my conclusion]

On the six stone jars at Cana, his view is that “they are simply intended to reflect the abundance created by the miracle.” I.e., he doesn’t favor the symbolism often attached to the detail such as imperfection, or “the contrast of the Jewish water with the eschatological wine.”<sup>130</sup> This is fine, but there is a possible *tertium quid*, reached by thinking about the phenomenon of water and its transformations. I propose that the precision of the description of the containers points to something not only hidden but part of a larger design and therefore implying a more complex theology than what von Wahlde seems to posit for the first edition (I have to check this, namely his definition of the first edition’s theology). See my notes on von Wahlde’s theory and its significance for my interpretation of the Cana story.

Note on vW’s reconstruction: How to explain the tight relationship between the structure of the Cana story, the placement of the episode at the temple, and the last scenes at the cross, plus the pouring out of blood and water? Were they part of the author’s understanding (and at what stage?), or was chapter 19 reframed later (2d or 3d edition of vW)? The first task would be to understand better the meaning of the Cana story, especially the 6 + 1 scheme. If it was there from the beginning (ed. 1 of vW or signs theory of many others), what meaning did it have then? It seems to me to go together with the discussion of the living water in chapter 4 (the Samaritan woman), and the paralytic in Jerusalem.

<sup>128</sup>G. L. Parsenios, *RBL* 11 (2011), page 4. Or see Paul C. Higgin in the SBL session of 2011 mentioned below.

<sup>129</sup>BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John*; ANDERSON, *The fourth Gospel and the quest for Jesus*.

<sup>130</sup>Von WAHLDE, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 83.

The scene at the cross, seen as an inclusion by many (and as I argue also), could have been added later. It is difficult to say anything about the composition. For this author, concealment and revelation go hand in hand (cf. CK Bennett; P. Anderson).

### *Three editions*

At every stage of the genesis of this gospel, the author checks on many characteristics of terminology, narrative orientation, and theological thought. For instance, in the theology of each edition, he looks for Christology, belief, pneumatology, eternal life, eschatology, knowing, soteriology, ethics, anthropology, ecclesiology, and attitude to the physical world.

1. the primary material from John the Baptist to the resurrection focuses on signs. It goes from the miracle at Cana to the raising of Lazarus. This edition does not have a high Christology. It has a political concern regarding the authorities. [I obviously need a fuller summary here]
2. The 2nd edition includes dialogues and debates, with the Jews. It remembers the repeated promises in Scripture regarding “that day” or concerning the Spirit given to all the people. It speaks of eternal life as a result. In the Jewish writings, there were discussions of this gift of eternal life and of the idea that the spirit would be given to all who would come to know God spontaneously, a new spirit, and a freedom from sin. In this edition, Jesus as son was sent by the father to proclaim the giving of the eschatological Spirit, described as water. The question is: was this consistent with the rest of Christian theology? *Was the spirit an effective agent of salvation? What then of the death of Christ?* (both tied in my mind!) And if the spirit was such an effective agent, was there a need for ethics?<sup>131</sup> Such a true realized eschatology would be perfectly at home in the Judaism of the time.

<sup>131</sup>Compare Bultmann and his existentialist interpretation. Meeks notes also the lack of specific ethics in these texts, and the eschatological spirit which seems to condone a spontaneous type of ethics.

3. The 1st letter of John is a balancing and recalibration of the [risky] ideas of the 2nd edition. In this letter, salvation is not realized, that is a process which started with Jesus, and which is to be realized “the last day.” There is a change in the vocabulary of father and son. The community is invited to adhere to what they heard “from the beginning.” Atonement is needed. Sin is still present. The theology is based on the idea of a final apocalyptic judgment. [I note that this supposes a community behind all of this kind of theological transformation]
4. in the 3rd edition of the gospel, the ideas of the 1st letter of John are incorporated. Jesus is presented as the lamb of God, laying down his life, and so on. The words of Jesus are presented as having permanent value. The spirit is presented as “another Paraclete,” a reminder of what Jesus said, who will not speak on his own, and will glorify Jesus. And in this addition too, we have an ethics: those who perform good deeds will inherit the light, and those who don’t will face the wrath of God.<sup>132</sup>

### *Appreciations and questions*

This theory explains fully the Jewish background which we see in the 2nd edition, and it explains also why the theology of the 1st letter of John is in some ways more primitive than that of the gospel of John. It is a genetic commentary in the sense that it does not say that the 2nd edition, for instance, was a real gospel. It delineates a clear succession of stages, including an explanation for the priority of the 1st letter of John, and it is the 1st full explanation of the development of Johannine theology. The best Johannine theology is in the final product, but the author explains how the Gospel got there.

On his forceful, clearly designed and articulated theory of three editions, with 1 John after the 2d ed., some interesting questions were raised in the discussion of his work at the SBL Annual meeting in SF, 11/20/2011. First speaker (Paul C. Higgin): On the aporias and riddles: couldn’t the author be rewriting his own material, as a dialectical thinker?

No need perhaps to go along with everything in the theory to benefit from the approach (hm, copout), and continue the dialectical approach to the theological development of the gospel. In terms of the Jesus of history: do we have material earlier than even Mark in the first stages (2 stages, presumably)? The Jesus of history (what does this mean?) is illuminated because the political realism of all the stages is more clearly defined (well, and we know better what ideas probably weren’t there at the beginning, so the theory helps eliminate some dross).

The third speaker, Craig (?) laid out the most interesting questions. The assumption re. John is usually that there was a long period of development, followed by the development of the community (including a rupture with Judaism), and then a new phase, with internal divisions. Von Wahlde’s work forces a completely new reconsideration. By arguing that the epistles were done before GJ because of the discussions raised about the humanity of Jesus, one understands better the striking passages in 6 on flesh, blood, and schism, which are similar to 1 John. Is it possible to be so clear and detailed in the reconstruction? Challenges appear especially concerning the 3d edition. The structure would be from a simple to a complex christology. It follows that the historicity issue is only accessible with the 1st edition in hand, and not important in the 3d. But that entails a contradiction: there would be a free theological expansion in the 3d ed., yet conservatism regarding the words of the historical Jesus. Isn’t this obscuring the testimony of the 1st ed.? Most importantly, the worldview is problematic: why would the apocalyptic ideas of dualism, judgment, etc., appear only in the 3d edition? This is a solution partly parallel to that of Bultmann who suggested insertions by a redactor. vW argues all this material is late and comes from the 3d editor’s familiarity with it, rather than from the early form of Jesus’ preaching. The reviewer thinks that the early pre-Easter Jesus had an apocalyptic element. It would be strange that the apocalyptic thematics was inserted in the more removed 3d edition, and one would have to suppose a separate movement, influenced (late) by a Q-like group?

In his response to this last question on the absence of an apocalyptic discourse or component in the

<sup>132</sup>Check JOHNSON, *Among the Gentiles*.

first stage of writing, vW had no answer. Perhaps due to the nature of the original community? No, it would need to be there with the earliest testimony.

### *GJ's editions according to vW and Cana story*

Von Wahlde's distribution of the present text of GJ into three editions goes as follows:

1. The story of Cana belongs to the first edition, except the mention of the three days, which comes from the second edition.
2. John 2:13–22 mostly comes from the second edition.<sup>133</sup> The single 1st ed. verse, “The Passover of the Jews was near and Jesus went to Jerusalem,” provides the anchor for a story regarding the temple confrontation which is significantly different from the synoptics' account because it has its own developed christology. vW's conclusion is that 1:35–2:12 “is as it was intended by the author of the second edition.”<sup>134</sup> Ok, but the explanations given for placing this elaborated story of the temple conflict at this precise point need to be examined. See note 9 of page 107: vW doesn't agree with Brown and Moloney who argue that the story is about replacing the temple with Jesus' body. But vW hesitates. The *naos* will be rebuilt only at resurrection time. And there is the problem of the presence of God in the *naos*/body? I don't see the problem.
3. 19:35 etc.: all third edition. Question: how can this text literarily look like part of a large inclusion which began with 2:1–11? Must we assign it to the last editing layer? Possible of course, but wouldn't it mean substantial changes to the Cana story itself in which the “sign” aspect of the first edition didn't require the details on the stones.... Or must I suppose on the contrary that this sign, in the mind of the first editor, points to hidden aspects (and a developed pneumatology and idea of atonement)? Picked up later by the last editor reworking the passion story?

The witness of JB and the Cana story were illustrations, from the second edition's point of view, “of the proper response to two types of witness about Jesus.”<sup>135</sup> A description of a trip to Jerusalem for Passover became the focus or hook for the second edition's “version of events surrounding the cleaning of the temple, events that it employed to illustrate two other means by which the disciples responded to Jesus with belief.” Those two other means were the disciples' response to scriptures and to Jesus' own word, as related in the temple incident.

So perhaps no need to explain this story as “displaced.”

Plan of an email to von Wahlde regarding this point: My problem is that my idea of a large inclusion from 2:1 to 19:35 with the mother and the wine (vinegar) and piercing motif, etc., has to be explained as being right there from the beginning, i.e. in the first edition. The other possibility is that it was progressively (and craftily) introduced and developed in accordance with von Wahlde's reconstruction of the theological disputes and notions found in the gospel. So we would have:

1) the story of the miracle at Cana as belonging to edition 1, together with the note on the trip to Jerusalem for Passover.

2) Is the temple episode, marked by a higher christology von Wahlde finds typical of the second edition, brought that close to the JB and Cana story because of the reasons given by vW (“illustrations of belief”), or rather *because it is intimately related to the way the Cana story is presented*? I think the rhetorical analysis of 2:1–11 is very important in this case and explains why this miracle is in first position for a special reason, *not only as illustration*.

3) the division of garments, scene with the mother, the offer of sour wine, and especially the piercing in 19:32–37, would be part of the third edition.<sup>136</sup> If I accept this, I have to suppose that the third edition was lucky to have the Cana episode as it was, or suppose it was changed. I would rather think that the Cana story already had a much deeper idea than imputed to it by vW.

<sup>133</sup>Von WAHLDE, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 106–12.

<sup>134</sup>*Ibid.*, 111, note 10.

<sup>135</sup>*Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>136</sup>*Ibid.*, 797–98.



WEINRICH

On 2:6: the number six might be there for local color (300)? Augustinian notion of six ages of the world? Idea of “incompletedness or imperfection probably indicated”? “a former gift is to be perfected”, following Moloney.<sup>137</sup> Page 301: purification in Jewish cult to be differentiated now from that obtained through Jesus’ death... Oy weh. Exclamation mark after reporting on the volume (301).

This theological commentary in two volumes (only one accessible in 2018?) addresses the resistance shown in many quarters to identifying wine and blood.<sup>138</sup> He refers to Bultmann 120, who thinks that John 19:34 with blood and water is not congruent with the presence of water and wine at Cana. In agreement are Boismard 142 and Schnackenburg 1:338.<sup>139</sup> Weinrich’s answer is that water remains significant throughout the gospel (I would insist on its quality as not different from blood, without removing it from its materiality by turning it into eschatological water). Quoting him: “Jn 19:34 is precisely the text which makes sense of Jn 2:1–11.” Indeed. But he also quotes Olsson in the same page (321): “The wine in our text would refer to the same reality as the word, the blood, the Spirit and other expressions in the Johannine writings, and cannot be bound to only one of them.”<sup>140</sup> The danger would be to generalize water as a fixed image.

WENGST

WENGST<sup>141</sup> makes helpful remarks. He has a clear explanation regarding the purity concern: for Pharisees, what was the duty of priests—to be pure before God—is taken to be a broader demand concerning every person (man). There is no place or time when a person doesn’t stand before God and is responsible for his daily behavior.

<sup>137</sup>MOLONEY, *The Gospel of John*, 68.

<sup>138</sup>W. C. WEINRICH, *John 1:1–7:1* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2015), 321.

<sup>139</sup>BOISMARD, *Du baptême à Cana (Jean 1,19–2,11)*, 142; SCHNACKENBURG, *Introduction and commentary on chapters 1–4*, 338.

<sup>140</sup>OLSSON, *Structure and meaning in the Fourth Gospel*, 107.

<sup>141</sup>K. WENGST, *Das Johannes-evangelium: 1. Teilband: Kapitel 1–10* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000), 96–105.

Interestingly, he doesn’t raise the matter of the number of stones, while giving the usual volume as being large, from 468 to 702 liters. Regarding the lack of wine, however, he notes that the wedding home was not necessarily a little or poor house (or village, I add, if neighbors helped with the stone vessels for instance), yet wine comes to lack.<sup>142</sup> This lack is not explained in the story (or by Wengst). The reality, however, was that it was difficult to provide enough food and especially wine—a sophisticated element of agriculture, a luxury of course, and often speculative at that time (evidence?) for a large feast. How large was the feast? See the evidence in Krauss and Dalman about this. It was difficult to predict the number of guests accurately, presumably. As Wengst notes, this sort of feast was a one time when a society of subsistence, hard-pressed farmers, would get their fill. The flexibility in the number of guests (pressure on everyone’s part? All were invited: see Mt and Lk on similar wedding feast invitations) was an important dimension of life. Hospitality to all the family, village, and friends—and its converse, as in Luke 15:1–10: knowing how and when not to get oneself invited—was driven by the desire for honor and status.<sup>143</sup> This desire in turn was imposed by the need to enlarge one’s social circle as widely as possible and build one’s security. It couldn’t be done by calculating outputs and inputs in the modern fashion. It was a broader calculation, with a strong contrast being made between the expense of the

<sup>142</sup>Wengst rightly remarks on this lack as important determination of social levels, whereas Reed thinks the vessels are a mark of high standing and makes too much of this information: J. L. REED, “Stone vessels and gospel texts. Purity and socio-economics in John 2”, in *Zeichen aus Text und Stein: Studien auf dem Weg zu einer Archäologie des Neuen Testaments*, ed. S. ALKIER and J. ZANGENBERG (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 2003), 381–401. Sobering review of recent interpretations of social situation of Galilee under Antipas in several studies by M. H. Jensen: M. H. JENSEN, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The literary and archaeological sources on the reign of Herod Antipas and its socio-economic impact on Galilee*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); JENSEN, “Rural Galilee and rapid changes: An investigation of the socio-economic dynamics and developments in Roman Galilee”, *Biblica* 93 (2012): 43–67; JENSEN, “Purity and politics in Herod Antipas’s Galilee: The case for religious motivation”, *JSHJ* 11 (2013): 3–34.

<sup>143</sup>See Neyrey on this question.

wedding feast (honor paramount) and the realities of married life.

Regarding 2:9, as well as 2:6, the number of stones: Wengst notes that the remark about the servants' knowledge encompasses and symbolizes that of the reader or hearer. I would add that the six plus one puzzle puts the reader and listener in a more modest position. They are in the position of lack, short of fulfilment, perhaps seeking a solution to this lack, like the mother? That is, although readers have special knowledge (as super-users) while the story unfolds before their eyes and ears, they are put on notice that the real source, the seventh jar and body, is missing, though the fount keeps giving. Even further (theologically or philosophically speaking?), they may realize that the seemingly mundane transformation of water into wine or food, as Augustine said, was a permanent miracle. Ancient complex agrarian societies were very aware of the danger of forgetting their precariousness and the hidden costs of what seemed natural and was socially required.

