

The Interpretation of John

- 23 In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (*T.Jud.* 20:1, 3, 5) and in the Qumran writings, especially in the section of the Community Rule on the two spirits (1QS 3:13, 4, 26).
- 24 For greater detail, cf. my article, "La notion de témoignage dans Saint Jean", *Sacra Pagina* II (Paris-Genbloux, 1959).
- 25 Art. cit., 202-8.
- 26 Cf. Zorell, *Lexicon graecum Novi Testamenti*, s.v.
- 27 Dan. (Theodotion) 2:4, 7, 9 (*his*), 11, 16, 24, 25, 26, 27; 5:12, 15; 3 Bar. 1 (ed. James 84, 20).
- 28 See the Jerusalem Bible.
- 29 H. van den Bussche, *Le discours d'adieu de Jésus* (Maredsous, 1959), 126.

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*God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel**

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I The State of Research

In his discussion of christological ideas in the Fourth Gospel, C. H. Dodd finds that the status and function of the Son as God's delegated representative recalls the language of the Old Testament prophets. Certain peculiarities, such as the Son's complete and uninterrupted dependence on the Father, and the dualism between higher and lower spheres, suggest to him that this aspect of Jesus' human career is a projection of the eternal relation of the Son and the Father upon the field of time.¹ This interpretation by Dodd does not take seriously the idea of the Son being commissioned and sent, but rather dissolves the idea of agency into an eternal and "Platonic" idea of relationship.

R. Bultmann, on the other hand, rightly places the commissioning and sending of the Son in the very centre of the message of the Gospel. He also finds certain points of contact between the Johannine ideas and the prophets of the Old Testament. But John, according to Bultmann, goes beyond the thought of a prophet and interprets gnostic mythology about divine and pre-existent agents, commissioned by the Father and sent to the world. The Mandaean literature is Bultmann's main source for his hypothesis.²

Close parallels found in the *halakah* encourage the investigation of the extent to which John's Christology and soteriology are moulded on Jewish rules for agency. K. H. Rengstorff had made a promising beginning at this point, although he does not think that the idea of agency plays any central role in the Johannine idea of

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Jesus as the Son of God.³ Also Théo Preiss and C. K. Barrett draw attention to the similarities between John and the *halakab* at certain places. Significantly enough, Preiss discusses the idea of the Son as commissioned by the Father within the wider framework of the juridical aspects of Johannine thought. The importance of judicial ideas in John has been stressed by N. A. Dahl as well.⁴ In spite of the work of these scholars, the field is open to examine the degree to which halakic principles of agent are reflected in the Fourth Gospel.

II Principles of Agency

(a) The basic principle of the Jewish institution of agency is that "an agent is like the one who sent him".⁵ This relationship applied regardless of who was the sender. Thus, for example "the agent of the ruler is like the ruler himself".⁶ Consequently, to deal with the agent was the same as dealing with the sender himself.

With what is the matter to be compared? With a king of flesh and blood who has a consul (agent) in the country. The inhabitants spoke before him. Then said the king to them, you have not spoken concerning my servant but concerning me.⁷

The saying in John 12:44 is a very close parallel to the saying by the king in the quotation from *Siphre*:

John: he who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me.

Siphre: you have not spoken concerning my servant but concerning me.

Another saying which expresses the same idea, that dealing with the agent is the same as dealing with the sender himself, is found in all four Gospels.⁸ The Johannine version occurs in 13:20:

he who receives any one whom I send receives me;
he who receives me receives him who sent me.

There are also other similar sayings scattered throughout John:

5:23: he who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him;
12:45: he who sees me sees him who sent me;
14:9: he who has seen me has seen the Father;
15:23: he who hates me hates my Father also.

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The halakic principle that "an agent is like the one who sent him" usually meant that the agent was like his sender as far as the judicial function and effects were concerned. There were, however, rabbis who developed it into a judicial mysticism saying that the agent is a person identical with the sender.⁹ Thus not only his authority and his function are derived from the sender, but also his qualities. *Qidushin* 43a formulates this mysticism in the following way: the agent ranks as his master's own person.¹⁰

In the Fourth Gospel the personal identity between the Son and the Father is stated in several different ways. One formula is "I and the Father are one" (10:30) and another formula is "the Father is in me and I am in the Father" (10:38; cf. 14:10-11 and 17:21-3). In 10:36-8 it is explicitly stated that it is the agent, the Son in the capacity of being sent into the world, who is one with the sender. Similarly, in 17:20-3, the unity between the Son and the Father shall make it possible for the world to recognize the Son as agent of the Father, "so that the world may believe that thou has sent me". Moreover, in 10:37-8 and in 14:10-11 the oneness between the Son and the Father is made manifest in Jesus' words and works which also are said to be the works of the Father.

