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The Competitive Textualization of the Jesus Tradition in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25

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ABSTRACT:

This essay argues that the Johannine “colophons” of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 support the argument that the author of John’s Gospel was aware of one or more of the Synoptic Gospels.  Although these passages do not prove that theory, they demonstrate that John’s Gospel participates in a competitive textualization of the Jesus tradition, emphasizing its superiority to prior textualized Jesus books.  This observation raises the question of what prior textualized Jesus traditions the author could have known. Although they are not the only options, it is here argued that the Synoptics are by far the most likely candidates.

KEYWORDS: Gospel of John, competitive textualization, Johannine transmission, John 20:30–31, John 21:24–25

“Here the writing of books (*biblia*) about Jesus

is clearly contemplated.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

This essay contributes to the longstanding debate over whether the Gospel of John (hereafter GJohn) evinces knowledge of, or familiarity with, the Synoptic Gospels.[[2]](#footnote-2) Generally, I will argue that recent research has undervalued the significance of the so-called Johannine “colophons”[[3]](#footnote-3) of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 for answering two interrelated-yet-separate questions in this discourse: (1) “Was the author of GJohn familiar with any of the Synoptic Gospels?”; and (2) “Why did the author of GJohn write his Gospel?” More specifically, I will argue that the textual self-consciousness on display in these passages—or “competitive textualization of the Jesus tradition”—favors the theory that GJohn was familiar with one or more of the Synoptic Gospels, though I acknowledge that the passages do not in themselves provide conclusive evidence.[[4]](#footnote-4) This argument thus complements arguments for GJohn’s familiarity with the Synoptics based upon its redaction of the Synoptics or Synoptic tradition.

Among the myriad of methodological matters that beset the question of GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics, one is necessary to address now and another (source-critical reconstructions of GJohn’s tradition-history) will be addressed later. Placing myself in a growing minority of Johannine scholars,[[5]](#footnote-5) I presently consider John 21 an original part of GJohn. I am not blind to the narrative and vocabulary curiosities of John 21 that cause most scholars to view it as a later addition. Yet, in light of the fact that I consider linguistic style an unreliable indicator of authorial origin,[[6]](#footnote-6) the fact that one can equally read John 21 as a planned epilogue to the Gospel,[[7]](#footnote-7) and, most importantly, the absence of any early manuscript or patristic evidence that GJohn circulated without John 21, I tend to view it as original until further evidence emerges.[[8]](#footnote-8) We simply have no evidence whatsoever that any Christian in the first through third centuries read or heard read aloud a GJohn that ended at John 20:31. For me, this carries more weight than hypothetical tradition-histories that reciprocally reinforce the idea that GJohn originally ended at John 20:30–31. This weighting of the evidence is a departure from much previous Johannine scholarship and I will address it again below with regard to hypothetical sources. I will not, however, here defend my view on John 21 further because taking the opposite view would not affect my argument. Under that circumstance, John 21:24–25’s later extension of themes from John 20:30–31 would only reinforce my claim that such themes are present in John 20:30–31.[[9]](#footnote-9) Similarly, my argument is entirely unaffected by those who would date the addition of John 21 to John 1–20 in the first century CE or early second century CE,[[10]](#footnote-10) including those who would attribute this action to the author himself[[11]](#footnote-11) or one or more of his immediate disciples.[[12]](#footnote-12) With these matters addressed, I proceed to the claims of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25.

*John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25*

Regardless of one’s opinion about John 21, it is clear that John 21:24–25 repeats some claims from John 20:30–31. What follows will consider some of these repeated themes that relate to writing and texuality. It will also note similar emphases elsewhere in the GJohn, the Johannine corpus, and Gospel literature.

*Textual Self-Consciousness in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25*

Several repeated themes in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 collectively signal the author’s heightened awareness of GJohn’s significance as written tradition. Both texts emphasize that Jesus’ deeds exceeded those found in the Gospel (John 20:30; 21:25).[[13]](#footnote-13) Both texts also emphasize the sufficiency of the content of GJohn, “these things” (ταῦτα), for leading the readership to saving faith in Jesus or constituting true testimony about Jesus (John 20:31; 21:24).[[14]](#footnote-14)

Related strongly to both of these themes, both texts exhibit a near manic obsession with the *written* status of the Johannine account of Jesus. Indeed, a form of γράφω occurs at least once in every verse in 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 and twice in 21:25.[[15]](#footnote-15) John 20:30–31 contrasts the “many other signs” of Jesus that are not “written” (γεγραμμένα) in GJohn with “these things” that “have been written” (γέγραπται) in it. Similarly, John 21:24 refers to the author as “the one who wrote” (ὁ γράψας) “these things” while 21:25 refers to the “many other things” that Jesus did, stating that, if each one of them was “written” (γράφηται) the world could not contain “the books written” (τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία).[[16]](#footnote-16) This repetition appears deliberate and purposeful. This is indicated by the fact that 21:24–25 repeats a number of specific vocabulary items from 20:30–31 in addition to γράφω: “many other” (πολλὰ . . . ἄλλα//ἄλλα πολλὰ . . .; 20:30//21:25); “Jesus did” (ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς; 20:30//21:25); “these things” (ταῦτα; 20:31//21:24); and “book/books” (τῳ βιβλίῳ//τὰ . . . βιβλία; 20:30//21:25).

Furthermore, both of these texts establish a contrastive relationship between accounts of Jesus in GJohn and accounts of Jesus outside GJohn that expresses the superiority of GJohn. Both John 20:31 and 21:25 begin with a δέ, which could be read as adversative.[[17]](#footnote-17) Regardless of that, however, the narrative signals that, in contrast to Jesus’ “many other signs” (20:30) that have not been written in GJohn, only those written in GJohn do or can have salvific significance.[[18]](#footnote-18) As Brown notes, “The contrast between signs not written down and signs that have been written down is too obvious to overlook.”[[19]](#footnote-19) Similarly, the conjunction’s function in John 21:25 is to signal that, in contrast to Jesus’ “many other things” that could be written in books, it is the testimony of the author “who wrote these things” (21:24) in GJohn that is true.[[20]](#footnote-20) GJohn’s author, therefore, does not imagine a neutral relationship between his book and other sources for stories about Jesus.