#### ZIMMERMANN

I have been reading the chapter by Zimmerman for the book by Lieu and de Boer.<sup>144</sup> He discusses time and the meaning of eternity. Page 301: "At the same time, the nourishment of the body of believers is not perishable water and bread, but rather the flesh and blood of Christ (6:54). It is a special quality of life that can also be experienced in human life. There is no denial that death comes at the end of [physical] life (John 11:26; 12:25), but death does not limit this true life.

In other words, the notion of time in John is broadened and bound to faith in a historical, single-point coming of the son of God. Hour and last day are connected to the resurrection of Jesus in a way that is not simply an event in time but a fragrant transformation of the here and now (inebriating and fragrant as in the scenes at Cana and Bethany, 12:1–3).

It is surprising how the highly complex notion of time in John can be analyzed on a material basis, in

<sup>144</sup>R. ZIMMERMANN, "Eschatology and time in the Gospel of John", in *The Oxford handbook of Johannine studies*, ed. J. M. LIEU and M. C. de BOER (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 292–310.

a continuum with itsx spiritual aspects. The hour is also the season when life-supporting activities, including care of the society (Cana and multiplication of bread) cannot be delayed. The turning point it represents is both the mirror and the perspectival view on a new creation that everyone is invited to believe in. Plus: the ability to act in the face of ongoing temporal conflict.<sup>145</sup> What is still needed is a comparison to the greco-roman conception of time.

The creation in the Bible is open to a new definition of humans. The gospel of John continues this idea—no return to the entropy of a stoic world in which the best outcome one can presume of history is its re-ordering by force if need be. John projects a time in which a new political world can be imagined.

#### ZUMSTEIN

Two-volume commentary by Zumstein.<sup>146</sup> Z accepts the theory of a signs source but is wary of using it for specific wordings of it. He thinks an earlier Johannine tradition is behind John 2:1–12 and was developed in a process of *relecture*.

#### 4 DIONYSUS

The thesis that the Cana story is influenced in some ways by the Dionysus myth and is shaped by the need to compete with it has been given new life recently. Old supporters: Bultmann, Dodd, Linneman, Lindars, Hengel somewhat, et al.<sup>147</sup> The case was reopened by Broer as well as by Wick and Eisele, who gives much of the previous literature.<sup>148</sup> The

<sup>145</sup>*Ibid.*, 305.

<sup>146</sup>J. ZUMSTEIN, *L'évangile selon saint Jean (1–12)* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2014).

<sup>147</sup>E. LINNEMANN, "Die Hochzeit zu Kana und Dionysos", *New Testament Studies* 20 (1974): 408–18 (417).

<sup>148</sup>I. BROER, "Noch einmal: Zur religionsgeschichtlichen 'Ableitung' von Jo 2,1–11", *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* 8 (1983): 103–23; reprised as a forceful answer to Meyer's criticisms in BROER, "Das Weinwunder von Kana (Joh 2,1–11) und die Weinwunder der Antike", in *Das Urchristentum in seiner literarischen Geschichte*, ed. J. BECKER, U. MELL, and U. B. MÜLLER (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 291–308, on which see below; P. WICK, "Jesus gegen Dionysos?", *Biblica* 85 (2004): 179–98; EISELE, "Jesus und Dionysos".

case for reopening the history of religions approach was reinforced by the discoveries of a related mosaic scene in Sepphoris (1987), while being sustained by the coinage of Scythopolis.<sup>149</sup> He confronts one of the main objections to the interpretation by Bultmann and followers, namely that the evidence for the Dionysus cult is late (or dispersed throughout the Hellenistic and Roman world): second and third centuries CE. He thinks the four themes of the wine miracle, nuptials and wedding, mother or nursing mother, and disciples, form a parallel structure in both the story of the Cana miracle and the broader, diversified Dionysus tradition and cult in the area. The evangelist would have set the Jesus story with this background in mind, a background of stories that were competitive and that the Cana story was meant to counteract and supersede.

In his 1999 essay, Broer takes Meier to task for refusing to consider the story of Dionysus as the most immediately relevant background for the Cana story and for denying that there is any evidence anywhere that Dionysus is “said to turn water into wine.” His essay sets out to demonstrate that not only does a very old tradition reflect the well-known relationship between Dionysus and wine but that a change of water into wine occurs in stories that precede or are contemporary with the fourth Gospel.<sup>150</sup> [note: the Cana story in no way sets Jesus to be a vine- or wine-giver (or inventor). It’s not even a Noah story.] What is the evidence for stories of change of water into wine in the Dionysus tradition? The first text he examines, from Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 6.10, mentions changing the water of Parnassus’ stream and filling it with wine. Change of nature, indeed, though

nothing to do directly with Dionysus, although that is not the most important issue.<sup>151</sup> Other texts regarding Dionysus indeed mention the miraculous change of the water of sacred springs or streams into wine and outpouring of that wine like water (last pages of Broer’s essay). What is remarkable in the text of Philostratus as in some (all?) of the others adduced by Broer is the absence of labor (expressed as “torturing”) in nature’s offering of the wine. Broer does not mention any of this fundamental difference between the vision of the divine in classical myth and that in the story of the miracle at Cana. At Cana, the response to need and the change of water into the best wine possible are framed within a story of joy and suffering. The miracle is paid for rather than being seen as the product of divine or human automata. Of course, this does not eliminate the possibility that the Cana story is responding to the ambient Dionysiac tradition and cult. Still, the texts adduced by Broer seem so different in their view of the world that it is difficult to understand why and how they could be attractive to Galilean or other Jewish believers who had their own tradition regarding messianic wine and its cost.

The texts Broer gives for the first century CE, based on a possibly older tradition, are: Diodorus Siculus 3.66.2 (spontaneous spring of wine, no change apparently; the spontaneous aspect, *αὐτομάτως*, again needs to be explained); Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.65off. (change but no water; Liber = Dionysus); Pliny, *NH* 2.231; 31.16 (flowing of wine-tasting liquid from a Liber temple spring in January, only within sight of temple; attributed by Pausanias to Dionysus in *Description of Greece* 6.26.2: automaton idea again); Horace, *Odes* 2.19.9–12; Silius Italicus, *Punica* 7.186ff.; Memnon of Herakleia, *FGrH* 434 F 1 (clear miracle of change from water to wine by Dionysus); finally a Sophocles fragment from Athamas. Broer counts four pieces of pre-Johannic evidence for the notion of change into wine.<sup>152</sup> Problem of streams of milk and honey? In any case, no doubt for Broer that we have enough confirmation of the existence in Greco-Roman tradition of stories

<sup>149</sup>For a review of the cult of Dionysus in Beth-Shean, see A. OVADIAH, *Art and archaeology in israel and neighbouring countries; antiquity and late antiquity* (London: The Pindar Press, 2002), 203–26 = *Rivista di Archeologia* 18 (1994): 105–14; or *Cathedra* 71 (1994): 21–34 [in Hebrew]. Dionysus’ image is on 27 of 67 known types of coins from Scythopolis (219). Their appearance in areas for which there is no other evidence related to Dionysus indicates that the cult of Dionysus was popular in the region (even among Jews?), according to Ovadiah. But no evidence of the worship of Dionysus or its influence has been discovered beyond Beth Shean, and much of it is from the second to third centuries AD.

<sup>150</sup>BROER, “Das Weinwunder von Kana (Joh 2,1-11) und die Weinwunder der Antike”.

<sup>151</sup>Broer argues that Nonnos 14.411–20 at least concerns Dionysus, and the three texts he gives concern change, of water into wine, or milk.

<sup>152</sup>*Ibid.*, 307.

of miraculous transformation of water into wine and that it is time for exegetes to resume the analysis of John 2.1–11 with these parallels in mind.

Objections other than the late date of the Dionysus-related archaeological evidence are possible. First, even if one grants that the inspiration for the third century CE mosaic floor of Sepphoris has a long cultural pedigree, is *contiguity* sufficient to suppose a wide cultural knowledge shared by towns and villages in southern Galilee? Part of this question is sociological: even if the numismatic finds of Nysa/Scythopolis belong to the first and second centuries CE, are the thirty-three kilometers between Scythopolis and Sepphoris sufficiently proximate? What of cultural, administrative, social, linguistic, religious separations? How does one think the cultural permeability worked in that world? And there is a historical question to boot: did the Greco-Roman culture become more integrative in the second century CE because of, or as a consequence of the military events of 70 and 135? Finally, why think influence is needed to explain the Cana story if the Biblical and Jewish tradition are up to the task?

Regarding the cult of Dionysus and Nysa (jointly) as nurse/mother goddess: in interpreting the coin issues and other materials, Eisele follows LICHTENBERGER, *Kulte und Kultur der Dekapolis*. He shows that: the name of the city was Nysa-Scythopolis in the Hellenistic (Seleucid) period, then Gabinia briefly, and returned to Nysa-Scythopolis in the first century CE. The coins and other finds, he asserts, show that the tradition regarding Dionysus as founding deity was old, strong, and bound to that of Nysa. He thinks DiSegni is too cautious in the interpretation she gives of the history of the Dionysus Ktistes tradition at Scythopolis.<sup>153</sup> She allows that one possible strand of the Dionysus-Ktistes tradition may go back to the Hellenistic period, as in Nicaea, but hesitates, because

the first-century link is missing [and Pliny's testimony is] a learned aetiological story [...] not

<sup>153</sup>EISELE, "Jesus und Dionysos", 23, note 74; L. DI SEGNI, "A dated inscription from Beth Shean and the cult of Dionysos Ktistes in Roman Scythopolis", *Scripta Classica Israelica* 16 (1997): 139–61.

confirmed by numismatic or epigraphic finds. (139–40)

Eisele disagrees and thinks the coins are solid evidence, together with Pliny's testimony, of the local Dionysus-Ktistes tradition. Yet, he too hesitates somewhat at the end of his note 74, page 23.

The next part of Eisele's argument in this article depends on a) geographical and chronological proximity (*Umgebung ... beeinflusst ...*), and b) the notion of influence (or competition, which admittedly is reasonable). If this explanation by competing stories is granted (themes of wine, wedding, mother, disciples), then what is one to make of 19:34–35: vinegar; and the piercing? The possibility of a large inclusion? Eisele does address this somewhat: the earthly future of the divinity through his mother (nurse). This is all rather vague and unconvincing.

In any case, he sets store by the confirmed existence in first century CE Scythopolis of a Dionysus motif structure, and so asks the rhetorical question regarding the influence of one on the other:

Da die solcherart im 1. Jh. n. Chr. literarisch bzw. numismatisch bezeugten Herkunftsorte Jesu und des Dionysos nahe beieinander liegen, wäre es verwunderlich, wenn die beiden göttlichen Gestalten nicht auf die eine oder die andere Art in Konkurrenz zueinander getreten wären, zumal sich Jesus als der jüdische Messias nicht einfach in einen heidnischen synkretismus integrieren ließ. (EISELE, "Jesus und Dionysos", 24)

New syncretistic attempt therefore: the problem is that it may be *supposed* of city environments, and perhaps only later in early Christianity. "Wahrscheinlich ... in der Gegend von Kana, Nazaret, Sepphoris und Nysa-Skythopolis..." But the similarity and contiguity of these complex traditions are not sufficient to convince me that the evangelist decided to shape his Cana story in a way meant to squelch the local, appealing, Dionysus tradition. My questions: a) phenomenologically, how necessary was it to have this kind of traditions? what did they mean for the people of Scythopolis, or *eventually the surrounding villages*, if one grants the influence of this large Hellenistic city? b) Was there a need for outside prompts? c) Was there a

possibility of reverse direction in the influence, from Judaism Messianic traditions to the Dionysus one? d) (said above) What was the nature of the social and political boundaries? How penetrable were they?

Further: page 24, Eisele accepts the notion that the wine has a eucharistic dimension (like Bultmann, see Schnackenburg against). Page 25: Jesus doesn't simply replace or substitute for Dionysus, but as Jewish Messiah demonstrates his lordship over the pagan god of wine. My basic question remains unanswered, after finishing this article. The water to wine wonder, nuptial feast, mother's presence and agency, disciples continuing the cult: all can be explained from within the Judaism of the time. There may have been an awareness of Dionysus' cult, no doubt, but a) did it reach places like Cana, or rather the author's locus, and b) if it did, was it really competitive? The urban development in that area of Galilee indeed happened early (beginning of the first century CE), but Josephus makes clear (in his *Vita*) the antagonism villagers felt for Greco-Roman culture. Did they "absorb" the story or the themes nevertheless? Further: why doesn't the name of Dionysus appear anywhere if this cult was so concurrential in Jewish areas?

Eisele does recognize the main objection to this comparatist history of religions' theme, which is that there is no turning of water into wine anywhere in the Dionysios patchwork of stories.<sup>154</sup> He tries to finesse the difficult question by saying that indeed there is no early single and complete body of the Dionysus legend (so, could have existed but simply didn't surface? This looks like counsel of despair). Neither do the archaeological and numismatic re-

<sup>154</sup>See however the long note by MEIER, *Mentor, message, and miracles*, 1021, n255. This was the main objection by H. NOETZEL, *Christus und Dionysos*, Arbeiten zur Theologie 1 (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1960), 39–58. Among his critics, Linnemann and Eisele. Even Linnemann, in Meier's view, doesn't overcome this basic objection. She does make a good argument that an early Christian community could have used this legend in responding to pagans' reliance on and belief in Dionysus as source of life. It was not simply a transference from Dionysus to Jesus. But again what of the main theme of the Cana story? and what particular community had this kind of contact with paganism? The other main objection by Noetzel is the late date of evidence regarding the association of the Cana story and the Epiphany feast.

mains have this motif. Yet, he hopes that their proximity in space and time give new life to the argument of competition of salvation stories.<sup>155</sup> After all, he says, is this particular motif of the change of water into wine so exclusive and important that no other comparative history of religion theme can be contemplated? Again, counsel of despair. Other motifs in this Cana story are also found in the Dionysus material in the area and time....<sup>156</sup>

#### FÖRSTER

The abundance of wine in the miracle bothers or elates many modern interpreters. The amount indicated by the text (480 to 720 liters) was not extraordinary by contemporary standards for households, claims FÖRSTER.<sup>157</sup> The consequence he draws from his study of the material context (consumption of wine and its role as part of daily food) is that there is no need to explain the quantity and quality given by the story (and the tone it gives to the whole gospel as being a "first sign") by appealing to the need to compete with the widespread cult of Dionysus.<sup>158</sup> I explain the amounts symbolically: the quantity is meant to imply bodies.

Still plenty rejecting the Dionysus idea.<sup>159</sup> The

<sup>155</sup>EISELE, "Jesus und Dionysos", 1–4.

<sup>156</sup>See also S. FREYNE, "Dionysos and Herakles in Galilee: the Sepphoris mosaic in context", in *Religion and society in Roman Palestine: old questions, new approaches*, ed. D. R. EDWARDS (New York: Routledge, 2004), 56–69 (67), who after examining the particular historical context for the Sepphoris mosaic, says: "Both gods—Dionysos and Herakles—had a long history in the northern region of Palestine, the one at Scythopolis and the other at Tyre, though there is no direct evidence for their cult in Galilee itself before the discovery of the Sepphoris mosaic." Rather than an on-going syncretization of Yahweh and Dionysus beginning in the second century BCE, or just an on-going hellenization, Freyne suggested a particular background for this kind of works, namely the Severan period.