(b) Although John interprets the relationship between the Father and the Son in such legalistic terms, it is a legalism that is not seen in contrast to personal "mysticism". Thus Preiss' term "judicial mysticism" is a very apt one, and the personal element is further deepened by the fact that it was the *Son* who was the agent of the *Father*.¹¹ It should be added that the idea of the Son-Father relationship also implies that the Son is subordinate to the Father. This subordination fits very well to the principles of agency, since here the thoughts of unity and identity between agent and sender are modified by an emphasis on the superiority of the sender. The principle is stated in John 13:16 and *Gen. R.* 78:

John: a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than him who sent him.¹²
Gen. R.: the sender is greater than the sent.

Matt. 10:24, cf. Luke 6:40, offers a parallel to the first part of John 13:16: "nor (is) a servant above his master". What in Matthew and Luke is said about pupil-teacher and servant-master relationship is in John specifically applied to agency.

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(c) Another important area of agency centres around the specific mission of an agent. It was a legal presumption that an agent would carry out his mission in obedience to his sender¹³ as can be seen from *Erubin* 31b-32a, *Qiddushin* 2:4 and *Terumo* 4:4:

It is a legal presumption that an agent will carry out his mission (*š'ih š'ihōtō*)¹⁴

I appointed you for my advantage, and not for my disadvantage.¹⁵

If a householder said to his agent (*š'ihōtō*), "Go and give heave-offering", the agent should give heave-offering according to the householder's mind (*kr'itō š'it b' l' hbyr*).¹⁶

In accordance with this principle, Christ was an obedient agent who did as the Father had commanded. He said, "I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me" (John 6:38). Likewise, the Christ always did what was pleasing to the one who sent him (8:29).

(d) The Johannine idea of the mission of Christ as God's agent is seen within the context of a lawsuit. The statement in *Baba Qamma* 70a is of special interest for this question:

Go forth and take legal action so that you may acquire title to it and secure the claim for yourself.

The principles reflected in this rule are also found in the Fourth Gospel. Although there is no scene of commissioning as pictured in the halakic statement ("go forth", etc.), the commissioning itself is referred to in these words: "I came not of my own accord, but he sent me" (John 8:42); "For I have not spoken of my own authority; the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak" (John 12:49); "For he whom God has sent utters the words of God" (3:34); "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me" (7:16); "... he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him" (8:26); "... I do nothing on my own authority but speak thus as the Father taught me. And he who sent me is with me..." (8:28-9); "... the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me" (14:24).

According to the *halakah* the sender transferred his own rights and the property concerned to his agent.¹⁷ On this basis the agent might acquire the title in court and secure the claim for himself. The will of the sender, the Father, in John 6:39 makes just this

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transfer clear: "This is the will of him who sent me, that all that he has given me (*pan ho dedōken moi*)..." The transfer is even more pointedly stated in 17:6: "thine they were, and thou gavest them to me" (*soi ēsan kamoi autous edōkas*).¹⁸

The next step is the actual acquiring of the title in court and the agent's securing of the claim for himself. John 12:31-2 pictures such a court scene:

Now is the judgment of this world,
now shall the ruler of this world be cast out;
and I, when I am lifted up from the earth,
will draw (*helkyō*) all men unto myself (*pros emauton*).

There is close resemblance between the two phrases "I will draw all men to myself" (John) and "secure the claim for yourself" (*halakah*). In both cases the agent himself is to take possession of the property since the ownership has been transferred to him. John uses a different verb, "draw" (*helkyō*) and not "secure" (*ōpig*) but the Johannine term comes from judicial context. The verb renders with all probability the Hebrew *māḳ* to draw, pull, seize.¹⁹ Thus the Septuagint frequently translates *māḳ* by *helkyein*.²⁰ And in the *halakah* of Judaism *māḳ* has received the technical meaning of "to take possession of" (by drawing or seizing an object).²¹ Thus the meaning of the phrase in John 12:32 and *Baba Qamma* 70a is the same.

