QUEST OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS

It has become customary to think of the quest of the historical Jesus in three phases: the original quest chronicled by Albert Schweitzer beginning in the eighteenth century and ending with Schweitzer himself in 1906; the post-Bultmannian "New Quest" of the 1950s; and the contemporary "Third Quest." However, this scenario owes as much to the enterprising spirit of British publishers as to anything else. Schweitzer's original German title, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: Eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (1906)—"From Reimarus to Wrede: A History of Life-of-Jesus Research"—suggested a sober history of biographical research within a strict timeline. The English version of the title, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, was coined by translator William Montgomery and his publisher, Adam and Charles Black. It heightened the impression that critical research showed that the Jesus of history was different (as Schweitzer himself insisted) from the Christ of the creeds, orthodox theology, liberal scholarship and Christian piety. It also reinforced the misconception that Schweitzer had explored the entire quest of the historical Jesus and his place in history. As it was, Schweitzer began with Hermann Samuel Reimarus in 1778 and ended with himself in 1906 (extended to 1912, but not radically changed in the second edition).

History repeated itself in the case of the New Quest. Its historian and leading advocate, James M. Robinson, recalled that the term had its origin in discussions with the editor of the SCM Press in London regarding a paper that Robinson had presented to the Oxford Congress on the Four Gospels in 1957. Robinson's original title was "The Quest of the Historical Jesus Today." It was intended not to supersede Bultmann but rather to develop his ideas. The eventual title given to Robinson's book, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1959), was "an afterthought."

Given this history, it was perhaps inevitable that any change of direction should be labeled "The Third Quest." The term gained prominence through N. T. Wright's revision of Stephen Neill's *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861–1986* (1988). Wright drew attention to renewed interest in Jesus as a figure in Jewish history, linked with the discovery of new materials, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. The fact that the term "Third Quest" appeared in a history of NT interpretation published by a major university press enhanced its status as a defining category.

It is debatable whether the term "Third Quest" should be used to describe all historical Jesus scholarship after the sudden demise of the New Quest, or whether it should be restricted to work that emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus and methodologies associated with it. If the former is the case, then the Third Quest appears to be a continuation, albeit a new phase, of the "Old Quest." If the Third Quest entails new and distinctive methodologies, it implies a new enterprise running alongside surviving remnants of previous quests.

"Third" implies two predecessors, suggesting that Schweitzer was right in insisting that the quest began with Reimarus, and that there were no prior attempts to discover the historical identity of Jesus. It also downplays half a century of scholarship exemplified in Britain by the generation of C. H. Dodd and T. W. Manson, in North America by B. W. Bacon and H. J. Cadbury, and in Europe by Joachim Jeremias and Oscar Cullmann.

It is not surprising that scholars found it necessary to invent the facetious term "The No Quest" to fill gaps in the three-quests scenario. In what follows it may be necessary sometimes to use terminology generated by the three-quests scenario, but the discussion will make clear its

inadequacy.

This article focuses on the history of postbiblical developments.

1. The Quest of the Theological Jesus

Until the sixteenth century, the Christian church was more concerned with what could be called "the quest of the theological Jesus"—Jesus as construed within the context the belief systems of Christian tradition. Appreciation of this context is a prerequisite for understanding the quest of the historical Jesus.

1.1. Jesus Within Judaism. Initially, the quest of the historical Jesus began as an internal Jewish controversy. It is arguable that it was formally inaugurated by a delegation of scribes sent from Jerusalem to investigate Jesus' reputation as an exorcist and healer (Mk 3:22–27; cf. Mt 12:22–30; Lk 11:14–22). To modern ears—Christian and Jewish—their findings may sound bizarre. The healings were real, but they were empowered by Beelzebul: Jesus was Satan-possessed. In the world of Second Temple Judaism the Torah was clear: a prophet who led people astray in the service of an alien deity—in this case Beelzebul—by means of signs and wonders was not to be heeded. His appearance should be viewed as a test of Israel's fidelity to God. Such a prophet should be put to death so that evil might be purged from Israel (Deut 13:1–5; cf. Ex 20:1–7; Deut 5:6–10). From the first, history and theology were inextricable.

The charge of leading people astray in the service of Beelzebul was one of several found in the canonical Gospels. Another delegation challenged Jesus' violation of cultic purity (Mk 7:1–23; cf. Mt 15:1–20; Lk 7:37–41). Charges included breaking the Sabbath, being a stubborn and rebellious son (Deut 21:18–21; cf. Mt 11:19; Lk 7:34) and blasphemy. The charges involved capital offenses. Eventually, Jesus was convicted of blasphemy connected with prophetic claims (Mt 26:63–68; Mk 14:61–65), a charge that dated from the beginning of his activity (Mt 9:3; Mk 2:6; Lk 5:21). In the Synoptic narratives confessions of Jesus as the Christ were made only after the negative charges (Mt 16:13–20; Mk 8:27–30; Lk 9:18–21).

1.2. Jesus Within Christianity. Second-century Christian literature (e.g., the writings of Justin Martyr [d. 165]) indicates that negative rumors persisted, and controversies continued in the Greco-Roman world in the time of Origen and Eusebius. However, with "the parting of the ways"—the separation of Christianity from Judaism—the center of gravity of theological concern began to shift. The internal debate within Christianity moved from the canonical Gospels' apologetic defense of the righteous historical identity of Jesus to his theological identity as the *Son of God and the Savior of humankind.

---

d. died par.

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

This shift of interest was indicated by several factors. In the Western church Yeshua of Nazareth came to be known by the Latin name "Jesus," which was not used in his lifetime, except possibly by *Pontius Pilate and the soldiers involved in the crucifixion. The Latin form served to contextualize him for the Latin-speaking part of the Roman Empire. However, it did so at the expense of turning him into a virtual Gentile, obscuring the fact that the Greek and Hebrew forms of his name—*Iēsous* and *Yēšûaʿ* (or *Yēšû*, for short)—were also the OT name of "Joshua," and with it the possibility that Yeshua of Nazareth was engaged in a second, but peaceful, conquest of the land of Israel.

Another factor in this shift was the almost-imperceptible way in which the term "Son of God" acquired the sense of "God the Son," or simply "the Son." In biblical contexts "Son of God" could indicate the nation of Israel (Hos 11:1; cf. Mt 2:15), a newly anointed king (Ps 2:7), peacemakers (Mt 5:9) or Jesus as the Spirit-anointed messianic Son (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22; cf. Acts 10:36–38).

Patristic Christology was dominated by *theological interpretation, which looked for truth behind the phenomena of history and Scripture. Irenaeus (ca. 130–ca. 200) did not question the veracity of biblical narratives. His celebrated recapitulation theory set out in *Against Heresies* sought patterns in the divine work of redemption and restoration beneath the surface of biblical history (*Haer.* 3.16.6). Eve through disobedience brought death to herself and the human race; Mary by her obedience brought salvation (*Haer.* 3.22.4). Through a tree humankind was made debtor to God; through a tree came cancellation of the debt (*Haer.* 5.17.3).

Irenaeus championed a trend in which atonement theory and the circumstances surrounding Jesus' death ran, as it were, on separate tracks. It gave an explanation "from above," which was related to the course of events "below" at a single point—the death of Jesus. Many regard *On the Incarnation* by Athanasius (ca. 296–373) as the classic patristic statement of Christology in terms of soteriology. The argument was summed up in this statement: "He became man that we might become divine, and he revealed himself through a body that we might receive an idea of the invisible Father; and he endured insults from men that we might inherit incorruption" (*Inc.* 54).

Controversy over Jesus' sonship came to a head with Arianism. The Alexandrian presbyter Arius accused his bishop, Alexander, of downplaying Jesus' humanity. Both sides agreed that divinity entailed immutability and impassiblity. The followers of Arius argued that since Jesus suffered and died, he was subject to change and suffering, and therefore he could not be fully God like the Father. The supporters of Alexander argued that since only God could save, Jesus must be fully divine in order to be the savior of humankind. The Council of Nicea (325) condemned Arius and defined Jesus' sonship as "consubstantial with the Father" (*homoousion tō patri*). The dispute raged on until the Council of Constantinople (381), which endorsed Nicea, while modifying its formula to produce what is called the Nicene Creed.

The debate entered a new phase as the rival schools of Alexandria and Antioch disputed whether the incarnation involved assumption of flesh in a more general sense, or whether the

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
ca. circa
ca. circa
Haer. Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)
Haer. Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)
Haer. Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)
ca. circa
Inc. De incarnatione (On the Incarnation)

preexistent Word was united with a particular man. The Council of Chalcedon (451) put together a patchwork formula, drawing on formulations from both schools. It affirmed that the Son was consubstantial with the Father regarding his divinity and consubstantial with human beings regarding his humanity—like them except for sin.

The opening chapter of Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus* was devoted to problems bequeathed by Chalcedon. As Schweitzer saw it, Chalcedon's doctrine of the two natures of Christ dissolved the unity of the personality of Jesus and cut off the last possibility of a return to the historical Jesus. "The contradiction was elevated into a law." The humanity of Jesus was preserved as an appearance. But the deception of the formula kept Jesus "prisoner and prevented the leading spirits of the Reformation from grasping the idea of a return to the historical Jesus" (Schweitzer 2001, 5). The dogma had to be shattered before people could even grasp the thought of his existence.

The attempt to derive a rationale for the incarnation apart from consideration of Jesus' life was taken to new heights by Anselm (ca. 1033–1109) in his *Cur Deus Homo*. The title could be translated as *Why Did God Become Man?* or *Why the God Man?* Anselm undertook to prove by logical steps that even if nothing were known about Christ, the human race could not be saved without him (*Cur Deus Homo* 1.3–4). However, the ensuing argument depended on a combination of theological and culturally conditioned beliefs, including sin as a debt, the alternative of making satisfaction or punishment, human inability to make satisfaction because of sin, the need to make up the number of fallen angels, and Jesus' death as a work of supererogation, for which Christ chose the salvation of humankind as a reward.

1.3. Jesus in Talmudic Judaism. Following the destruction of the *temple and the ruinous wars with *Rome that left *Jerusalem devastated, Jewish identity was preserved through oral law, which became the basis of the Mishnah (oral teaching). The two main centers of Jewish life were Palestine and Babylonia, which in time produced interpretations of the Mishnah for their respective communities in the form of the Talmuds (teaching). The Jerusalem Talmud dates from around A.D. 400; the Babylonian Talmud, generally regarded as more authoritative, was produced a hundred years later (*see* Rabbinic Traditions and Writings).

The Talmuds contain veiled polemical references to Jesus, calculated to show the superiority of Judaism. They ridicule Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth and maintain that Jesus was rightfully executed as a blasphemer and idolater. On account of their garbled characterizations, scholars in the Christian tradition have tended to dismiss their historical value. However, more recent scholarship has called for reassessment (Peter Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud*, 2007) (*see* Jesus in Non-Christian Sources).

P. Schäfer contends that the characterizations indicate a high degree of familiarity with Matthew and John and represent a sophisticated anti-Christian polemic. The Jerusalem Talmud was more restrained, as it emanated from Roman Byzantine Palestine at a time when Christian influence on political power was in ascendance. In Babylonia, on the other hand, the Jewish community enjoyed relative freedom, and the compilers of the Babylonian Talmud did not feel the same constraints in depicting their hostility to Jesus. It would seem that Jewish tradition, no less than Christian tradition dating from roughly the same period, contributed to lines of division that have persisted down to modern times.

---

ca. circa

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

2. Quests Before the Quest

2.1. Issues in Reformation Christology. In the Leipzig Disputation (1518) Martin Luther (1483–1546) defended the "theology of the cross" in contrast to the "theology of glory." The latter denoted the presumptuous speculations of scholastic theologians about God's inner being. It bypassed God's revelation in the sufferings of Christ on the cross. For Luther, the Gospel that best expressed the theology of the cross was John. Luther's *Preface to the New Testament* (1522) pronounced John to be the "principal" Gospel; it truly "showed Christ," presenting much teaching but few works. Luther's preference for John represented a trend that lasted for centuries, using John as a lens for interpreting the other Gospels.

However, a younger generation of scholars developed a Lutheran scholasticism that keenly debated the relative merits of *kenōsis* and *krypsis* to explain the Son's divinity and humanity. *Kenōsis* ("emptying") suggested renunciation or nonuse of divine attributes—such as omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience—during Jesus' earthly life. It claimed the support of Philippians 2:6–11, but *kenōsis* raised questions of whether such limitation of divinity was merely temporary or even an incarnation at all. *Krypsis* ("hiding" or "hiddenness") argued for Christ's full, but hidden, possession of divine attributes. But this seemed to imply that the cosmic functions of the Word continued to operate—perhaps unknown to Jesus himself—while he was a baby in the manger, asleep during the storm on the lake, or conversing with the Pharisees.

The Calvinist alternative argued, "Since the Godhead is incomprehensible and everywhere present, it must follow that it is indeed beyond the bounds of its assumed humanity, yet it is nonetheless in the same, and remains personally united with it" (*Heidelberg Catechism*, question 48).

An issue of a different kind surfaced in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1509–1564). It turned on the rise of skepticism, which had already begun in the age of the Renaissance (see 2.2 below). Since Calvin's *Institutes* expounded Reformed theology, it raised the question of the legitimation of the Reformed belief system over against Catholicism. Calvin argued that the church could not be the final authority, because its claims rested ultimately on the Bible. The Word of God in Scripture was the basic source and criterion of Reformed faith. But this answer raised questions about how one knows that Scripture is the Word of God, and whose interpretation is correct. For Calvin, "The highest proof of Scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it.… We ought to seek our conviction in a higher place than human reasons, judgments or conjectures, that is, in the secret testimony of the Holy Spirit" (*Institutes* 1.7.4). Calvin supplemented this argument by external "proofs." Miracles and prophecy (miraculous fulfillment of predicted events) were invoked to confirm the supernatural authority of the accompanying revelation (*Institutes* 1.8.5–10). Catholic apologists replied that Calvin's view was subjective, and that continued miracles in the Catholic Church proved that God was still on its side. Calvin retorted that he was supported by Jesus' miracles, which brought glory to God (Jn 7:18; 8:50). Modern "miracles" were like those claimed in Augustine's day by the Donatists; they were pseudo-miracles, "delusions of Satan," calculated to lead people astray (*Institutes*, prefatory address) (cf. Deut 13:2–6; Mt 24:24).

It fell to the Arminian Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) to bring into the open the question whether Deuteronomy 13:2–6 might be applied to Jesus himself. In *The Truth of the Christian Religion* (1627) Grotius promptly dismissed the thought on the grounds that Jesus' works brought glory to God. Moreover, Jesus forbade worship of false gods.

2.2. The Rise of Skepticism. From Calvin's day onward miracles and prophecy became increasingly important for their extrinsic role in legitimating belief systems, first in Protestant

and Catholic polemics, and then in disputes between Christianity and secular skepticism. Among the factors in the rise of skepticism was the rediscovery in the Renaissance of ancient skepticism (Richard Popkin, *The History of Scepticism: From Savonarola to Bayle*, 2003). Interest in the skepticism of Pyrrho (d. ca. 270 B.C.) was stimulated by publication of *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* by Sextus Empiricus (ca. A.D. 200), *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius, and the writings of Cicero.

Early Pyrrhonism in the form of systematic doubt was employed by Catholic apologists as a new "engine of war" against Calvinism. In return, Protestants deployed systematic doubt against Catholicism. Skepticism about the reliability of the senses and the ability of reason to discover ultimate truth provided the horizon within which truth claims in philosophy, science and religion would be judged. Rationalism and empiricism (a term connected with the methods and name of Sextus Empiricus) were just two developments.

Hobbes and Spinoza sought to preempt appeal to miracles as warrant for invoking religious beliefs in the political sphere. In chapter 37 of *Leviathan* (1651) Thomas Hobbes (1558–1679) defined a miracle as "a work of God (besides His operation by way of nature, ordained in the Creation) done for the making manifest to His elect the mission of an extraordinary minister for their salvation." However, he warned against false prophets and ignorance of natural causes. The state, as "God's lieutenant," had the right to demand public conformity, but privately everyone was free to believe or not believe acts that "had been given out for miracles."

Benedictus de Spinoza (1632–1677) also discussed miracles in an apparent digression. In chapter 6 of his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670) he argued that since the laws of nature were laws of God, nothing could occur outside them. Hence, we could not gain knowledge of God from "violations" of divine law. John Locke (1632–1704) argued that miracles furnished empirical evidence for accepting beliefs that were above reason (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* [1690]; *The Reasonableness of Christianity* [1695]; and his posthumously published *Discourse of Miracles* [1706]). They functioned like the credentials of an ambassador.

The purpose of David Hume's (1711–1776) section "Of Miracles" in his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748) was not to show the impossibility of miracles, but rather to challenge their role in establishing belief systems. Hume's definition was also a refutation: "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can be imagined" (*Enquiry*, 10.90). He concluded, "No human testimony can have such force as to prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for any such system of religion" (*Enquiry*, 10.98).

The importance of Hume's argument lay not in its novelty, but rather in the way that Hume deployed arguments that had been around for more than a century. Use of analogy—comparing reports of the past with contemporary understanding of reality—played an increasingly important part in the quest of the historical Jesus.

2.3. Alternatives to Orthodoxy. In the period from the Reformation to the Age of Enlightenment two streams of construing the identity of Jesus emerged. The first may be described as broadly Unitarian. What they had in common was rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity and the Nicene view of the personal divinity of Jesus, while desiring to retain Christian identity. The second stream was Deism—a term given to describe various attempts to supplant

---

d. died par.
ca. circa
ca. circa

theistic Christianity.

2.3.1. Forms of Unitarianism. During the 1530s Michael Servetus (ca. 1511–1553) composed treatises on the errors of the concept of the Trinity, arguing that the term itself was unbiblical. Orthodoxy compounded misunderstanding of biblical language with patristic mistakes about "natures" and "persons." Servetus's tragic execution was precipitated by his *Christianismi restitutio* (1553), which was composed as a reply to Calvin's *Institutio christianae religionis*.

Socinianism derived from the Latinized names of two Italian scholars who were uncle and nephew, Lelio Francesco Mario Sozini (1525–1562) and Fausto Paolo Sozzini (1539–1604). The latter's *De Jesu Christo servatore* (1594) attacked the penal view of atonement. God was only one person. Although Jesus should be honored as the agent of salvation, it did not follow that he possessed a divine nature.

In Britain the terms "Socinianism" and "Arianism" often were used interchangeably. However, Socinianism affirmed the exaltation of Jesus to divine status, whereas thoroughgoing Arianism was anti-Trinitarian. The leading English Arians—Isaac Newton (1642–1727), William Whiston (1667–1752), Samuel Clarke (1675–1729)—were intimately connected by Cambridge, science, biblical studies, and with one another. Newton was Lucasian Professor of Mathematics and subsequently Master of the Mint, but privately he was an almost obsessive student of Scripture. Newton himself seems to have been more anti-Athanasian than pro-Arian. He saw himself as a faithful follower of Scripture and ante-Nicene Christology.

William Whiston was Newton's assistant and handpicked successor. Whiston shared many of Newton's convictions but was less circumspect. His plea to the archbishops of Canterbury and of York for a more accommodating approach to Christology backfired, and he was removed from his professorship (1710). Today he is remembered less for his Arianism than for his translation of the works of Josephus (1737).