<sup>157</sup>H. FÖRSTER, "Die Perikope von der Hochzeit zu Kana (Joh 2:1–11) im Kontext der Spätantike", *NT* 55 (2013): 103–26 (103).

<sup>158</sup>He quotes EISELE, "Jesus und Dionysos", and LÜTGEHETMANN, *Die Hochzeit von Kana*, 317–18. Wick extends the significance of this anti-Dionysus stand to the whole gospel: WICK, "Jesus gegen Dionysos?"

<sup>159</sup>Förster cites H. THYEN, *Das Johannesevangelium*, HNT 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 151.

symbolic interpretation is often given.<sup>160</sup> Massive, magical wonder?

Förster first gives the Dionysus background (106–7), then the status quaestionis in regard to elements of the story (107–15); finally the assumptions are confronted to archaeological and papyrological evidence (116–21). In regard to Dionysus, why no mention of the competition?

About the stone jars, the wine and the nuptials: Abnormal quantity (108)? The presence of a majordomo supports the idea that the Jewish customs needed to be explained to an early Hellenistic Christian audience (ibid.)? Anti-Judaism revealed by many symbolic interpretations of the purification verse?<sup>161</sup> Shouldn't the uncompletion meant by the six jars be made good by a seventh one, then?<sup>162</sup> About numbers and their symbolism: L.P. Jones (1997:59) is skeptical.

Wine: super abundant (Thyen 157), luxury miracle (Thyen 151), enough for a battalion... Something beyond expected (hence explainable only by agnostic reaction to Dionysus cult). Only rare voices escape the concert calling the abundance either near scandalous or dionysiac.<sup>163</sup>

About the transformation of water into wine (111). Usual typological exegesis is toned down nowadays, and speaks of continuity or transformation (Moloney, *Belief*, 80, for instance). I would add: fulfilment but not replacement.

Wine fundamental food (with cereals, oil, and legumes) for ancient populations?<sup>164</sup> Higher in alco-

hol (15–16?).

The wedding (114–15): higher social class, considering the master of ceremonies, servants (Gnilka 22–23; Morris 162). Symbolic nuptiality: God and his people, eschatological, messianic interpretation therefore. Deeper symbolic meanings? Eucharistic?<sup>165</sup>

In his section on the archaeological and papyrological evidence for wine, Förster sets out to show that wine in large or fairly large quantities was common in the Mediterranean area and specifically in Palestine right through the Byzantine period. It was also part of the daily food of adults (about 270 liters per adult, he figures!), perhaps a quarter of their caloric needs. Given this abundance and ubiquity, the expected audience of the gospel would not have had the reaction of modern exegetes (evangelical or puritanical, my words) and thought of the quantity as beyond belief. It would have been more captivated by the miraculous change. His analysis relies on maximum calculations (for instance full metrics of wine-making vats, storage dolia) without regard for social patterns of production and distribution. The texts adduced (papyri) indicate some large marketing ploys, unsurprisingly, but the texts (perhaps late, like Talmudic literature, but not later than Byzantine period) show access to wine was highly patterned. The use of Cato and other literature seems to me highly naïve.

The problem with the A.'s reasoning is that the wedding, even with a master of ceremonies and servants (and one has to wonder what the expected reader would think the social level would be, given the failure of the wine), all as well prepared as possible (see texts on need to prepare long in advance for this kind of large expense), ran out of wine. Why did this happen? Lack of foresight is unlikely (again, in the readers' mind)? Unexpected number and greediness of guests?

His main conclusion: the massive presence of wine in Roman Palestinian society and in the whole Mediterranean region means that the weight given by many interpretations to the sharing of the gift

of the vine, 2000:210; and Frankel, *Wine and oil production* 38.

<sup>165</sup>Cites Wilckens 59.

<sup>160</sup>Cites: F. J. MOLONEY, *Belief in the word. Reading the Fourth Gospel: John 1–4* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 79; essays by LÜTGEHETMANN, *Die Hochzeit von Kana* and Riedl.

<sup>161</sup>See Collins, *Cana*, 89; L. MORRIS, *The Gospel according to John*, 155; So for instance incompleteness: Köstenberger 2004:96; Moloney, *Belief in the word*, 85; Barrett. Or completion: Theobald 214; and the failure of wine = failure of Judaism: Köstenberger 2004:93;

<sup>162</sup>Carson, *The gospel according to John* (1991): 174. Morris 161.

<sup>163</sup>Quotes E. LITTLE, *Echoes of the Old Testament in the wine of Cana in Galilee (John 2:1–11) and the multiplication of the loaves and fish (John 6:1–15): towards an appreciation* (Paris: Gabalda, 1998), 51 again: "It is a generous quantity for a country wedding but pitiful in terms of an eschatological vision."

<sup>164</sup>Quotes Hodeček, "Vinum laetificat..."; Walsh, *The fruit*

in a nuptial context is not warranted. Indeed, the change of water into wine is the most important part of the action, in the Exodus tradition of great signs done by Moses (and I add: Elijah). The tradition and the context of the time indicate that the wonder was an important part of the story and that there is no need to explain it either by competition with Hellenistic cults. He quotes BERGLER:<sup>166</sup> “Ultimately, this story is to be understood without bringing in the wedding. The miracle might just have happened at a symposium.” The only problem with this view is that a symposium—by invite only and a one day or night event—would have set aside enough wine for its agapes and wouldn’t have run out of it. This was not a situation for a village or town where a wedding was a large community event whose size and length were guided by overriding considerations of hospitality and honor. The intertextual reading advocated by Förster doesn’t have to be an either or, and he reasonably leaves the question open at the end of his article.

There is another solution, however. The six large stone jars have to be accounted for, with their large volume, and the missing seventh. The storyteller doesn’t care to say how many guests there were. He cares about the miracle, that the quantity is sufficient (that is: abundant by any measures, pace Förster) as in chapter 6, and is of a superior quality. Yes the change of water into wine is important and spectacular by itself, but so is the immediacy of the miracle in regard to a long-in-coming product (see Dar on this), the discretion exercised about its origins, the quantity, its surprising quality (for a “new” wine).

## 5 THE JEWS IN JOHN

The following is a summary of the pages in ASHTON, *Understanding the fourth Gospel*, 151–59, concerning the evolution of the meaning of the term Jews. He starts by summarizing the two theses he has presented so far: that the origins of the Gospel lie in heterodox Judaism (his words, nearly; with reference

<sup>166</sup>S. BERGLER, *Von Kana in Galiläa nach Jerusalem: Literaturkritik und Historie im vierten Evangelium*, Münsteraner judaistische Studien 24 (Berlin: Lit, 2009), 105.

to Robert Murray); secondly that the “Jews” in the gospel indicate “the powerful party that took advantage of the disarray following the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and gradually assumed authority over the Jewish people.”<sup>167</sup> I don’t think any party could be “powerful” after the fall of the temple and the client-kingship.<sup>168</sup> It is clear that the Pharisees (probably not called that way, or so rarely, in later rabbinic texts because of the perceived narrowness of the word?) were the only party that survived with some claim to dignity and leadership after the war. And the priests (the surviving ones) probably gathered forces around them, as we already see in 66 according to Josephus (*Vita*, but this text is late).<sup>169</sup> These smaller groups of reconstituted authorities would be the target of the GJ’s ire, because of the attempt to stamp out such ideas as that of “two powers in heaven.”<sup>170</sup> I’m not quite convinced by all of this, but one thing is sure: the dynamics would be to continue to try to circle the wagons around the Torah, no doubt. There was nothing else, and that had been the pattern for several centuries.<sup>171</sup> The influence of Pharisees seems obvious from the way Josephus after the war talks about them and seems to align himself with them. Also obvious from the gospels’ hostility, especially those gospels that can be shown to come from Jewish milieux and be addressed to people in that situation (Matthew pour ne pas le nommer). See S. MASON, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: a composition-critical study* (Boston: Brill Academic, 2001). See especially D. BOYARIN, “Justin Martyr invents Judaism”, *Church History* 70 (2001): 427–61: Boyarin makes the case (after, or with, others, such as Seth Schwartz, Martin Goodman, etc.) that there was no central authority, and in fact no orthodoxy, for quite a while.

In his “Story of a name”, Ashton strikes the right

<sup>167</sup>Page 152.

<sup>168</sup>See S. SCHWARTZ, *Imperialism and Jewish society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>169</sup>Hence the amount of space devoted to Temple issues in the Mishnah? idea suggested by: S. COHEN, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 219, 219. Quoted by Ashton 157, note 64.

<sup>170</sup>A. F. SEGAL, *Two powers in heaven: early rabbinic reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

<sup>171</sup>At least since the Hasmoneans.

balance, it seems to me.<sup>172</sup> The term “Jew(s)” usually has a religious connotation in this Gospel, sometimes a national one (“Judaean”). The latter would get lost, definitively after the second Jewish revolt. Josephus uses the terms “Jews” or “Jewish” to indicate Judaeans as well as diaspora Jews, and the customs associated with either. Usually the context allows the reader to discriminate.

Jews, however, (but which, I ask?) used the term “Israel”. A Greek used Ἰουδαῖος to refer to a Jew with religion in mind (“culture” and political identity were indissociable, as well as status). A Jew, in a context not necessarily restricted to Judaea, would use Israel, and tolerate Ἰουδαῖος in other situations. See P. J. JONSON, “The names Israel and Jew in ancient Judaism and the New Testament”, *Bijdragen, tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie* 47 (1986): 120–40, 266–89, on this usage. The usage of the term *Judaean* has a long history: as Josephus uses it, it is not so much tied to a geographic area as denoting the community of exiles. I would put it differently: it denoted those *defined* religiously as well as geographically by their Persian masters as willing to organize politically and religiously under their aegis (meaning, with the torah at the center, and priests-interpreters or scribes at the helm in all respects).<sup>173</sup>

Ashton exaggerates the multiplicity (“jungle”) and variety of Judaism in the time before Jesus. A catalogue of sects and types of Jews from that period, even based on the 2d-c. lists of Hegesippus (cited in Eusebius HE 4.22.7) would make little sense: what is needed, as for the Ezra period, is a political analysis of the forces and interests.

The scholarly debate on this question has a long history. One can start with Cronin’s book on the treatment of Jews in John by Raymond Brown and contemporary exegetes.<sup>174</sup> Or A. REINHARTZ, “Judaism in the Gospel of John”, *Interpretation* 63 (2009): 382–93.<sup>175</sup> “Jewishness” or “Judaity” of

Jesus: looks like hair splitting, but the vocabulary itself is partly a product of modern times. No matter, by the first century AD, *hoi Ioudaioi* meant the Jews in general.<sup>176</sup> About the possibility of expulsion from synagogues, discussed pp. 389–90: R., like many others, doesn’t see that messianic and political hopes were very intense and inextricably related. She tries to dismiss the idea of expulsion from the synagogue for messianic beliefs by suggesting that beliefs in messiahs continued, and neither R. Akivah nor followers of Bar Kokhba were expelled. This view doesn’t take into account the intensity of feelings regarding failed messiahs (including the criticisms of Bar Kokhba, a particular kind who went much further during his lifetime). In the period leading to the first Jewish war and after, the political tensions were very high and the claims of Jesus’ messiahship must have been seen to be close to treason by some Jews (Paul earlier and Pharisees later). The answer to that tension, the deepening of the meaning of this messiahship claim (including the claim that Jesus is the unique son of God), was perhaps seen as even more aggravating. This does not mean that there was a formal, centralized expulsion. But the tensions within the Jewish communities of various cities, especially given the intertwining of religious, ethnic, and legal status must have led to many tensions. The ethnic aspect of the attacks in the Gospel of John must have made sense for many followers of the messianic Jesus who had to choose and separated themselves from other Jews—family after family—as much as they were rejected by them.

I agree with this:

One possibility is that the gospel was written in a context where a definitive separation had already occurred between those who believed in Jesus, and the Jews who did not share this belief. In that case, the expulsion passages would be the gospel’s attempt to situate that split in the time of Jesus and to lay the responsibility at the feet of *hoi ioudaioi*. If so, the Fourth Gospel’s negative comments about *hoi ioudaioi*

meaning of Ioudaios in ancient Judaism”, *CBR* 12 (2014): 216–65.

<sup>176</sup>REINHARTZ, “Judaism in the Gospel of John”, 383, referring to Malcolm Lowe, “Who were the Ioudaioi?” *NovT* 18 (1976): 101–30.

<sup>172</sup>Page 152.

<sup>173</sup>As Ashton 153–54 notes, see Josephus AJ 11.173; AJ 11.84; cf. 22; see also AJ 11.340–45.

<sup>174</sup>S. S. CRONIN, *Raymond Brown, ‘The Jews,’ and the Gospel of John: From apologia to apology* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015).

<sup>175</sup>See also D. M. MILLER, “Ethnicity, religion and the



could be seen as part of the community's move towards self-definition, which would also entail differentiation from Jews who do not believe in Jesus. (391)

Almost right, except that the intensity of the agonistic and political context of ancient cities is not sufficiently appreciated, nor is the issue of claims to ancient rights and privileges that were contentious ground for these early communities. This gives the wrong impression that these communities were selecting between pure theological choices.

## 6 QUMRAN AND JOHN

There is much research devoted to this topic, for instance M. L. COLOE and T. THATCHER, eds., *John, Qumran, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: sixty years of discovery and debate* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011): one cannot separate John from the synoptics and predecessors, and one doesn't need to appeal to hellenistic background, at least before understanding better the relationships between Qumran and John. In this collection, see ANDERSON, "John and Qumran", which helps to map the problems in a somewhat sociology of ideas manner. See my remarks above, about the literature on John.

### PURIFICATION AND THE JEWS

Harrington has studied this topic in detail.<sup>177</sup> Reading.... While discussing atonement and water rituals, she mentions water and blood joined in a flow ... but note the wrong order of the elements.<sup>178</sup> See Schnackenburg 3.294 on this, which she seems to follow. She talks abundantly about symbolism, but of what? Where does "la ronde des symboles" end if ever? She shows how the eschatological angle is well in evidence in the gospel, against those who think it is an innovation of the church (the ecclesiastical editor of Bultmann, I suppose).<sup>179</sup> This is

<sup>177</sup>H. K. HARRINGTON, "Purification in the Fourth Gospel in light of Qumran", in *John, Qumran, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: sixty years of discovery and debate*, ed. M. L. COLOE and T. THATCHER (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 117–38.

<sup>178</sup>*Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>179</sup>*Ibid.*, 136. See Wahlde on this topic.

debated, however, see J. KLAWANS, *Impurity and sin in ancient Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 139. Eschatological salvation was "symbolized by the joyful event of the bridegroom's wedding."<sup>180</sup>

For the author, purification was a *preparation* for cultic acts, not this end-all essence of religion that so many commentators have often chosen to compare—unfavorably of course—to proper (Christian) spirituality. So, modern commentators like Harrington are breaking with any suggestion of supersessionism, but we are not out of the woods yet. Jewish rituals of water purification are not superseded by the works of the spirit.<sup>181</sup> She develops Ng's suggestion "of water as anticipation and fulfillment." This has parallels in Qumran texts. Purification in water was already full of meaning for Jews before (?) John: spirit, atonement, usher divine revelation, and the eschaton.