Moreover, the legal acquiring of the title can be seen in John 12:31-2, although pictured in a negative way. The world and the ruler of this world are judged and cast out from the heavenly court.²² The ruler of this world is judged not to have any just title to or claim upon God's people.²³ Thus it is implied that God's agent has the title and therefore can secure the claim for himself.

Although the ownership, for sake of the lawsuit, is transferred from the sender to his agent, the agent is, of course, still an agent of the sender. Thus, as a matter of fact, the sender takes possession of the property when the agent does. The meaning of John 6:44 is to be understood along this line: "No one can come to me (i.e. the agent) unless the Father who sent me (*ho pempsas me*, i.e. the sender) draws (*helkyō*) him." In other words, the coming to the agent, Christ, is the same as being in possession of the Father, and only those who are included in the Father's claim come to his agent. Against this background it is logical that the rabbis discussed

if an agent in such cases is to be characterized as partner to his sender.²⁴

(e) As Jesus has completed his mission (John 4:34; 5:36; 17:4; 19:30) he is to report to his sender. John 13ff. is dominated by this theme of Jesus' return to his Father: "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand, and that he had come from God and was going to God . . . , etc." (13:3). And just as the judgement scene in John 12:31-2 was pictured in a proleptic way before its completion on the cross (19:30), so also is the Son's report given ahead of time in the form of the prayer found in John 17: "I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do" (17:4).

It is in accordance with the *halakah* that an agent who is sent on a mission is to return and report to the sender. The return is mentioned in *P Hagigah* 76d: "Behold we send to you a great man as our shaliach, and he is equivalent to us until such time as he returns to us." Although a contrast between human and divine agency is drawn in *Mek. Ex.* 12:1, the passage illustrates the point of return and report by an agent to his sender: "Thy messengers, O God, are not like the messengers of human beings; for the messengers of human beings must needs return to those who send them before they can report. With thy messengers, however, it is not so, . . . whithersoever they go they are in thy presence and can report: we have executed thy commission." John does not draw this contrast between human and divine agents but applies rather the human principle of return and report also to God's agent, Jesus Christ.

(f) One question remains, namely, the actual effectuation of Jesus' mission after his return to his Father and beyond the limitation of his work in Israel. John found the solution of this problem in the halakhic rule that "an agent can appoint an agent" (*Qidushin* 41a).²⁵ Consequently at the completion of his own mission, Jesus said: "As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (John 17:16).

On the last evening before his departure, Jesus therefore first made clear to the disciples the principles of agency, John 13:16, 20 and then in his prayer reported to the Father about the sending (chapter 17), and then after his resurrection the actual commissioning of the disciples took place: "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21). Accord-

ingly, the unity between the Father and his agent, the Son, is extended to these agents of the agent: "... as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21).

Thus there are striking similarities between the halakhic principles of agency and ideas in the Fourth Gospel, as (a) the unity between the agent and his sender (b) although the agent is subordinate, (c) the obedience of the agent to the will of the sender, (d) the task of the agent in the lawsuit, (e) his return and reporting back to the sender, and (f) his appointing of other agents as an extension of his own mission in time and space.

III Heavenly Agent

On the basis of the analysis of agency in John one might be tempted to draw the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel represents the so-called normative and rabbinic Judaism,²⁶ and not mystical Judaism which E. R. Goodenough so forcefully championed.²⁷ Such a conclusion would be premature. The study so far has not explained the fact that Jesus according to John is not just a human and earthly agent but a divine and heavenly agent who has come down among men. Bulmann's hypothesis of gnostic mythology would offer an explanation of this point, since the gnostic agents were divine figures who were sent down to earth.²⁸

The close similarities between agency in John and halakhic principles point in another direction. The question can be formulated in this way: Where do we find *halakah* applied to the heavenly world and man's relation to it? It is the merit of G. D. Scholem to have brought to the foreground the Merkabah mysticism and to have made manifest its halakhic character. Here we find a combination of *halakah*, heavenly figures and the heavenly world as is the case with the idea of agency in the Fourth Gospel.²⁹ H. Odeberg, G. Quispel, N. A. Dahl and P. Borgen have suggested that the Fourth Gospel reflects early stages of Merkabah mysticism.³⁰

Since Philo also is influenced by early Merkabah mysticism, his writings can throw light upon ideas in John.³¹ In connection with the concept of agency, the Johannine idea of the vision of God can serve as a good point of departure for a comparison with Philo. According to John 12:45 God's agent mediates the vision of God: "he who sees me sees him who sent me." Moreover, in John

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the agent from God is a heavenly figure and the only one who has seen God:

Nor that anyone has seen the Father except him who is from God: he has seen the Father (John 6:46).