Samuel Clarke became a Newtonian at Cambridge. He translated Newton's *Opticks* into Latin in order to make Newton's ideas more accessible on the continent. Clarke's reputation for Arianism was based on his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712). In the uproar, the bishops ruled that Clarke should not be required to retract, on the condition that he agreed to publish nothing further on the subject. In his historical-critical handling of the church fathers, Clarke represented the way of the future. In his handling of the NT, Clarke (like Newton and Whiston) remained in the precritical age, taking texts at their apparent face value and drawing logical deductions. It is questionable whether any of the three merited the title "Arian."

The leading advocate of Unitarianism in Britain was the discoverer of oxygen and Presbyterian minister turned Unitarian, Joseph Priestley (1733–1804). Priestley sharply criticized the preexistence and divinity of Christ and also the satisfaction theory of atonement. His extensive writings included harmonies of the Gospels in Greek (1777) and English (1780), the two-volume *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (1782) and *An History of Early Opinions Concerning Jesus Christ* (1786). Following rioting against him in England, Priestley settled in America (1794), where he was instrumental in turning Thomas Jefferson to Unitarianism.

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was the framer of the Declaration of Independence and third president of the United States (1801–1809). Priestley's *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* convinced him that one could be a Christian without believing in the Trinity or divinity of Christ. Other writings inspired Jefferson to examine the life of Jesus. They remained unpublished in his lifetime (*Jefferson's Extracts from the Gospels: "The Philosophy of Jesus" and "The Life and Morals of Jesus,"* ed. Dickinson W. Adams et al., 1983).

---

ca. circa

Jefferson's "The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth" was literally a cut-and-paste compilation, produced by snipping extracts from editions of the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French and English and pasting them in a book in parallel columns. Jefferson freely cut verses in half in order to eliminate the supernatural. References to the Holy Spirit were cut out, as were narratives of *miracles and exorcisms. The *Sermon on the Mount was extensively preserved, as were *parables emphasizing social responsibility. The *Last Supper was edited so as to include the Johannine account of footwashing, while omitting the meal itself. Jesus was condemned for blasphemously claiming to be the Son of God. The narrative concluded with the burial of Jesus.

2.3.2. Deism. Etymologically, "deism" (Lat. *deus* = "god") indicates belief in a transcendent God, as does "theism" (Gk. *theos* = "god"). However, the terms differed in usage. Since the sixteenth century, "deist" was used to describe someone who professed belief in God the Creator but not in the deity of Christ. It became associated with "freethinking," a euphemism for atheism.

Deism is commonly dated from the Latin work, published in Paris, *De veritate* (1624) by Edward Herbert (ca. 1582–1648). *De veritate* (*On Truth*) advocated rational religion based on innate common notions in response to skepticism and institutional religion. The 1645 edition openly attacked revealed religion.

Charles Blount (1654–1693) was a private scholar whose ideas were indebted to Herbert, Hobbes and Spinoza. Blount translated *The First Two Books of Philostratus Concerning the Life of Apollonius Tyaneus* (1680). Public outcry prevented further publication, but from then on Apollonius was invoked as a rival to Jesus, a "divine man," thought to be a familiar figure in the ancient world. An anonymous tract attributed to Blount, *Miracles No Violations of the Laws of Nature* (1683), paraphrased Spinoza with quotations from Hobbes.

A landmark in the history of deism was *Christianity Not Mysterious*, by John Toland (1670–1722). Toland was an Irish self-described freethinker. He posed as a defender of Locke but argued against him. Belief above reason was untenable because assent could not be given to what was not understood. Toland warned of mysteries, pagan ideas and priestcraft, which had at first been tolerated in Christianity but later allowed to distort it. They should be stripped away to reveal Jesus as a preacher of purest morals. Toland's *Nazarenus: Or, Jewish, Gentile, and Mahometan Christianity* (1718) argued that the earliest Jewish Christians were Nazarenes or Ebionites. They were not the heretics depicted by Christian orthodoxy, but rather honest believers who followed the teaching of Jesus, unencumbered by later orthodoxy. The "Mohametan Gospel" could be traced to Ebionite Christianity. Toland's Jesus was the Jesus of enlightened humanism. Toland is credited with having coined the term "pantheist."

Anthony Collins (1676–1729), who, like his friend Locke, had found political refuge in Holland, and to whom Toland dedicated several writings, argued that prophecies already fulfilled in their own time had been misapplied to Jesus. Isaiah 7:14 (cf. Mt 1:22–23) was not a prediction of the miraculous conception of Jesus, but rather a sign for the prophet's generation of the birth of a child. Hosea 11:1 (cf. Mt 2:15) was not a prediction concerning the holy family's return from Egypt, but rather a saying about Israel's exodus. Collins concluded that such examples were instances of rabbinic allegorical interpretation, demonstrating that Christianity was based on irrational fantasy. Collins did not consider the alternative that they might represent intertextual identification of later events in terms of descriptions of earlier events.

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
ca. circa

Prophecy was a pillar of contemporary apologetics. The other pillar, miracles, was attacked by Thomas Woolston (1670–1731), an eccentric Cambridge scholar who had been deprived of his fellowship. Woolston published a series of six *Discourses on the Miracles of Our Saviour in View of the Present Controversy Between Infidels and Apostates* (1717–1729), examining fifteen miracle stories and pronouncing them absurd, incredible and immoral. With an eye on the claim that the Gospel miracle stories were moral and elevating, Woolston observed that if Apollonius of Tyana had turned water into wine (cf. Jn 2:1–10), we would have reproached his memory. The star of Bethlehem was a "Will-a-Whisp." The resurrection of Jesus was "the most self-evident Imposture that was ever put upon the World."

The last major work by a deist writer was *Christianity as Old as the Creation: Or the Gospel, a Republication of the Religion of Nature* (1730), by Oxford scholar Matthew Tindal (1655–1733). It has been variously described as "the Bible of deism" and "devoid of originality." It was a rambling tirade, littered with comments on OT morality, by a writer who described himself as a "Christian Deist."

English deism was well known in Germany, and the ground was well prepared for Reimarus, whom Schweitzer credited with originating the quest of the historical Jesus. Learned periodicals published reports of debates. Writings by English deists and replies by opponents were published in translation. Lecture courses and biographies treated leading personalities. Reimarus himself visited England and Holland in 1720–1721. His library was well stocked with deistic writings, which were cited in the full text of his *Apology or Defense of the Rational Worshippers of God* (first published in 1972). Today Reimarus is regarded as the leading German deist of his time. In one major respect Reimarus advanced beyond English deism. The deists were preoccupied with subverting orthodoxy; Reimarus built on their work a theory of a Jewish political Jesus who died vainly trying to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

3. Schweitzer's Quest in Context

The study by Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) known in English as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1911; German original, 1906) has acquired near-canonical status as the definitive history of the quest. This is understandable in view of Schweitzer's awesome grasp of the literature, especially in the second German edition (1913), which in English was published as the "First Complete Edition" (2001). Because of limitations of space, this section will focus on Schweitzer's assessment of Reimarus as the inaugurator of the quest, and on his view of the three defining stages of the subsequent quest.

3.1. The Origin of Schweitzer's Quest. In order to appreciate Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, three background facts are relevant. First, as an undergraduate at the University of Strassburg, Schweitzer studied theology and philosophy. Upon graduation, he proceeded to a doctorate in philosophy with a dissertation on *Kant's Philosophy of Religion* (1899). His research included Kant's *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793), which treated the figure of Jesus as "the personified idea of the good principle." Although Schweitzer regarded Jesus as a historical figure, Kant's influence was such that Schweitzer's research methods and conclusions about Jesus could be said to have been conducted within the limits of reason alone.

Second, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* was actually Schweitzer's second attempt to deal with the historical Jesus. To complete his habilitation in theology (the qualification for teaching at university level), Schweitzer wrote a two-part dissertation with the overall title *The Lord's Supper in Relationship to the Life of Jesus and the History of the Early Church* (1901). Part 1 was *The Problem of the Lord's Supper According to the Scholarly Research of the Nineteenth*

Century and the Historical Accounts (ET, 1982), and part 2 was *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God: The Secret of Jesus' Messiahship and Passion* (ET, 1914). It described events that led up to the *Last Supper. Initially, Jesus believed that he was called to be the herald of the *Son of Man. In that expectation, he sent out his *disciples on a mission, expecting the messianic woes—the tribulation preceding the end-time conflict with the powers of evil—to befall them. Jesus assured the Twelve that they would not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man would come (Mt 10:23). When the disciples returned unscathed, Jesus realized that the Son of Man was not someone else. Rather, he himself was called be the one who would unleash the tribulation and give his life a ransom for many (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45). At first, Jesus revealed the mystery of the kingdom to Peter, James and John. Later, Peter told it to the Twelve, and Judas told it to the high *priest. Caiaphas secured Jesus' conviction by the *Sanhedrin from Jesus' own mouth. Jesus was convicted of blasphemy by his prophetic claim to be the messianic Son of Man, who would come on the clouds of heaven (Mt 26:53–56 par.).

Third, Schweitzer began forming his ideas as early as 1894 on the basis of Johannes Weiss's *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (1892; ET, 1971). What Schweitzer was not to know was that on the day his dissertation was published, another book on the same subject was published by William Wrede (1859–1907), *The Messianic Secret in the Gospels*. Wrede had studied under the liberal theologian A. B. Ritschl at Göttingen, where he had also come under the influence of the history-of-religions school. The German titles of both Schweitzer's book and Wrede's contained the word *Geheimnis*, but it was translated differently in English. In Schweitzer's book it became "mystery"; in Wrede's it meant "secret." Wrede's work not only eclipsed Schweitzer's, but actually undermined it by arguing that the so-called messianic secret could not be traced earlier than Mark and his community, and that it belonged to dogma, not history. The scholarly world followed Wrede rather than the relatively unknown Schweitzer.

This led Schweitzer to write the book that we know as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, which would vindicate him by forcing readers to decide between Wrede's "thoroughgoing skepticism" and Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing eschatology." It was not that Schweitzer himself believed in eschatology; he believed only that he could demonstrate historically that Jesus' belief in eschatology was the key to his teaching and actions. In retrospect, it could be said that Schweitzer's final alternative offered two different forms of "thoroughgoing skepticism" with regard to the historical Jesus.

3.2. Reimarus and the Inauguration of the Quest. Schweitzer dated the quest from the publication in 1778 of an anonymous piece, "On the Intention of Jesus and His Disciples." It was taken from a manuscript by Hamburg scholar Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694–1768), whose *Apology or Defense of the Rational Worshippers of God* had been withheld from publication on account of its dangerous ideas and the threat of censorship. Among the circle permitted to see it was the dramatist Gotthold Ephraïm Lessing (1729–1781), who was living in Hamburg at the time. Upon his appointment as librarian to the Duke of Brunswick, Lessing took up residence in Wolfenbüttel. Between 1774 and 1778 Lessing published extracts from Reimarus's manuscript

---

ET English translation
ET English translation
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
par. parallel passage(s)
ET English translation

under the title *Fragments from an Unnamed Author*, which he had ostensibly found in the duke's library. The extracts came to be known as the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* and were subsequently published in German editions of Lessing's collected works. Confirmation of the author's true identity came long after Reimarus's death.

Reimarus's *Fragments* (ET, 1970) included an attack on the historicity of the *resurrection narratives. The notoriety of this article was surpassed by that of the fragment "On the Intention of Jesus and His Disciples." Jesus was a pious Jew, dedicated to calling Israel to repentance in order to establish the kingdom of God on earth. He did not intend to introduce novel teaching or found a new religion. As time went on, Jesus made the fatal mistake of embracing political messianism. He miscalculated popular support, and his belief in divine intervention proved misplaced. He died disillusioned with the God who had forsaken him (Mk 15:34).

Christianity might well have ended then but for the ingenuity and duplicity of Jesus' disciples. When it became clear that there would be no general persecution, they emerged from hiding. They proclaimed that Jesus had been raised from the dead and would return to establish the promised kingdom. Eschatology was thus the key to understanding both Jesus and the disciples, but in both cases it was mistaken. Jesus wrongly believed that God would establish his kingdom on earth through him; the disciples were guilty of encouraging false expectations of the coming kingdom.

The *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* provoked numerous replies, the weightiest from the founder of "liberal theology," J. S. Semler (1725–1791). Semler's *Answer to the Fragments* (1791) was virtually a line-by-line refutation, written from the standpoint of moderate orthodoxy. In the meantime, Lessing protested that although he did not fully agree with the *Fragments*, they did raise important questions. His standpoint expressed the Age of Enlightenment's confidence in reason and sought to detach religion from history by claiming that nothing in history could be demonstrated beyond doubt. In *On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power* (1777) Lessing wrote, "If no historical truth can be demonstrated, then nothing can be demonstrated by means of historical truths. That is: *accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason*" (Lessing, 53). History might exemplify rational truth, but such truth was not dependent on history. To Lessing, Jesus was one of the great educators of the human race, being "the first reliable, practical teacher of the immortality of the soul" (*The Education of the Human Race* [1780]) (Lessing, 92).

For Schweitzer, Reimarus was like a bolt from the blue, without predecessors or immediate successors. In fact, the history of theology down to Johannes Weiss appeared retrograde. But every sentence of Weiss's *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (1892; ET, 1971), which Schweitzer pronounced equally important as David Friedrich Strauss's first *Life of Jesus*, was "a vindication, a rehabilitation of Reimarus as a historical thinker." However, Reimarus's relationship to the English deists puts a question mark against the place assigned to him by Schweitzer as the inaugurator of the quest of the historical Jesus.

3.3. The Three Stages of Schweitzer's Quest. Schweitzer identified three defining moments in the subsequent quest of the historical Jesus (Schweitzer 2001, 198). The first was Strauss's victory over the question of whether an account of the historical Jesus should be "either purely historical or purely supernatural." The second, which was worked out by the Tübingen school and later by Schweitzer's mentor, H. J. Holtzmann, was whether it should be "either Synoptic or

---

ET English translation

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

ET English translation

Johannine." The third defining moment was whether it should be "either eschatological" (Johannes Weiss) or "noneschatological" (German liberal theology). However, this defining moment morphed into the ultimate choice between "thoroughgoing skepticism" (William Wrede) and "thoroughgoing eschatology" (Schweitzer himself). The view that Schweitzer put forward was a restatement of the view that he had argued in *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*.

For Schweitzer, the outcome of these issues was cumulative. Any reconstruction of the historical Jesus must satisfy three criteria: it must be (1) "purely historical," with the supernatural eliminated; (2) based solely on the Synoptic tradition, with John discounted as late and unhistorical; (3) thoroughly "eschatological," in the sense that Jesus' life and teaching were determined by Jesus' conviction that his martyrdom would inaugurate the kingdom of God on earth.

3.3.1. Stage 1: Strauss and the "Purely Historical" Jesus. Schweitzer identified David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874) as the scholar who forced the question of either a purely historical or a purely supernatural Jesus. In order to appreciate Strauss, it is important to see him in relation to the scholarship of his time. We need not dwell on the authors of fictitious lives of Jesus, such as K. F. Bahrdt and K. H. Venturini, to whom Schweitzer devoted ample discussion. More significant for understanding Strauss are the rationalist theologian at the University of Heidelberg, H. E. G. Paulus (1761–1851), and the founding faculty member of the University of Berlin who was also the most creative theologian of the century, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834).

Paulus was the author of a two-volume *Life of Jesus* (1828), which Schweitzer described as "fully developed rationalism." It undertook to explain the events depicted in the Gospels in a rational way, including the resurrection, which was a case of resuscitation from a coma. The truly miraculous aspect of Jesus was his "pure and serenely holy disposition."

Schleiermacher's account of Jesus was more complex. Schleiermacher rejected the scholastic doctrine of the Trinity as three separate-but-related divine individuals, and the incarnation as what happened when one of them assumed flesh. Instead, he saw the Redeemer's consciousness of God as an existence of God in his own person (*The Christian Faith*, §94). In his posthumously published lectures (*The Life of Jesus* [1864; ET, 1975]) he drew attention to the role of the Spirit in the life of Jesus. Jesus' intimate relationship with the Father through the indwelling of the Spirit enabled him to claim to be the Son of God. "According to the creedal conception he would have had to say, I have the Son of God in me" (Schleiermacher, 95).

Strauss studied theology at the University of Tübingen, where F. C. Baur was his mentor. On completing his doctorate, Strauss went to Berlin to study under the leading philosopher of the day, G. W. F. Hegel. However, Strauss had hardly settled in when Hegel died. Strauss remained in Berlin, hoping to hear Schleiermacher's lectures on the life of Jesus. However, Schleiermacher was not offering the course, and Strauss had to make do by borrowing lecture notes. He returned to Tübingen, resolved to write his own life of Jesus, avoiding the "supernaturalism" of Schleiermacher and the "vulgar rationalism" of Paulus. The outcome was *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (1835–1836; ET, 1846; repr., 1972).

Strauss accepted a basic historical framework for the life of Jesus: he had grown up at Nazareth; he was baptized by John the Baptist; he made disciples; he went about teaching, opposing Pharisaism and summoning people to the messianic kingdom; he fell victim to the

---

ET English translation
ET English translation
repr. reprint

hostility of the *Pharisees and died on the cross. However, this outline was overlaid by the creative imagination of the church, which interpreted these events as the fulfillment of OT beliefs and institutions. Messianic expectation predetermined that the Messiah should perform miracles and act like a new *Moses and a Davidic king (*see* Christ; Son of David). Once Jesus acquired the reputation of being the Messiah, popular belief created myths about him. This was in line with the general myth-making tendencies of religion. The historical Jesus was turned into the mythical Messiah. Strauss sought to rescue the underlying truth of Christian faith by appealing to the philosophy of Hegel, who had taught that reality was the manifestation of the Absolute Spirit. The incarnation was the mythological symbol of the divine manifestation in humankind in general.

Strauss's work provoked great outcry. Within five years some sixty replies appeared. A widely respected conservative response was August Neander's *Life of Jesus Christ* (1837; ET, 1851). Strauss published three series of replies to critics and made revisions to his work. But his radical views cost him his academic career, and he turned to literature and politics.

In later life Strauss returned to theology, writing a rehabilitation of Reimarus (1862) and a bitter critique of Schleiermacher on the posthumous publication of lectures on the life of Jesus, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* (1865; ET, 1977). His *Life of Jesus Adapted for the German People* (1864; ET, 1865) was prompted by the popularity of J. E. Renan's *Life of Jesus* (1863) in France. It retained Strauss's earlier mythical explanation but dropped the Hegelian philosophy. The desupernaturalized Jesus depicted by Strauss emerged as one of the great improvers of the ideal of humanity. As a schoolboy, Friedrich Nietzsche had been turned against Christianity by Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. However, Nietzsche subjected Strauss's *The Old and the New Faith* (1872) to remorseless criticism in the first of his *Untimely Meditations* (1873) on account Strauss's bourgeois outlook.

In retrospect, Schweitzer was mistaken in seeing Strauss's antisupernaturalism as the first defining moment in the quest of the historical Jesus. It may have been the turning point for Schweitzer himself, but for scholarship and the churchgoing public it proved not to be so. In any case, the desupernaturalism of Jesus was initiated by the deists. At the same time, Strauss's demythologizing of Jesus left an indelible mark on Schweitzer himself, whose Jesus was demythologized in all but name.