Idea on the gushing of and water: precisely unexpected, a double miracle, i.e. of the gushing (as temple spring), and the joining of both elements.

Ritual ablutions and their parallel to atonement were an emphatic trend in second temple Judaism.<sup>182</sup> Water, as said before, was a *catalyst for spiritual renewal*. But one has to be careful on this topic of the centrality of the temple as a driver of purity rules, either as the Jerusalem temple or the Qumran view of it. As Poirier writes in his paper on purity, the stone vessels of the late first century BCE and first century CE served a daily concern, a shared concern regarding impurity in daily life.<sup>183</sup> As Andrea Berlin writes, we are dealing with a kind of "household Judaism" in which religious, social, and political concerns are lived and expressed in the use of "mundane" elements (pottery, lamps, baths, stone vessels, funerary customs).<sup>184</sup> Yet, it remains true also that

<sup>180</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup>*Ibid.*, 117; and see W.-Y. NG, *Water symbolism in John: an eschatological interpretation* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2001).

<sup>182</sup>HARRINGTON, "Purification in the Fourth Gospel in light of Qumran", 126.

<sup>183</sup>J. C. POIRIER, "Purity beyond the temple in the Second Temple era", *JBL* 122 (2003): 247–65 (257).

<sup>184</sup>A. M. BERLIN, "Jewish life before the revolt: The archaeological evidence", *JSJ* 36 (2005): 417–70.

the temple figured as fundamental guarantee also of this daily, non-priestly, popular concern.

N.B.: Jesus' baptism is joined, let's not forget it, with the lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

## 7 DUALISM

Chapter 6 of Ashton, pages 204ff. About authorship, an old suggestion:

All early Christians were converts and John was no exception. Bultmann thought that he was a Gnostic; I believe he is more likely to have been an Essene, simply because this is the easiest and most convenient explanation of the dualism that is such a notable characteristic of his thought and marks off his Gospel from the other three.<sup>185</sup>

The idea strikes me as natural: dualism is a feature of Qumran, definitely, and better and more economical to look for it close to Jerusalem and Judaeon interests than in a putative Gnostic group about which we know little before the second century.

But remember the political background. By 80–90, the dualistic language is the (only?) way to escape a still narrow, politicomessianic view that is no more tenable.

His discussion of the world, pages 206ff., is not completely convincing: the world could mean every time “the world of men” as he quotes Bultmann saying (54 of his commentary). Interesting to learn that Luise Schottroff follows Bultmann in his Gnostic interpretation. Ashton puts only in note the right caution re. Gnosticism (207–8, note 8).

Then discussion of light and darkness; life; judgment; division.

## MESSIAH

Ashton speaks of

a stage in the history of the Johannine group when the status it accorded to Jesus began to be felt as intolerable by the parent community.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>185</sup> ASHTON, *Understanding the fourth Gospel*, 205. Old suggestion, Ashton says, but rather half-heartedly presented by the likes of Brown, Charlesworth, Schnackenburg.

<sup>186</sup> *ibid.*, 242.

Hence expulsion. Yes, but the “status” presumably evolved in response to two types of pressures or needs. One, the need within the group of Jewish (Judaeon, Galilean, and diaspora) and problematic Samaritan believers to respond to political tensions in the period leading to 70, and differently after 70, to messianic hopes.<sup>187</sup> Two, in regard to non-Jews, a) the need, especially after 70 (or differently?) to explain to Jews and to oneself (or world) the presence of non-Jews in a messianic movement (that everything indicated had failed), and b) differently to answer the hopes and expectations (defined by their own background) of non-Jews in the movement. So, are the complicated expectations and hopes of these two spectra the proper ground in any explanation of the full development and creation of a messianic, prophetic figure who ends up being divinized (fully, not à la Arius) in GJ?

## 8 EDITIONS

Page 199 ff., Ashton discusses the origin of the work. If one wants to explain the rough transitions in GJ and one is not satisfied with the displacement theory, two alternatives present themselves: a) the evangelist produced different editions of the gospel (Brown, Martyn, Lindars, according to Ashton); b) or someone else heavily redacted the gospel (Schnackenburg, etc.). Or both a and b are possible at the same time, i.e. the notion of extensive revisions by the evangelist can be maintained together with the idea of a subsequent redactor(s?). This is the solution favored by Ashton.

My still rather inchoate idea regarding the first sign: the notion of an early signs source is appealing, but what is its relationship to the passion source or tradition? At an early stage, the signs would make sense (see Ashton on this, summarizing the opinions of others) as part of an interpretation (missionary?) and defense of Jesus as traditional messiah (with mir-

<sup>187</sup> The question here or problem, how to make a parallel inquiry into “traditional” messianism and the one that transpires dynamically in the gospels. Remember: the memory of a dead putative messiah is better in some ways than the belief in a living one. But it needs to be justified at least partly by the political advantages it offers: eventual judgment, peace, etc...

acles as part of the messianic persona: see Martyn on this). Intra-Jewish dialogue then, before the sixties when the political situation became much more tense, and surely Judaism wasn't monolithic, far from it? I would envision a recasting of this source to fit a more refined, and mysterious (esoteric) re-interpretation of the messianic nature of Jesus (towards a highly developed christology). The *sitz im leben* of this refining would be the impossibility to maintain Jesus' messiahship in its traditional formulation, given the press of events and the radical failure of all authorities, including those prophetic or messianic figures who appeared repeatedly in the decades preceding the fall of the temple and Jerusalem.

The evangelist re-used the signs source as well as the passion (?) in light of the need to answer these new pressures. So, no need to assume an expulsion from the synagogue(s) yet, but certainly grave tensions existed within the communities, even in the diaspora (see Josephus on Antioch). So the miracle at Cana, part of the description of messianic high deeds, could have had seven containers originally (cf the twelve baskets at the end of the other multiplication miracle). The author however had a new, more demanding interpretation of Jesus' life and death, and used this older miracle material to signify to the readers this hidden, dangerous meaning. Jesus was the messiah and much more, but in a way that is only accessible to those willing to enter the mystery. The main goals (social background) could have been two at least: to justify to outsiders (both Jews and non-Jews even?) the continued belief in Jesus' messiahship, and its attractiveness, no matter the horrible 66-73 events, but on a new basis. Second, to strengthen the faith of Christians coming from Judaism who especially would have had to question their beliefs in Jesus' messiahship.

So, my hypothesis goes, the mention of the six stone jars, rather than seven, becomes part of this new, deeper interpretation of Jesus' life and death, in which Jesus is presented in a series of riddles (?), beginning with that of his body/temple. The juxtaposition of the programmatic Cana miracle and the conflict at the temple follows from that need to deepen and reinforce the meaning of Jesus' life and death, redefining messiahship as he who comes, son of man, son of god, etc. This would be the first

edition, sometime after the fall of the temple. A second redaction either by the evangelist or another redactor (school?) would eventually follow the inexorable complete break with Jewish communities. Where? How is this different from Lindars' idea?

Back to Ashton, page 201, and his notes of approval of Lindars' theory of displacement of the temple episode. "Thus, although the present position of the temple episode suits John's purposes quite well, one can scarcely believe that this is where he found it in his source."<sup>188</sup>

## 9 MOTHER AND JESUS

See WILLIAMS, "The mother of Jesus at Cana". Her summary:

John 2:1-12 read in context is a story about a widowed mother at a wedding who brokers from her son a favor that preserves the honor of the groom's family and enhances her son's honor in an unexpected way.

Three main aspects of this cultural context: the gendering of labor and space; the mother and son relationship; and the role of honor. She rightly notes that men are associated with the outside and public sphere, where honor is at risk of challenge, while women are inside (except at wells, ovens... what about harvest time?). I add a further aspect of this gendering: men in charge (fathers or elder sons, etc.) are away, absent, distant (potentially very far when they are rich). Result: even at a wedding, which is a public event, women are segregated. But women are more keenly aware of abundance and lack, since they, inside houses, as primary food producers, are bound to worry more about immediate resources and stores.

About the mother-son bond: the son supports and defends his mother, even against his own father (and that side of the family), and his own wife (again another family). Males are in charge of defending or enhancing honor, which Williams defines as "a socially acknowledged claim to worth."<sup>189</sup> All interactions outside the home are—or have an aspect

<sup>188</sup> ASHTON, *Understanding the fourth Gospel*, 201.

<sup>189</sup>I think this definition doesn't sufficiently mark the dynamic aspect of the notion, although Williams explains very

of—competitions for honor, which leads to constant, open, negotiated alliances and patronage.

One has to assume the wedding feast lasts several days, from three to seven according to research (Safrai, after Krauss?). Food and wine needed for the party would be partly provided by neighbors (? loans, i.e. part of the reciprocity system?). Lack of wine would have social consequences (loss of honor).

Who was likely to know the wine was running out? A few servants (women some of them)?<sup>190</sup>

Mary's and her son's presence at the wedding feast mean an on-going relation of reciprocity exists. "Desire to share (or continue sharing) in the honor of Mary's family:?"? Someone has asked Mary for her help in the matter at hand? According to Williams, Mary has taken on the role of broker.<sup>191</sup> How does she approach Jesus? Her words are implicit recognition Jesus can do something. Mary is counting on his growing fame? I think Williams is highly speculative here. She supposes that Jesus' answer is a response to an intrusion, or a threat (to his honor)? But indeed, I do agree that the mother's phrase and expression of concern represents a challenge.

About time or timeliness. Williams reads Jesus' answer as questioning the structure of local competition for honor, when actually greater things have started. In other words, she reads the second part of Jesus' answer as a question: "Hasn't my hour come?" According to her "She [Mary] is trying to establish his place in society through her brokerage of this request for help." At this point, I do wonder

well the negotiated, flexible, open-ended aspects of it in practice. I would define it as a claim to recognition of one's worth and at the same time a project (investment?) to secure the widest and longest possible access to land and labor.

<sup>190</sup>I note that Williams does not note that women, because of their responsibility in the preparation of food and proximity to reserves (inside the house, well protected or hidden), would be most sensitive to the size of quantities in reserve, as well as to matters of honor.

<sup>191</sup>It looks like that, but one key issue, namely that she is pursuing her own advantage and that of her kin group, is simply an assumption. The text of the Cana episode gives no clue as to the meaning of the "brokerage". It does talk about Jesus' glory, but as a phenomenon that is only perceptible to those who have faith. It is hidden to others who benefit from it. The relationship of power that the sociology of honor assumes may be there, but is precisely the issue. It goes against all the rules of philanthropy.

if a basic belief the Cana event is historical is not leading the exegete to miss the literary and theological framework of the gospel. The "brokerage" is at another level. I read Jesus' answer as both a statement and a question, something in between. If one pushed the sociological analysis, why not suppose that in a world of limited goods (without buying the whole idea), someone will have to pay for this "out of season" bonanza? Untimely life leads to untimely death.

"He revealed his glory." The problem, however, is that only people who cannot reciprocate in kind (except faith) know where the wine comes from, i.e. those who count (hosts and guests) and are part of a complex reciprocity economy, don't know (as Williams herself says). Perhaps key is the contrast with the brothers in 7:4-8. Their "time is always here," with time here being *καιρός* (i.e., always pressing). They are not hated by the world (because they go along with the demands of the world, seasonal and regulated, and don't deliver anything out of the ordinary. In other words, they submit to entropy). So the sign or miracle of Cana is about a new kind of recognition and honor.

More pointed exegesis: the concerned remark by the mother, with its implications for the honor of her son and kinship group, is to be seen as a trigger for a tragic path that is to be expected for anyone who does "things out of season," or not "at the right time." The tradition is clear on the dangers entailed. It is sensitive to honor of course, but also to the knowledge someone has to pay for it, given the risky, unbalanced, valuation of honor (for instance Hannah; Rachel; Sarah perhaps).

The transformation of nature into the great products that enable communities to rejoice and celebrate their unity as well as recalibrate their divisions and tightly calculated hopes, this transformation or transfiguration requires labor and even lives. Victims? No, but compensation. This is what the seventh jar may point to, present yet invisible to eyes that cannot see. The mother triggers the series of events, beginning with the seventh jar, a body that is also a temple, the hate Jesus focusses on himself, the misunderstanding of his brothers, etc., up to the

passion with the mother at the foot of the cross.<sup>192</sup>

ASHTON, *Understanding the fourth Gospel*, 268–69 is not satisfactory in this regard. He doesn't see the importance of honor: that of the community in Cana, the groom's and bride's, and Jesus'. The problem is that she initiates the first sign, when her son normally initiates and controls everything. Compare for instance with the story of the Samaritan woman of John 4 in which he initiates the dialogue. Isn't she supposed to notice his thirst? At noon, a traveller whose fatigue would be showing. One doesn't lack stories about the precipitation shown by proper (young) women in offering water.

It is interesting and perhaps important to note that women would be more likely (and expected) to note lack, as they are house-insiders who would worry most about what is needed, especially in terms of food. Whereas men live outside the house and would tend to be less aware (and less willing to be aware) of the state of their food reserves. Evidence for this: intra-biblically, the story of Elijah and the widow? This basic gendering of food awareness would go together with social concerns: the honor of a neighboring family in danger of seeing the rejoicing surrounding a new alliance and hopes for more life cut short while a most important moment is ruined publically in an inexorable way by lack of wine.

*ibid.*, 269–70: misreading of “hour?” It might be better to translate “time” rather than moment. One suspects a whole notion of time is lurking in the background according to which to do things before their time is to invite catastrophe. On the notion of “right time”, see R. Bloch: “Quelques aspects de la figure de Moïse”, in H. Cazelles, ed., *Moïse, l'homme de l'alliance* (Paris, 1955), 93–167.

Page 271, note 61: I disagree not with the possibility of redactional activity but with its meaning. Six stone jars: “set up” is not necessarily misplaced (contra FORTNA, *The Fourth Gospel and its predecessor*, 32). There is no problem of old wineskins here. Is this a story where one could use the notion of limited good: if there is a miracle, out of time (or before its time), there will be payment for this acceleration of history?

Page 273, conclusion: “faith of fulfillment and of transformation, of joy and celebration”. Yes, the wine. But what is critical, before getting excited about the idyllic-sounding imagery is the source of this wine: it remains unknown from all (except the mother?) until 19:34–35.

Note J.-B. M. BULEMBAT, “Head-waiter and bridegroom of the wedding at Cana: Structure and meaning of John 2.1–12”, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 30 (2007): 55–73: Jesus as the real groom and his mother as head-waiter. Not very convincing.

#### MOTHER AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

The scene in John 19:34 is part of a large inclusion looking back to the Cana miracle story, as many have seen. Two main aspects of this inclusion have garnered less attention, that I'm aware of. The first one is about the Roman soldier's gesture at the cross. I argue in my notes that there is a strong textual tradition that has ἀνοίξεν, “opened”, supported by Syriac and Latin, rather than “pricked”. The possible meaning would confirm my interpretation of the Cana miracle and would suggest the opening of a fountain or wine cask. Whereas with “piercing,” the idea is not only more reserved or timid but other. Why the change or the existence of two traditions, then? The first idea is to check the Septuagint's textual tradition (psalm 69?) and see if a change occurred because the initial meaning of the text was misunderstood and a substitute was found. But why?