John 6:46 as well as 1:18 ("No one has ever seen God; the only God (Son), who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known") are an interpretation of the theophany at Sinai. According to Exod. 33:20 there was a significant modification made to this theophany. Moses was not allowed to see the face of God; for no man can see God and live. John adds that one heavenly figure has had this full vision of God, namely the divine Son, the one who is from God.³²

The closest parallel to this heavenly figure is the idea of the heavenly Israel, "he who sees God". The idea is found in Philo, *Conf.* 146 and *Leg. all.* I 43:

But if there be any as yet unfit to be called a Son of God, let him press to take his place under God's First-born, the Word, who holds the eldership among the angels, their ruler as it were.

And many names are his, for he is called, "the Beginning," and the Name of God, and His Word, and the Man after His image, and "he that sees", that is Israel.

... the sublime and heavenly wisdom is of many names; for he calls it "beginning" and "image" and "vision of God".

Two observations support the theory that there is a connection between the Christ of the Fourth Gospel and the angel Israel. First, although there is no explicit etymological interpretation of the word Israel ("he who sees God") in John, the idea of Israel is tied together with the idea of vision in the interpretation of Jacob's vision, John 1:47-51. Nathanael, the true Israelite is to see what his ancestor, Jacob/Israel saw. And the reference to the Son of Man (John 1:51) probably presupposes the idea of the heavenly model of Jacob/Israel.³³

Secondly, important parallels can be seen between John and Philo as to the many other names of the heavenly figure. Both John and Philo identify him who sees as the Logos (John 1:1, 14 and *Conf.* 146, cf. the heavenly wisdom in *Leg. all.* I 43). He is furthermore called the Son, in John the only Son *monogenēs*, John

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1:14; 3:16, 18) and in Philo the first-born Son (*protogonos*, *Conf.* 146). It should be added that both John and Philo at times characterize the Logos and the son as God.³⁴

Two other parallel terms for the heavenly figure are Philo's "The Man after God's image" (see *Conf.* 146 and *Leg. all.* I 43) and John's "the Son of Man". The kinship between these two terms can be seen from the fact that both John and Philo associate this heavenly man with vision, with ascent into heaven, and with the second birth in contrast to the first birth.

At this point the ideas found in *Quaest. Ex.* II 46 are of particular interest. Philo here says that when Moses, at the theophany at Sinai, was called above in the seventh day (Exod. 24:16), he was changed from earthly man into the heavenly man, and the change was a second birth in contrast to the first. John's ideas in 3:3-13 seem to be a polemic against the very idea expressed by Philo. John says that the vision of God's kingdom³⁵ and the second birth from above are not brought about by ascent into heaven to the Son of Man. It is rather the heavenly man's descent which brings about the second birth.³⁶

The conclusion is that John and Philo have in common the idea of a heavenly figure as the one who sees God, associate this figure with Israel, and also have in common several of the other terms and concepts which are crystallized around the same heavenly figure.

Although Philo in *Conf.* 146 says that Israel, "he that sees", mediates the vision of God, he does not apply the halakhic principles of agency to the concept. At this point John differs and says that the heavenly figure, the only one who has seen God, is sent as God's agent to mediate the vision. It is of interest to note that John in 8:16-18 applies also another judicial principle to Christ and his mission. Here the Old Testament and halakhic rule of two witnesses has been applied to the idea of Jesus as the Son of the (heavenly) Father: the Father and the Son both witness.³⁷

IV Conclusion and Perspective

Thus, the ideas of the heavenly figure who sees God (Israel) and ascent/descent are found both in Philo and John. Similarities have also been found between John and rabbinic *halakah* about agency. The Fourth Gospel, therefore, shows that no sharp distinction can be drawn between rabbinic and hellenistic Judaism.³⁸

It has been suggested above that the Jewish background reflected in John should be characterized as early stages of Merkabah mysticism, in which we find such a combination of *halakah*, heavenly figures and the heavenly world. A strong support for this conclusion is found in a text from Nag Hammadi, as reported by Dorresse:³⁹

It [the Ogdoad] comprises a glorious palace, a throne erected upon a chariot surrounded by cherubim with faces like those of a lion, a bull, a man and an eagle. The chariot, we are told, has been taken for a model by the seventy-two gods who govern the seventy-two languages of the peoples. There are also seraphim in the forms of dragons, who perpetually glorify their lord. Near to Sabaoth stands a first-born who is named Israel, "the man who sees God".