3.3.2. Stage 2: The Synoptic Jesus as the Historical Jesus. Schweitzer's second defining moment raised the question of whether reconstructions of the historical Jesus should be based on the Synoptic Gospels or John (*see* Synoptics and John). It took place in two stages: first, through the Tübingen school of F. C. Baur, then through Schweitzer's own mentor, H. J. Holtzmann.

The priority of Matthew was widely accepted in the early nineteenth century. Among those who did so was Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860), leader of the Tübingen school. Baur insisted upon a purely historical approach that avoided supernatural explanations. For him, the key to NT study was tendency criticism (*Tendenzkritik*), which sought to identify and evaluate sources by discovering their basic tendencies. Baur believed that Matthew was the earliest Gospel, because of its Jewish character. Historically, John was remote from the time of Jesus. But since Matthew was written around A.D. 130, it was only relatively more historically reliable. Baur's view of Jesus was akin to that of Schleiermacher. Jesus had a unique consciousness of

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation

God. As the highest emissary of God, he mediated divine knowledge. Baur repudiated his former student, Strauss, on the grounds that he practiced criticism without undertaking adequate critical account of the Gospels. The Tübingen school enjoyed great notoriety, but membership was limited to Baur himself and a handful of disciples. Their views were too extreme for most scholars.

In the meantime, the traditional view of the priority of Matthew began to be overturned. The year that saw the appearance of Strauss's *Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (1835) also witnessed publication in Latin of an article by Karl Lachmann, "On the Order of Narratives in the Synoptic Gospels." Lachmann's article was the first to treat seriously the order of events as the key to understanding Synoptic relationships. Lachmann saw Mark as the middle term between Matthew and Luke. It told the same basic story; Matthew and Luke deviated from Mark by adding new material, each in his own way. Lachmann's work led to the growing popularity of the view that Matthew and Luke were dependent on Mark for their common account of events.

The leading proponent of the theory of two sources behind the Synoptic tradition was Heinrich Julius Holtzmann (1832–1910). *Die Synoptischen Evangelien* (1863) argued that oral tradition regarding Jesus crystallized into two sources behind the Synoptic Gospels. Holtzmann called the narrative behind Matthew and Luke the "A" source, which was designated in German as *Urmarkus* ("early Mark"). It had a primitive style of narrative and language, and it may have been based on the memories of Peter as narrated by John Mark. Later Holtzmann made Mark one of the two primary sources. The other source (now called *"Q," short for *Quelle* ["source"]) was identified by Holtzmann as "L" (short for *Logia* ["sayings"]). It provided the basis of Jesus' teaching, which was free from the eschatological fanaticism that Schweitzer saw as the key to understanding Jesus. Holtzmann saw Jesus as a religious genius who in his lifetime established the kingdom of God on earth. John was not a reliable source for reconstructing Jesus' life. Like Baur, Holtzmann thought that John was shaped by later Hellenistic philosophical influences.

By the end of the nineteenth century, traditional views of the apostolic authorship and priority of Matthew and the apostolic authorship of John were supplanted by the two-source theory (Mark and Q) as the substratum for recovering the historical Jesus. This tendency was linked with discounting the miraculous and supernatural. The result was a portrait of Jesus that followed Mark's general outline while embodying moral teaching from Q.

Perhaps the most widely translated and notorious life of Jesus was the *Vie de Jésus* (1863), by former Catholic seminarian and rising Semitic scholar J. E. Renan (1823–1892). However, Renan's career as a professor at the Collège de France was terminated as a result of his remark that Jesus was such an incomparable human that he would not contradict those who called him God. His biography of Jesus was inspired by the ambiance of the Holy Land, which he visited in the course of an expedition to Phoenicia. It eschewed critical discussion of sources and method, seeking instead to retell the Gospel stories in a way that was credible to the modern French reader. Renan added imaginative splashes of local color to the scenes that he described, writing with the assurance of a man who had got to the bottom of things. What made Jesus the Son of God was his realization that true worship depended not upon places and ritual, but rather upon spirit and truth (Jn 4:23). Renan claimed that his Christ was rooted in "genuine history." His method was to follow closely the original narratives, discard impossibilities, sow seeds of doubt,

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
Q *Quelle*
Q *Quelle*
Q *Quelle*

and suggest conjectures about how events might have happened.

Strasbourg Protestant scholar T. Colani complained that Renan's Christ was not the Jesus of history, but that of the Fourth Gospel without a metaphysical halo. He set out his own views in *Jesus Christ and the Messianic Beliefs of His Time* (1864). Colani believed that there was no connection between the historical Jesus and Jewish messianic beliefs. The eschatological teaching attributed to Jesus in the Gospels (Mt 24; Mk 13; Lk 17; 21) was not authentic. Jesus had predicted the destruction of the temple, and the disciples had asked when it would occur (Mt 24:3; Mk 13:4; Lk 21:7). Jesus replied that he did not know (Mt 24:36; Mk 13:32; Lk 21:33). The so-called Little Apocalypse that comes between the question and answer was the work of overzealous, eschatologically minded Jewish Christians who could not accept Jesus' confession of ignorance. The views of neither Renan nor Colani commended themselves to Schweitzer as credible accounts of the historical Jesus.

3.3.3. Stage 3: Johannes Weiss and the Eschatological Jesus. There is something deeply paradoxical about Schweitzer's third defining moment in the course of the quest of the historical Jesus with regard to Johannes Weiss, the protagonist of the eschatological Jesus, and Schweitzer himself as his advocate. Both believed that eschatology was the key to Jesus' self-understanding, but neither actually believed in eschatology.

Johannes Weiss (1863–1914) was a member of the "History of Religions" school. The term was originally applied to a group of younger researchers at the University of Göttingen in 1890s. Theologically, they were heirs of A. B. Ritschl (1822–1889), the leading liberal theologian of his day. Methodologically, their research focused on the ancient world as the context for locating the study of Judaism and Christianity. Weiss was the son-in-law of Ritschl, and so long as Ritschl was alive, he did not publish his findings. Weiss's *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (1892; ET, 1971) was totally at variance with Ritschl's view of the kingdom as God's ethical lordship over humankind. According to Weiss, the kingdom that Jesus proclaimed was transcendent and superworldly. It belonged to the future. Jesus was a rabbi or prophet who believed that the kingdom would come after his death. He would be installed as Son of Man in the coming kingdom.

Schweitzer called his own version "thoroughgoing eschatology" (*konsequente Eschatologie*), insofar as he believed that Jesus proactively sought to establish the kingdom, whereas Weiss saw Jesus as more the prophet of the kingdom. It enabled him to offer the sole alternative to Wrede's skepticism, which made it possible to understand the motives and actions of the historical Jesus. It did so at the price of making the historical Jesus alien to the modern world.

3.4. Schweitzer's Jesus. Schweitzer confessed, "There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the Life of Jesus" (Schweitzer 2001, 478). Critical research had totally demolished the orthodox picture of Jesus the founder of the kingdom of God who died for the sin of the world. It had also destroyed the rationalistic liberal Jesus, the preacher of the ethical kingdom of God on earth. In the knowledge that he was the coming Son of Man, Jesus laid hold of the wheel of the world. When it finally turned, it crushed him. Instead of realizing the eschatological dream, he destroyed it. However, what mattered was not the Jesus of critical research, but rather the immeasurable greatness of one who was strong enough to think of himself as "the spiritual ruler of mankind and to bend history to His purpose" (Schweitzer 2001, 369).

Terms such as "Messiah," "Son of Man" and "Son of God" survive merely as "historical parables." It is "the spirit which goes forth from Him and in the spirits of men strives for new

---

ET English translation

influence and rule" that "overcomes the world." He comes to us as one unknown, without a name. But those who follow his commands for their generation will experience "Who He is." Schweitzer was in some ways the forerunner of twentieth-century demythologization: it was not Jesus' mythological program of eschatology that was important, but rather the spirit that imbued it.

Schweitzer's work did not meet with universal approval. The leading authority on the parables of Jesus, Adolf Jülicher, complained that Schweitzer was practicing subjective, dogmatic criticism. The leading British authority on eschatology, R. H. Charles, refused to consider Schweitzer in the second edition of his *Eschatology* (1913), because he showed no firsthand knowledge of the sources and made no fresh contribution. More recently, James M. Robinson accused Schweitzer of using Matthew in a way that could be justified only by the precritical view of Matthew as an eyewitness. Schweitzer seems to have been eclectic in drawing alternately from Matthew and Mark but suppressing parts of both that did not fit his narrative, especially moral teaching that he jettisoned as an interim ethic that would be superseded in the coming kingdom.

The original ending of Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus* offered a choice between the "thoroughgoing skepticism" of Wrede and Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing eschatology." In 1913 it became a choice between liberals like his mentor, Holtzmann, and Schweitzer himself. Holtzmann claimed that the historical Jesus was still relevant; Schweitzer insisted that the Jesus-cult must be replaced by Jesus-mysticism. In words that might have been taken from Lessing, Schweitzer laid down the prior essential assumption "that religion is by nature independent of any sort of history" (Schweitzer 2001, 406).

4. From Harnack to Grundmann

This section traces developments from the liberalism of Harnack, through the great era of investigation into Jesus' world, to constructs of Jesus and Christianity under the Third Reich.

4.1. Harnack and His Critics. A bestselling book on Jesus in the early twentieth century was based on a series of public lectures at the University of Berlin on the essence of Christianity. They were delivered extempore by the great church historian Adolf Harnack (1851–1930). In English the book was entitled *What Is Christianity?* (1901). It eclipsed Schweitzer's book published in the same year, though this did not diminish the friendship between the two, which endured until Harnack's death.

Harnack maintained the Ritschlian tradition, depicting Jesus as a teacher whose message was summed up under three headings: the kingdom of God and its coming; God the Father and the infinite value of the soul; the higher righteousness and the commandment to love. Jesus was the appointed way to the Father. In a study of the *Sayings of Jesus* (ET, 1908) Harnack argued that Q conveyed the best "portrait" of Jesus, though Mark must remain "in power."

Among Harnack's severest critics were the Catholic modernists Alfred Loisy (1857–1940) and George Tyrrell (1861–1909). Harnack was the target of Loisy's book *The Gospel and the Church* (1902; ET, 1903). Loisy agreed that Jesus' preaching centered on the kingdom of God. "Jesus announced the kingdom of God, and what came was the church." Loisy's remark is frequently taken to imply that the church was an anticlimax. It meant, in fact, the opposite. The

---

ET English translation
Q *Quelle*
ET English translation

way for Jesus' teaching to be realized on earth was through the church. Harnack's mistake was defining the essence of Christianity in terms of returning to the Gospels. For Loisy, the procedure was like identifying a grown man by making him return to the cradle.

In *Christianity at the Cross-Roads* (1909) Tyrrell summed up Loisy's argument: "The Christ that Harnack sees, looking back through nineteen centuries of Catholic darkness, is only the reflection of a Liberal Protestant face, seen at the bottom of a deep well." The jibe has often been applied to attempts in general to recover the historical Jesus. However, it could be applied to any reconstruction of Jesus, including Loisy's, since every act of understanding requires the interplay of the "horizons" of the interpreter and those of the interpreter's object. What matters is sensitive, informed, critical interplay.

The most thoroughly researched and influential book on Jesus by a Jewish scholar was *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times, and Teachings* (1922; ET, 1925), by Joseph Klausner (1874–1960). He accused Harnack of making Jesus, the historical Jew, disappear in much the same way as the early heretic Marcion had done. Klausner acknowledged Julius Wellhausen's claim that "Jesus was not a Christian but a Jew." In some respects, Jesus was "the most Jewish of the Jews." There was nothing in his teaching that could not be paralleled in the OT, the Apocrypha, and talmudic and midrashic literature. Jesus even surpassed Hillel in his positive statement of the Golden Rule. However, Judaism could not embrace Jesus, because of his indifference to the needs of Jewish national life.

4.2. The Recovery of Jesus' World. Serious attempts to recover the world of Jesus began with Emil Schürer (1844–1910). His textbook on NT background evolved into the multivolume *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* (ET, 1890–1891). In time, Schürer's account of the Pharisees and his reduction of Jewish piety to two themes—life under the law and messianic hope—were seen to reflect liberal Protestant bias. Inevitably, the work became dated, though it was given new life in the form of *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (4 vols., ed. G. Vermes, F. Miller and M. Goodman, 1973–1987).

Gustaf Dalman (1855–1941) is best known for his study of Aramaic and his research into Jesus in the context of Second Temple Judaism. *The Words of Jesus* (1898; ET, 1902; 2nd ed., 1930) sought to ascertain the meaning of Jesus' words as heard by Aramaic-speaking hearers. The title of *Jesus-Yeshua* (1922; ET, 1929) is a reminder that Jesus was not known as "Jesus" by his contemporaries, but rather as "Yeshua." Dalman claimed that Jesus knew three languages: Aramaic, his mother tongue; Greek, the language of government and trade; and Hebrew, the language of Scripture and theological discourse. An appendix contained parallels in Jewish literature to Jesus' sayings, showing their thoroughly Jewish character (*see* Languages of Palestine).

The *Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* ("Handbook to the New Testament from Talmud and Midrash") was conceived and managed by Hermann L. Strack (1848–1922). Compilation of the material for the first four volumes was the work of Paul Billerbeck (1853–1932). The editing of further volumes was entrusted to Joachim Jeremias. The work was not strictly a commentary, but rather a compilation of more than forty thousand annotations. Jeremias maintained that the work opened up the Jewish world for nonspecialists. Critics argued that the alleged parallels could be misleading in the absence of expertise in

---

ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation

evaluating contexts and sources. Perhaps the biggest problem was the assumption that rabbinic Judaism represented normative Judaism, in contrast to *Hellenism, Diaspora Judaism and sectarian Judaism. A project intended to replace Strack-Billerbeck has been initiated by *A Comparative Handbook to the Gospel of Mark* (2010), first in the series The New Testament Gospels in Their Judaic Contexts.

Most of the works noted in this section could be described as background without a portrait, since the figure of Jesus was conspicuously absent. Nevertheless, they contributed significantly to the quest of the historical Jesus. The alternative was to reconstruct a Jesus without historical religious and cultural context.

4.3. The Shadow of the Third Reich. Reconstruction of the impact of National Socialism on German theology has been largely pioneered by Jewish scholars and historians of the Holocaust (see Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* [2008]). It involves scholars who were committed members of the Nazi party and others who deplored it.

Adolf Schlatter (1852–1938) belonged to the tradition of evangelical scholarship from Luther onwards that held the Jewish nation responsible for the *death of Jesus (*see* Anti-Semitism). He also openly criticized Jews for the malaise that afflicted German society and the church. On the other hand, Schlatter was a passionate advocate for understanding the Jewishness of Jesus. He possessed an unrivaled command of biblical and rabbinic literature.

For Schlatter, the historical Jesus was the Christ of faith, who was to be found in the world of the text of the NT. In the preface to his commentary on Matthew (1929) he made a statement that encapsulated his understanding of the knowledge of Jesus: "It is right and proper that we read the Gospel for the sake of Jesus, for it was written for his sake. To reach Jesus we must listen to the evangelist. Were he to disappear from us, we would be severed from the course of history and left to our own imaginations. Jesus speaks to humanity through his disciples."

The scholar who merits the dubious title "the Jesus specialist of National Socialism" is Walter Grundmann (1906–1976). However, in order to see Grundmann in perspective, it is necessary to examine the work of Rudolf Otto, to whom Grundmann was indebted. Rudolf Otto (1869–1937) is remembered chiefly for his work on *Das Heilige* (1917; ET, *The Idea of the Holy*, 1923). Otto regarded the holy as a unique category, the numinous, which was a *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, a mystery that inspires fear and awe and also attracts and exalts. Jesus was the embodiment of the holy. As such, he was more than a prophet; he was the Son.

In later life Otto wrote *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man* (1934; 2nd ed., 1940; ET, 1938). Jesus was a Galilean itinerant charismatic preacher, healer and exorcist. Otto followed Walter Bauer in stressing the distinctive Galilean freedom from Judean attachment to the law and to Pharisaism. Instead of proclaiming judgment, Jesus preached the new age of the kingdom, which would follow the messianic woes. Jesus himself lived in the miracle of the new age, mediating through speech and parable its charismatic power. Initially he believed that the Son of Man was distinct from himself (Lk 12:8), but later he came to think that he as Son of Man must suffer to bring about the kingdom. The Last Supper was a prophetic sign of his willingness to accept this messianic obligation.

The claim that Jesus was not Jewish had numerous nineteenth-century protagonists, including

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
ET English translation
ET English translation

the philosopher J. G. Fichte, and the biblical scholars J. E. Renan and Friedrich Delitzsch. In the Nazi period Walter Grundmann made the theory a cornerstone of his account of Jesus. Grundmann joined the National Socialists in 1930. He obtained his doctorate under Gerhard Kittel, whom he assisted in preparing his *Theologisches Wörterbuch*. Although he lacked the customary habilitation, he was preferred over the more qualified Günther Bornkamm for the chair of NT and *völkische Theologie* at Jena in 1936. Hitler himself subsequently signed his tenure. Grundmann was appointed director of research of the Institute for Investigation into Jewish Influence on German Church Life and Its Eradication, located in neighboring Eisenach.

In 1940 Grundmann published *Jesus der Galiläer und das Judentum* ("Jesus the Galilean and Judaism") with a view to giving an answer based on "scientific scholarship" to "inquiring Germans" on the burning question of Jesus' relationship to Judaism. Following Otto, Grundmann described Jesus as a "charismatic" who possessed an inner vision, which gave him absolute authority in his teaching and deeds. Inevitably, it brought him into conflict with the Jews. However, Jesus threw back at them their charges of impurity and of leading the people astray. It was they who opposed God and led people astray, adopting the cynical ploy of handing Jesus over to the Romans, representing him as a dangerous political messiah.

Grundmann claimed that for centuries Galilee had been separate politically and ethnically from Judea. The Galilean origin of Jesus was beyond doubt. It followed "with the greatest probability" that Jesus belonged to one of the ethnic streams that existed in Galilee. Grundmann discounted the strands in the Gospels linking Jesus' birth to Bethlehem and suggesting childhood visits to Jerusalem. He ascribed to the Palestinian Judean Christian community passages that linked Jesus with David's line. Jesus was not an earthly ruler, but rather the proclaimer of a spiritual kingdom, which was welcomed by the Hellenistic world.

In 1943 Grundmann was conscripted and served on the Russian front. At the end of the war he was released from prison camp and returned to Jena, but he was not reinstated in his chair. Eventually, he was made head of the *Predigerseminar* at Eisenach, and he became a leading churchman and scholar in the German Democratic Republic. His numerous writings included *Die Geschichte Jesu Christi* (1956; 3rd ed., 1961). This massive work introduced current scholarship to postwar readers. It avoided discussion of Grundmann's earlier book, but the conflict between the Galilean Jesus and the Judeans remained. It took the form of a clash between "the innermost concern of religion" and "the defect of late Jewish official religion," with its exaggerated demand for "cultic purity."

5. From Bousset to Bultmann and the "New Quest"

Radical German thought about the historical Jesus may be seen as a development of the History of Religions school, with Wilhelm Bousset setting the critical agenda, and Rudolf Bultmann being its last great representative. In two respects Bultmann differed from Bousset. Bultmann embraced *form criticism as he interpreted the Gospels within Bousset's historyof-religions framework. Bousset belonged to the world of liberal cultural Protestantism, whereas Bultmann combined the history of religions with dialectical theology.