The second aspect of this scene at the foot of the cross is the presence of the mother. In the Cana miracle, she is in the role of concerned provider. As I argue elsewhere, she is totally in character when she notices the running out of wine: either from conversations of servants, concerned looks of people not daring to speak up about something potentially shameful, or her own sense of things formed by years of worry about reserves at home. Because of their role in milling, cooking, providing, women were most likely to be particularly aware of the state of reserves in their household, and most concerned about it. Men too would be interested in this but they were not directly affected in the day-to-day situa-

<sup>192</sup>The need to remedy lack leads to a new form of temple.

tion. So, her noticing of the running out of wine, her remark to her son, his reply and cryptic note on “his hour,” bind mother and son in a dramatic story of providential, miraculous supply that needs to be paid later somehow, as they both know. She cannot help noticing the lack, bringing it to the attention of Jesus, as he cannot help responding to the need. His “hour” here brings up the question of timeliness of things in ancient agrarian societies. If miracles could be hoped for, was there a price to pay, and how? Michaels and other commentators do not see any of this, as the appearance of wine and its volume cloud their judgment. They’d rather think of it as a humorous situation and not think about the material conditions under which both the “miracle” and the death are bound together.

## 10 SERVANTS

It is difficult to say much on the social level of this wedding, and even more to explain whatever conclusion a sociological analysis might reach. The existence of “servants” (could be translated: “gens de service”, i.e. helpers, neighbors chosen to do the work, paid in kind and/or money, but part of the community and not treated as servants); a “steward” (same remark: could be a local); guests (nothing peculiar here). It makes sense then that the mother (a local authority?) draws attention to the problem and can speak to the helpers as to equals, not servants (who would answer only to their master?). The stone vessels however appear to be a sign of wealth. See Reed on this.

## 11 SACRAMENTS IN JOHN

The topic of sacraments in John, namely baptism and eucharist, is much debated. See SMITH, *The theology of the Gospel of John*, 155–58. D. Moody Smith explains that the extreme positions are represented by Cullmann and Bultmann respectively. The former thinks or argues that the GJ is sacramental through and through (his words? I actually tend to agree, but perhaps not in Cullmann’s way), whereas the latter

thought sacraments played no role in this gospel.<sup>193</sup>

An essential issue is to reflect upon what sacraments mean: a separated ritual that aims at transforming food, drink and all that goes into producing them (on the four axes, to follow J. GAGNEPAIN, *Guérir l’homme, former l’homme, sauver l’homme*, vol. 3 of *Du vouloir dire. Traité d’épistémologie des sciences humaines* (Bruxelles: De Boeckh Université, 1995)).

A short study of the meal aspects of the Cana and foot washing scenes explores the sacramentality also: MORGEN, “Le festin des noces de Cana (Jn 2, 1–11) et le repas d’adieu (Jn 13, 1–30)”. A few ideas gleaned in this article which follows Culpepper’s analysis in many respects.

## 12 NUMBER SYMBOLISM

In general on space and time symbolism, see R. KIEFFER, “L’espace et le temps dans l’Évangile de Jean”, *NTS* 31 (1985): 393–409. Jewish and Palestinian roots for this gospel, at least in part, with concrete realia, though symbolic meanings. Ok, nuthin’ new.

For the symbolism of six in Judaism as preparatory (fullness, yet to be transformed by an additional digit), we find many examples, from Genesis to Mark, in parallel with the structure of the week leading to the Sabbath (discussed in antiquity as a most visible sign of Judaism).<sup>194</sup> The story of the transfiguration in the synoptic gospels uses it also. It is one of the passages where the gospel of Mark makes an unusual note on time, “After six days,” which “probably has

<sup>193</sup>Smith refers to O. CULLMANN, *Early Christian worship* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), in which is found a part on sacraments translated from the French; R. K. BULTMANN, *Theology of the New Testament* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2007), vol. 2, p. 58ff. Check pages. See Meier (above).

<sup>194</sup>See M. Z. BRETTLER, “Method in the application of Biblical source material to historical writing (with particular reference to the ninth century BCE)”, in *Understanding the history of ancient Israel*, ed. H. G. M. WILLIAMSON, Proceedings of the British Academy 143 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 305–36 (330), about Athaliah in 2 Kings 11 and 2 Chron 24:7, six bad years followed by a good year after Athaliah’s demise. Check. The pattern is especially obvious in the P story of the creation. See also Job 5:19 and Prov 6:16.

some sort of symbolic resonance.”<sup>195</sup> The mention of six days in Mark’s description of the transfiguration is surprising in this gospel (Mark 9). Dropped in Matt, changed to 8 in Luke, which is less surprising, as it is part of the transfiguration proper). The most important Hebrew Scripture background to this scene is Ex 24:16, in which Moses ascends and is engulfed in a cloud for six days, then revelation comes on the seventh day:

The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

Other less important references are given by Marcus already cited: Philo (6 for mortalia, 7 for immortalia); Origen regarding the creation in six days; and above all the sabbath as a “sanctuary in time” and a “foretaste of the world to come.”<sup>196</sup>

But if six means “preparatory” it is seven which means fullness. See M. H. Pope on “Seven, seventh, seventy” in *IDB* 4.295. For the use of seven in Genesis, see Cassuto, *A commentary on the book of Genesis. Part I: from Adam to Noah* (Jerusalem 1961), 12–15, 26, 94, 191–92.

A more literary inheritance would be the motif found in the story of Joash according to which he remained six years hidden in the temple, while Athaliah ruled. “But in the seventh year...” (2 Kgs 11:3–4). As in this story, it is tempting to think that the six to seven passage (and not simply 6 plus 1)

<sup>195</sup>J. MARCUS, *Mark 8–16. A new translation with introduction and commentary*, The Anchor Bible 27A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 631.

<sup>196</sup>*Ibid.*, quoting Heschel (in his book *Sabbath*): “The Sabbath itself is a sanctuary which we build, a sanctuary in time...” This notion of a sanctuary in time, on the seventh day, is appropriate to Jesus at Cana too. It offers the solution to the conundrum: namely, how to read “for the purification of the Jews” without falling into the trap of a chasm Judaism and Christianity? The seventh hidden container is the new temple, a displacement, not of water into wine—both are necessary to each other and as miraculous one as the other—but still centrally located in Judaism. What it contains can only appear in time too. Six days of the week to have to worry about storage (women’s role in ancient world, hence Mary the mother), and the seventh to be delivered from it and contemplate the mystery of the transformations of the world, à la Augustin.

signifies a change of status, the passage to a new situation.

Again, what is the meaning of this number six? Negative (needing fulfillment or replacement) or positive (perfect multiplier)? Not incompleteness or unfulfillment if one follows Philo according to LÜTGEHETMANN, *Die Hochzeit von Kana*, 321–22. No reason to attribute a meaning of incompleteness to number six, according to Barrett.<sup>197</sup> But this is hardly satisfying. The seven are there, with the question regarding the figuration becoming deeper and dizzier. What do the stone jars stand there for, and what does a body stand for? is this a hint to the meaning of incarnation?

### 13 NOTES ON STONE VESSELS

Deines notes that Augustine in his commentary on the gospel of John drops the detail about the stone material.<sup>198</sup> Ancient commentators didn’t know what to do with this detail.<sup>199</sup> Similarly, many modern writers do not comment.<sup>200</sup> They tend to follow allegorizing interpretations in which *stone* stands for Old Testament law or Torah.<sup>201</sup>

On stone tools and utensils of the temple: they were very important for the Jerusalem-based priesthood.<sup>202</sup> For their importance in the early *halakha* discussions, see Josephus, *AJ* 13.298; 18.16ff.<sup>203</sup> Purity concerns developed or spread among the people in spite of Sadducees’ strict views. Stone utensils were not only a priestly concern: they are found everywhere and show that priests and people were close in this respect. Did that happen under the influence of the priests in Pharisee circles? Stone water jars were very important for people’s meals, and this is not simply because of a concern for the

<sup>197</sup>BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John*, 160–61.

<sup>198</sup>In *Iohannis evangelium*, tract. cxxiv, ix.6: ideo erant ibi sex hydriae. See R. DEINES, *Jüdische Steingefässe und pharisäische Frömmigkeit: Ein archäologisch-historischer Beitrag zum Verständnis von Joh 2,6 und der jüdischen Reinheitshalacha zur Zeit Jesu* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 29.

<sup>199</sup>See KRAUSS, *TA*, 288.

<sup>200</sup>DEINES, *Jüdische Steingefässe und pharisäische Frömmigkeit*, 34.

<sup>201</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup>*Ibid.*, 243–46.

<sup>203</sup>*Ibid.*, 244–45.

purity demanded in the temple cult. See Poirier and Adler on this issue. I think Magen's suggestion is still right: the idea of the temple and the purity demanded of the cult actually spread across the land. But it doesn't follow, as Magen and Reich suggest, that the destruction of the temple and cessation of the cult in 70 CE led to a decrease of ritual purity observance.<sup>204</sup> In fact, *miqvaot* and stone vessel industry continued for a while. There is no evidence of decline of that aspect of purity observance before the middle of the second century. The fact that the date of the decline doesn't correspond to the end of the temple cult, Adler argues, means that it is not related to the cessation of the temple cult. A middle-ground solution is that the effects of the cessation of the cult reverberated slowly through the society, especially after the Bar Kokhba's war. It is striking that the appearance of stone vessels is abrupt, its demise less so, but still remarkably happens during a period of great political and military confrontation. The use of those vessels made political fault lines more clear (Bevan 2007:171). Ritual purity could continue by other means, with differences of practice among rabbis and ordinary people, without metonymic reference anymore to the temple by material means. Another aspect of this question of the centrality of the Jerusalem temple is its presence at the top center of fifth-century synagogal mosaics.<sup>205</sup>

In STRACK and BILLERBECK,<sup>206</sup> a number of texts referenced on John: *mKelim* 10.1 (see Maimonides on it: list of pots and vases that do or do not carry impurity); *bShab* 96a; *mBetsah* 2.2–3; *tParah* 3.2ff: כוסות של אבן; קלליות של אבן

<sup>204</sup>Y. ADLER, "The decline of Jewish ritual purity observance in Roman Palaestina: an archaeological perspective on chronology and historical context", in *Expressions of cult in the Southern Levant in the Greco-Roman period: manifestations in text and material culture*, ed. O. TAL and Z. WEISS (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 269–84 (269).

<sup>205</sup>See what Magen has to say about the Bar Kokhba war's effect.

<sup>206</sup>H. L. STRACK and P. BILLERBECK, *Das Evangelium nach Markus, Lukas und Johannes und die Apostelgeschichte*, vol. 2 of *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 6th ed. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1974), 406.

## TECHNICAL SIDE

The working properties of the relatively soft stone means it can be worked fairly easily with metal tools by moderately skilled artisans since drilling is not needed. The overall design and final decorative elements would be left to skilled artisans. The skills (and tools) applied to it are the same as for wood (as well as ivory and bone).<sup>207</sup>

They are inherently flexible objects, strange to say, that is, technically and culturally flexible, as carving skills and tools can be transferred from other soft media to soft stone.

That the Kallal (copper in Aramaic? from "smooth?") might be initially a copy of a Hellenistic vessel of bronze is interesting. See Reed on this. "Often parts of acts of imitation or substitution" (Bevan). Perhaps completely tied then to the Herodian period continuous architectural projects, especially the building of the temple. Stone vessels stand metonymically for the temple? Not found in Samaria (?). But found in Greco-Roman cities.

Bevan mentions the later evidence of the stone vessel industry. Ca. 50 BCE–70 CE, chalk ritual vessels abundant, completely disappearing from the record after the Bar Kokhba revolt of 132–35 CE (Magen 2002). Magen, Bevan says, argues that these vessel forms were strongly associated with the application of Jewish purity laws (note: found also in Greek cities, not necessarily Jewish environments? see Reed), especially the strict observance favored and encouraged by the Pharisees (Magen 2002: 138–47). And especially when contrasted with metal and glass ware ("Roman" products). As Bevan says: "deployed to emphasise a material, cultural and ideological faultline" (but not necessarily between Pharisee, Sadducee, and Roman views, but more broadly set: see archaeological distribution).

<sup>207</sup>See chapter 4 of A. BEVAN, *Stone vessels and values in the Bronze age Mediterranean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 40–61, as well as 170–71 on Jewish Second-Temple traditions (Bevan follows Y. MAGEN, *The stone vessel industry in the second Temple period. Excavations at Hizma and the Jerusalem Temple mount*, ed. L. TSFANIA (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2002), 138–47). On values involved and a comparative look, see *ibidem*, pages 8–18.



## FINDS ON MT SCOPUS

Conclusions after reading the chapter on Mt Scopus excavations, in D. AMIT, J. SELIGMAN, and I. ZILBERBOD, “Stone vessel production caves on the eastern slope of Mount Scopus, Jerusalem”, chap. 20 in *New approaches to old stones: recent studies of ground stone artifacts*, ed. Y. M. ROWAN and J. R. EBELING (Equinox, 2008), 320–42:

1. tens of thousands of small cups and vessels were produced and sold on markets.
2. types of vessels produced were: cups (so-called “measuring cups”), shallow bowls, larger and deeper bowls, most turned on lathes (two types of lathes are described). Several of these types are imitations of Greco-Roman ware.
3. ossuaries were also found here. The origins of this type of funerary implement are not known, but it is remarkable that their use ends at about the same time as that of stone vessels, especially given the relative ease of carving this limestone. See Benjamin Isaac’s introduction to H. M. COTTON et al., eds., *Volume I: Jerusalem, Part 1: 1–704*, vol. 1 of *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae. A multi-lingual corpus of the inscriptions from Alexander to Muhammad* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2010), 10:

Although ossuaries have been discovered in burial sites in the Galilee, Samaria, Judaea and the Negev, the overwhelming majority of known ossuaries come from Jerusalem and its environs.

Together with the excavation and use of burial caves by Jews, ossuary use dropped after 70.<sup>208</sup>

In his *BAR* 1998 article (Sept-Oct), I. Magen repeats or summarizes his main arguments: that the development of this industry is caused by a concern for purity that spread to “all Israel”, as well as by the convenience of the material (soft stone

<sup>208</sup>Dates of ossuaries: appear in the last third of the first century BCE, taper off after AD70, and do not continue much after the second revolt? Check J. MAGNESS, *Stone and dung, oil and spit: Jewish daily life in the time of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2011).

widely available).<sup>209</sup> In the chapter in Amit etc., the role of purity is not spelled out. It is implied by statements that such vessels were not subject to impurity: *mHagigah* 3.8; *mKelim* 10.1; *mOholot* 5.5; *mParah* 5.5; *mYadayim* 1.2. The latter text lists the vessels not susceptible of transmitting impurity. Vessels made of earthy materials (and porous, that is what is their characteristic: not glazeable, or at least not glazed and made impermeable, i.e., the same principle as in other realms of agriculture is at work, namely not push one’s advantage to the maximum). Or said in other words: vessels that are not fired and are not glazed (part of the same process actually) *are not carrying to an extreme the technical capacity of kiln-fired pots*. Hence they are less liable or not liable at all. Reasoning:

1. matter of principle: as said above, closeness to natural state (as defined by relative absence or technicity? proximity of material to temple? whiteness? porosity certainly).<sup>210</sup>
2. glass, metal, and pottery (glazed, esp. large drinking bowls) were expensive and often imported...