This text shows close parallels to the ideas discussed from Philo and John, such as the heavenly Son, the first-born who is the same as the heavenly Israel, the man who sees God.⁴⁰ It is significant that this heavenly figure has its place in the heavenly palace near the throne erected upon a chariot. Thus the influence of Merkabah traditions is unmistakable, a fact which shows that the same is the case with regard to the ideas discussed in John and Philo.⁴¹

Furthermore, the text from Nag Hammadi gives clear evidence for the fact that Jewish Merkabah traditions have influenced the gnostic movement. It is therefore quite probable that the ideas of heavenly agents in gnostic/Mandean literature similarly have been influenced by Jewish principles of agency and Jewish ideas of heavenly figures. In that case the gnostic agents do not explain the background of God's agent in the Fourth Gospel, as Bultmann thinks.⁴² The Fourth Gospel rather gives a clue to the Jewish background of the gnostic/Mandean mythology.

Not very long before the death of the eminent scholar Dr E. R. Goodenough, I had the privilege of conversing with him about Philo of Alexandria. In the course of the conversation he said that it was the task of the younger generation of scholars to explore what light the Merkabah mysticism could throw upon Philo's work and upon Philo's relationship to rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament. The present study is meant to be a contribution towards the fulfilment of this charge given by Dr Goodenough.⁴³

NOTES

- 1 C. H. Dodd (1953) 254-62.
- 2 R. Bultmann (1971) 251-2; (1925) 104-9.
- 3 K. H. Rengstorf *TDNT* 403-5; 421-2; 435-6.
- 4 Preiss (1954) 9-31; C. K. Barrett (1955) 216, 474; N. A. Dahl (1962) in this volume, pp. 147-67; P. Borgen (1965) 158-64.
- 5 *Mek. Ex.* 12:3; 12:6; *Berakoth* 5:5; *Baba Metzia* 96a; *Haggigah* 10b; *Qiddushin* 42b, 43a; *Menahoth* 93b; *Nazir* 12b, etc.
- 6 *Baba Qamma* 113b.
- 7 *Siphre* on Numbe 12:9, cited in K. H. Rengstorf *TDNT* 1, 416.
- 8 See Matt. 10:40; cf. Matt. 18:5; Mark 9:37 and Luke 9:48. The parallels are discussed in C. H. Dodd, "Some Johannine 'Herrnworte' with parallels in the Synoptic Gospels" *NTS* 2 (1955/56) 81-5.
- 9 The phrase of judicial mysticism as clue to central ideas in John is suggested by Preiss (1954) 28.
- 10 "He ranks as his own person." Translation in *The Babylonian Talmud*, Nashim VIII, ed. I. Epstein (London, 1935) 216. Hebrew text in *Der Babylonian Talmud mit Einchluss der vollständigen Mischnah*, by L. Goldschmidt, V (Leipzig 1906) 845.
- 11 See Preiss (1954) 24-5: "The formulae suggestive of mystical immanence so typical of Johannine language are regularly intermixed with juridical formulae . . . Jesus reveals himself to be one with the Father as a result of the strict fidelity with which he waits upon him and utters his words and performs his task as ambassador and witness. (The bond between the Father and the Son) coincides with the bond formed by the obedience of a witness . . . Jesus is in the Father and the Father in him because he does the work of the Father (10:30, 37, 38). Inasmuch as he is the Son of Man sent as a witness from the height of heaven, . . . Jesus is according to rabbinical law 'as he who sends him'."
- 12 See also John 15:20.
- 13 Cf. K. H. Rengstorf, *TDNT* 1, 41.
- 14 *Erubin* 31b-32a; cf. *Keruboth* 99b; *Nazir* 12a.
- 15 *Qiddushin* 42b; cf. *Baba Bathra* 169b; *Keruboth* 85a; *Berakoth* 61b.
- 16 *Terumoth* 4:4. Cf. the medieval collection, *Shulhan Aray, Hoshen Mishpat*, 188:5: "Stets wenn der Vertreter (*šālāh*) von dem Willen des Vertretenen (*mdt' bmtl*) abweicht, ist das Vertretungsverhältnis gänzlich aufgelöst." See M. Cohn, "Die Stellvertretung im jüdischen Recht," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, 36 (1920) 206.
- 17 See M. Cohn, *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, 36 (1920) 165-7; L. Auerbach, *Das jüdische Obligationenrecht*, I (Berlin, 1870) 567-9.
- 18 Variants of the phrase occur in John 17:2, 6, 7; cf. 13:3.