5.1. Bousset. Wilhelm Bousset (1865–1920) taught at Göttingen—the birthplace of the History of Religions school—before moving to Giessen in 1916. Seminal studies on Hellenistic Judaism and gnosticism laid the foundations of Bousset's later work and that of Bultmann.

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

Bousset's most influential work was *Kyrios Christos* (1913; ET, 1970). In a foreword to the 1965 reprint Bultmann declared that its central theme was also that of NT theology: the history of belief in Christ. This evolutionary process began with the primitive Palestinian community, which venerated Jesus as the apocalyptic Son of Man. The canonical Gospels were characterized by the dogma of the Messiah, miracle stories, the messianic secret and Jesus' sacrificial death. At a later stage the title *Kyrios* ("Lord"), derived from the mystery cults, was bestowed on Jesus, turning him into a cult hero (*see* Lord).

Paul introduced Christ mysticism, which turned Jesus into a "supraterrestrial" power. Baptism became a rite of initiation into the deity. Paul's Christ-Adam typology put Christ's bestowal of the Spirit at its center. These "perilous" speculations were derived from Jewish *apocalyptic, Babylonian and Egyptian myths of the dying and rising god, and gnosticism. The Johannine circle completed the estrangement from the human Jesus of Nazareth by adopting thoroughgoing docetism. As the eternal Son of God, Jesus dispensed divine secrets and bestowed eternal life. Paul's stress on the Spirit faded from view.

***5.2. Bultmann*.** The theology of Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976) combined the tradition of the History of Religions school with the dialectical theology associated with Karl Barth.

The History of the Synoptic Tradition (1921; ET, 1963) adapted Bousset's historical stratification of the NT to the oral history of Gospel material before and after it received written form. Bultmann drew on the form criticism that Hermann Gunkel had applied to the OT, and the pioneering work of Martin Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (1919), and K. L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (1919). Together, these writings shaped radical German scholarship for the next half-century. Instead of treating Mark as a historical portrait of Jesus, form criticism posited that Mark consisted of disconnected units of oral tradition shaped by (and sometimes created by) the "life setting" (*Sitz im Leben*) of the early communities.

Bultmann saw Mark as a random collector of stories, "not sufficiently master of his material to venture on a systematic construction himself." His Gospel was the first of a new literary genre, which depicted "the Christ myth" as a book of secret epiphanies. Matthew and Luke strengthened "the mythical side" by adding infancy narratives and Easter stories from sources, inaccessible to Mark.

A characteristic of the Bultmann school was the criterion of double dissimilarity. Bultmann gave the following definition: "We can only count on possessing a genuine similitude of Jesus where, on the one hand, expression is given to the contrast between Jewish morality and piety and the distinctive eschatological temper which characterized the preaching of Jesus; and where on the other hand we find no specifically Christian features" (Bultmann 1963, 205). The criterion was not only an outcome of Bultmann's critical study of history; it was also the expression of his theological conviction about divine transcendence, which was linked to his dialectical theology.

Bultmann described this "distinctive eschatological temper" in *Jesus* (1926; ET, *Jesus and the Word* [1934]). Jesus was "the bearer of the word" that assures forgiveness by God. The word implies a relationship between speaker and hearer. Human beings are constrained to decision by the word, which brings a new element into their situation. The word therefore becomes to them an event; for it to become an event, the hearer is essential. This event brings eschatology into the present.

ET English translation

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

ET English translation

ET English translation

Bultmann maintained a lifelong friendship with Karl Barth. Bultmann's theology was characterized by *Sachkritik* ("subject criticism," or "theological criticism"), which sought to identify the *Sache*—the matter or essential meaning—as distinct from its form. (Barth's view may be characterized as *Sachexegese* ["theological exegesis"], which sought theological themes, unhampered by Bultmann's radical criticism.) Bultmann's *Sachkritik* "distinguishes what is said by what is meant and measures what is said by its meaning" (Bultmann 1968, 241). This understanding of the *Sache* of the NT formed the basis of Bultmann's identification of the cross and resurrection as the core of NT kerygma and of his program of demythologization.

Bultmann's *Sachkritik* was graphically outlined in his epoch-making paper on "New Testament and Mythology." The paper dates from 1941 and was published in the first volume of the series *Kerygma und Mythos* (1948; ET, Bartsch, 1:1–44). Bultmann was restating the view of mythology held by the History of Religions school for over half a century but drawing on dialectical theology and the categories of Heidegger's existentialist philosophy. The thought world of the NT—the three-decker universe of heaven, earth and hell, angels and demons, supernatural interventions, cosmic catastrophe, resurrection, judgment, eternal salvation and damnation—was mythological. As such, it needed to be demythologized so as to make way for the true scandal of Christianity: the message of the cross and resurrection, which alone could liberate humankind and lies beyond objectification.

Bultmann's commentary *The Gospel of John* (1941; ET, 1971) was a tour de force of Johannine reinterpretation. The dualism of the discourses—light and darkness, truth and falsehood, above and below, freedom and bondage—derived from gnosticism. However, John the consummate theologian (an honor that he shared with Paul) deployed these contrasts against gnosticism. The coming of the Son in judgment was not a dramatic event in the future; rather, the Son's mission was complete in the present (Jn 3:18). Bultmann's multivolume *Theology of the New Testament* (1948–1953; ET, 1951–1955) laid down the premise: "*The message of Jesus* is a presupposition for the theology of the New Testament rather than a part of that theology itself.… Christian faith did not exist until there was a Christian kerygma; i.e., a kerygma proclaiming Jesus Christ—specifically Jesus Christ the Crucified and Risen One—to be God's eschatological act of salvation. He was first so proclaimed in the kerygma of the earliest Church, not in the message of the historical Jesus" (Bultmann 1951–1955, 1:3).

The theme of how Jesus the proclaimer became the proclaimed dates from Bultmann's 1933 essay "The Christology of the New Testament" (ET, Bultmann 1966, 262–85). Bultmann restated his overall view in *Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting* (1949; ET, 1956). In his lectures at Yale and Vanderbilt Bultmann explained how the task of demythologizing and detaching faith from history was comparable to Paul's and Luther's insistence on justification by faith alone apart from works of the law (Bultmann 1960, 84).

5.3. The "New Quest" The "New Quest" of the historical Jesus was largely confined to Bultmann's former students and followers in Germany and the United States. Signs of unrest appeared in 1953 at the meeting of "Old Marburgers," when Ernst Käsemann (1906–1998) presented a paper on "The Problem of the Historical Jesus" (ET, Käsemann, 15–47). Like others who followed him in the New Quest, Käsemann protested fidelity to Bultmannian methodology

---

ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation

and disavowed any attempt to write a biography of Jesus. Nevertheless, Käsemann feared relapse into docetism if the exalted Lord of the kerygma was detached from the humiliated Lord in history. The way forward was to discover the earthly Jesus through the kerygma.

Jesus of Nazareth (1956; ET, 1960), by Günther Bornkamm (1905–1990), was the first book on Jesus in the Bultmann school since Bultmann's study thirty years earlier. Whereas Bultmann had stressed the eschatological transcendent kerygma, Bornkamm focused on the new age already dawning through Jesus' words and actions. Although the Gospels did not provide enough information "to paint a biographical picture of Jesus," Bornkamm valued more than did Bultmann the substratum of history in the Gospels. "Quite clearly what the Gospels report concerning the message, the deeds and the history of Jesus is still distinguished by an authenticity, a freshness, and a distinctiveness not in any way effaced by the Church's Easter faith. These features point us directly to the earthly figure of Jesus" (Bornkamm, 24). On the other hand, Jesus stood out from the world of Judaism, which was like "a soil hardened and barren through its age-long history and tradition" (Bornkamm, 55–56).

The most concise, and perhaps the most negative, overview of Jesus produced in the New Quest came from Hans Conzelmann (1915–1989). It took the form of a 1959 encyclopedia article, later expanded into a booklet. Conzelmann's "Jesus Christus" was firmly based on the criterion of double dissimilarity: "Whatever fits neither into Jewish thought nor the views of the later church can be regarded as authentic" (Conzelmann, 16). Jesus moved almost exclusively within the framework of Palestinian Judaism. The oldest stratum of the Synoptic tradition showed no influence from Hellenistic ideas (Conzelmann, 17). True to Bultmann, Conzelmann affirmed that at the heart of Jesus' teaching was "the absolute promise of salvation," which because of its unconditional nature was "the crisis of all security" (Conzelmann, 42).

Reginald H. Fuller (1915–2007) was a British scholar who came to America in the 1950s. At this stage in his career he was an enthusiastic follower of Bultmann, though the perspective of Fuller's *Foundations of New Testament Theology* (1965) was perhaps closer to Bousset. Fuller's method was determined by the criterion of double dissimilarity. He traced the kerygma to Jesus' self-understanding. "Jesus understood his mission in terms of eschatological prophecy and was confident of its vindication by the Son of man at the End. As eschatological prophet he was not merely announcing the future coming of salvation and judgment, but actually initiating it in his words and works" (Fuller, 130).

The most enthusiastic advocate of the New Quest was also its historian, James M. Robinson (1924–). Robinson saw his contribution as a development of Bultmann's *Jesus*. The Old Quest was impossible and illegitimate because Jesus of Nazareth cannot be reached by "reconstruction of his biography by means of objective historical method" (Robinson 1959, 29). Wrede had demonstrated that Mark was not writing objective history, and K. L. Schmidt had shown that the order of events in the Gospels was not based on historical memory. The tradition about Jesus "survived only in so far as it served some function in the life and worship of the primitive Church. History survived only as *kerygma*" (Robinson 1959, 37). On the other hand, the quest for meaningful existence gave impetus and direction for "a serious quest of the historical Jesus" (Robinson 1959, 75). Such a quest must not "dodge the call of the *kerygma* for existential faith in the saving event, by the attempt to provide an objectively verified proof of his historicity" (Robinson 1959, 76). Robinson expanded the argument of his original book in a reprint, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus and Other Essays* (1983).

In July 1959 Bultmann responded to the New Quest in an address to the Heidelberg

---

ET English translation

Academy of Sciences on "The Primitive Christian Kerygma and the Historical Jesus" (ET, Bultmann 1964). Bultmann observed that Old Quest sought to get behind the kerygma in order to discover the historical Jesus. Today the situation was reversed. "The emphasis lies on elaborating the unity of the historical Jesus and the Christ of the kerygma" (Bultmann 1964, 15). Without the historical Jesus, there would be no kerygma. However, as Wellhausen had observed, Jesus was a Jew and not a Christian. Jesus did not demand faith in himself. The historical Jesus was the presupposition of the kerygma—the "that," but not the "what."

Toward the end of his address Bultmann lined up his former students and rebuked them one by one for their lack of rigor in maintaining that Jesus the proclaimer must now be the Christ who is proclaimed. Even Robinson's efforts to demonstrate the continuity between Jesus and the kerygma blurred the difference between them so that (as R. H. Fuller clearly saw in his review of Robinson's book) the kerygma was made unnecessary (Bultmann 1964, 39). What Bultmann faulted in the New Quest was not defective critical scholarship, but rather inconsistency regarding the dialectical significance of the kerygma of the cross and resurrection.

Bultmann's Heidelberg address had the effect of taking the wind out of the sails of the New Quest, and the crew abandoned ship. James M. Robinson threw his prodigious energies into two enterprises. The first was his role in editing and translating the Coptic codices discovered at Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt in 1945 (*The Nag Hammadi Library in English* [1977; 4th ed., 1996]). The other was the International Q Project, which culminated in *The Critical Edition of Q* (2000), edited by Robinson and others. Robinson wrote a substantial number of studies collectively published in *The Sayings Gospel Q* (2005). Not only was it possible to reconstruct a Q community; it was also possible to reconstruct a Jesus behind it. "Jesus himself made no claims to lofty titles or even to divinity. Indeed to him, a devout Jew, claiming to be God would have seemed blasphemous! He claimed 'only' that God spoke and acted through him" (Robinson 2005, xi).

6. European Alternatives

In the hindsight of contemporary scholarship, the criterion of double dissimilarity looks absurdly restrictive. But to those of Bultmann's generation, who had experienced the horrors of the twentieth century, dialectical theology offered hope. It seemed not unreasonable to see institutional religion—both pre-Christian Judaism and incipient Catholic Christianity—as the product of human religiosity and to view the kerygma of the cross and resurrection in terms of the Wholly Other. To use Barth's analogy, God's word was like a vertical line intersecting a horizontal plane at a single point. In the meantime, alternative approaches to the historical Jesus challenged the Bultmann tradition. Among the most notable were those of Joachim Jeremias and Oscar Cullmann.

6.1. Jeremias. The most concerted attempt by a Christian scholar to locate Jesus within Judaism was made by Joachim Jeremias (1900–1979), who spent most of his career at Göttingen. Jeremias's lecture "The Present State of the Debate about the Problem of the Historical Jesus" (1956) set out his case against Bultmann (repr., Jeremias, 1–17). Bultmann came close to

---

ET English translation
Q *Quelle*
Q Quelle
Q Quelle
Q *Quelle*
repr. reprint

surrendering the message of "the Word became flesh" to docetism and dissolving *Heilsgeschichte* (salvation history) into preaching. Rabbinic literature must be studied to help recover Jesus' opposition to "the religiosity of his time." Aramaic should be used to help identify what lies behind the Greek of the NT. The message of Jesus flowed from his conviction that God's kingdom was about to break into history. These issues constituted Jeremias's agenda.

Though it might not be possible to recover Jesus' actual words, it was possible to hear his *ipsissima vox*, the voice of Jesus with its distinctive manner of speaking. It was characterized by (1) "Truly I say to you," an idiom used to emphasize Jesus' pronouncements; (2) the use of the theological passive (e.g., "Your sins are forgiven") as a circumlocution for God's activity through Jesus; and (3) a predilection for similitudes and parables.

The nature of Jesus' distinctive voice occupied Jeremias in a series of pivotal works. *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (1935; 3rd ed., 1960; ET, 1966) was a major investigation of the Last Supper, which Jeremias saw as a Passover meal, in which the words of Jesus related Jesus' death to salvation history. *The Parables of Jesus* (1947; 6th ed., 1962; ET, 1963) urged that the purpose of the parables was to compel hearers to come to a decision about Jesus' person and eschatological mission. In *The Prayers of Jesus* (ET, 1967), Jeremias explained Jesus' use of *Abba* ("Father") as an Aramaic term of intimacy and submission, and the Lord's Prayer as an eschatological prayer for the coming of God's kingdom.

Issues raised by Jeremias continue to be discussed and specific interpretations challenged. However, his main contribution still stands. In an age in which dissimilarity from Judaism was regarded as a test of authenticity, Jeremias boldly reversed it, maintaining that Jesus could not be understood apart from his Jewish historical context.

6.2. Cullmann. Oscar Cullmann (1902–1999) was the last of his generation of European scholars who shaped the scholarship of his day. In *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr* (ET, 2nd ed., 1962) Cullmann rejected the Bultmann school's argument that the idea of the church was incompatible with Jesus' eschatology. *The Christology of the New Testament* (1957; ET, 1959) developed a functional *Christology based on the titles of Jesus, using form criticism to "arrive at Jesus' self-consciousness." Cullmann's Christology was bound up with his linear view of time, outlined in *Christ and Time* (1946; ET, 1951; rev. ed., 1964). In opposition to Greek cyclical views and the eschatologies of Schweitzer, Bultmann and Barth, Cullmann claimed that the Hebrew view of time was linear—past, present, future. In so doing, he revived salvation history, which had been propounded by J. C. K. Hofmann in the nineteenth century. Cullmann's last major book, *Salvation in History* (1965; ET, 1967), enlarged upon these views.

7. The English-Speaking World

7.1. British Scholarship. In comparison with European scholars, British scholarship was more restrained. It was virtually ignored by Schweitzer in the first edition of his *Quest of the Historical Jesus*.

ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
ET English translation
rev. revised
ET English translation

Inspired by a visit to the Holy Land, F. W. Farrer's *Life of Christ* (1874) set the model for the rest of the century. It was filled with imaginative descriptions of places and events, but it did not tamper with orthodoxy. The most erudite British life of Jesus, written by a Viennese Jewish convert to Christianity, Alfred Edersheim, was *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (1883). Edersheim's standpoint was precritical orthodoxy. British critical scholarship was largely a conservative and constructive response to impulses from Europe. It was led by William Sanday (1843–1920) at Oxford and F. C. Burkitt (1864–1935) at Cambridge.

Sanday's years at Oxford were dedicated to reconciling modern scholarship with orthodox tradition. His knowledge of German enabled him to become the leading interpreter of European scholarship of his day. His *Outlines of the Life of Christ* (1905) was a reprint of an encyclopedia article. A second edition (1906) contained updates on the state of scholarship. *The Life of Christ in Recent Research* (1907) introduced Wrede and Schweitzer to English readers. Sanday confessed that, as far as he knew, no one accepted Wrede's reconstruction. But Schweitzer's book was "the most striking work of its kind." However, it was as great a mistake to explain everything in terms of eschatology as it was to treat eschatology as "a mere appendage."

Sanday's enthusiasm for Schweitzer waned after hearing the lectures of Ernst von Dobschütz. Meanwhile, Burkitt's enthusiasm grew. Schweitzer's *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* was translated by his former student William Montgomery, and Burkitt himself supplied an introduction. In 1910 Sanday published *Christologies Ancient and Modern* as a prelude to his life of Jesus. He suggested that the work of William James on the unconscious mind might provide an analogy for understanding divine immanence. Sanday returned to the topic in a brief study of *Personality in Christ and in Ourselves*, which he republished with *Christologies Ancient and Modern* in a single volume under the title *Christology and Personality* (1911). The "high-water mark" of human language—Paul's words "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal 2:20)—suggested an analogy of how divinity could be present in humanity. Toward the end of his life, Sanday pondered the significance for Christology of the descent of the Spirit on Jesus.

Sanday pioneered faculty seminars on the Gospels. An outcome was *Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (1911), the first major British treatment of the subject (*see* Synoptic Problem). Among writings by members of the seminar were John Hawkins's linguistic study *Horae Synopticae* (1899; 2nd ed., 1909) and B. H. Streeter's *The Four Gospels* (1924). The latter expanded the two-documentary source favored by most European scholars to Mark, Q, M (material in Matthew indicating a "Judaistic tendency") and L (Lukan material combined with Q to form Proto-Luke). Streeter believed that his four-document hypothesis helped to explain a range of issues, including Luke's reference to "many" predecessors (Lk 1:1). It broadened the basis of evidence for the "authentic teaching of Jesus." Streeter's book replaced Burkitt's *The Gospel History and Its Transmission* (1906) as the standard British textbook.

Burkitt contended that the apocalyptic vision was "no mere embroidery of Christianity." Eschatology challenged the world and its priorities. However, Burkitt's Jesus was not the Jesus of Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing eschatology." Jesus could not wholly be explained. In *Jesus Christ: An Historical Outline* (1932) Burkitt urged that the burden of Mark 13 was to watch and wait. The resurrection of Jesus was "a well-attested fact" in the sense that those who shared Peter's experience were convinced that Jesus was alive again. In his last years, Burkitt brushed aside form criticism. He had no time for the theory of Jesus' words and deeds as the product of communal imagination. Tradition rested upon historical reminiscence going back to Peter, Mark

---

Q *Quelle*
Q *Quelle*

and Q.