With stone vessels, impurity stops in the market, or at least is contained, at the foreigner’s stall. Yet, extraordinary diffusion. This is a case of diffusion of something originally “priestly,” that spread quickly among all sorts of people in cheap imitations (cups). So, it is not only a matter of private or cultic use, but one has to explain the use throughout Jewish society (or Temple-organized society). The large craters must have been expensive, however.<sup>211</sup>

<sup>209</sup>Give the time: second half of first century BCE, thicker distribution assigned to first century CE, and tapering off after 70 CE.

<sup>210</sup>I regard this principle as having broad applications, such as the construction of the altar/temple, without iron tools near, or sound of them.

<sup>211</sup>Note that an abundance of stone vessels was found at Qalandiya, a farm villa producing wine among other things, and where the presence of two *mikvaot* as well as the abundant stoneware point to the purity concern surrounding wine production: Y. MAGEN, “Jerusalem as a center of the stone vessel industry during the Second Temple period”, in *Ancient Jerusalem revealed*, ed. H. GEVA (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994), 244–56 (255); Y. MAGEN, “Kalandia – A vineyard farm and winery of second temple times” [in

## STONE VESSEL INDUSTRY

Bibliographical items, coming from the article above by Amit et al: J. CAHILL, “The chalk assemblages of the Persian, Hellenistic and Early Roman periods”, in *Excavations at the City of David 1978–1985*, ed. A. D. GROOT and D. ARIEL, Qedem 33 (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1992), 190–274; S. GIBSON, “The stone vessel industry at Hizma”, *IEJ* 33 (1983): 176–88; S. GIBSON, “Stone vessels of the Early Roman period from Jerusalem and Palestine. A reassessment”, in *One land — Many cultures; Archaeological studies in honour of Stanislaw Loffreda*, ed. G. BOTTONI, L. D. SEGNI, and L. CHRUPCALA (Franciscan Printing Press, 2003), 287–308; S. S. MILLER, “Some observations on stone vessel finds and ritual purity in light of Talmudic sources”, in *Zeichen aus Text und Stein. Studien auf dem Weg zu einer Archäologie des Neuen Testaments*, ed. S. ALKIER and J. ZANGENBERG (Francke Verlag, 2003), 402–19. More recent addition in a 2010 publication on the finds of the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem: long chapter by H. GEVA, “Stone artifacts”, chap. 5a in *Jewish Quarter excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem: conducted by Nahman Avigad 1969–1982. Volume IV: the Burnt House of Area B and other studies*, ed. H. GEVA (Israel Exploration Society / Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2010), 154–212. Non vidi.

New bibliographical items: A. ALTSHUL, “Stone vessels, ossuaries and king Herod: Changes in material culture at the end of the second temple period” [in Hebrew], in *Eretz-Israel. Archaeological, historical and geographical studies. Ehud Netzer Volume*, ed. Z. WEISS, J. AVIRAM, E. OREN, et al. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2015), 1–5. Y. ADLER, “The archaeology of purity: Archaeological evidence for the observance of ritual purity in *Erez-Israel* from the Hasmonean period until the end of the Talmudic era” (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2011); D. AMIT and Y. ADLER, “The observance of ritual purity after 70 C.E.,” in “*Follow the wise*”: *Studies in Jewish history and culture in honor of Lee I. Levine*,

ed. O. IRSHAI et al. (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 2010), 121–43.

Stone vessels are analyzed anew by Jensen.<sup>212</sup> Longer analysis that Jensen uses by Berlin.<sup>213</sup> Dates: emerge in second half of first century BCE, end is harder to specify. Adler’s research indicates the use of stone vessels lasted even in areas unconnected with BK’s revolt (?). The use however fell after 135 CE. Problem of dating manufacture of these stone implements? Both dating and geographical distribution indicate a religious-ethnic function. Over sixteen workshops (Berlin 430), with six large ones, five of which in Jerusalem’s area (the other one at Reina, near Nazareth, see Berlin 430). See also Eynot Amitai, excavated by Yonathan Adler and xxx, but no remains of large vessels? There was an enormous demand, according to Berlin, attested in both elite and more common contexts, in Judea, Galilee, and Gaulanitis. Samaria is absent: no workshop, and only two sites where stone vessels occur. This is also significant, as Samaritan belief regarding the temple may have considered these broadly used vessels to imply a connection to the temple in Jerusalem. Ideas about cultic purity and impurity took a different path in Samaria. Shapes of the large jars: calyx crater (as Magen says, followed by Altshul et al)? Berlin not convinced, neither Gibson. Not convenient for transport, storage, or the small ones for grinding or cooking. Stone vessels weren’t expensive (relative to metal or red-slipped ware. The latter disappears from Gamla, Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Yodefat in the early first century CE: Berlin 433), they were local, “of a material that was religiously privileged” (Berlin 2005:433). Compare also to display table tops (showy).

Add to this the fact that the undecorated Herodian lamp (knife pated lamp) that appears at the end of the first century BCE came from Jerusalem (even in finds in the north): see Berlin 435–36. They must have appeared because they added a religious dimension to daily tasks. But why from Jerusalem? Proximity to temple (pace Poirier’s criticism of the nexus temple and purity laws). The end of this style

Hebrew], *Qadmoniot* 17 (1984): 61–71. The same may be assumed by the implied author of 4G regarding the Cana family wedding.

<sup>212</sup>JENSEN, “Purity and politics in Herod Antipas’s Galilee”, 12–16.

<sup>213</sup>BERLIN, “Jewish life before the revolt”, 429–34.

in the last quarter of the first century CE reinforces this hypothesis. Demand for the plain knife-pared lamp from Jerusalem disappeared.

See maps of stone vessels in Adler, with about 250 sites.<sup>214</sup> Seventy sites in Galilee according to Adler, in Gamla, Sepphoris, Capernaum, Nabratein, Bethlehem of Galilee.<sup>215</sup> Many fragments found in Iotapata, right near Khirbet Cana.<sup>216</sup> Several authors do not accept Magen's explanation regarding the use of stone vessels and prefer to speak of upper class style: Miller, Fine, Gibson, Altshul.<sup>217</sup> Jensen rightly rejects the style-craftmanship explanation: the distribution, use in various social strata, and the fact stoneware seems to have replaced imported wares in some sites, such as in Galilee. With Berlin, Deines, Arbel et al, he thinks another explanation is needed, that is religious-ethnic. Religious resistance (Berlin has argued so)? In any case, as Regev and others have argued, extensive non-priestly purity was a shared dimension of all Jewish life in Judaea, Galilee and elsewhere and was not at all impractical.<sup>218</sup> Metaphorical extension of the temple among the people, as Magen suggested—in various ways and at various degrees, and partly as resistance to political and military developments?

Herodian lamps have a narrow date range also: from the end of the first century BCE to Bar Kokhba revolt, though use of the Type 1, undecorated, ended with the first revolt. They were Jerusalem made, and their distribution happens in known Jewish settlements: one may presume it brought a bond to the temple in daily life.<sup>219</sup>

Magen 2002 shows that stone vessels developed in the second half of the first century BCE, with a fairly

<sup>214</sup>ADLER, "The archaeology of purity", table, p. 368.

<sup>215</sup>BERLIN, "Jewish life before the revolt", 430.

<sup>216</sup>One hundred twenty fragments, according to E. REGEV, "Non-priestly purity and its religious aspects according to historical sources and archaeological findings", in *Purity and holiness: The heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M. POORTHUIS and J. SCHWARTZ (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 223–44 (232).

<sup>217</sup>MILLER, "Some observations on stone vessel finds and ritual purity in light of Talmudic sources", 418.

<sup>218</sup>As POIRIER, "Purity beyond the temple in the Second Temple era", 259 says, contra Sanders.

<sup>219</sup>See D. ADAN-BAYEWITZ et al., "Preferential distribution of lamps from the Jerusalem area in the late Second Temple period (late first century B.C.E.-70 C.E.)", *BASOR* 350, 2008, 37–85 (75); BERLIN, "Jewish life before the revolt", 436.

abrupt decrease after the fall of the second temple in 70 CE. Production methods are described in chapter four.<sup>220</sup> All these vessels were labor intensive and demanded a variety of skills: carving by hand chisel inside and outside of cups;<sup>221</sup> smoothing of inside; using small lathes for small objects; and larger lathes for bigger containers such as kraters. The stone used was soft white chalk found under the *nari* layer, for instance east of Jerusalem as well as in the Nazareth hills. Blocks of it were soaked in water to give it more flexibility and permit easier smoothing. Caves were carved under the *nari* and could be used as shops and shelters.

Broad review in MAGNESS, *Stone and dung, oil and spit*, 71–74. For distribution and workshop, see MAGEN, *The stone vessel industry in the second Temple period*, 148–62. Magness signals workshops in Galilee.<sup>222</sup> Add to this Abila and Einot Amittai, near Sepphoris, as examples of limestone quarries in Lower Galilee.<sup>223</sup> Rami Arav finds evidence of limestone vessels at Bethsaida in the period following Alexander Jannaeus.<sup>224</sup> Note also—in the same

<sup>220</sup>MAGEN, *The stone vessel industry in the second Temple period*, 116–31.

<sup>221</sup>*ibid.*, 118, fig. 4.2.

<sup>222</sup>223, note 112: Weiss, in the Hebrew translation of Josephus' *Vita* by D. Schwartz; Z. GAL, "A stone-vessel manufacturing site in the Lower Galilee", *Atiqot* 29 (1991): 25\*–26\*; AMIT and ADLER, "The observance of ritual purity after 70 C.E.," 139–41.

<sup>223</sup>J. F. STRANGE, "Sepphoris and the earliest Christian congregations", in *The archaeology of difference: gender, ethnicity, class and the "other" in antiquity: studies in honor of Eric M. Meyers*, ed. D. R. EDWARDS and C. T. MCCOLLOUGH (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2007), 291–99 (293): limestone vessels appear in Roman strata, though fragments sometimes found—mixed?—in later layers. No details given.

<sup>224</sup>R. ARAV, "The archaeology of Bethsaida and the historical Jesus quest", in *The archaeology of difference: gender, ethnicity, class and the "other" in antiquity: studies in honor of Eric M. Meyers*, ed. D. R. EDWARDS and C. T. MCCOLLOUGH (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2007), 317–31 (320); no details given. See perhaps R. ARAV and R. A. FREUND, eds., *Bethsaida. A city by the north shore of the Sea of Galilee*, vol. 1, Bethsaida Excavations Project (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1995); ARAV and FREUND, eds., *Bethsaida. A city by the north shore of the Sea of Galilee*, vol. 2, Bethsaida Excavations Project (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1999); and ARAV and FREUND, eds., *Bethsaida. A city by the north shore of the Sea of Galilee*, vol. 4, Bethsaida Excavations Project

volume in honor of Eric Meyers—what Aviam says regarding local Galilean stone vessel industry. Yet, it could be tied to Jerusalem (at least metonymically): the lamps found in the same places and layers (Gamla?) are of the Jerusalem type (did they come from Jerusalem?).

Ritual baths and stone vessels, as well as ossilegium, actually continued after 70 CE, though with less and less intensity. For instance in Lower Galilee still, in En Gedi, and especially in Shu'afat finds.<sup>225</sup> Gradual decline leading to complete disappearance in the fourth century (cf. Amit and Adler).

Short chapter by ALTSHUL.<sup>226</sup> Production of stone vessels and secondary burial in ossuaries appear in Jerusalem and Judah at the end of the second temple period. Altshul argues that both phenomena were related to each other. First, it seems clear that the production of stone vessels took off in the second half of the first century BCE, almost certainly in the early Herodian period, and spread wide.

In this regard, of particular interest is the report of three rock-cut tombs in Khirbet Cana. Two limestone ossuaries and one broken clay one were found in cave A.<sup>227</sup> In cave C, two complete clay ossuaries and one broken one were found in cave C.<sup>228</sup>

#### USE OF LARGE JARS

I need to explain what they were used for: water mostly and “ablutions”? or more widely, for all sorts of liquids? Idea: the breaking of glass at weddings, in souvenir of temple’s destruction. Similar view already regarding Jesus? Broken vessel? For temple as vessel, check Ezekiel again.

(Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2009).

<sup>225</sup>MAGNESS, *Stone and dung, oil and spit*, 185, citing R. BAR-NATHAN and A. SKLAR-PARNES, “A Jewish settlement in Orine between the two revolts” [in Hebrew], in *New studies in the archaeology of Jerusalem and its region*, ed. D. AMIT and G. D. STIEBEL, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority; Hebrew University, 2008), 57–64 (63); and other publications by same.

<sup>226</sup>ALTSHUL, “Stone vessels, ossuaries and king Herod”.

<sup>227</sup>M. AVIAM and D. SYON, “Jewish ossilegium in Galilee”, in *What Athens has to do with Jerusalem. Essays on classical, Jewish and early Christian art and archaeology in honor of Gideon Foerster*, ed. L. V. RUTGERS (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 151–87 (162, fig. 8, page 164): two columns.

<sup>228</sup>*Ibid.*, 165.

About their volume (the question seems settled now). Archaeological finds confirm that there were large stone kraters with a capacity of eighty liters.<sup>229</sup> *Metretes* is the largest Greek measure of capacity. One Attic metrete = 39.4 liters. There were competing systems of weights and measures, which mean that a *metretes* could theoretically range from 21.75 liters to 54.6 liters. Deines uses LXX usage to establish the clear, exact equivalence of *bat* and *metretes* (see 2 Chron 4:5). A *bat* is 72 *xestes* (*sextarii*), which is 72 x .544 liters = 39.68 liters, which is the Attic *metretes*. The discussion therefore establishes that two to three *metretai* were equal to eighty to one hundred twenty liters.<sup>230</sup>

See discussion by Dietler of basic equipment of Greek house in terms of storage:

In terms of other equipment, at a minimum, a Greek kitchen needed storage jars for grain, water, olive oil, garum, vinegar, salted fish, and olives, in addition to amphorae of wine. Some of these (such as the *hydria* used to fetch and store water, and the *pthos* for storage of large quantities of grain or other products) had specialized shapes, but there were also large pots with a flat or ring-base, and often a fitted lid, that served as generalized short-term containers and mixing bowls (*lekane*, pl. *lekanai*). (M. DIETLER, *Archaeologies of colonialism: consumption, entanglement, and violence in ancient Mediterranean France*, The Joan Palevsky imprint in classical literature (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 233)

Note 203: refers to Bats (“Vaisselle et alimentation à Olbia de Provence (v. 350–v. 50 av. JC.): modèles culturels et catégories céramiques.” *Revue Archéologique de Narbonnaise, Supplément 18*. Paris: CNRS, 1988); and Sparkes (“The Greek kitchen.” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 82 (1962):121–137; *Greek Pottery: An Introduction*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991).