It is important to notice the manner in which John 21:25 builds upon John 20:30–31, extending an opinion toward other accounts of Jesus that is already present in the earlier passage; namely, that accounts of Jesus outside GJohn are superfluous. John 21:25 extends this opinion in two ways—by stretching the temporal focus beyond the present and by specifying the media form of alternative accounts of Jesus. John 20:30–31 has a present temporal focus, as the perfect periphrastic of 20:30 refers to Jesus’ many other signs that “are not written” (οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα) in “this book.” These verses do not clarify whether accounts of Jesus’ “many other signs” existed as oral tradition or written tradition; either could serve as the point of contrast depending on where interpreters place the point of emphasis. That is, the author could conceivably be contrasting “this *book*” with oral tradition. But the author could just as conceivably be contrasting “*this* book” with another book or other books. How one reads John 20:30 is almost inevitably influenced by what sources one already thinks the author had available, as we will see below.

John 21:25, however, specifically identifies other written tradition[[21]](#footnote-21) and extends the temporal focus into the future or, more accurately, into the hypothetical, with the subjunctive. Even *if* someone wrote Jesus’ many other things one by one (ἐὰν γράφηται καθʼ ἓν), the world could not contain “the books written” (τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία).[[22]](#footnote-22) One does not need many written accounts of Jesus; one needs only this one written account of Jesus, GJohn. Of course, John 21:25 technically refers to Jesus books that could exist in the future, not Jesus books that exist in the present. Regardless, it is not unreasonable to assume that the author castigates any and all future competitors in the Jesus-book market in John 21:25 as a means of castigating present competitors. In light of the connections with John 20:30, this is the most likely meaning. To the dismay of Johannine scholars, the author does not refer to any other Jesus books by name, but his rhetoric is clear with these deliberately repeated themes. Collectively, John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 assert the superiority of GJohn, as a Jesus book, to any other Jesus traditions that do exist or could exist in the future, particularly those that might also take the form of a book.

*Textual Self-Consciousness Elsewhere in GJohn and Early Christianity*

The heightened sense of the social significance of writing and texts in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 is present elsewhere in GJohn, in the Johannine corpus, and in Gospel literature. GJohn displays a similar awareness of the importance of textuality in the uniquely Johannine account of the Jewish leadership requesting Pilate not to write “King of the Jews” on the *titulus*, but that Jesus claimed to be King of the Jews (19:19–21). In response, the author has Pilate state: “What I have written, I have written” (ὃ γέγραφα γέγραφα). Similarly, only GJohn includes the account of Jesus’ audience asking about his literacy (John 7:15). GJohn was also the chosen location for a later scribe to insert the *Pericope Adulterae* into John 7:53–8:11, the only account of Jesus in canonical tradition that applies γράφω or its cognates to Jesus (John 8:6, 8).[[23]](#footnote-23) One may also observe the important narrative role of “the writing” or Scripture (ἡ γραφή) of Israel in GJohn (2:22; 5:39; 7:38, 42; 10:35; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37; 20:9), and the manner in which the author conceives of GJohn, as written text, on par with those written texts since it can lead to life (John 20:31). In the words of Sheridan, “This book takes the position that in writing γραφή of its own, John is ‘re-telling’ the biblical narrative.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

A similar heightened textual self-awareness appears elsewhere in the Johannine corpus. Γράφω appears a total of eighteen times in the Johannine epistles,[[25]](#footnote-25) with the author frequently combining the verb with purpose statements in a manner similar to John 20:30–31 (for example, 1 John 1:4; 2:1, 12–14; 5:13). The author is thus clear that it is through his written text—not an oral performance or ritual—that he accomplishes some of his important goals. Also similar to John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 is the author’s references to writing ταῦτα (“these things”; 1 John 1:4; 2:1). The author even refers to the *realia* of written communication, saying twice that he has other things to tell the readers but prefers not to write it with pen, paper, and ink (2 John 12; 3 John 13).

Γράφω carries a similar significance in the Apocalypse. John is often instructed to “write” important matters, as is the case with the seven letters in Rev 1–3 (1:11, 19; 2:1, 8, 12, 17, 18; 3:1, 7, 14) or the voice from heaven in Rev 14:13. In a manner not unlike John 20:30–31, Rev 1:3 pronounces blessing upon those who read and hear the book. Revelation 22:18–19 goes further and pronounces plagues and lost salvation upon anyone who alters the written words of the book. As should be clear, therefore, the Apocalypse also, like John 21:25, frequently employs the image of the book, using βιβλίον twenty-three times, βίβλος twice, and βιβλαρίδιον (“little book”) thrice.[[26]](#footnote-26) Gamble is correct that the author of the Apocalypse “may be the most textually self-conscious Christian writer of the early period.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

Outside the Johannine corpus but within Gospel literature, and although not exhibiting the type of emphasis present in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 (or Luke 1:1–4, see below), both Mark’s and Matthew’s Gospels also evince self-awareness of their written status. The narratorial interruptions “let the reader understand” (Mark 13:14; Matt 24:15) address the lector who would read the text aloud for a largely illiterate audience. This point stands regardless of whether the Gospel of Mark, for example, was originally composed as oral tradition.[[28]](#footnote-28) The only versions of Mark’s Gospel and Matthew’s Gospel that we have self-identify as manuscripts.