C. H. Dodd (1884–1972) began his academic career at Oxford, where he also spent his retirement. Dodd taught at Mansfield College, Oxford, before becoming Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism at Manchester (1930). He succeeded Burkitt at Cambridge (1935), retiring in 1949. His book *The Parables of the Kingdom* (1935; revised, 1961) proposed "realized eschatology" in reply to Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing eschatology." While Jesus employed apocalyptic symbolism to express the divine dimension, his parables show that the kingdom—the reign of God—had already become a reality. Subsequently, Dodd redefined his position: the eschaton had dawned with Jesus, but it was also "in process of realization."

In *History and the Gospel* (1938; rev. ed., 1964) Dodd responded to the negative form criticism of the Bultmann school. He drew attention to the fact that singly attested material taken from different forms and genres portrayed Jesus as "an historical personality distinguished from other historical personalities of His time by His friendly attitude to outcasts and sinners" (Dodd 1964, 66). This convergence of strands anticipated what Gerd Theissen would call "cross-section evidence."

In retirement Dodd published two major works on John. *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (1953) explored John against its background and discussed main themes. *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (1963) argued that the tradition underlying John was ancient and independent of the Synoptic tradition. Dodd's final book, *The Founder of Christianity* (1970), challenged the skepticism of the New Quest and urged renewed study of the historical Jesus. The Gospels included remembered and interpreted facts. The resurrection faith of the church was based on genuine memory of the empty tomb.

T. W. Manson (1893–1958) followed in the footsteps of Dodd but by no means was overshadowed by him. He succeeded Dodd at Mansfield College and later at Manchester University, when Dodd went to Cambridge. In *The Teaching of Jesus* (1931) Manson proposed an interpretation of the Son of Man that radically challenged the German tradition. The Son of Man was the final term in an OT series including the remnant of Isaiah, the *Servant of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah, the "I" of the psalmists, and the Son of Man in Daniel 7, all of which were collective embodiments of "the Remnant idea." Unlike German scholars who identified the Son of Man as an apocalyptic figure based on eschatological expectation (*1 En.* 37–41), Manson saw no difficulty in tracing the concept to Jesus' application of Daniel 7:13. Manson recognized that in some instances the term could simply mean "that man," "a certain man," or "I." However, some passages, such as Luke 9:58 and Matthew 8:20, suggested a more specific meaning. This sense was indicated in sayings after Peter's confession. Just as the Son of Man in Daniel 7 indicated corporate identity, so the passion predications about the Son of Man carried the implication that, together, Jesus and his followers were called to service and self-sacrifice in the redemptive purposes of God (Mk 10:45). Initially the disciples embraced this calling. But at the Last Supper Judas deserted. In Gethsemane the remaining disciples fell away (Mk 14:26–31, 50; Lk 22:31–34). Jesus was left alone to suffer as the Son of Man.

In response to form criticism, Manson remarked that a story that could have a *Sitz im Leben* in the life of the church should not automatically be excluded from also having a *Sitz im Leben* in the life of Jesus. His response to Bultmann and Schweitzer was summarized in "The Life of

---

Q *Quelle*
rev. revised
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
1 En. 1 Enoch (Ethiopic Apocalypse)

Jesus: Some Tendencies in Present-Day Research" (Manson 1964), his contribution to a Festschrift for Dodd.

Form criticism, as the study of units of narrative and teaching, was in itself "interesting but not epoch-making." But it got mixed up with two dubious assumptions. One was that the first generation of Christians were not interested in the life of Jesus, and only some thirty years later did they become suddenly fascinated. Then the life of Jesus had to be created out of nothing. The other assumption was that Gospel incidents and sayings were remembered in detail apart from their original context. Manson contended that episodes are typically remembered in conjunction with their historical context.

Schweitzer's reconstruction exhibited two flaws: his interpretation, especially of Matthew, was uncritical; and his Jesus was "a deluded fanatic." Manson endorsed Burkitt's view that Jesus changed eschatology, not by "spiritualizing" it but rather by transforming it through his own ministry as a "prologue."

In some respects, Manson anticipated the criterion of double similarity and double dissimilarity. Terms such as "messiah" and "kingdom" were used in ways that were similar to but dissimilar from their meaning in Judaism. Their use in the Gospels was not identical with subsequent Christian use but served to explain the origin of the church. This meant that there was no escape from historical enquiry, but also that there was no need to be despondent about its prospects.

Vincent Taylor (1887–1968) devoted his career to the dual role of training ministers for the Methodist Church and explaining scholarship to the wider public. *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (1933; 2nd ed., 1935) remains one of the best and balanced introductions to form criticism. It showed that it need not follow the negative direction taken by Bultmann, and it introduced other form critics besides Bultmann and Dibelius. Taylor wrote two trilogies relating to the historical Jesus. The first considered his death: *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (1937); *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching* (1940; 3rd ed., 1958); *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (1941). The second trilogy was devoted to his life: *The Names of Jesus* (1953); *The Life and Ministry of* Jesus (1954); *The Person of Christ in New Testament Teaching* (1958). Both trilogies were works of survey and synthesis. Taylor's crowning achievement was his commentary on *Mark* (1952; 2nd ed., 1966), which remains unmatched as an encyclopedic resource.

The traditions of British NT scholarship initiated by Sanday and Burkitt, and carried forward by Dodd and Manson, were carried further by C. F. D. Moule, A. E. Harvey, John A. T. Robinson and, somewhat idiosyncratically, Austin Farrer. C. F. D. Moule (1908–2007) was educated at Cambridge, where he spent his academic life. Moule's *The Origin of Christology* (1970) rejected the tradition of Bousset and Bultmann that insisted on evolutionary Christology, culminating in the deification of Jesus. Moule proposed a developmental process beginning with "four well-known descriptions of Jesus": Son of Man, Son of God, Christ, and *Kyrios*. In his Bampton Lectures at Oxford A. E. Harvey approached the Jesus of the Gospels from the standpoint of the historical constraints imposed upon him (*Jesus and the Constraints of History* [1982]). The NT studies done by John A. T. Robinson (1919–1983) revealed an inquiring mind that was not afraid to adopt radical conclusions, even if they happened to be unfashionably conservative. *Redating the New Testament* (1976) argued that no hard data precluded the composition of the NT before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, whereas *The Priority of John* claimed that, historically and theologically, John was first among equals.

7.2. North American Scholarship. The history of theological scholarship in America mirrored that of America at large. For a long time it lagged behind Europe, to which it looked for

leadership. In the field of Jesus studies it was not until well into the twentieth century that America began to gain independence.

B. B. Warfield (1851–1921) taught systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1887 until his death. At the time, the seminary was a bastion of Calvinistic orthodoxy. Like his predecessors, Warfield went to Germany to complete his education. Many of his writings were reprinted posthumously in ten volumes (1927–1932). *Christology and Criticism* (1929) and *Critical Reviews* (1932) kept readers abreast of European scholarship. They gave the impression that every new critical idea contained something profoundly wrong. At the heart of Warfield's criticism was his steadfast belief in the "two natures" formula of Chalcedon as the key to the complicated locks of the NT. It authenticated the "Great Reality" of Christology.

For Warfield's contemporary B. W. Bacon (1860–1932), at Yale, the key was higher criticism. Bacon was an early exponent of the two-source theory of the Synoptic Gospels. His *Studies in Matthew* (1930) saw Jesus as a new Moses, the giver of a new law, modeled after the five books of Moses. To Bacon, Matthew was a legalist who missed the essential point of Jesus' sympathy with prophetic protests against the law.

At the University of Chicago Shailer Mathews (1863–1941) advocated sociological interpretation in *The Social Teachings of Jesus* (1897) and *Jesus and Social Institutions* (1928). Mathews credited his revolutionary portrait of Jesus not to the study of Second Temple Judaism, but rather to his work on the French Revolution.

Whereas Mathews progressed from conservatism to liberalism, Shirley Jackson Case (1872–1947) described himself as "born a liberal." Case's first book, *The Historicity of Jesus* (1912), anticipated what was later called the "criterion of double similarity and double dissimilarity." Jesus fitted into the Jewish world, but his message of God's saving presence made him distinct. Contemporary Christian faith could not be detached from the historical Jesus. *Jesus: A New Biography* (1927) paid attention to literary criticism, social orientation and form criticism. Other members of the Chicago school included Clyde Weber Votaw (1864–1940), who identified the Gospels as forms of ancient biography. Edgar J. Goodspeed (1871–1962) is remembered for his translation work and his *Life of Jesus* (1950). Goodspeed did for American readers what Renan did for French readers nearly a century earlier, only without the offensive agnostic overtones. He retold the familiar story, without critical apparatus, using imagination to fill in the gaps.

Chester C. McCown (1877–1958) was a product of the Chicago school who spent his professional career at the Pacific School of Religion. *The Search for the Real Jesus* (1940) followed in the footsteps of Schweitzer, but beginning with Strauss and Baur, and telling the story from the standpoint of the social gospel. The kingdom of God was not merely an internal state of moral goodness and spiritual happiness, but rather "a society ruled by the divine will."

The most respected NT scholar at Harvard was Henry J. Cadbury (1883–1974), who wrote three books on Jesus. The best known of the three was *The Peril of Modernizing Jesus* (1937). Today modernization is sometimes called "contextualization," but to Cadbury, the more Jesus was depicted in terms of another culture, the more removed he was from his own. The process of modernizing Jesus began in the early church. The Gospels give at best a selection of sayings and events. Modern predilections were prone to dismiss elements such as apocalyptic language and miracles, even though they were embedded in historical tradition. Interpreters were also apt to fill in gaps by attributing to Jesus their own outlook. *Jesus: What Manner of Man?* (1947) was intended as a "more positive" book, focusing on Jesus' "habits of thought and argument." It addressed questions such as wisdom, parables and authority. In the end, Jesus was, like every personality, "an enigma." *The Eclipse of the Historical Jesus* (1964) contains reflections on the

quest of the historical Jesus. Much of the quest was "wishful thinking," assuming that Jesus shared a modern mindset. Cadbury's own contribution remained like sketches prepared for a portrait that was never painted.

Leander E. Keck (1928–) devoted an entire book to the question of *A Future for the Historical Jesus* (1971). In the 1970s he edited a series, largely reedited reprints, of lives of Jesus. His aim was to encourage fresh discovery and lively debate with classic tradition, in order to enrich and make more precise the contemporary debate. The series ranged widely with editions of Reimarus, Strauss, Schleiermacher, Strauss's critique of Schleiermacher, Weiss, Loisy, Herrmann and Mathews. In his running debate with Bornkamm, Keck urged that Bornkamm needed not praise but reappraisal (cf. Dieter Lührmann, "Bornkamm's Response to Keck Revisited"). The historical Jesus was "the parable of God." The future should begin with the past—Jesus' Jewish past, as Keck explained in *Who Is Jesus? History in Perfect Tense* (2001).

8. The Ongoing Quest

The closing quarter of the twentieth century saw increasing globalization of Jesus research. Among the factors were jet travel, multinational publishing, the Internet, academic guilds—notably the Society of Biblical Literature and the Society for New Testament Studies—and focus on specialized topics that transcended national boundaries. In previous ages the quest of the historical Jesus was more or less a Protestant pursuit. Starting in the 1970s, Jewish and Catholic perspectives came increasingly to the fore.

8.1. Wright and the "Third Quest" The scholar most closely linked with the Third Quest is N. T. Wright (1948–). Wright's prodigious writings include shorter books on the historical Jesus and a monumental series (still in progress), Christian Origins and the Question of God. The series includes *The New Testament and the People of God* (1992), *Jesus and the Victory of God* (1996) and *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (2003). Helpful roadmaps and responses include essays collected in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel* (1999 [edited by C. Newman]) and in *Jesus, Paul and the People of God* (2011 [edited by N. Perrin and R. B. Hayes]). Wright described his approach as "critical realism"—a process of knowing that acknowledges "the *reality of the thing known, as something other than the knower*" and gains access to this reality along "the spiralling path of *appropriate dialogue or conversation between the knower and the thing known*" (Wright 1992, 135).

In contrast to the Bultmann school's criterion of double dissimilarity, which insisted that the authentic Jesus was dissimilar to both the religion of Judaism and post-Easter Christian expressions of faith, Wright proposed a criterion of double dissimilarity and double similarity. "Along with the much-discussed 'criterion of dissimilarity' must go a criterion of double similarity: when something can be seen to be credible (though perhaps deeply subversive) within first-century Judaism, *and* credible as the implied starting-point (though not the exact replica) of something in later Christianity, there is a strong possibility of our being in touch with the genuine history of Jesus" (Wright 1996, 132).

Wright's reconstruction identified the overarching theme of biblical history as *exile and restoration. Although Judeans had returned from exile in Babylon, and the Jerusalem temple had been rebuilt, many felt that Israel's God had not returned. The hope of the prophets remained unfulfilled. Israel was in a state of continuing exile (Wright 1992, 268–72). Hope centered on a

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

new exodus and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth (Wright 1996, 202–14). Within this framework Jesus assumed the "profile of a prophet" who announced the advent of God's kingdom, with Jesus' life and teaching understood as the reenactment of "the central drama" of Israel. "The real return from exile, including the real resurrection from the dead, is taking place, in an extremely paradoxical fashion, in Jesus' own ministry" (Wright 1996, 127).

Despite Wright's wide learning, his strongest critics suspect that F. C. Baur's verdict on his former pupil Strauss might also apply to Wright: he has undertaken a critique of Gospel history, without critique of the Gospels. They see *Jesus and the Victory of God* as a vast precritical harmonization of the Gospels, based largely on an eclectic reading of the Synoptic Gospels to the neglect of John, without due examination of the narrative features of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

8.2. Crossan and the Jesus Seminar. The Jesus Seminar in America was broadly contemporary with N. T. Wright and the Third Quest in Britain. It was launched in California by Robert Funk's Weststar Institute in 1985. Whereas Wright proposed new methodology stressing Jesus as the climax of Jewish history, the Jesus Seminar applied traditional critical methodologies with renewed vigor.

The leading members of the Jesus Seminar were its cochairs, Robert W. Funk (1926–2005) and John Dominic Crossan (1934–). From the outset, the Jesus Seminar assumed major discrepancies between the historical figure of Jesus and representations of him in American religion and the canonical Gospels. The Jesus Seminar's quest was a search for reliable, recoverable data as a basis for understanding Jesus as he really was (Funk 2001).

The Jesus Seminar published papers and interim reports through its academic journal, *Forum: Foundations & Facets*, culminating in *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (1993 [edited by R. W. Funk and R. W. Hoover]) and *The Acts of Jesus: The Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (1998 [edited by R. W. Funk]). In speaking of five Gospels, the Jesus Seminar deliberately included the *Gospel of Thomas* alongside the NT Gospels, thereby relativizing the concept of canonicity (*see* Canon). Borrowing from the old practice of printing Bibles with the words of Jesus in red, the Jesus Seminar followed a color scheme used in casting votes for identifying degrees of authenticity: red (Jesus very probably said or did this); pink (Jesus probably said or did this); gray (Jesus probably did not say or do this, or at least no firm judgment was possible); black (Jesus very probably did not say or do this).

The portrait of Jesus that emerged was that of an itinerant sage and healer who broke with dogma and convention. His conception was a normal human one. Jesus preached not apocalyptic eschatology about the end of the world, but rather social-political liberation through subversive parables, aphorisms and praxis.

The publication of his book *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (1991) coincided with Crossan's tenure at the Jesus Seminar and laid the foundation for subsequent writings. He described his approach as a triple process that moved from the general to the particular. It was like a military operation that involved campaign, strategy and tactics. The campaign consisted of an analysis of the socioeconomic world in which Jesus lived—life in a remote Mediterranean corner of the Roman Empire under the *Pax Romana*. Strategy involved compiling an inventory of canonical and extracanonical texts, arranged according to chronology and independent attestation. Finally, tactics involved interpretation of the Roman colonization of the Mediterranean world. Jesus was a Mediterranean peasant philosopher, dedicated to subverting Roman subjugation through his itinerancy—"a symbolic representation of unbrokered egalitarianism."

Crossan's Jesus turned out to be a composite figure that combined the aphoristic teaching and lifestyle of Hellenistic Cynicism with Jewish magic. But Cynics do not appear to have practiced magic, and Jewish magicians do not seem to have been attracted to Cynicism. Current research has not uncovered conclusive evidence of Cynic activity in Galilee in Jesus' day. Moreover, Crossan paid scant attention to what orthodox Jews thought that they should do to magicians and those who led the people astray.

Methodologically, Crossan's databases represent a sophisticated form of source criticism in which multiple attestation and chronological stratification determine the value of sources. However, it has not stood up to close scrutiny. Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter draw attention to methodological flaws in Crossan's insistence upon the criterion of multiple attestation (Theissen and Winter, 238–39). On the one hand, Crossan's insistence on the inclusion of noncanonical texts (*see* Gospels: Apocryphal), in which primacy was allocated to the noneschatological, virtually ensures that he ends up with a noneschatological Jesus. On the other hand, multiple attestation is a weaker criterion than cross-section evidence and resistance to tendencies of the tradition in singly attested material in diverse traditions, which preserve comparable and converging pictures of Jesus. Inevitably, Crossan's source-critical method ignored the tendencies of texts and thereby made little or no use of literary criticism in discerning their character. It paid scant attention to the religious and social aspects of texts and their explanatory power to illuminate incidents and sayings, which in turn might suggest conceivable historical contexts in the world of Second Temple Judaism.

The most probing critique of the Jesus Seminar, and by extension of its cochair Crossan, was written by Birger Pearson: "The Gospel According to the 'Jesus Seminar': On Some Recent Trends in Gospel Research" (reprinted in the 1997 collection of his essays, *The Emergence of the Christian Religion*). Pearson concluded, "The Jesus of the Jesus Seminar is a non-Jewish Jesus. To put it metaphorically, the seminar has performed a sneak epispasm on the historical Jesus, the surgical procedure removing the marks of circumcision.… The ideology driving the Jesus Seminar is, I would argue, one of 'secularization' " (Pearson, 56–57).

Crossan's later writings seem no longer to depend on the elaborate methodology of *The Historical Jesus*. The portrait of Jesus as a homespun Galilean Cynic philosopher appears to have faded. What remains is a Jesus pitted against Rome (*God and Empire*, 2007).

8.3. The Quest for the Political Jesus. Interest in Jewish life in the Second Temple period gained impetus through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the late 1940s. Focus on the political struggle against Roman oppression received indirect stimulus from the climate of the post-World War II situation: growing awareness of the Holocaust, tensions of the Cold War, liberation movements in the Third World, and the creation of Israel as an independent state in 1948. Israeli struggle for independent nationhood invited comparison with previous liberation movements. The Masada excavations of the 1960s drew attention to anti-Roman freedom fighters and martyrs. This section focuses on two issues: (1) Zealots; (2) Jesus and politics.

8.3.1. The Zealots. The dissertation of William R. Farmer on *Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus* (1956) pioneered investigation into Jewish nationalism and raised the question of Jesus' links with it. Subsequent debate about the Zealot movement centered on the 1961 dissertation by Martin Hengel (1926–2009), the foremost European authority on Christian origins in the context of Judaism and Hellenism: *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I Until 70 A.D.* (1961; ET, 1989).