<sup>229</sup>DEINES, *Jüdische Steingefässe und pharisäische Frömmigkeit*, 28–29.

<sup>230</sup>The capacities noted for *metretai* in John 2:6 by Magen 1988 and others are without basis. Magen gives 21.83 l. for the *bat*. Did Magen revise his calculations in 2002? Check

## MEANING OF STONE VESSELS?

Thought: Why stone? Because it summarizes the temple or stands for the temple (not only the rules of purity that are attached *en définitive* to the temple, but the material proper, quarried out of nearby quarries—visible from the temple?). But the metonymia or metaphor goes both ways and can be made to flow back to the temple. It is a container, a transforming machine.<sup>231</sup>

I take the meaning of the detail given on the volume in G<sub>4</sub> that each is a body's worth. If the quantity of wine to be drunk at the feast was the only thing on the author's mind (i.e. a reality check of sorts, with the implied author simply folded unto the real author), it would have been sufficient to say, "much wine," or "large vessels." But to lead the readers to think of a body, the detail is helpful.<sup>232</sup>

On the ὕδριαί, see FORTNA, *The Fourth Gospel and its predecessor*, 58. Compare 1 Kgs 17:12 LXX. Six + one in Cana story: can one suppose that the remark on the number of pots was added to the source by the evangelist? It would make more sense that the symbolism of the original source would be traditional and simple, meaning it would have seven jars to indicate fullness of the miracle, and completion. The six + one scheme recovers or continues this idea of completion and subsumes it in an accomplishment that is larger yet less visible.

If there were six stone jars already mentioned in the pre-johannine source, following Fortna, explanations for this would be: a) the number is fortuitous (unlikely); b) the meaning is irrecoverable; c) or it means what I suggest, but then doesn't this imply that 2:12ff. were already brought closer, and 19:25 already shaped as we have it (mother, vinegar, piercing)?

What is the evidence for the preponderance of the number *seven*? First the story in Genesis 1: creation in six days, followed by anapausis or rest. The story of Jacob in Genesis also offers an example: from 66

<sup>231</sup>And a house, a mountain, etc. Une machine désirante à la Deleuze? Is there any evidence of the temple treated as a body, aside from John's gospel?

<sup>232</sup>Why isn't this picked up by the ancient commentators? Because of two main concerns: they are concerned about defending the reality of the miracle, or bewitched or enthralled by the note "for the purification of the Jews."

to 70 in Gen 46:26–27 is one of the counts of Jacob's family in Egypt. A good example of the usage of six creating an expectation and eventually completed as seven. Most important background to this aspect of the question: the story of Moses' ascent to Sinai, the wait for six days before the divine call on the seventh day in Exod 24:16.

For εἴξ in the NT, see transfiguration story; Mt 17:1; Mk 9:2; Lk 4:25; 13:14; Jn 2:6 of course. Time indications are rare in Mark and probably symbolic, according to Marcus 2:631. The story of the Transfiguration is important in regard to the use of numbers: Mt 17:1 starts, "after six days... takes them to the mountain..." No day 7 recorded. Compare this version to Mk 9:2–8; Lk 9:28–36 speaks of 8 days, another way to show the supernatural, and see Lk 4:25; 13:14. This story, like Cana's, also addresses the notion of messianic or prophetic transformation by playing similarly with numbers. [NB no transfiguration scene in John, the whole gospel is situated in a post-transfiguration stage]. On the pre-existing traditions of the transfiguration story in Mark, see MARCUS, *Mark 8–16*, 635.

## PARALLEL: מקואות

Did ritual baths and their ritual regulations contribute to the definition of sectarian identity, as claimed by Wise?<sup>233</sup> She aims to show that John's baptism and its meaning (atonement via immersion and purification) were "broadly representative of the Judaism of the time" (186–87). She asserts a symbolic meaning was part of all of these actions and rituals at that time, which seems to be forcing open doors (she is fighting a rear-guard battle with Christian theologians of the past, and presumably some present ones). She painstakingly shows that the washing of hands had symbolic significance in ancient Judaism. Quotes 4Q 512, 1QS 2:26–3:12; Philo (*quod deus sit immutabilis* 7–8); 1 Enoch 10:22 (flood as purification); *Life of Adam and Eve* 11 (penance by Adam standing in a river); etc. I retain the idea

<sup>233</sup>C. S. WISE, "Miqwā'ôt and Second Temple sectarianism", in *The archaeology of difference: gender, ethnicity, class and the "other" in antiquity: studies in honor of Eric M. Meyers*, ed. D. R. EDWARDS and C. T. MCCOLLOUGH (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2007), 181–200 (181).

that the washing of hands is in a continuum with other practices. Notes the dynamics of separating and joining actions. Wise sees some of the dynamics but doesn't address the larger issues: ethnic identity, social construction, and relations with foreigners.

On the twenty stepped pools of the western acropolis at Sepphoris (plus three found in the 2000 season), see K. GALOR, "The stepped water installations of the Sepphoris acropolis", in *The archaeology of difference: gender, ethnicity, class and the "other" in antiquity: studies in honor of Eric M. Meyers*, ed. D. R. EDWARDS and C. T. MCCOLLOUGH (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2007), 201–13. Not an anomalous situation, and extending into the Byzantine period (and beyond). The significance of these pools has long been under discussion.<sup>234</sup> Both Galor and Miller argue that there is no single use of these pools.<sup>235</sup>

Recent article on related topic: AMIT and ADLER, "The observance of ritual purity after 70 C.E.," See especially BERLIN, "Jewish life before the revolt".

#### 14 THE STEWARD OF THE FEAST

The steward's presence and actions are interpreted in various ways. Is his presence a sign among others (the stone jars) of the wealth of the groom's family? Not that the GJ seems to care much about social issues, or at least not in an obvious fashion. His asking for the groom and reminder of common wisdom in 2:10 leads to a variety of comments. What can it mean in the broader, Johannine scheme of things? One approach is to interpret the steward's words as a reproach to the groom that he is naïve.<sup>236</sup> The absence of a reaction from the groom surely needs to be explained (namely: the fact that the author doesn't need one is probably significant). Naïveté

<sup>234</sup>Eshel 1997 against; Reich 1990 and publications defending (extensively) their ritual usage.

<sup>235</sup>S. S. MILLER, "Stepped pools and the non-existent monolithic "Miqveh"", in *The archaeology of difference: gender, ethnicity, class and the "other" in antiquity: studies in honor of Eric M. Meyers*, ed. D. R. EDWARDS and C. T. MCCOLLOUGH (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2007), 215–34.

<sup>236</sup>DIETZFELBINGER, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Teilband 1*, 68.

seems a good candidate, as the common wisdom regarding the use of wine can easily be seen as a gentle remonstrance, but I think it might be a secondary aspect, for sociological and rhetorical reasons (or theological? I'm not sure how one makes a difference here).

What do the ancient author and audience assume about the steward's function and his reactions? One should assume that the honor of the groom's and bride's families, as well as that of the steward, are at stake at all times.<sup>237</sup> Given the paramount force of honor, and especially if the steward is not a servant or even a paid professional but possibly a neighbor who is traditionally called upon in such events,<sup>238</sup> the more likely unexpressed aspect of the steward's query is anger, as the honor of everyone is engaged (put on the line). If the groom and his family could become accused of being miserly (behind their backs, naturally), the steward himself could be the target of comments regarding not only his lack of foresight, but perhaps miserliness likewise, and even worse, of keeping the good stuff for himself (a few bottles). In any case, the rigors of social demands make naïveté alone unlikely as an explanation, and frustration and anger more likely. His calling up the groom makes clear to everyone—since one has to assume that all such talks were public—that he knows the traditions and only the groom or his family are to blame.

#### 15 TEMPLE EPISODE

Nature of connection of temple episode to new setting (See Lindars above):

- 1) placement between two stories of drawing of water and transformation;
- 2) the "treatment" of Jesus' death in 19: as a spring or source of water again, explaining 2:1–11 and 4. Or resolution of what is hidden in Cana series and in Samaritan woman's story.
- 3) 6 stone jars: the  $\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$  as stone (not in John) or house: a market however, when it should be a source of life. Or their "translation" to a world in which imperial use of a sacred space and time doesn't hold,

<sup>237</sup>See Malina, Neyrey, and many authors about this important, all too often neglected aspect of ancient texts.

<sup>238</sup>See Wengst on this possibility.

i.e. economic use of “separated” space and time becomes impossible.

5) discussion of temple’s function in ch. 4, in relation to messianic aspirations.

4) the “body = sanctuary” equivalence starts one imagining a new life in which there is no abandonment of old structures but their transformation

Compare to treatment by A. J. KÖSTENBERGER, *A theology of John’s Gospel and letters: the word, the Christ, the Son of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 193–94: Where there is overlap with the Synoptic Gospels, potential differences are reconciled as in a kind of modern Diatessaron. For example, since John says that Jesus cleared the temple early in his ministry and the Synoptics say that Jesus did so at the end, Köstenberger argues that Jesus must have done so twice, with John’s account serving as a precedent for the action that would occur again later.

What is at stake in the placement at this juncture in John of this story? The wedding at Cana is a scene of peace and abundance when all frictions and conflicts are suspended and the fullness of life can be enjoyed. The contract concerning the bride is not mentioned and is in the background. This scene of peace is followed by a scene of conflict at the temple, the place normally expected precisely to be the foundation for abundance and peace. So we are back to the temple as machine. The GJ proposes both a displacement and continuation by other means. Without the temple, no satisfaction or satiety was considered possible, the kind of satisfaction sealed by a banquet.

#### MIGDAL SYNAGOGUE

The discovery of a first-century synagogue at Migdal and a decorated stone that probably was a pedestal for a Torah wood lectern makes clear that Galilean Jews considered the temple to be central to their concerns. It played the key role in determining hopes for a secure and abundant life.<sup>239</sup> The symbolism

<sup>239</sup>For an interpretation, see M. AVIAM, “The decorated stone from the synagogue at Migdal: A holistic interpretation and a glimpse into the life of Galilean Jews at the time of Jesus”, *NT* 55 (2013): 205–20; and R. BAUCKHAM, “Further thoughts on the Migdal synagogue stone”, *NT* 57 (2015): 113–

of the Migdal stone, writes Bauckham, “in no way competes with substitutes for the Jerusalem Temple, but forges a cultic connection with it.”<sup>240</sup> This symbolism has many dimensions. I’ll underline two. The first is that divine presence, which tended to be uniquely tied to the temple, appears here as very local. The synagogue goers could imagine that the deity, symbolized by the menorah and the associated burning of lights, was benevolently near. The chariot vision of Ezekiel even more powerfully represented the mobility of God and the possibility to feel its presence everywhere. Bauckham is right to insist that the chariot evokes Ezekiel’s vision rather than Daniel.

#### 16 WINE AND VINEGAR

BÖHM

Recent MA by K. Böhm for the university of Vienna. Page 56, *wine as symbol of blood* in: Mark 14:24 (vs Lev 17:10ff which prohibits); Gen 49:11; especially Deut 32:14 LXX; Isaiah 63:1–6; compare Rev 14:18–20.

Pages 78ff., Böhm after Förster (see above) shows that wine was an expected component of common feasts, as expected as bread. As she remarks in page 81, Jesus is in the situation of Elijah. She also rightly quotes Linneman regarding the meaning of the large quantity and excellence of the wine. It means promise of a marvelous fertility of the land, not a wonder against nature.<sup>241</sup> This is very much in the spirit of Augustine’s view of this miracle. I add quickly: what is important is the sharing of the bounty, as in the bread episode..

#### MY NOTES

To the passages above on the abundance of wine in the Hebrew Bible, I add the following references: Gen 27:28; Is 25:6; Hos 2:21–22; Joel 2:24; 3:18; Amos 9:13; Zech 10:7.

35, who accepts Aviam’s interpretation and provides further details on its significance.

<sup>240</sup>*Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>241</sup>LINNEMANN, “Die Hochzeit zu Kana und Dionysos”, 411.

Note the presence of a wine cellar (encorbelled roof?) as one of the buildings around the courtyard of what must have been a substantial property in Bethsaida, a town otherwise not very impressive by its luxury: see ARAV, “The archaeology of Bethsaida and the historical Jesus quest”, 322, 328, and fig. 7. This type of house was very common, according to Robertson 1969:297–321.<sup>242</sup> [check all these publications]

About the quality of the wine: that the best is served first, the weaker one later, opinions differ. In agreement: F. F. BRUCE, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 69; diffident: no attestation, for BROWN, *The Gospel according to John (I–XII)*, 100, but “shrewd practice.” Apparent evidence for the opposite: BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John*, 193, after Windisch and Bultmann 118. A bit of humor?: SCHNACKENBURG, *Introduction and commentary on chapters 1–4*, 334; Ad hoc remark for this sign?: R. BULTMANN, *The Gospel of John : a commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), 118. One would think the high quality wine would be served when guests need to be honored: either because of ceremony itself, or certain people are present, in a feast that could last days (in the mind of the putative reader).

Interpretation as fulfillment by Gail R. O’Day, “John 2:1–12,” in *New Interpreter’s Bible* (vol. IX, 1995), p. 538.

For the feast of Unleavened Bread, there was a removal of the old leaven: Lev 23:6–7; Ex 12:14, 19. Was the same removal practiced for sour wine? No leaven needed in this case, however. One could make the case that Ex 12:22–23 and John 19:29 are parallels: sprig or branch of hyssop, the dipping (blood in Ex), a bowl (omitted in Greek of LXX however), the touching of the lintel and two posts, and approaching the sponge to the mouth. Vinegar was or is still forbidden during Passover week by some modern Jewish groups, e.g. the Lubavitchers (logical minds!).

On the mention of vinegar (ὄξος) and sponge (σπόγγος) in the Synoptics and John (comparison). The tradition in Mark is of vinegar only, with ref-

erence to Psalm 69:22 (see MARCUS, *Mark 8–16*). But see the text history: doublet in 15:23 (wine with myrrh, p. 1046 of Marcus) and 15:36 (vinegar or sour wine, page 1055 of Marcus’ commentary). The tradition is adapted in Matthew and Luke. See the various commentaries.

In John, the potentially shameful effect of the sponge is balanced out by the mention of the hyssop which makes sense only as a symbolic reference to the sacrificial meaning of Jesus’ death. It is also offset by the references to the “fullness” of the “utensil” which is “there” and the fullness of the sponge. Offset, I think, because they echo the large containers of the Cana transformation and point to notions of fulfillment, body as instrument or container, and locus in history that are new. Are these mentions of “fullness” only pointing to the fulfillment of—what? father’s and son’s will—, or completeness of life encompassed by the gospel, and pointing back to the full jars in the story of Cana? Is it going too far to suggest that the care of the Jesus’ body done after his death—a filling with myrrh—is the converse of his emptying prefigured at Cana and enacted on the cross?<sup>243</sup>

On Cana and vinegar again: I hadn’t thought of the jar of vinegar in John 19:29–30, and Jesus’ tasting of the *fermented* kind, rather over-fermented and gone flat, or very diluted (ppsc style), right before his death, disposing in his way of all γμπ in time for the sacrifice. This is right before the breaking of the limbs. 19:29–30: σκεῦος ἔκειτο ὄξους μεστόν · σπόγγον οὖν μεστόν τοῦ ὄξους ὑσσώπῳ περιθέντες προσήνεγκαν αὐτοῦ τῷ στόματι. ὅτε οὖν ἔλαβεν τὸ ὄξος [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν · τετέλεσται, καὶ κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα. Then, since it was the day of preparation, bodies were not to be kept hanging on sabbath, especially before this great feast, and the petition was made to speed up death. But in John 2:6 we have λίθιναι ὑδρίαί, not the common σκεῦος which is perhaps fitting for a potentially shaming scene.