Although he does not repeat Mark 13:14, as does Matthew, Luke reveals a textual self-consciousness similar to GJohn in his prologue (Luke 1:1–4). The Lukan prologue has received no shortage of scholarly attention, but for present purposes it will suffice to observe that, like the author of GJohn, Luke presents his account of Jesus as superior to alternative accounts of Jesus *and* presents his account as a written text. Luke states that many others “attempted” (ἐπεχείρησαν) to craft a narrative (1:1) out of the oral tradition stemming from the eyewitnesses and helpers (1:2). Yet he decided to join their ranks and “to write” (γράψαι) an account “orderly” (καθεξῆς) and “accurately” (ἀκριβῶς)—that is, Luke’s Gospel was not merely an *attempt* at such a narrative—once he had pondered everything from the beginning (1:3). Luke clearly considers his *written* account of Jesus to be a superior account of Jesus.

In light of this similarity between the Lukan prologue and Johannine colophons, it is unsurprising that scholars often refer to Luke 1:1–4 when discussing John 20:30–31 or 21:24–25.[[29]](#footnote-29) Luke 1:1–4 is a pre-Johannine example of the competitive textualization of the Jesus tradition that displays notable similarities to GJohn’s own textual self-consciousness. Both authors display an awareness of alternative sources for the Jesus tradition but indicate the superiority of their written accounts of Jesus.[[30]](#footnote-30)

*John 20:30–31, 21:24–25 and the Synoptic Gospels*

One implication of this evidence is that the author of GJohn was not the first early Christian to commit his account of Jesus to writing in a bid to outshine other accounts of Jesus. With GJohn, he stepped into a competitive market for authoritative and “true” Jesus books that predated him. This observation brings us to obvious questions. How aware was he of his competitors in this market? What exactly are the other accounts of Jesus to which John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 could allude? And, most importantly, are they possibly the Synoptic Gospels?

The Synoptic Gospels are the strongest possible candidates for the other accounts of Jesus to which John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 refer. This claim must be tempered, however. GJohn’s author does not explicitly name any other Jesus tradition, and thus any theory must proceed in light of this silence. Also, the Synoptic Gospels are not the only possible candidates for other accounts of Jesus that the author knew. Nevertheless, they are, in my estimation, the most likely candidates for the following two simple reasons.

First, as noted above, the author seems particularly concerned to emphasize his Gospel’s superiority, as a book itself, over other *books* about Jesus. This is explicitly the case in John 21:24–25 and possibly the case in John 20:30–31. In the very least, one can observe that the author thinks that βιβλία are particularly authoritative cultural expressions of tradition (21:25) and that his βιβλίον in particular (20:30) is the most authoritative of any such expressions concerning Jesus that do exist or will exist.

Second, if we ask what other Jesus books the author could have conceived as competitors in the textualization of the Jesus tradition, only four *certain* possibilities emerge in light of present evidence: the Gospel of Mark; the Gospel of Matthew; the Gospel of Luke; and the unknown gospel attested by *P.Egerton* *2* and *P.Köln 255*.[[31]](#footnote-31) The force of this point was often diluted in previous scholarship by scholars’ willingness to treat hypothetical sources for GJohn as equally likely as known sources. I will address this methodological issue shortly, but for now reiterate that if we restrict ourselves to definite possibilities, these are the only four that exist. Of these four, three almost certainly predated the Gospel of John under traditional datings—the Synoptic Gospels.

The fourth candidate, the so-called “Egerton Gospel,” exhibits some form of literary relationship with GJohn. This relationship is perhaps most clear in verbatim and near-verbatim correspondences between John 5, John 9, and lines 8–24 on the verso of fragment 1.[[32]](#footnote-32) Most scholars date *P.Egerton 2* to the second or third century CE, and thus later than GJohn.[[33]](#footnote-33) Watson, however, has recently argued for the priority of *P.Egerton 2*.[[34]](#footnote-34) Despite his thorough consideration, the best explanation of the data is still that *P.Egerton* 2 is later than GJohn and has knowledge of Johannine and Synoptic tradition. Watson’s arguments for Johannine posteriority are often fragile.[[35]](#footnote-35) He has also, in my view, underestimated the overlap between the Synoptic accounts of the leper (Mark 1:40–45//Matt 8:1–4//Luke 5:12–16) and a similar account in *P.Egerton 2* fragment 1 recto lines 11–20.[[36]](#footnote-36) Regardless of this point, however, even Watson would presumably agree that the case for GJohn’s posteriority to (and thus familiarity with) *P.Egerton 2* is much more debatable than the case for GJohn’s familiarity with the Synoptics.[[37]](#footnote-37) Therefore, although they are not the only possibilities, the Synoptic Gospels must hold pride of place as the most likely possibilities for other Jesus books to which John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 obliquely refer.

*The Implications of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 for Recent Research*

The position argued above is not new. Barrett saw John 20:30 as an indication that the author “was likely familiar with much of the synoptic tradition.”[[38]](#footnote-38) Similarly in reference to John 20:30, Thyen claimed, “. . . so setzt er wiederum voraus, daß seine potentiellen Leser, vermutlich doch wohl aus ihrem Vertrautsein mit den synoptischen Evangelien, um derartige Zeichen wissen.”[[39]](#footnote-39) Although he does not elaborate the point, Bauckham likewise claimed that readers of GJohn might have understood John 20:30’s “many other signs” in light of their knowledge of the Gospel of Mark.[[40]](#footnote-40) Furthermore, upon the supposition of the lateness of John 21, some scholars argue that John 21:24–25 does or could refer to the Synoptics.[[41]](#footnote-41)

The implications of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 for the question of GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics bear revisiting, however, in light of recent research. At least three matters reflecting the changing winds of scholarship make the present argument more forceful than it has perhaps been in the past: (1) a decreased interest in positing hypothetical sources; (2) a resurgence of arguments for GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics; and (3) increased attention to the significance of the Gospels as written artifacts.