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- 19 So also A. Schlatter (1930) 176, and R. Bulmann (1971) 231 n. 2. These scholars have not, however, focused the attention upon *mšk* as a judicial term.
- 20 Deut. 21:3; Neh. 9:30; Ps. 9:30 (10:9); Eccl. 2:3; Cant. 1:4, etc.
- 21 *Baba Metzia* 4:2; *Baba Metzia* 47a; 48a; 49a. Cf. Ph. Blackman (ed. and trans.), *Mishnaoth*, IV (London, 1951) 579.
- 22 See N. A. Dahl (1962) below, p. 161; C. K. Barrett (1955) 355-6 ("The devil will be put out of office, out of authority. He will no longer be *archōn*; men will be freed from his power").
- 23 Cf. that the children of Abraham have as Father God and not the devil, John 8:39-47.
- 24 *Baba Qamma* 70a, from which the above quotation was taken, discussed this very question: "He was surely appointed but a shaliach. Some however, say that he is made a partner . . ."
- 25 There was a discussion among the rabbis on this question, and some offered specific qualifications as to circumstances under which an agent could appoint an agent. See *Gittin* 3:5-6; *Gittin* 29b.
- 26 The champion of "normative" Judaism is G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, I-III (Cambridge, Mass. 1927-30).
- 27 See especially E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, I (New York, 1953) 3-58.
- 28 See reference in n. 27.
- 29 G. D. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 3rd rev. edn (New York, 1961); *Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (New York, 1960) 9-19.
- 30 H. Odeberg (1929); G. Quispel, "L'Évangile de Jean et la Gnose", in *L'Évangile de Jean, Recherches Bibliques III* (Lyon 1958) 197-208; N. A. Dahl (1962) below; and P. Borgen (1965) have especially emphasized Jewish mysticism as background for John.
- 31 Concerning elements of Merkabah traditions in Philo, see K. Kohler, "Merkabah", *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. I. Singer, VIII (New York, 1947) 500.
- 32 Further discussion of ideas from the theophany at Sinai in the contexts of John 1:18 and 6:46 in M. E. Boismard, *St. John's Prologue* (Westminster, Md., 1957) 136-40; S. Schulz, *Komposition und Herkunft der Johannischen Reden* (Stuttgart 1960) 40f.; N. A. Dahl (1962) below, p. 157; P. Borgen (1962) 150f.
- 33 See especially N. A. Dahl (1962) below, pp. 158-9 and notes with numerous references. It is even possible that the etymology of Israel meaning "he who sees God", is implied in John 1:47-51. It would be more of pure speculation to try to find allusions to the etymology also in John 1:18, that "No one has seen God" should render Hebrew *l' 'š r' b' l*. Concerning other places in which the idea of Israel and the vision of God are associated in John, see P. Borgen (1965) 175-7.

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- 34 John 1:1, 18; *Somma* 1228-30 and *Quae. Gen.* II 62.
- 35 For the idea of seeing God's kingdom, see *Wisd.* 10:10.
- 36 This analysis of John 3:3-13 gives support to the interpretation suggested by H. Odeberg (1929) ad loc., that v. 13 is a polemic against the idea of visionary ascent among Merkabah mystics. So also N. A. Dahl (1962) below, pp. 163-4; see also E. M. Sidebottom (1961) 120-1.
- 37 See C. H. Dodd (1953) 77 and Str-B II, ad loc.
- 38 Also E. R. Goodenough, "John a Primitive Gospel", *JBL* LXIV (1945) 145-82 rightly stresses the Jewish background of John. He draws, however, too sharp a distinction between legalistic rabbinism and hellenistic (mystical) Judaism.
- 39 J. Doresse, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics* (New York, 1960) 167. (see also 176f.)
- 40 See N. A. Dahl (1962) below, p. 166 nn. 21, 22; H. Jonas, "The Secret Books of Egyptian Gnostics", *The Journal of Religion* XLII (1962) 264.
- 41 See references to the works by J. Doresse (n. 39) and N. A. Dahl in this volume pp. 147-67.
- 42 See references in note 41.
- 43 See also E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, I, 8 and n. 6.