ET English translation

*Josephus described as "so-called zealots" a faction that committed gross atrocities as it seized power during the winter of A.D. 66–67 (*J.W.* 2.651; 4.161; 7.268–270) (see Hengel 1989, xiii–xv, 380–404) (*see* Revolutionary Movements). Josephus's phraseology raised the question of whether they were a new group of freedom fighters known as Zealots, or whether their roots reached back to the Maccabees. A tradition of scholarship in America from Kirsopp Lake to Morton Smith and Richard A. Horsley took Josephus's statements to mean that the Zealots were of recent origin (see Horsley 1986). Horsley went on to reconceive Jewish history from Jesus to the war with Rome as a mounting spiral of violence resulting from exploitation of the masses, popular protest, and severe repression leading to open revolt when the situation became intolerable. Horsley formulated a reply to Hengel in *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence* (1987).

Accordingly, the Zealots should be seen not as a "foil" for Jesus' activity, but rather as a violent faction in the war's final stages. Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom called for peaceful social revolution in village life: egalitarian family relations, cancellation of debts, reconciliation with enemies. It was intended to prepare for the kingdom of God, which would break the spiral of violence and end the established order.

European scholarship tended to side with Hengel in seeing violence and the Zealot movement as related factors, which periodically surfaced from the Maccabees to the war with Rome. They grew out of the religious tradition regarding the sacredness of the land, which belonged to Yahweh, who granted Israel the sovereign right to inhabit it as sojourners (Lev 25:33). This conviction lay at the heart of *Jubilee Year theology. The land of Israel was not to be profaned. The violent priest Phinehas was honored as the prototype of zeal for Yahweh (Num 25:6–13; 1 Chron 9:20; Ps 106:2–30; 1 Macc 2:24–26) (see Hengel 1989, 146–228).

The Zealot motif and the role of politics was taken further by G. S. F. Brandon (1901–1971) in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church* (1951), *Jesus and the Zealots* (1967) and *The Trial of Jesus* (1968). He argued that although Jesus himself may not have been a Zealot, he was far more political than Christian tradition made him out to be. The connections of Simon with the Zealot movement and the political context of Jesus' death were indisputable. Moreover, early Christians were like Josephus in their desire to dissociate themselves from extreme Jewish nationalism. Mark transferred responsibility for the crucifixion from the Roman to the Jewish authorities. Mark's portrait of an apolitical Jesus was changed by Matthew and Luke into a "pacific Christ" for their respective churches. John portrayed Jesus as "insulated from the political unrest" that agitated Jewish society (*see* Trial of Jesus).

A sociological perspective was introduced by Gerd Theissen (1943–). Theissen's brilliant experiment in *Wirkungsgeschichte* (the study of historical effects), *The Shadow of the Galilean: The Quest of the Historical Jesus in Narrative Form* (ET, 1987; updated, 2007), took the form of a historical novel. Some of the characters, such as the narrator—a young, traveling grain merchant based in Sepphoris—were fictional. Others, such as Pontius Pilate and Barabbas, were historical characters woven into a fictional narrative in which Jesus himself did not actually appear. However, Theissen's endnotes meticulously document the factual basis of the story's setting.

Theissen's earlier programmatic essay *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity* (ET, 1978) followed a more conventional format. The Jesus movement began in Palestine as a band of

---

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
J.W. Jewish War (Bellum judaicum)
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.
ET English translation
ET English translation

"wandering charismatics" proclaiming the imminent rule of God. It met with failure within Judaism, but it achieved success in the local communities of the Hellenistic world. In *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition* (ET, 1991) Theissen applied sociology to form criticism in the formation of the Synoptic tradition. *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*, by Theissen and Annette Merz (ET, 1998), is an authoritative guide to issues.

8.3.2. Jesus and Politics. All too often studies of this question give the impression that politics and religion in first-century A.D. Judaism could be understood in terms of the Age of Enlightenment's separation of church and state. It would be nearer the mark to say that every political issue had a religious dimension. Jesus' stance was apolitical political, insofar as he does not appear to have aligned himself to any particular movement, ideology or the bellicose sections of the Torah. Nevertheless, his teaching and praxis had political ramifications.

Modern appraisals include Oscar Cullmann's *Jesus and the Revolutionaries* (ET, 1970) and Alan Richardson's *The Political Christ* (1973). Martin Hengel supplemented his work *The Zealots* by a series of short studies that included *Was Jesus a Revolutionist?* (ET, 1971), *Victory over Violence* (ET, 1973) and *Christ and Power* (ET, 1977). Jesus' action in the temple was a token, prophetic sign. In view of the proximity of the Antonia fortress overlooking the temple, Jesus would have needed an army if he had intended to launch a political coup. If the Romans had seen it as more than a religious commotion, they could easily have intervened. In the event, it was the religious authorities that planned to arrest Jesus (Mk 12:12).

A number of scholars—most notably Mennonite theologian and Notre Dame ethics professor John Howard Yoder (1927–1997) in his book *The Politics of Jesus: Vincit Agnus Noster* (1972; 2nd ed., 1994)—have identified the Jubilee Year as the key to Jesus' program. Yoder claimed that Jesus' agenda was shaped by his resolve to implement the Jubilee Year, and that Luke in particular highlighted this interpretation. Jesus' reading from Isaiah 61:1–2 (Lk 4:18–19) in the *synagogue at Galilee marked the inception of the Jubilee Year as "the year of the Lord's favor." Yoder saw Jesus' teaching about forgiveness, especially the petition about forgiving debts in the Lord's Prayer, as implementation of the ordinances of Leviticus 25. Captives would be released. Jesus' exhortations not to be anxious about food or clothing were encouragement to trust in a year when there would be no repayments of debt, seedtime or harvest. Yoder's interpretation was attractive but problematic. Luke does not mention the Jubilee explicitly, and Jubilee Year terminology does not appear in the NT. The proclamation of release to the captives in Luke 4:18–19, with reference to Isaiah 61, fits better the exile theology discussed in 8.1 above.

The most comprehensive review of issues and exegetical questions remains *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (1984 [edited by Ernst Bammel and C. F. D. Moule]). However, the vigorous debate continues. Marcus J. Borg argued that the key issue was one of paradigms (*Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* [1984; 2nd ed., 1998]). Differences between Jesus and his adversaries centered on orthopraxis. For the Pharisees, the dominant paradigm was holiness; for Jesus, it was justice, mercy and faithfulness. Klaus Berger, in his *Novum Testamentum* article "Jesus als Pharisäer und frühe Christen als Pharisäer" (1988), traced the

---

ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation
* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

conflict to different concepts of purity. The Pharisees' attitude was essentially "defensive": avoiding contact with whatever was contaminated and following the prescribed rituals of the Torah when contact was unavoidable (*see* Clean and Unclean). For Jesus, holiness was "offensive." In virtue of his anointing by the Spirit, Jesus made the impure pure, the common holy, and the excluded included.

8.4. The Quest for Jesus the Jew. In an early account of the Third Quest, N. T. Wright identified as leading proponents two senior colleagues at Oxford, Geza Vermes and E. P. Sanders (Neill and Wright, 379–96). Both approached their subject as historians, and both stressed Jesus' fundamental Jewishness. Both appeared to meet Wright's criterion of double similarity and double dissimilarity. But even then, Vermes, Sanders and Wright seemed to be going in different directions. Donald A. Hagner's *The Jewish Reclamation of Jesus* (1984) remains unsurpassed as an analysis of twentieth-century Jewish scholarship. This section is devoted to highlighting the diversity of contemporary accounts of the Jewishness of Jesus in Jewish and non-Jewish scholarship.

8.4.1. Jewish Scholarship. Geza Vermes (1924–2013) was born in Hungary of a Jewish family, which converted to Catholicism in the 1930s. His parents perished in the Holocaust. Vermes himself became a Catholic priest and obtained a doctorate for work on the Dead Sea Scrolls. He came to England, where he taught at the University of Newcastle, before moving to Oxford, where he became the first Professor of Jewish Studies.

In *Jesus the Jew* (1973; 2nd ed., 1981) Vermes contended that the Jesus of history was neither the Christ of the Christian church nor the apostate villain of Jewish legend. Rather, he fitted the profile of the holy man (Hasid) and "man of deed" (miracle-worker). This profile was shaped by Honi the Rain-Maker (d. 65 B.C.), who was reputed to have drawn a circle that he refused to leave until God gave rain (*m. Ta'an.* 3:8). Even more important was Jesus' younger contemporary, the Galilean charismatic Hanina ben Dosa (58–82), whose story was modeled on the miracle-working prophets Elijah and Elisha. Tradition portrayed Hanina ben Dosa as a man of prayer, renowned for successfully interceding for the sick, even at a distance, and helping the needy. However, Jesus was "second to none in profundity of insight and grandeur of character" (Vermes 1973, 224).

Vermes's *Jesus the Jew* was followed by *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (1983; 2nd ed., 2003, published as *Jesus in His Jewish Context*) and *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (1993). Together, the books form a trilogy representing not a scholarly consensus or comprehensive engagement with other scholars, but rather "one man's reading of the Synoptic Gospels." These sources "to some extent at least, recount history" in reporting "the life and message of Jesus" and were "unaffected by accretions deriving from the creative imagination of nascent Christianity." However, the resurrection and the parousia were attributable to the doctrinal and apologetic needs of the early church (Vermes 2003, 23).

Paula Fredriksen (1951–) is often associated with Vermes as the two foremost twentieth-century Jewish interpreters of Jesus in the English-speaking world. However, one fundamental difference is immediately apparent. Vermes's Jesus was a Galilean charismatic on the margins of Judaism; Fredriksen's Jesus stood in the mainstream of orthodoxy, albeit with apocalyptic expectations of the kind associated with E. P. Sanders and Albert Schweitzer.

In *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus* (1988; 2nd ed.,

---

d. died par.
m. Mishnah
Ta'an. Taʿanit

2000) Fredriksen traced the evolution of Christology from Jesus' preaching about the coming kingdom of God. Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. The enthusiastic crowds may have hailed him as "the messiah." "Proceeding to the Temple, Jesus then pronounced the nearness of the End through a prophetic gesture. Overturning tables in the outer court, he symbolically enacted the impending destruction of Herod's temple, soon to be replaced by the eschatological Temple of God.… What Jesus hoped would be the final Passover of the world turned out, instead, to be the last for him" (Fredriksen 1988, 129–30).

Fredriksen enlarged this sketch in *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews: A Jewish Life and the Emergence of Christianity* (1999). Most contemporary scholars are guarded in their use of the Fourth Gospel as a historical source and follow Mark in placing Jesus' action in the temple at the climax of his activity. However, Fredriksen felt free to give equal weight to John, who indicated that much of Jesus' activity took place in Jerusalem (cf. Jn 2:13, 23; 4:45; 5:1–2; 7:25; 10:22; 11:18, 55; 12:18) (Fredriksen 2000, 237–41). Pontius Pilate must have known that Jesus was harmless. However, Pilate's politics allowed him to sanction Jesus' death. But why?

Fredrikson operated on the principle "where the evidence thins, we must speculate" (Fredriksen 2000, 254). "Perhaps Caiaphas said something to Pilate like, 'You know about the rumor spreading this week that Jesus of Nazareth is messiah. Some people actually expect him to reveal himself this Passover. The crowd seems restless' " (Fredriksen 2000, 254). Pilate knew what to do. He arrested Jesus by stealth at night, reasoning, "Let them wake up to their messiah already on a cross the next morning. Killing Jesus publicly, by crucifixion, would go a long way toward disabusing he crowd. Let him hang indicted by their own belief: KING OF THE JEWS. A nice touch—an insult to the idea itself as well as to their convictions" (Fredriksen 2000, 254). Alternatively, perhaps it was Caiaphas himself who decided that Jesus' death was the only way to put an end to the wild hopes growing among the city's pilgrims.

In retrospect, Fredriksen's speculations belong more to the realm of the historical novel than critical history, especially regarding the personalities involved in the death of Jesus. She glossed over the deep divisions between Jesus and the Judeans in both the Synoptic Gospels and John (see C. Brown 2011d).

David Flusser (1917–2000) was preeminent in the world of Second Temple scholarship. Flusser's thoughts about the historical Jesus were distilled in a short book that underwent revision over the years. *Jesus* first appeared in German (ET, 1968; reissued as *The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius* [2007]). Flusser viewed Jesus as a Pharisee in the broad sense, somewhat close to the school of Hillel, but also as a charismatic who clashed with the Pharisees over their attachment to institutional Judaism. It was not the Pharisees, but rather the *Sadducees, led by Caiaphas the Sadducean high priest, who handed Jesus over to Pilate for execution. As a rule, Jesus did not heal non-Jews; in fact, the Synoptic picture shows Jesus as a Jew who worked only among Jews.

8.4.2. Non-Jewish Scholarship. One of the most bracing and provocative twentieth-century attempts to situate Jesus in his historical context was E. P. Sanders's *Jesus and Judaism* (1985).

In *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977) Sanders laid out the direction of his future thought. He broke with the traditional Protestant view that Paul's theology was essentially a condemnation of Pharisaic legalism. Jewish belief could be described as covenantal nomism: membership of the people of God was constituted by the covenant with Abraham and maintained by keeping the law. Paul taught participationist eschatology: "In Christ one dies to the *power* of

---

ET English translation

* Title (or closely worded title) appears in the *Dictionary*.

sin, and does not just have trespasses atoned for" (Sanders 1977, 465). Christ was the means of entering God's covenant people.

Sanders's *Jesus and Judaism* depicted Jesus as an observant Jew whose action in the temple was a prophetic sign of a new temple and the restoration of Israel. If Jesus occasionally seemed to relativize the law, it was because of his sense of living at the turn of the ages, which suggested that the Mosaic law was not final and absolute (Sanders 1985, 261). *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (1990) defended Sanders's earlier contention that Jesus' attitude toward the law on a variety of issues from Sabbath to fasting was fundamentally orthodox. The book's central themes were "common Judaism," identified by commitments ranging from the role of the temple to the future hope of Israel, and "groups and parties," which focused on Sadducees, Essenes and Pharisees. *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (1993) was a less technical book, designed for more general readers.

As with his work on Paul, Sanders saw the Gospel narratives about Jesus as solutions, which posed the problem of identifying the questions. Again the result was covenantal nomism and restoration eschatology (Sanders 1985, 335–37). Sanders described himself as "a liberal, modern, secularized Protestant" who could no longer defend the Christology or social gospel of his upbringing (Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 334). In retrospect, Sanders's Jesus looked very much like the Jesus of Albert Schweitzer: a Jesus who expected the advent of God's kingdom as a result of his actions. However, Sanders protested that Schweitzer's view rested on dubious exegesis. It lacked the backing of the "restoration eschatology" that Sanders inferred from his "more or less undisputed facts" (Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 328–30). What Schweitzer and Sanders had in common was the sad conclusion that Jesus was profoundly mistaken. In neither case did the kingdom come, as expected. A new Jerusalem temple did not replace the old temple.

Bruce Chilton's work at Cambridge on the kingdom of God was published as *God in Strength: Jesus' Announcement of the Kingdom* (1979; repr., 1987). It was followed by his edition of articles in *The Kingdom of God* (1984). Study of the Targumim—oral Aramaic paraphrases of Scripture in synagogue worship—led to *The Glory of Israel: The Theology and Provenance of the Isaiah Targum* (1982), *A Galilean Rabbi and His Bible: Jesus' Use of the Interpreted Scripture of His Time* (1984), *Profiles of a Rabbi: Synoptic Opportunities for Reading about Jesus* (1989) and *Judaic Approaches to the Gospels* (1994).

A new direction opened up with Chilton's *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (1992). The discussion turned on the meaning of pure sacrifice. Chilton's interpretation was based on two convictions. The first went back to the tradition that sacrifice should be linked with offering one's own property. Laying hands on the sacrificial animal was a token of ownership. The second conviction was that in the spring of A.D. 30 Caiphas had introduced the novel practice of allowing animals to be purchased within the temple precincts (Chilton 1992, 107–8). Jesus' action in the temple was a failed attempt to restore the practice of pure sacrifice. Jesus' failure contributed to his growing conviction that common meals were themselves the equivalent of sacrifice offered to God. "This is my body" and "This is my blood" replaced the words "This is my sacrifice"—words thought to have been uttered in the presenting of an offering in the temple. Jesus' social eating "took on a new and scandalous element: the claim that God now preferred a pure meal to impure sacrifice in the Temple" (Chilton 1992, 154).

Whereas the earlier writings meticulously documented Chilton's argumentation, his *Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography* (2000) eschewed footnotes except to explain technicalities. What

---

repr. reprint

follows is a highly imaginative reconstruction of Jesus' life in which an early experience of the divine presence at the Jerusalem temple is followed by a marginal life in the temple precincts, a formative visionary experience and release from sin while a disciple of John the Baptist, and a subsequent ministry of healing and forgiveness.

Chilton's interpretation of the final events in Jerusalem followed the path sketched earlier in *The Temple of Jesus*. Jesus "wanted to ensure that his Galilean followers would climb Mount Zion with their *own* offerings, not merely with *mammon* with which to buy the priests' produce" (Chilton 2000, 228). However, the elation that Jesus felt in driving out the merchants dissipated as he realized that his plan could not succeed. Jesus resorted to holding communal meals (*see* Table Fellowship) that were invested with "a revolutionary new meaning," as he spoke of sharing his "blood" and his "flesh" (Chilton 2000, 250). They became the prototype of what later Christians called the Eucharist, the Mass and Holy Communion. Jesus' interpretation of these meals as replacement for temple sacrifice provoked disaffection among followers (Jn 6:60–71) and antagonized the Sanhedrin (Chilton 2000, 254–55). By agreeing to execute Jesus, Pontius Pilate was motivated by the desire to show the power brokers in Rome that he was in control. At the same time, he ensured that Caiaphas remained forever in his debt. Chilton interpreted the resurrection narratives from the perspective of Kabbalah mysticism. "The disciples' mystical practice of the Chariot only intensified after Jesus' death, and to their own astonishment and the incredulity of many of their contemporaries, they saw him alive again" (Chilton, *Rabbi Jesus*, 272). In the end, Chilton's Jesus "entices each one of us to meet him in that dangerous place where an awareness of our own weakness and fragility shatters the self and blossoms into an image of God within us. That is the gift that his biography and death have left us, and it is what makes Rabbi Jesus the treasure of the Church and the unique possession of no institution, no person on earth" (Chilton 2000, 291).

In diametrical opposition to Chilton's reconstruction was that of British scholar Maurice Casey. Casey's massive study *Jesus of Nazareth: An Independent Historian's Account of His Life and Teaching* (2010) crowned a career of scholarship characterized by dauntingly informed research that challenged conservative and liberal assumptions alike. In *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* (1998) Casey had argued that reconstruction of Mark's source, based on knowledge of Second Temple Aramaic made possible by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, was vital for the recovery of the historical Jesus. In *An Aramaic Approach to Q* Casey rejected the idea that Q represented a single Greek document, and he posited an early Aramaic source that was the basis of a Greek translation that was variously edited. This research was subsequently integrated into *Jesus of Nazareth*.