*The “Waning Interest” in Hypothetical Sources for GJohn*

First, Johannine scholarship has witnessed a turn away from source-critical hypothetical reconstructions of GJohn’s sources. Source-critical reconstructions of the tradition-history of GJohn, whether Bultmann’s three-source theory,[[42]](#footnote-42) Fortna’s Signs Source,[[43]](#footnote-43) Brown’s complex multi-stage community development theory(ies),[[44]](#footnote-44) or any modern variants,[[45]](#footnote-45) gain(ed) currency from a form-critically-inspired and historical-positivist era of New Testament scholarship. In this era, scholars have had great confidence in their abilities to stratify layers of the gospel tradition and assign them to corresponding stages of a community’s development. This source-critical procedure and the concomitant Gospel community hypothesis it requires, however, have both received strong criticism. Scholars working in media studies (orality, texuality, and memory) have increasingly eroded confidence in the criteria by which scholars identify earlier (often oral) traditions in written texts.[[46]](#footnote-46) (One can observe similar erosions of scholarly confidence in the ability to mine and recover earlier states of the gospel tradition from the written Gospels in the demise of the criteria of authenticity in historical Jesus studies and the increased popularity of the Farrer-Goulder solution to the Synoptic problem.)[[47]](#footnote-47) Separately, Bauckham’s *Gospel for All Christians* and Klink’s related *The Audience of the Gospels* exposed numerous weaknesses in the theory that each Gospel was intended for a single Christian community.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Thatcher has thus rightly observed a “waning interest” in such methods and theories among more recent scholars, and I place myself within that group.[[49]](#footnote-49) I acknowledge the great amount of learning in these previous studies and the indebtedness of current New Testament studies to their contributions. To stand on the shoulders of giants and appreciate the view does not require us to remain there, however.

The implications of this shift for the present issue are significant. Scholars who are willing to entertain hypothetical sources for GJohn and complex tradition-histories can appeal to these sources as possible referents in John 20:30 and 21:25. Thus, Bultmann argued that John 20:30 refers to (and was borrowed from) his proposed signs source[[50]](#footnote-50) and Fortna concluded from 20:30 that the Fourth Evangelist “had the signs source before him when he wrote.”[[51]](#footnote-51) For those who restrict their theories to known evidence, however, the possible referents for John 20:30 and 21:25 are considerably less. As noted above, there really are only four known Jesus books that could antedate GJohn. Among them, only the three Synoptic Gospels have a clear-cut case for priority to GJohn. And, as noted at the beginning of this essay, this point stands also for those scholars who date John 21 after GJohn but still in the first century or early second century CE.

*Recent Defenses of GJohn’s Knowledge of the Synoptics*

The second matter demonstrating a renewed relevance of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 for the question of GJohn’s relationship to the Synoptics is the resurgence of arguments for GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics. In 1989 and 2000, Hengel affirmed GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics.[[52]](#footnote-52) Bauckham defended GJohn’s knowledge of Mark’s Gospel in 1998 and 2006.[[53]](#footnote-53) Thyen’s major 2005 commentary on GJohn argues that GJohn knew all three Synoptics, as does Lincoln’s 2005 GJohn commentary.[[54]](#footnote-54) Brant’s 2011 commentary claims that GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics “remains viable” and Barker’s Vanderbilt PhD dissertation from the same year is the most extensive argument to date that GJohn knew Matthew’s Gospel.[[55]](#footnote-55) These are just a sample of scholars exhibiting this trend. Obviously, if, on other grounds, scholars are convinced that the author of GJohn was aware of the Synoptics, this raises the likelihood that he could have them in his peripheral vision in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25.

This observation is particularly relevant because some of the most recent advocates of GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics overlook the colophons entirely. This oversight has not always been the case. Windisch considered these texts as important evidence (indeed, “das letzte und vielleicht stärkste Argument”) for his then-groundbreaking argument in 1926 that the author of GJohn was not dependent upon the Synoptics but certainly knew them and intended to supplant them.[[56]](#footnote-56) Nevertheless, Lincoln’s 2005 commentary, for example, never mentions them in its defense that GJohn knew all three Synoptics and does not refer to the Synoptics in its discussion of John 20:30–31 or 21:24–25.[[57]](#footnote-57) Similarly, Barker’s defense of GJohn’s knowledge of the Gospel of Matthew does not mention John 20:30–31 and 21:25.[[58]](#footnote-58) The colophons also play no role in Bird’s 2014 report on research, which affirms GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics.[[59]](#footnote-59) If the argument forwarded above is correct, it strengthens these and other arguments for GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics that are based upon literary style or redaction.

*Why John* Wrote *a Gospel*

The third scholarly trend justifying a reconsideration of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25, and by far the most important for present purposes, is the recent emphasis upon the significance of the Gospels as writtenartifacts. One can view this point of emphasis in, for example, the title of Bockmuehl and Hagner’s *The Written Gospel*, the subtitle of Bird’s *The Gospel of the Lord:* *How the Early Church Wrote the Story of Jesus*, or Hurtado’s work on the social significance of the Gospels (and other early Christian writings) as manuscripts.[[60]](#footnote-60)

The most thorough treatment of this issue as it relates to GJohn is the work of Thatcher in his significant study *Why John Wrote a Gospel* and a related prior essay.[[61]](#footnote-61) Thatcher shows convincingly that GJohn’s theory of the Paraclete as the one who reminds, teaches, and guides Jesus’ followers (John 14:15–17, 26; 15:26–27; 16:12–14) seems to preclude the dominant scholarly view that the author wrote GJohn as an *aide-mémoire*.[[62]](#footnote-62) This observation then underscores the curious question of why the author *did* commit the Gospel to writing. Thatcher proceeds to argue that the author textualized the Johannine Jesus tradition in order to capitalize upon the symbolic significance and rhetorical impact of books in a predominantly illiterate culture.