Further note on vinegar: the fact that wine may become vinegar by oxidation was used as metaphor for a parallel between purity or uprightness and de-

<sup>242</sup>D. ROBERTSON, *Greek and Roman Architecture* (Cambridge, 1971)??

<sup>243</sup>PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ, “Las bodas de Caná y la sepultura de Jesús (Jn 2, 11 y 19, 29-40)”.



generation, at least in later literature, for instance in *bBM* 83b. The text tells a story about R. Eleazar ben Simeon, whose professed wisdom in discriminating between honest workers and (so-called) robbers, all tired by a good night's work, led to his being commissioned by the empire to be in charge of the arrests, instead of the officer of the Roman government. R. Joshua ben Karhah used this metaphor in condemning the collaborator as a degenerate son:

[he] sent word to him, 'Vinegar, son of wine! How long will you deliver up the people of our God for slaughter!' Back came the reply: 'I weed out thorns from the vineyard.' Whereupon R. Joshua retorted: 'Let the owner of the vineyard himself [God] come and weed out the thorns.'<sup>244</sup>

Note how the text of this dialogue presents a problem of political wisdom (the future of Israel/Jewish people) within the framework of prophetic discourse (Isaiah). Is there evidence for the use of the expression "Vinegar, son of wine" aside from this passage in *bBM*?

In passing, I note that vases, jars, containers of all kinds are used to express the quality or vastness of a person's body, memory or knowledge (would have to collect much evidence and classify it, but it is available). So, for instance, R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus is deemed by R. Johanan ben Zakkai to be "a cemented cistern that loses not a drop."<sup>245</sup>

## 17 THE PIERCING

19:34 in NRSV: "Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out." Greek of SBLGNT: ἄλλ' εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχην αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τῆς αἵμα καὶ ὕδωρ. Reading other than ἔνυξεν

<sup>244</sup>Soncino translation. Note that another story of miraculous lack of putrefaction (of the fat from R. Eleazar's viscera) is attached to the first... And Eleazar was fat apparently, as was R. Ishmael son of R. Jose!

<sup>245</sup>*Pirquei Avoth* 2.8. Interesting that the Okhnay oven at the center of the discussion of the ground for authoritative decisions is also "cemented" (read: plastered), and that the oven declared pure by Eliezer can be seen as an image of Eliezer himself, a perfectly impermeable container of all of Torah wisdom available in his day.

given in 27th Nestle-Aland: ἤνοιξεν, but explained by itacism (letter substitution, esp. of eta). Yet, the use of ἀνοίγνυμι (to open, e.g. a door, box, funerary urn, seals; or to tap βίβλινον sc. οἶνον, see Theocritus 14.15) makes great sense here too. ἔνυξεν, from νύσσω | νύττω (to prick, stab, sting, not pierce really) is less forceful than "open," or "tap." There is a strong textual tradition behind the latter word however. Is it the best?

On the opening of the side, see R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Commentary on chapters 13–21*, vol. 3 of *The Gospel according to St. John* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 289. He notes that the Latin version hesitates: *pupurgit* (6), *inseruit* (e), *percussit* (a ff<sup>2</sup> n q), *perfordit* (c), *aperuit* (aur f r<sup>1</sup> Vg), i.e. "opened", cf. Peshitta, "might go back to a confusion in the Greek" (289): ἔνυξεν from νύσσω confused with ἤνοιξεν. "Mistakenly read or heard," in note 78, page 462. This variation led to speculations by Latin fathers, e.g. Augustine: the flowing of sacraments, and/of the birth of the Church.

Schnackenburg 3.289 reports also on the historical problem of the flow and its significance. Symbolic? My own interpretation is to take seriously the textual variants and makes more sense. Meaning then? Living water is a gift which entails sacrifices.

Related questions: how were ancient amphoras sealed and unsealed? And further: the translation by "open" rather than "prick /pierce" doesn't solve the question. What of wineskins, however? See Lk 5:33–39.

Of further interest: John 19:35 crept into Mt 27:49, with *aperuit* in Latin. Greek has the inverted order water and blood among other changes: ἄλλος δὲ λάβων λόγχην ἔνυξεν αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὕδωρ καὶ αἷμα. Appears in κBCLΓ pc vg<sup>mss</sup> mae. The text of Mt without is in: ADWΘf etc. The order is interesting: testimony to a very old misunderstanding? Variant in Gk: ἤνοιξεν, opened, cf. Latin *aperuit. fodit* in what mss?

Several commentators think that this flow of blood marked a valid sacrifice.<sup>246</sup> Also Ford, who reads the passage as "fluid blood."<sup>247</sup> No need for this.

<sup>246</sup>Miguens, "Salió sangre y agua," 20).

<sup>247</sup>J. M. FORD, "'Mingled blood' from the side of Christ (John XIX. 34)", *NTS* 15 (1969): 337–38 (337).

Antidocetism? That is also misguided, I think, or at least very insufficient. All of this reviewed by S. A. CARNAZZO, *Seeing blood and water: A narrative-critical study of John 19:34* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2012), a massive study of John 19:34. He discusses the order of blood and water page 90. Note that another simple explanation can be added to the sacrificial one (and paschal), not simply an extension of Zechariah and the purification idea of Zech 12:10 and 13:1. Rather, Zech 14:8 and an expansion of Ezekelian view of the temple, with a new spirit (or ever renewed), but not so spiritual as to completely forget real water and fecundity.

In the chapter before last, Carnazzo argues that blood washes away sin, and water is linked to uncleanness, by correlating the Johannine verse (19:34) to Zech 12:10, 13:1, and 14:8. This linkage with Zechariah doesn't eliminate other sources, especially Ezekiel 47:1 (which Zechariah furthers?). Carnazzo doesn't develop the significance of the Ezekiel text on the eschatological temple. In his 2015/10 *RBL* review of this book, Frayer-Griggs says he is persuaded that it is a literal translation of Ezek 47:1 that explains (or stands behind) John 19:34, together with the belief that Jesus represents the eschatological temple as intimated in 2:21.<sup>248</sup> Here is the text of Ezekiel: וַיִּשְׁבְּנִי אֶל-פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת וְהִנֵּה-מַיִם יֹצְאִים מִתַּחַת מִפְּתֵן הַבַּיִת קְדִימָה כִּי-פָנֵי הַבַּיִת קְדִים וְהַמַּיִם יֵרְדִים מִתַּחַת מִפְּתֵן הַבַּיִת לַמִּזְבֵּחַ: He also connects to this idea the passage in John 7:38 that says, ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ, καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ ἑραφή, ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ῥεύσουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος. I think the case can be made even more clear.

More on John and Ezekiel: a new book by Peterson argues that the fourth gospel needs to be understood with Ezekiel as model for the author. So, John 1 needs to be read with Ez 1–3, or Jesus' signs with those of the prophet, and the cleansing of the temple with Ez 8–11.<sup>249</sup> The return of Jesus to Jerusalem recalls that of Yahweh in Ez 40–43.

<sup>248</sup>He quotes R. BAUCKHAM, *The testimony of the beloved disciple: narrative, history, and theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2007), 280.

<sup>249</sup>B. N. PETERSON, *John's use of Ezekiel: Understanding the unique perspective of the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015).

Additional note: I find curious, after many readers, the story about the very numerous fish of John 21 (153). Might it not be in the spirit of the insistent passage on abundant fish and flora of Ezek 47:9–12?

Further note on the parallel between Cana and the cross: the filling of the stone-jars and bringing them to the majordomo, and the piercing by the Roman soldier, are done by “servants” who don't realize the significance of what they are doing.

## 18 HISTORICITY

About the unique nature of the miracle of Cana: folklore? “Party” miracle? Theology refers to raising of Lazarus and resurrection?<sup>250</sup> Yet, “mundane character of the details in this sign is also striking”. By mundane are meant the stone, capacity, etc. Anderson wonders if this story comes from an independent source. Or alternative beginning from Johannine perspective?

The historical perspective in all those articles is the “historical figure” of Jesus. Supposing it could be reached or properly defined, then what? What is critical is the broader world Jesus was a part of.

The real miracle is the hiddenness of Jesus in the middle of the business which his mother is so attuned to and worries about: honor, demands of patriarchal authority, etc. It is the “seventh stone” (not what we expect or know how to look for) and the transformation of six days into freedom from anxiety. Even when cut off from the Temple (that is, this text comes from communities which had to reflect upon the political conditions of their existence long after the fall of the temple). This means that one needs to replace the six stone jars within the internal debate of the Judaism of the time: a continuum not a rupture.

Does the hiding of Jesus in plain sight—the seventh jar full of intoxicating messianic wine—help explain this gospel better? Is there a simpler story of a miracle of multiplication in the background, or was it imagined by the author from the beginning as the reality of history (I was going to say image)? The background would be messianic expectations, stories

<sup>250</sup>ANDERSON, JUST, and THATCHER, *Aspects of historicity in the Fourth Gospel*, 10.

of multiplication, competing stories regarding Dionysus perhaps, and the expectations regarding Jesus, who by that time—at the end of the first century CE—was believed to be the messiah. The author transforms the telling of a story into an infinite vision of history.

## 19 CONCLUSION

LINDARS, *John*, 89: In John’s presentation of Jesus as surpassing the Torah, the difficulty is that the Law exists and can be drawn upon, while Jesus has died and is invisible, *except through the Holy Spirit*. The Johannine understanding of the resurrection colors the whole approach...

So the six stone jars may be seen as the visible containers for the revelation of a new meaning (or: capable of a new meaning), with the seventh container being the real agent of salvation, though in continuity.<sup>251</sup>

For a possible conclusion to the paper then: The author’s presentation of the six stone jars points to notions of contrast and fulfillment, it can be argued (and has been). The seventh (rhetorically) needed or expected crucible for the transformation of drawn water (as in the Samaritan story, with a jar again, wells, and temple[s]) into wine, is hidden. As a body, it shares in the physical reality of vessels deemed to enable a life of purity, as well as that of a material temple which has been built and rebuilt over many years, and is the guarantor of fertility, signified by springs running from its threshold or “shoulder” in Ezekiel.<sup>252</sup>

The mention of six vessels points to something missing. The seventh absent jar is an object of expectation, which completes, surpasses, and transforms the other six... [Do I really want to say this?] The abundant, pure life available in the six (I think it’s too easy to only frame it as the law?) needs to be transformed. Poignant is the leap from stone vessel, however precious, to a body proposed as temple and spring, or source of renewal.

<sup>251</sup>On the sociological and axiological notion of absence (of father and then son), see Malina’s notes on Mediterranean society, after Gilmore, summarized in my journal, 03/23/2012.

<sup>252</sup>See the third-century representation in Europs’ synagogue fresco.

It is tempting to reflect further on the six stone jars themselves and say they are transformed in the reader’s understanding into bodies. They are brought to life. John’s gospel is not apocalyptic (see Easton on this) but revelatory, a revelation whose mediators are (in part) the readers.

Or: there is a borrowing, literally and literarily, a borrowing of containers. In every borrowing, there is remanence and transformation, appropriation and exchange.

I think of the Cana miracle as the re-figuration and expansion of the transfiguration scene in Mark, Matthew and Luke. The transfiguration of common places, times and things, food and drink. What the text invites the believer who is without any access to confirmed witnesses to consider is the relationship of the invisible and absent element (triggered by an original lack) to the mundane and see in it a new, broader, possibility of access to sacredness, that is at least what I’m inclined to see in the miracle at Cana.

Perhaps more broadly (?): M. de Certeau me fait penser à l’auteur de l’évangile de Jean et l’histoire du miracle de l’eau changée en vin.<sup>253</sup> La composition de cette histoire avec les six vases de pierre pose la dynamique de la vie telle qu’elle peut être vécue avant Jésus (pas encore là) et avec Jésus (plus là).

Je suis pleinement d’accord avec son idée sur l’importance de la réflexion sur le sens de la “coupure” initiale et sur les règles d’une *fidélité* qui ne peut être totalisée. Il y a la trace objective d’une fidélité qui ne participe pas de cet ordre car elle est liée à l’absence de l’objet (Jésus-Christ, mais on pourrait appliquer l’idée à l’exil six siècles plus tôt et à la reconstruction du judaïsme après l’effondrement politique des deux royaumes). Comme il le dit :

Elle [la fidélité] a d’ailleurs son premier énoncé (*après* la disparition de Jésus) avec l’écriture posant comme sa condition même la mort par laquelle le « fils de l’homme » *s’efface* pour rendre un témoignage fidèle au Père qui l’autorise et pour « donner lieu » à la communauté fidèle qu’il rend possible. (page 213)

<sup>253</sup>M. de CERTEAU, *La faiblesse de croire*, ed. L. GIARD (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 1987), 213–14.

p. 160–61: divine knowledge of man: more interior, deeper, more relational than the γνώσις, ἐπιστημὴ of the Greeks. Or: evolution of yada' = γιγνώσκω. See Am 3:2, Dt 34:10, Jer 12:3, Jer 1:5 esp., Ps 139:1–2 (the whole psalm also).

On vision: p. 167. Vision of God erased progressively in prophetic traditions? From Isaiah to Ezekiel with its “cumbrous” expressions.

Question: Ὁ θεωρῶν ἐμὲ θεωρεῖ τὸν πέμψαντά με (Jo 12:45): what does this mean? Seeing the giving and justice? what eyes can one have to see forgiveness? Seeing signs of something which is by definition invisible.

## 21 NOTES ON ORIGEN

On the Samaritan's water pot and six husbands, Origen is very good: he brings up the story of Rebecca for comparison: xiii.177;

Go beyond six, the number for visible and corruptible things: In Matthew xii.36 = GCS X, pp. 151–52.

He has an interesting note regarding the number of times JB witnesses to Jesus: six, whereas on the 7th time Jesus speaks up himself: see *In Joh.* 2:36, p. 219, and Blanc's note ad loc.

No mention of the six jars of Cana!

But he notices that after talking about her six men (five previous husbands), she leaves her water pot, since regular water is now unneeded, when one has the living water of the seventh (spiritual) husband?

At the beginning of his book number XXVIII, Origen writes a little essay on 6, prime numbers, and 7. Obviously very aware of speculations on the monads, and following Philo in part.

On the signs source theory, see U. SCHNELLE, *Antidocetic Christology in the Gospel of John: an investigation of the place of the fourth Gospel in the Johannine school* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 150–64. See Moloney for more bibliography on this problem.<sup>254</sup> Most important, Marc Girard has long proposed a theory of signs that makes sense of the number of signs (6 visible ones), and especially

shows that they are a fundamental part of the large design of the gospel.

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<sup>254</sup>MOLONEY, *The Gospel of John*.

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