Casey stressed the need for criteria that identified historical plausibility (Casey 2010, 101–41), particularly in terms of Jewish context and attention to Aramaic. He drew a distinction between memory and social memory. The latter was prone to adapt traditions and historical facts to beliefs and spiritual needs of social groups (Casey 2010, 132–41). The criterion of double dissimilarity (Casey 2010, 104–5) was useless because it posited an artificial Jesus, disconnected from the world of Judaism and from anything that the early church might have inherited. Historical plausibility is exemplified by Mark's story of people bringing the sick and possessed at sundown for healing. The Sabbath was over, and people were permitted to carry burdens, including the sick (Mk 1:32; cf. Jer 17:21–22). It fitted Jewish Sabbath observance, whereas Gentile Christians might not be so scrupulous (Casey 2010, 106–7).

Q Quelle
Q *Quelle*

God was at the center of Jesus' life and activity (Casey 2010, 199–235). Two major concepts were God's fatherhood and his kingdom/kingship. Jesus summed up his view of God in what we know as the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:9–13; Lk 11:2–4). Jesus addressed God as "Father" (Aram. *abba*), using an everyday, relatively intimate term as the natural way in which one should approach God. His call to repentance was a call to return to God and to follow in the way taught by Jesus. It embodied the meaning of the Aramaic word *tub* ("return") and is illustrated by the parable of the prodigal's return to his father (Lk 15:11–32). Repentance implied a once-and-for-all return rather than repeated actions, which explains the relatively rare occurrence of the term in the teaching of Jesus.

Jesus went deliberately to Jerusalem to die his atoning death for the redemption of Israel (Casey 2010, 401–53). His first major action there was to take control of the court of the Gentiles (Mk 11:11, 15–17; cf. Mt 21:10–17; Lk 19:45–46), where he threw out those who were selling and buying in the temple. The effect of Jesus' action was to turn the court into a place of prayer (Is 56:7). In stopping anything from being carried through the court, Jesus effectively stopped the carrying of small animals and birds for sacrifice, and coins brought for the purchase of sacrificial animals. Casey interpreted Jesus' action not as an attack on the sacrificial system as such, but rather as a recall to the true function of the temple.

In the meantime, Jesus continued to preach in the temple. He celebrated the Passover with his closest followers, among whom were the women who accompanied him. During the meal he predicted his betrayal by one of the Twelve, in accordance with the Scriptures. He interpreted the bread and wine with reference to his atoning death and the impending establishment of the kingdom. Following his arrest, Jesus was taken to Pilate, who had him executed as an insurrectionist—"The King of the Jews" (Mt 27:37; Mk 15:26; Lk 23:38; Jn 19:19)—along with two other insurrectionists. Among modern scholars who have stressed the Jewishness of Jesus, Maurice Casey was unique in his dedication to the importance of the Aramaic sources that he posited behind Mark and Q. Yet the fact remains that among the myriads of texts and fragments that have been discovered, no such Aramaic sources have been found. Casey's conclusions rested upon his personal reconstruction of them.

8.4.3. Postscript. The foregoing account has examined only a cross-section of scholars who merit attention. Selection has been determined by a desire to include both Jewish and non-Jewish scholars, focusing on those who have caught the public eye. If a "blind sampling" were taken, it might be difficult to determine which authors were Jewish and which were not. The Jewish-Christian dialogue described here is a model of mutual appreciation and understanding. At the same time, it gives the impression of passing over lightly issues that were once matters of deep division (see, e.g., 1.1 above).

8.5. Exorcism and Healing. The work that came closest to reopening the question of the Beelzebul charge was *Jesus the Magician* (1978), by Morton Smith (1915–1991), who contended that magic was the key to explaining the Christian "official portrait" of Jesus and also Jewish and pagan rejection of him. Celsus and other sources claimed that Jesus learned magic in Egypt (cf. Origen, *Cels.* 1.28, 38; *b. Šabb.* 104b). Smith was inclined to see Matthew's account of the flight of the holy family to Egypt (Mt 2:13–23) as an implausible cover-up designed to counter them. He linked the charge that Jesus was possessed by a demon to Gospel accounts of the descent of

---

Q *Quelle*
Cels. Contra Celsum (Against Celsus)
b. Babylonian Talmud
Šabb. Šabbat

the Spirit on him. Smith found further confirmation in the use of Jesus' name in Greek magical papyri (collection edited by K. Preisendanz; a subsequent English edition, dedicated to Smith, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* [2nd ed., 1992], was edited by H. D. Betz). The Christian Eucharist was essentially a magical rite.

Jesus the Magician has the appearance of being a counterpart to the "Secret Gospel of Mark," which Smith claimed to have discovered in the course of his researches in the monastery of Mar Saba, near Bethlehem, in 1958. Morton Smith's claims were based on photographs of a copy of a letter attributed to Clement of Alexandria, which no one else was permitted to see.

Initially, Smith's discovery was hailed as being equally important as the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi library. But enthusiasm waned, as parallels were drawn with a popular novel by James H. Hunter entitled *The Mystery of Mar Saba* (1940). Scholars continued to treat Smith's work with respect, and some pronounced it to be earlier than canonical Mark. It was included with hesitation by its editor, Helmut Merkel, in the first volume of *New Testament Apocrypha* (ET, 2nd ed., 1991 [edited by W. Schneemelcher]). The text purports to relate the encounter with the risen Christ by a naked young man who sought initiation into the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Merkel noted that each sentence in the brief text corresponded to parts of verses from the canonical Gospels. Smith's discovery was judged a forgery by Stephen C. Carlson (*The Gospel Hoax* [2005]) and by Peter Jeffery (*The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled* [2006]). Although Smith has his defenders, others regard his Secret Gospel of Mark as a hoax that tested the credulity of the academic world.

Throughout history the exorcism and miracle narratives have been subjected to intense scrutiny (see C. Brown 1984; 2011a). A meticulous study of their relation to magic is David E. Aune's 1980 essay "Magic in Early Christianity" in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. Aune concluded that magic was a characteristic of early Christianity from its inception. However, he warned that magic was a characteristic of all religions, and that he used the term without pejorative connotations.

Among the issues that received attention in the twentieth century was whether Jesus fitted the profile of the "divine man" (*theios anēr*), the itinerant holy miracle worker who was thought to be a common feature of the Greco-Roman world. It attracted attention in the Bultmann school through the researches of Ludwig Bieler published in his two-volume *Theios Aner: Das Bild des "Göttlichen Menschen" in Spätantike und Frühchristentum* (1935–1936; repr., 1976). More recent scholarship has determined that *theios anēr* was an imprecise concept, not particularly associated with miracle working.

The most famous rival to Jesus was the first-century itinerant wonder-working holy man Apollonius of Tyana, whose memory was preserved by Philostratus in a biography commissioned by Julia Domna, wife of the emperor Septimius Severus. Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius* relates numerous bizarre tales, such as a plague being averted at Ephesus by stoning a demon disguised as a beggar. When the stones were removed, the beggar had been transformed into a dog (*Vit. Apoll.* 4.10). Of the various wonders linked with Apollonius, the one that comes closest to the Gospel narratives is the account of a funeral procession in Rome of a young girl who apparently died on her wedding day (*Vit. Apoll.* 4.45). She was revived by Apollonius, though Philostratus leaves readers to judge whether or not there were natural causes. The episode

---

ET English translation
repr. reprint
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)

seems to conflate two Gospel stories, both recorded by Luke: the raising of the widow of Nain's son (Lk 7:11–17) and the raising of Jairus's daughter (Lk 8:40–56 [// Mt 9:18–25; Mk 5:21–43]).

A consideration that may help bring closure is comparison of Philostratus's work with Luke-Acts. Their prefaces contain truth claims employing similar style and language (Lk 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–2; *Vit. Apoll.* 1.2–3). While various incidents suggest comparison with the Synoptic Gospels generally, Luke remains a constant factor. Some suggested parallels occur only in Luke. Among them are the youthful wisdom showed by Jesus and Apollonius (Lk 2:48; *Vit. Apoll.* 1.7–8). Other incidents reflect stories that belong to Acts. Examples are the gift of languages (Acts 2:8; *Vit. Apoll.* 1.19); encounters with consuls (Acts 13:4–12; *Vit. Apoll.* 7.11–12); perilous sea voyages and welcome by followers (Acts 26:27–28:30; *Vit. Apoll.* 8:14–15).

Howard Clark Kee surveyed the question in two major monographs: *Miracle in the Early Christian World* (1983) and *Medicine, Miracle, and Magic in New Testament Times* (1986). He concluded the latter by observing, "What remains central in the New Testament … is the conviction that God is alone in control of human destiny, even though the powers of Satan have for a time seized control or sought to thwart the divine plan. That plan is being accomplished through an agent whom God has chosen and empowered.… The divine redemptive purpose and instrument of the accomplishment are … epitomized in the Q saying of Jesus, 'If, indeed, it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you' (Lk 11:20)" (Kee, 126–27).

It should be noted that in biblical times healers were considered to be agents of Yahweh (Ex 15:25–26; Deut 32:39). The practice of medicine was associated with magic and pagan religion, and it was through a radical shift in the Diaspora that physicians came to be seen as God's agents in healing (Sir 38:1–15) (see Kee, 19). The healer (*iatros* [Mk 2:17; Lk 4:23; 8:43]) was not a qualified physician in the modern sense, but rather one who practiced healing. Certain contexts imply remuneration. Priests were not healers, but they functioned as public health inspectors in the case of skin diseases (Mk 1:44; cf. Lev 14:1–4). In Luke 4:23 sickness and healing are metaphors for sin and restoration.

In *Jesus the Exorcist* (1993) Graham H. Twelftree compared the exorcisms of Jesus with exorcisms in first-century A.D. Palestine. His detailed examination of NT data led him to conclude that exorcism was an integral part of the activity of the historical Jesus. Jesus' exorcisms marked the first stage of the defeat of Satan, which showed Jesus empowered by "the eschatological Spirit of God" (Twelftree, 228) (cf. Mt 12:28; Lk 11:20). The final defeat of Satan would take place in the judgment. Exorcisms were "the focus of the coming kingdom."

More recently, Amanda Witmer pursued a theme of her mentor, Richard Horsley, in arguing that spirit possession reflected and contributed to "a broader discourse of the problematic nature of living under foreign rule and the effects of this on all levels of life, including societal, village, family and individual" (Witmer, 205). Jesus' exorcisms were perceived by the Jewish and Roman ruling elite as a dangerous political threat. Witmer brings to the fore a conflict of viewpoints regarding interpretation of the demonic. A number of scholars hold that "demons" were real. However, they were not beings, like humans, but rather a dimension of oppressive

---

// parallel text(s)
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)
Vit. Apoll. Vita Apollonii (Life of Apollonius)
Q *Quelle*

socioeconomic conditions. The root problem was the systemic structure of societies, which resulted in "possession" as the sole means of coping.

8.6. Catholic Contributions. Catholic attitudes toward biblical studies may be divided into two phases. The first was characterized by hostility to modernism. The second was marked by growing awareness of the value of critical study.

8.6.1. The Modernist Crisis. The early years of the twentieth century saw the Roman Catholic Church engulfed in controversy over modernism (see 4.1 above). Pope Leo XIII is remembered today for his social teaching and concern to define the Church's relationship to modern thinking, while remaining true to its past. His encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* (1893) asserted the inerrancy of the original texts and warned against exegesis that disregarded the norms and authority of the Church. The "analogy of faith" and Catholic teaching as received from the authority of the Church should be followed "as the supreme norm."

Toward the end of his pontificate Leo XIII established the Pontifical Biblical Commission (1902), chiefly to answer questions of authorship, date and historical truth of the Gospels, and other parts of Scripture. Between 1905 and 1915 it issued fourteen brief *responsa* defining the Church's teaching. In more recent times the nature of its pronouncements changed from "decrees" to "letters" and "instructions." One of the great biblical scholars of the age was the Dominican Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855–1938), who welcomed Leo XIII's encouragement of scholarship. Although Lagrange was an OT scholar, accusations of German rationalism inhibited further work in the OT, and he applied his labors to magisterial commentaries on Mark (1911), Luke (1920), Matthew (1923) and John (1925).

Leo's successor, Pius X, formally condemned modernism. His decree *Lamentabili* (1907) identified sixty-five errors drawn largely from the writings of Alfred Loisy and his "school." At issue was the critical approach to Scripture, the person of Jesus and the authority of the Church. The decree was followed by the encyclical *Pascendi Domini Gregis* (1907) and the oath against modernism, *Sacrorum Antistitum* (1910), which remained in force until 1967.

8.6.2. Current Scholarship. A major turning point came in 1943 with Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. It marked the fiftieth anniversary of *Providentissimus Deus* and urged that its directives be followed. While honoring the Latin Vulgate, the encyclical granted permission for translations of Scripture to be made from the original languages. The study of textual criticism was encouraged, as was that of authorship, written and oral sources, and literary types. Priests were exhorted to study Scripture and support their teaching by drawing on "sacred history."

This development was carried further by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which defined revelation as a divine unfolding through words and deeds of the history of salvation. "In the process of the composition of the sacred books God chose and employed human agents, using their own powers and faculties in such a way that they wrote as authors in the true sense, and yet God acted through them and solely as he willed" (*Dei Verbum* §11) (see further C. Brown 1991). Among the leading post-Vatican II NT scholars in America are the Jesuit Joseph A. Fitzmyer (1920–), who taught in various schools prior to his appointment at the Catholic University of America (1976–1986), and Raymond E. Brown.

Raymond E. Brown (1928–1998) was a priest and member of the Society of Saint-Sulpice. He was the first Catholic to hold a tenured professorship at Union Theological Seminary, New York, where he taught from 1970 until retirement in 1990. Brown rose to prominence for his two-volume Anchor Bible commentary *The Gospel According to John* (1966–1971), which identified layers of development before the Gospel reached its final canonical form. In his later

years he devoted attention to the Gospel narratives of the birth and death of Jesus. *The Virginal Conception and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus* (1973) was a preliminary investigation of biblical data, in contrast with doctrinal developments. It was followed by massive commentaries on Gospel narratives of Jesus' birth and death, *The Birth of the Messiah* (1973; 2nd ed., 1993) and the two-volume *The Death of the Messiah* (1994).

The most ambitious and comprehensive account of the historical Jesus by any scholar in the English-speaking world is that of John P. Meier (1942–), who taught at the Catholic University of America and Notre Dame. His book *A Marginal Jew* had its origin in Raymond Brown's invitation to write an article on the historical Jesus for the second edition of the *Jerome Biblical Commentary* (1990). Meier reflected that it was perhaps symptomatic of the state of Catholic biblical studies in the 1960s that the original edition contained no such article. Meier's early articles, which included reflections on contemporary theologians, were collected in his book *The Mission of Christ and His Church* (1990). To date, four volumes of Meier's *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* have been published. The first volume, *The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (1991), deals with method, sources and Jesus' background and early life. The second volume, *Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (1994), discusses John the Baptist, the kingdom of God, and the healing and nature miracles. The third volume, *Companions and Competitors* (2001), deals with disciples, Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and other groups. The fourth volume, *Law and Love* (2009), explores Jesus' ethical teaching. A projected fifth volume will discuss Jesus' last days and death.

Meier distinguished between "the real Jesus" and the "historical Jesus" (Meier, 1:21–31). The "real Jesus" is Jesus as he was in the totality of his person and existence, but much of his life is now irretrievably lost. "We cannot know the 'real' Jesus through historical research, whether we mean his total reality or just a reasonably complete biographical portrait. We can, however, know the 'historical Jesus' " (Meier, 1:24). "The historical Jesus is not the real Jesus, but only a fragmentary hypothetical reconstruction of him by modern means of research" (Meier, 1:31). The "theological Jesus" is the Christ of Christian theology. As a Catholic critical historian, Meier felt able to hand over to the theologians the investigation of this domain "according to their own proper methods and criteria." Meier's task was to pursue a historical, as distinct from a theological, investigation of Jesus. Jesus was "a marginal Jew" in the sense that he was mentioned only in passing at the margins of Jewish and Greco-Roman accounts of history.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is former Benedictine monk and priest, subsequently professor of NT at Emory University, Luke Timothy Johnson (1943–), who launched a series of salvos against the current quest of the historical Jesus. His main target in *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest of the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels* (1996) was the Jesus Seminar. Johnson welcomed Meier's critique of modern skepticism, but Meier's separation of fact and meaning was misguided (Johnson 1996, 133). Indeed, "abandoning the frame of meaning given to the story of Jesus by the four canonical Gospels is to abandon the frame of meaning given to the story of Jesus and of Christian discipleship by the rest of the New Testament as well" (Johnson 1996, 166) (see also Johnson 1999).

Johnson was well aware of the slippery character of the word "real" (Johnson 1996, 127–33, 143–46, 166), and the fact that "real" does not imply unmediated access to Jesus. What historical scholarship achieves is the creation of models. Johnson used the word *model* "to mean an imaginative construal of the subject being studied, as well as a structured picture of both process and product: a model is a paradigm within which the data pertinent to a discipline makes sense" (Johnson 1996, 172). Here it may be observed that the alternative to the historian's constructed

models is not a direct, unmediated access to the "real" Jesus by prayer and faith. This is because prayer and faith use their own models, constructed by the community of faith as it develops its belief system, which incorporates testimonies to past experience, inspirational songs, patterns of worship, examples drawn from biblical narratives, and so on. Without models of some sort, we cannot think about Jesus or God.

Last, but by no means least, mention must be made of the personal contribution of Pope Benedict XVI, his three-volumes on *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration* (ET, 2007), *Holy Week: From Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (ET, 2011) and *The Infancy Narratives* (ET, 2012). Previous popes had issued directives in the form of encyclicals regarding the study of Scripture. Benedict drew on his years of scholarship to deal with academic integrity and pastoral sensitivity issues of the gap between the "historical Jesus" and the "Christ of faith." He set out his "methodology" in the first of the three volumes. His work made no claims to be "an exercise of the magisterium, but is solely an expression of my personal search 'for the face of the Lord'.… Everyone is free, then, to contradict me. I would only ask my readers for that initial goodwill without which there can be no understanding" (Benedict XVI, xxiii–xxiv).

8.7. Methodology. The purpose of this section is to draw attention to the variety of methodologies and dynamics of argument in contemporary debate about the historical Jesus.

8.7.1. Data Beliefs, Data-Background Beliefs and Control Beliefs. In the academic world foundationalism is widely regarded as an illusion and failure. Knowledge and theorizing are not in practice based on a foundation of indubitables. No one has succeeded in stating how theories that are warranted are related to a set of indubitable propositions or demonstrating a general logic of the sciences and history. Hence, there is no general rule for a warranted theory of acceptance or rejection. Nicholas Wolterstorff, in *Reason Within the Bounds of Religion* (1976; 2nd ed., 1984) has made a case for distinguishing between data beliefs, data-background beliefs and control beliefs in weighing theories. In investigating an issue, the main focus is whether a thesis is supported by data beliefs and data-background beliefs. Control beliefs remain in the background, providing the general framework in which the inquiry is conducted. However, the cumulative weight of evidence may warrant modification of a control belief. In special cases, paradigm shifts occur involving major changes in control beliefs. Examples of paradigm shifts in the sciences are Newtonian physics, evolution, relativity and the discovery of DNA. In this context, "belief" does not necessarily imply doubt, of course, but rather an unavoidable reliance on the work of others of good standing, past and present. It should also be noted that a data belief in one investigation may become a data-background belief in another investigation, and vice versa.