Thatcher’s study is highly important. For present purposes, his most important observation is that asking why the author crafted the narrative he did in response to his situation—why he *composed* GJohn—is one question; asking why he then committed this narrative to the written medium—why he *wrote* GJohn—is another question. Noting the likelihood that the author wrote GJohn in a context of conflict, Thatcher asks,

Why did John choose to write a Gospel in response to his difficult situation, rather than, say, preaching a sermon? Or assassinating the leading local Pharisees? Or organizing a mass suicide for all Christians in the area? Or filing a protest with the Roman authorities? Or simply giving in, rejecting Christ, and returning to the Jewish fold?[[63]](#footnote-63) Why, from all these and many other options, did John choose to write a Gospel in response to his situation?[[64]](#footnote-64)

He thus defines his line of enquiry: “I am interested in the shift from memory/tradition to written text that produced the Fourth Gospel and in the *motives* behind that shift. . . . I am concerned with John’s recycling of traditional material and the *motives* behind his decision to commit these traditional materials to writing.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

Thatcher also states that, in light of this focus, his study “seeks to transcend the problem of possible literary sources,” which clearly includes the question of whether GJohn knew the Synoptics.[[66]](#footnote-66) He nevertheless expresses doubt that GJohn used any sources other than the Beloved Disciple and states that, regardless, it “makes no difference whatsoever” to his argument about why the author wrote a Gospel.[[67]](#footnote-67) Thus, when Thatcher addresses John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25, he does so in relation to GJohn’s status as written text in the Johannine community, not in relation to GJohn’s possible knowledge of other written texts from outside the Johannine community.[[68]](#footnote-68)

Above I emphasized Thatcher’s two references to the “motives” behind the shift of the oral Johannine tradition into written tradition because it reveals the point at which his overall theory is most open to criticism. Thatcher’s statements reveal a false choice between defining the author’s motives for textualization internally (in terms of the Johannine community) or externally (in terms of previous written sources of the Jesus tradition). At the crux of this presentation is likely the aforementioned highly debated Gospel community hypothesis, but this false choice leads Thatcher to fail to consider seriously whether even part of the author’s motives for textualization could have emerged from awareness of prior instances of the texualization of the Jesus tradition. I suggest, however, that at least one strong possibility for why the author of GJohn chose the written medium for his authoritative account of Jesus was precisely that he was aware of other accounts of Jesus that had successfully harnessed the written medium and established themselves with some degree of prominence in early Christianity, accounts with which he intended to compete. In the least, the tremendous amount of similar traditions between GJohn and the Synoptics—enlisted ubiquitously in arguments over Johannine knowledge of the Synoptics based upon redaction criticism—warrant taking this possibility seriously.

*Conclusion*

To state this conclusion more directly, the question of other written sources of Jesus tradition is precisely what John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 will not allow the critic to transcend if that critic is asking about the author’s *motives*. For these passages explicitly explain the author’s commitment of the Jesus tradition to writing—an issue that Thatcher has rightly thrown into sharp relief—by referring to alternative sources for stories of Jesus, including alternative written sources. The implication of the preceding argument is therefore that one strong possible motive for the author’s textualization of the Jesus tradition was his awareness of prior textualizations of the Jesus tradition, which he considered inferior to GJohn. What he envisioned for the future of earlier textualizations of the Jesus tradition remains an open question.[[69]](#footnote-69) As the only certain textualizations of the Jesus tradition that antedate GJohn, however, the Synoptic Gospels are the most likely candidates for the author’s envisioned competitors. John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 should thus function as supporting evidence for the theory that the author of GJohn was familiar with the Synoptics. The author of GJohn likely was not only aware of the trend of competitive textualization of the Jesus tradition, but intended actively to contribute to it in such a way that would render future contributions irrelevant.

1. D. Moody Smith, *John* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 401. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For the lengthy history of research, see D. Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels* (2d ed.; Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001). I am in agreement with Mark Goodacre, Thomas *and the Gospels: The Case for* Thomas*’s Familiarity with the Synoptics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 7, that speaking of one text’s “knowledge of” or “familiarity with” another text is preferable to speaking of one text’s “dependence upon” another text. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 28–29. Armin Baum, “The Original Epilogue (John 20:30–31), the Secondary Appendix (21:1–23), and the Editorial Epilogues (21:24–25) of John’s Gospel,” in *Earliest Christian History* (eds. Michael F. Bird and Jason Maston; WUNT 2.320; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 262, objects to identifying John 21:24–25 as a colophon because colophons typically came from copyists, not authors or editors. He prefers the term “editorial epilogue.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. I am not here concerned to demonstrate GJohn’s knowledge of a specific Synoptic Gospel. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Several scholars note the growing popularity of this minority position. See, for example, Carsten Claussen, “The Role of John 21: Discipleship in Retrospect and Redefinition,” in *New Currents through John: A Global Perspective* (eds. Francisco Lozada Jr. and Tom Thatcher; RBS 54; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 57; Francis J. Moloney, ed., *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* by Raymond E. Brown(AYBRL; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 84n.95. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The comments of Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII–XXI* (AB 29a; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), on “the uncertain criterion supplied by style” (1080) reflect a similar sentiment as regards John 21: “Twenty-eight words used in ch. xxi do not appear elsewhere in the Gospel; yet since this is the only fishing scene in the Gospel, we expect a percentage of appropriate vocabulary” (1079). For further comments on the unreliable nature of linguistic style as an indicator of authorial origin, see Chris Keith, “The *Pericope Adulterae*: A Theory of Attentive Insertion,” in *The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research* (ed. David Alan Black and Jacob Cerone; LNTS 551; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), forthcoming. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 358–411; Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 271–84; repr. from *Neotestamentica* 36 (2002): 77–88; Edward Clement Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (ed. Francis Noel Davey; 2d ed.; London: Faber and Faber, 1947), 550, 559, 561–2; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 2:1219–1222; Stanley E. Porter, “The Ending of John’s Gospel,” in *From Biblical Criticism to Biblical Faith: Essays in Honor of Lee Martin McDonald* (eds. William H. Brackeney and Craig A. Evans; Macon: Mercer University Press, 2007), 55–73; Hartwig Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HNT 6; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 772–3; cf. Claussen, “Role,” 59. For a recent defense of the majority position that John 21 is a late addition to GJohn, see Baum, “Original Epilogue,” 227–70. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Surviving witnesses to Tatian’s *Diatessaron*, originally compiled in the late second century CE (on the date of the *Diatessaron*, Peter J. Williams, “The Syriac Versions of the Bible,” in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From the Beginnings to 600* [eds. James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013], 528),contain John 21 (§54:24–38; 55:17), including John 21:24–25 (§54:38; 55:17) (*ANF* 9:127–9; my thanks to James Barker for pointing out the evidence of the *Diatessaron*). P66, dated by some to ca. 200 CE (NA28; Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], 127n.96, 140, cf. 219), is the earliest manuscript to attest the relevant portion of GJohn and contains John 21:1–9. Although M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Jean* (*EBib*; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1925), 520, overstates the implausibility of John 21’s later addition, I agree with his general sentiment: “Mais cette hypothèse d’un appendice, mȇme émané du mȇme auteur, ne nous paraȋt ni plausible, ni necessaire.” The lone manuscript of GJohn that appears to end at John 20:31 is a fourth-century Coptic manuscript (see Gesa Schenke, “Das Erscheinen Jesu vor den Jüngern und der ungläubige Thomas, Johannes 20,19–31,” in *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk* [eds. Louis Painchaud and Paul-Hubert Poirier; Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi 7; Leuven: Peeters, 2006], 893–904; note especially the appropriately cautious statement regarding a Greek original [902]). As a late versional witness, this manuscript cannot provide evidence of the state of the Greek manuscript tradition two or three centuries earlier, *pace* Petr Pokorný, *From the Gospel to the Gospels: History, Theology and Impact of the Biblical Term ‘Euangelion’* (BZNW 195; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), 182n.333. One must, however, now consider statements that the Gospel *never* circulated without John 21 as overstatements, if only slightly. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Scholars frequently view John 21:24–25 as an imitation of, echo of, or attempt to link to John 20:30–31. See Brown, *Gospel according to John XIII–XXI*, 1126, 1129; Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* (eds. R. W. N. Hoare and J. K. Riches; trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), 718; Keener, *Gospel*, 2:1240–1241; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (SP 4; Collegeville: 1998), 546, 562; Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St John* (BNTC 4; London: Continuum, 2005), 523–4; Smith, *John*, 401; Thyen, *Johannesevangelium*, 773–4, 796. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Brown, *Gospel according to John XIII–XXI*, 1128; R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (FF; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 96; Theo K. Heckl, *Von Evangelium des Markus zum viergestaltigen Evangelium* (WUNT 120: Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 217–8; Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1972), 618; David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. D. Walter Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium* (3d ed.; HNT 6; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1933), 324–5; J. B. Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 195 (cf. 197); Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John* (2 vols.; London: John Murray, 1908), 2:359; cf. Baum, “Original Epilogue,” 247, 267; Porter, “Ending,” 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Baum, “Original Epilogue,” 247 (cf. also 267); Marie-Émile Boismard, “Le chapitre XXI de Saint Jean: Essai de critique littéraire,” *RB* 54 (1947): 495–7; Brown, *Introduction*, 82–84; Martin Hengel, *The Johannine Question* (London: SCM, 1989), 84; Martin Hengel, Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM, 2000), 40, 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. A similar claim occurs in 1 Macc 9:22 in reference to Judas Maccabeus. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Although the precise referent of “these things” in 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 is debated, the most natural reading in light of the emphasis upon the things written in “this book” (20:30), is that they refer to GJohn as a whole. Similarly, Baum, “Original Epilogue,” 231, 262; Bultmann, *Gospel*, 717n.4; Lincoln, *Gospel*, 505–7, 522–3; Lindars, *Gospel*, 641. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Bauckham, *Jesus*, 358–62, focuses upon the meaning of γράφω in John 21:24 while arguing that the passage intends to claim that the Beloved Disciple was, in fact, responsible for the authorship of GJohn, “whether or not he wielded the pen” (362). In response to those who have argued otherwise, he states, “It must be stressed that no one has yet produced any evidence that *graphein* can be used to refer to a relationship between the ‘author’ and text more remote than that of the dictation of a text to a scribe” (361). Although I agree with Bauckham regarding the meaning of the verb in John 21:24, there is evidence for precisely such a wider usage, even if other scholars have overlooked it. In Esth 8:8 LXX, Artaxerxes commands Esther and Haman, “Write in my name what you like and seal it with my ring” (γράψατε καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ ὀνόματός μου ὡς δοκεῖ ὑμῖν καὶ σφραγίσατε τῷ δακτυλίῳ). After scribes come and take dictation from Mordecai (Esth 8:8–9 LXX), Esth 8:10 LXX again clarifies that the edict “was written through the king and sealed in the king’s ring” (ἐγράφη δὲ διὰ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ἐσφραγίσθη τῷ δακτυλίῳ; translations mine). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See also Thyen, *Johannesevangelium*, 773–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See BDF § 447, which notes that the inclusion of μέν (see John 20:30) always “throws the emphasis” upon the content of the δέ clause (see John 20:31). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Consider Heckl, *Von Evangelium*, 149, on John 20:30–31 specifically: “Der Satz formuliert eine Selbstreflexion auf das niedergeschriebene Evangelium. Das unterstreicht auch der Hinweis auf das Buch. Das Evangelium soll in geschriebener Form wirken.” As I note in the main text, the emphasis on prior *written* tradition is clearer in John 21:24–25, though possible in John 20:30–31. On the tricky issue of whether to read the present subjunctive or aorist subjunctive of πιστεύω in John 20:31, see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2000), 219–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Brown, *Gospel according to John XIII–XXI*, 1056. Similarly, Lincoln, *Gospel*, 505, 522–3, notes the contrasts in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Brown, *Gospel according to John XIII–XXI*, 1126–7, 1129, overstates the lack of connection between 21:24 and 21:25. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Smith, *John*, 372, rightly observes this shift. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Brown, *Gospel according to John XIII–XXI*, 1129, misses the temporal shift and overlooks the manners in which 21:25 extends the claims of 20:30 when he claims that 21:25 “awkwardly” repeats 20:30. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See further Chris Keith, *The* Pericope Adulterae*, the Gospel of John, and the Literacy of Jesus* (NTTSD 38; Leiden: Brill, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ruth Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture: ‘The Jews’ and the Scriptural Citations in John 1:19–12:15* (BIS 110; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 32. Consider Keener, *Gospel of John*, 2:1215: “Because he is inspired by the Paraclete . . . , the author may quietly suggest that his work belongs in the same category with the Scriptures of old.” [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. 1 John 1:4; 2:1, 7, 8, 12, 13 (twice), 14 (thrice), 21, 26; 5:13; 2 John 5, 12; 3 John 9, 13 (twice). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. βιβλίον: Rev 1:11; 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9; 6:14; 10:8; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12 (thrice); 21:27; 22:7, 9, 10, 18 (twice), 19 (twice); βίβλος: Rev 3:5; 20:15; βιβλαρίδιον: Rev 10:2, 9, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Antoinette Clark Wire, *The Case for Mark Composed in Performance* (Biblical Performance Criticism 3; Eugene: Cascade, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Baum, “Original Epilogue,” 233; Gamble, *Books*, 103; Keener, *Gospel*, 2:1241n.12; Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 2; Smith, *John*, 31; Windisch, *Johannes*, 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Gamble, *Books*, 103, refers to both as “book conscious.” [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Although earlier proposals for the dating of the *Gospel of Thomas* exist (see Uwe-Karsten Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* [trans. Gesine Schenke Robinson; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2008], 15–16), Goodacre, Thomas *and the Gospels*, 154–71, has argued convincingly for a second-century date. Similarly, and despite proposals to place it in the first century CE, the *Gospel of Peter* is best understood as a second-century text that develops canonical texts (Paul Foster, “The Gospel of Peter,” in *The Non-Canonical Gospels* [ed. Paul Foster; London: T&T Clark, 2008], 38–41; Alan Kirk, “The Johannine Jesus in the Gospel of Peter: A Social Memory Approach,” in *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* [eds. Robert T. Fortna and Tom Thatcher; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001], 313–21). The only other possibility is Papias’s *Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord*, which is unlikely. This possibility would require that GJohn be dated to later than 110–130 CE, when Papias was writing (see Charles E. Hill, “The Fragments of Papias,” in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers* [ed. Paul Foster; London: T&T Clark, 2007], 42–43). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. For example: “Your accuser is Moses, in whom you trust” (John 5:45// *P.Egerton 2* fragment 1 verso lines 13–15); “We know that God spoke to Moses” (John 9:29//*P.Egerton 2* fragment 1 verso lines 15–16); “For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for that one wrote concerning me” (John 5:46//*P.Egerton 2* fragment 1 verso lines 20–24). The only differences between GJohn in NA28 and *P.Egerton 2* in these passages are the tenses of “spoke” in the John 9:29 parallel (perfect in GJohn, aorist in *P.Egerton 2*) and of the second “believe” in the John 5:46 parallel (imperfect in GJohn, aorist in *P.Egerton 2*). For Greek, see Andrew Bernhard, *Other Early Christian Gospels: A Critical Edition of the Surviving Greek Manuscripts* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 88–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. For a recent summary of proposed dates, see Stanley E. Porter, “Der Papyrus Egerton 2 (P.Egerton/P.Lond.Christ 1),” in *Antike christliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung* (eds. Christoph Markschies and Jens Schröter; 2 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 1:361–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Francis Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 286–325. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. For example, Watson believes the whole question must be reopened on account of reading an *eta* instead of an *upsilon* in line 23 of *P.Egerton 2* fragment 1 verso, as is traditionally read (Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 295–6; for the traditional reading, see Bernhard, *Other*, 88–89, and the back matter for an image of the fragment). Thus, instead of agreeing with John 6:49’s “your (ὑμῶν) fathers,” Watson’s reconstructed *P.Egerton 2* reads “our (ἡμῶν) fathers,” which he considers a “totally un-Johannine usage on the lips of Jesus” (Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 295). Watson stretches the “totally un-Johannine” nature of this phrase. The phrase might not otherwise occur on Jesus’ lips, but it is hardly un-Johannine. The exact phrase occurs on the Samaritan woman’s lips in John 4:20 and the lips of the crowd in John 6:31. Furthermore, even if Watson’s reconstruction is correct, it does not change the fact that this phrase is embedded in a context in *P.Egerton 2* that is thoroughly Johannine. See note 32 above. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 324, claims, “[*P.Egerton 2*’s version of the leper story] shows few if any signs of dependence on the synoptic versions.” [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Cf. Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 290–96, on the scholarly consensus of *P.Egerton 2*’s dependence upon GJohn. On GJohn’s knowledge of the Synoptics, he says: “John’s use of Mark is highly selective, but here at least [the trial before Pilate] it is undeniable. There are also indications that this evangelist can draw on Matthew and Luke to supplement Mark” (384). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John* (2d ed.; London: SPCK, 1978), 575. Barrett defends GJohn’s knowledge of Mark’s Gospel on p.42–46. Barrett’s point on p.45 resonates with my argument below: “Anyone who prefers to say, ‘Not Mark, but the oral tradition on which Mark was based’, or ‘Not Mark, but a written source on which Mark drew’, may claim that his hypothesis fits the evidence equally well. All that can be said is that we do not have before us the oral tradition on which Mark was based; we do not have any of the written sources that Mark may have quoted; but we do have Mark, and in Mark are the stories that John repeats. . . . Anyone who after an interval of nineteen centuries feels himself in a position to distinguish nicely between ‘Mark’ and ‘something much like Mark’, is at liberty to do so. The simpler hypothesis, which does not involve the postulation of otherwise unknown entities, is not without attractiveness.” [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Thyen, *Johannesevangelium*, 774. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Richard Bauckham, “John for Readers of Mark,” in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (ed. Richard Bauckham; Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1998), 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Heckl, *Von Evangelium*, 150; cf. also the argument that the author of John 21could have introduced the κατά titles to the Gospels, 207–17; Smith, *John*, 372, 401; Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 240n.63, 241; D. Moody Smith, “When Did the Gospels Become Scripture?” *JBL* 119 (2000): 13, 19; Trobisch, *First*, 100; cf. Keener, *Gospel*, 2:1241. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Bultmann, *Gospel*, 6–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Robert T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 11; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Brown, *Gospel*, xxxiv–xxxix (five stages); *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* (New York: Paulist, 1979), 22–24 (four stages); *Introduction*, 62–89 (three stages). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. For example, Paul N. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus: Modern Foundations Reconsidered* (2d ed.; London: T&T Clark, 2007), 101–26; Paul N. Anderson, “Mark, John, and Answerability: Interfluentiality and Dialectic between the Second and Fourth Gospels,” *LASBF* 63 (2013): 197–245; Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospels and Letters of John* (3 vols.; ECC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Eric Eve, *Behind the Gospels: Understanding the Oral Tradition* (London: SPCK, 2013), 15–32, 47–65, 86–134; Rafael Rodríguez, *Oral Tradition and the New Testament: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T&T Clark, 2014), 55–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. On the former, see Chris Keith and Anthony Le Donne, eds., *Jesus, Criteria, and the Demise of Authenticity* (London: T&T Clark, 2012). On the latter, see Mark S. Goodacre, *The Case against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg: Trinity, 2002); Mark S. Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin, eds., *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2005); John C. Poirier and Jeffrey Peterson, eds., *Marcan Priority Without Q: Explorations in the Farrer Hypothesis* (LNTS; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), forthcoming. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Bauckham, ed., *Gospel for All Christians*; Edward Klink III, ed., *The Audience of the Gospels: Further Conversation about the Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity* (LNTS 353; London: T&T Clark, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Quotation from Tom Thatcher, “The New Current through John: The Old ‘New Look’ and the New Critical Orthodoxy,” in *New Currents through John: A Global Perspective* (eds. Francisco Lozada Jr. and Tom Thatcher; RBS 54; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Bultmann, *Gospel of John*, 6–7, 698 (“[The Evangelist] is able to use this conclusion of the source without fear of misunderstanding, and at the same time outwardly to conform his book to the form of Gospel literature as it had already become traditional.”). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Fortna, *Gospel of Signs*, 223; repeated at *Fourth Gospel*, 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Hengel, *Johannine*, 75; *Four*, 39; cf. 105–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Bauckham, “John for Readers of Mark,” 147–71; *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 127–9, 194–201, respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Thyen, *Johannesevangelium*, 4; Lincoln, *Gospel*, 32–39, respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Jo-Ann Brant, *John* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 10; James W. Barker, “John’s Use of Matthew” (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2011), respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Hans Windisch, *Johannes und die Synoptiker: Wollte der vierte Evangelist die älteren Evangelien ergänzen oder ersetzen?* (UNT 12; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1926), 121–4; quotation from p.124. I thank James Barker for helping me acquire a copy of Windisch’s study. Cf. Smith, *John among the Gospels*, 29: “If the colophons are the strongest evidence for the displacement theory, it is much less certain than Windisch thinks.” Presently, I am much less concerned with the issue of GJohn’s attitude toward the Synoptics than its possible knowledge of them. In this regard, I think Smith unnecessarily downplays the significance of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 by focusing upon Windisch’s argument for the “displacement theory.” [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Lincoln, *Gospel*, 32–39, 504–8, 522–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Barker, “John’s Use.” He references John 21:24 on p.59, but only its eyewitness claim. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Michael Bird, *The Gospel of the Lord: How the Early Church Wrote the Story of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 188–213. Bird does, however, cite approvingly Baum, “Original Epilogue,” in a footnote (191n.178). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Markus Bockmuehl and Donald A. Hagner, *The Written Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Bird, *Gospel*; Larry A. Hurtado, “Manuscripts and the Sociology of Early Christian Reading,” in *The Early Text of the New Testament* (eds. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 49–62, respectively. See also Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); Chris Keith, “Ancient Christian Book Culture and the Emergence of the First Written Gospel,” in *Mark, Manuscripts, and Monotheism: Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado* (eds. Chris Keith and Dieter T. Roth; LNTS 528; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 22–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Tom Thatcher, *Why John Wrote a Gospel: Jesus—Memory—History* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006); “Why John Wrote a Gospel: Memory and History in an Early Christian Community,” in *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity* (eds. Alan Kirk and Tom Thatcher; SemSt 52; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 79–97. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Thatcher, *Why*, 23–36; “Why,” 80–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Thatcher would have been better served here to imply that the author has left the non-Christian “Jewish fold” rather than “Jewish fold” in general. There is no indication that the author conceives of himself as no longer Jewish. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Thatcher, *Why*, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Thatcher, *Why*, xvi–xvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Thatcher, *Why*, xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Thatcher, *Why*, xvi. Thatcher defines the Beloved Disciple as “a real person, albeit portrayed now as a legendary figure” (xv). [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Thatcher, *Why*, 45. Cf. Thatcher, “Why,” 94, where he suggests that 21:24 has in view “competing memories of Jesus.” [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Scholars have held a variety of views, ranging from GJohn’s intended supplanting of the Synoptic tradition to its intended complementarity. See Smith, *John among the Gospels*, throughout, and, more succinctly, Bird, *Gospel*, 194–211. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)