Wolterstorff's examples were drawn from the natural sciences, but his method seems applicable in other fields. For example, we may ask about the evidence for Jesus saying or behaving in a particular way. If the answer is that it is based on passages in Scripture or some other source, we are talking about data beliefs. If we are asking about their authorship and dating and the accuracy of the source, we are talking about data-background beliefs. If we ask about how it fits a particular theory about Jesus or its theological meaning, we are in the area of control beliefs.

8.7.2. Criteria for Assessing Data Beliefs. The most comprehensive and incisive discussion

---

ET English translation
ET English translation
ET English translation

of criteria is *The Quest for the Plausible Jesus: The Question of Criteria*, by Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter (1997; ET, 2002) (on Theissen's work, see 8.3.1 above). Although Theissen succeeded to the chair at Heidelberg formerly held by Martin Dibelius and Günther Bornkamm, he broke with them and traditional German scholarship at significant points, not least in rejecting the criterion of dissimilarity. He corrected it by proposing the criterion of historical plausibility, which was linked to the plausibility of effects (*Wirkungsplausibilität*). "It is the responsibility of historical research to interpret texts so that they can be seen as the effects of the history they report.… This means that in Jesus research we must explain and interpret the historical effect of Jesus as presented to us in the form of the sources generated by him" (Theissen and Winter, 231) (*see* Criteria of Authenticity).

Historical plausibility had various subcriteria. They included opposition to traditional bias (*Tendenzwidrigkeit*), which recognized historical credibility in "unintentional evidence that is not influenced by the tendency of source" (Theissen and Winter, 174). The latter seems close to what has traditionally been called the "criterion of embarrassment." However, one must recognize that the author may have deliberately included such evidence, with a view to refuting it.

In addition, Theissen recognized the importance of coherence of sources (*Quellenkohärenz*): "When sources independently of each other testify to the same event, the prospect that we are dealing with authentic material is enhanced" (Theissen and Winter, 177). Coherence of sources was recognizable through two further subcriteria: cross-section evidence (*Querschnittsbeweis*) refers to "recurring items of content, of formal motifs and structures in different streams of tradition" (Theissen and Winter, 178); genre constancy (*Gattungsimvarianz*) is found in "features and motifs that have maintained themselves in different genres" (Theissen and Winter, 178).

Furthermore, authentic material must satisfy the criterion of Jewish contextual plausibility, which had two aspects: contextual appropriateness and contextual distinctiveness. "What Jesus intended and said must be compatible with the Judaism in the first half of the first century in Galilee.… What Jesus intended and did must be recognizable as that of an individual figure within the framework of Judaism of that time" (Theissen and Winter, 211 [italics removed]).

8.7.3. The Changing Role of Data-Background Beliefs. Through the importance that they attached to noncanonical Gospels and early fragments, John Dominic Crossan and the Jesus Seminar brought fresh awareness to what typically had been assigned to the realm of data-background beliefs. By treating the *Gospel of Thomas* on a par with the canonical Gospels and the now largely discredited Secret Gospel of Mark as prior to canonical Mark, they elevated what was previously been thought of as background to data of prime importance. The variety of noncanonical gospels raises the question of the existence of a variety of early Christian communities.

8.7.4. From Data Beliefs to Control Beliefs. In some cases cumulative data may reach a critical mass in which they achieve the status of a control belief. In other cases, control beliefs may be imposed on data as an arbitrary controlling principle. It would be an interesting exercise to retrace our steps and examine the quest of the historical Jesus in the light of the dynamic of the three categories. However, space permits noting only one case from the recent past and two examples of the role of control beliefs in the ongoing debate. The past case is Crossan's *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (see 8.2 above). The two examples, taken from the ongoing debate, concern the roles of apocalyptic and of memory and oral tradition.

8.7.4.1. John Dominic Crossan. In the entire history of the quest no other book comes close

ET English translation

to Crossan's *The Historical Jesus* in its determination to follow a rigorous methodology. The book was divided into three parts. Part 1 was devoted to the "Brokered Empire," a lengthy analysis of political, social and economic conditions under the *Pax Romana*. Part 2 zeroed in on the "Embattled Brokerage," Jewish life and Jewish figures under Roman rule. Only in part 3, on the "Brokerless Kingdom," did Jesus appear, assuming the role that was open to him in the socioeconomic situation: a peasant Jewish Cynic who sought to subvert the system by "magic and meal." The historical basis for the reconstruction of Jesus was provided by an elaborate inventory of stratified sources, arranged in accordance with chronology and attestation. From first to last, control beliefs determined the outcome. In his autobiographical memoir, *A Long Way from Tipperary* (2000), Crossan could not help wondering how far his outlook was shaped by growing up in the postcolonial enclave of the Irish Republic after centuries of oppressive British rule.

8.7.4.2. Apocalyptic. From Albert Schweitzer onwards, apocalyptic eschatology has been a control belief that has divided scholars. Bart D. Ehrman fundamentally disagreed with Schweitzer on many critical points but thought that "he was essentially right that Jesus was an apocalyptist" (Ehrman, 128). Similar views were shared by Dale C. Allison Jr. (e.g., *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* [1998]; *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* [2010]).

Other scholars regard the messianic woes as largely Schweitzer's invention. N. T. Wright considers apocalyptic language as a way of speaking about the transcendent in history, and therefore it should not be taken literally as a programmatic guide to future events (Wright 1992, 392–93; cf. 280–338). Wright sees the parousia not as Jesus' second coming back to earth after a period of absence, but rather, as in Daniel 7:13, as the coming of the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days to receive "enthronement" and dominion (Wright 1996, 341).

A solid body of scholarship has argued that the so-called apocalyptic discourse of Mark 13 and its parallels embody intertextual allusions to prophetic metaphorical language with regard to events in history (e.g., C. Brown, *NIDNTT* 2:915–17). The cosmic language about the heavenly bodies is not to be taken as prediction of unprecedented astronomical events; rather, it is the prophetic language of judgment used to denote the divine dimension of this-worldly events. In the end, contemporary interpretation is divided not only on exegesis of particular texts, but also more broadly on hermeneutical questions such as this.

8.7.4.3. Memory and Oral Tradition. The contemporary debate about memory and oral tradition is less about the exegesis of particular texts than their role in the creation of written texts. As such, it belongs chiefly to the realm of control beliefs. It is perhaps best described as a work in progress. In part, it is an alternative to the Bultmann tradition. Bultmann held that prior to the creation of the canonical Gospels there was a period in which traditions were freely created by prophets speaking in the name of Jesus within the life of the church. Scandinavian scholarship pioneered by Harald Riesenfeld's *The Gospel Tradition* (1970) and developed by his pupil Birger Gerhardsson argued that rabbinic tradition, with its emphasis on memorization, could illuminate early Christian practice. Gerhardsson's *Memory and Manuscript* (1961) argued that rabbinic practice suggested that Jesus required his followers to memorize his teaching. In *The Reliability of the Gospel Tradition* (2001) Gerhardsson envisaged a period in which oral tradition continued alongside the written Gospels until the four canonical Gospels achieved the status of Holy Scripture and became the primary sources of the Christian message. Samuel

---

NIDNTT New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. C. Brown (4 vols.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–1985)

Byrskog's *Story as History—History as Story* (2000) stressed that for Greek and Roman historians, the ideal witness was not the dispassionate observer but rather "the eyewitness who was socially involved or, even better, had been actively participating in the events" (Byrskog, 167). The subject was taken up by Richard Bauckham in *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Bauckham, 8–11), which challenged the assumption that the Gospels were the product of anonymous community tradition. Much of the discussion belongs to data-background beliefs. However, it is strategic for building the control belief that determines Bauckham's perspective on Christian origins in the Jesus of testimony.

Bauckham's argument is that "the Gospels put us in close touch with the eyewitness of the history of Jesus" (Bauckham, 472). Testimony is "as basic a means of knowledge as perception, memory, and inference" (Bauckham, 477). Bauckham follows Byrskog's argument that "the Gospels, though in some ways a very distinctive form of historiography, share broadly the attitude to eyewitness testimony that was common among historians in the Greco-Roman period" (Bauckham, 479) (*see* Historicisms and Historiography). Moreover, the category of testimony "is the one that does most justice to the Gospels both as history and as theology" (Bauckham, 505). "In summary, if the interests of Christian faith and theology in the Jesus who really lived are to recognize the disclosure of God in the history of Jesus, then testimony is the theologically appropriate, indeed the theologically necessary way of access to the historical Jesus, just as testimony is also the historically appropriate, indeed historically necessary way of access to this 'uniquely unique' historical event. It is in the Jesus of testimony that history and theology meet" (Bauckham, 508).

In his later career James D. G. Dunn has focused increasingly on Jesus as he was remembered. The first part of Dunn's *Jesus Remembered* (2003) is devoted to a survey of the quest of the historical Jesus and its shortcomings. Perhaps the greatest shortcoming was that the various portraits of Jesus inevitably were constructs, which were then used to critique the Gospel tradition (Dunn 2003, 125–26). Like N. T. Wright (see 8.1 above), Dunn saw himself as a critical realist in the tradition of Bernard Lonergan (Dunn 2003, 111). However, Wright's work seemed to be more interested in constructing metanarratives of "exile theology" and Jesus as "the climax of the covenant" (Dunn 2003, 120, 470–77), whereas Dunn concerned himself with a hermeneutic of encounter with the remembered Jesus as interpreted by the tradition of testimony in the texts of the Gospels (Dunn 2003, 111–25). This involved reappraisal of the writings of Kenneth Bailey, who suggested degrees of informal controlled tradition as a corrective to the "informal uncontrolled tradition" of Bultmann and the "formal controlled tradition" of Gerhardsson (Dunn 2003, 206).

Dunn summed up his argument in four propositions: "(1) The only realistic objective for any 'quest of the historical Jesus' is Jesus remembered. (2) The Jesus tradition of the Gospels confirms that there was a concern within earliest Christianity to remember Jesus. (3) The Jesus tradition shows us *how* Jesus was remembered; its character suggests again and again a tradition given its essential shape by regular use and reuse in oral mode. (4) This suggests in turn that that essential shape was given by the original and immediate impact made by Jesus as that was first put into words by and among those involved or eyewitnesses of what Jesus said and did. In that key sense, the Jesus tradition *is* Jesus remembered. And Jesus thus remembered *is* Jesus, or as close as we will ever be able to reach back to him" (Dunn 2003, 335). Accordingly, Dunn proposed that "the quest should start from the recognition that Jesus evoked faith from the outset of his mission and that this faith is the surest indication of the historical reality and effect of his mission" (Dunn 2009, 203 [italics removed]). In contrast to "the blinkeredness" of the literary

paradigm, Dunn proposed "the necessity of taking the oral phase of the history of Jesus with all seriousness" (Dunn 2009, 211 [italics removed]). In contrast to the liberal tradition, Dunn proposed that "we should look first of all for the Jewish Jesus rather than a non-Jewish Jesus," in the belief that "the characteristic emphases and motifs of the Jesus tradition give us a broad, clear and compelling picture of the characteristic Jesus" (Dunn 2009, 219, 223 [italics removed]).

My own reading of the literature suggests a perhaps unconscious stress on selective memory that focused on the positive while passing over negative items that actually might strengthen its case.

9. Concluding Reflections

There are many issues that this article has not been able to explore, since they would take us beyond the "quest of the historical Jesus" in the strict sense of the term. Some belong to NT Christology or even Christology at large. Among them are the variety of socially oriented theologies, such as feminism, liberation Christology, and black, Hispanic and Asian Christologies, which are concerned with biblical hermeneutics and contemporary praxis.

With regard to how many quests there are of the historical Jesus, this survey has demonstrated that there is no clear answer. There is much to be said for Stanley E. Porter's reply that it is best to think of "a single multi-faceted quest of the historical Jesus, with modifications and adjustments in approach, some of them perhaps influenced with method and others perhaps by personality or nationality" (Porter 2000, 56). But it would be a mistake to think that the judgment implies a conscious concerted enterprise leading to the same destination. Alternatively, it is tempting to think of a forest fire, which makes unpredictable leaps.

Critics of the quest often assert that the quest of the historical Jesus brings no positive results. However the alternative of a quest of "the unhistorical Jesus" has its own problems. This quest, whether recognized or not, takes two main forms. On the one hand, there is Jesus the cultural icon who functions as a kind of talisman in life's situations. On the other hand, the history of Christian theology is replete with attempts like that of Anselm of Canterbury (ca. 1033–1109) to prove the rational necessity of the incarnation "apart from Christ, as if there was never anything about him" (*Cur Deus Homo*, preface).

In fact, the quest of the unhistorical Jesus does not have a better, more immediate access to Jesus than does the quest of the historical Jesus. It is equally a construct conditioned by sources, religious and cultural belief systems, and the personality of those who undertake the construction. As in the case of all constructs, they are prone to the risk described by George Tyrrell of peering down a deep well and seeing one's own face. The admission of limitations on the part of those engaged in the quest of the historical Jesus is not a confession of the futility of the enterprise. Rather, to engage in the quest of the historical Jesus is to assert the importance of apprehending Jesus historically. It gives recognition to the fact that historical knowledge is an essential component of knowing Jesus at all.

A term that appears with increasing frequency in discussions of the historical Jesus is *hermeneutics*. Sometimes it is used in the limited sense of linguistic interpretation. A modern, more comprehensive definition is offered by Anthony C. Thiselton: "Hermeneutics explores how we read, understand, and handle texts, especially those written in another time or in a context of life different from our own. Biblical hermeneutics investigates more specifically how we read, understand, apply, and respond to biblical texts" (Thiselton, 1). The answer to the question of

---

ca. circa

how many quests there are of the historical Jesus may well turn on the number of different hermeneutical approaches there are. If we look back at Schweitzer's narrative of the quest, we see that each of his main turning points involves major hermeneutical shifts: the decision to follow Strauss in rejecting supernaturalism, the decision to reject John in favor of the Synoptic Jesus, the adoption of "consistent eschatology." These three shifts may not have applied to theological scholarship as a whole, but certainly they determined Schweitzer's outlook.

In retrospect, hermeneutical factors shaped Jesus' activity and fate in ways that Schweitzer did not envisage. It is instructive to read the Gospels from opposing perspectives, which may be called "with the grain" and "against the grain" (see Brown 2011d). By "with the grain," I mean attempting to see what the authors of the Gospels wanted readers to see. By "against the grain," I refer to the standpoint of opponents and outsiders, which may be reconstructed from the narratives. The exercise is relevant to understanding both the content of the Gospels and their form.

With regard to content, I refer to material that traditionally has been regarded as embarrassing, but preserved because it was regarded as part of authentic memory. As such, its preservation has been treated as more or less fortuitous. It seems to me that the material preserved "against the grain," was preserved because Christian tradition deemed that it required an answer—for example, charges that Jesus was a blasphemer, a Sabbath breaker, a prophet possessed by Beelzebul who led astray, a *mamzēr* (a term usually denoting the offspring of an adulterous or incestuous union [Deut 23:2], which Chilton applied to Jesus because of the stigma attached to his birth [cf. Mk 6:3; Jn 8:41]) and a stubborn and rebellious son. All this sets Jesus firmly in a Second Temple Jewish context. It is also germane to the central question of the quest of the historical Jesus: his identity.

Although the content of the Gospels addressed Jewish concerns, their format, especially that of Mark, was adapted to the Greco-Roman world. Biography seems to lie outside the rabbinic tradition. Jacob Neusner made the following observation about stories of the sages in the Talmud: "*Sage-stories turn out not to tell about sages at all; they are about the Torah personified*. Sage-stories cannot yield a gospel because they are not about sages anyway. They are about the Torah.… The gospel does just the opposite, with its focus on the uniqueness of the hero" (Neusner 1988, 52–53) (see also Neusner 1984).

It now seems clear that the canonical Gospels belong to the genre of Greco-Roman biography (*see* Gospel: Genre). They also seem to square with Jonathan Z. Smith's observation that the major religious biographies of the ancient world were characterized by "a double defense against the charge of magic—against the calumny of outsiders and the sincere misunderstanding of admirers" (Smith, 25). It also seems to me that more attention should be paid to reading the Gospels as literary narratives instead of searching them to find lowest common denominators. There are many questions that we may put to the Gospels, but the most searching questions are those that the Gospels put to us.

See also CANONICAL CRITICISM; CHRISTOLOGY; CRITERIA OF AUTHENTICITY; FEMINIST AND WOMANIST CRITICISMS; Form Criticism; GOSPELS: HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION; HISTORICISMS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY; JESUS IN NON-CHRISTIAN SOURCES; LATINO/LATINA CRITICISMS; ORALITY AND ORAL TRANSMISSION; POSTCOLONIAL CRITICISM; Q; REDACTION CRITICISM; SOCIAL-SCIENTIFIC CRITICISMS; SYNOPTIC PROBLEM; TEXTUAL CRITICISM; THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE GOSPELS.

Q *Quelle*

BIBLIOGRAPHY. **D. C. Allison Jr.**, *The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); idem, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998); idem, *The Historical Christ and the Theological Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); idem, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination and History* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010); **W. Baird**, *History of New Testament Research* (3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992–2013); **E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule**, eds., *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); **H.-W. Bartsch**, ed., *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*, trans. R. H. Fuller (2 vols; London: SPCK, 1953); **R. Bauckham**, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); **J. K. Beilby and P. R. Eddy**, eds., *The Historical Jesus: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009); **Benedict XVI (J. Ratzinger)**, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, trans. A. J. Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2008); **D. L. Bock**, *Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002); **D. L. Bock and R. L. Webb**, eds., *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence* (WUNT 247; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009); **M. Bockmuehl**, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); **H. K. Bond**, *The Historical Jesus: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T & T Clark, 2012); **M. J. Borg**, *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1984); idem, *Jesus, A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987); idem, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994); idem, ed., *Jesus at 2000* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997); **G. Bornkamm**, *Jesus of Nazareth*, trans. I. McLuskey, F. McCluskey and J. M. Robinson (New York: Harper, 1960); **W. Bousset**, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. J. E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970 [1913]); **S. G. F. Brandon**, *Jesus and the Zealots: A Study in the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967); **C. Brown**, "The Parousia and Eschatology in the NT," *NIDNTT* 2:901–35; idem, *Miracles and the Critical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984); idem, *Jesus in European Protestant Thought, 1778–1860* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985); idem, "Scripture and Christology: A Protestant Look at the Work of the Pontifical Biblical Commission," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. M. Shuster and R. Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991) 39–76; idem, "Issues in the History of the Debates on Miracles," in *The Cambridge Companion to Miracles*, ed. G. H. Twelftree (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011a) 273–90; idem, "The Quest of the Unhistorical Jesus and the Quest of the Historical Jesus," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. T. Holmén and S. E. Porter (4 vols.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011b) 2:855–86; idem, "Why Study the Historical Jesus?" in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. T. Holmén and S. E. Porter (4 vols.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011c) 2:1411–38; idem, "With the Grain and Against the Grain: A Strategy for Reading the Synoptic Gospels," *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. T. Holmén

---

trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
PA Probleme der Ägyptologie
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
NIDNTT New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. C. Brown (4 vols.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–1985)

and S. E. Porter (4 vols.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011d) 1:619–48; idem, *The Quests of the Historical Jesus: A Brief History* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, forthcoming); **R. E. Brown**, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives of Matthew and Luke* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1973); *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave; A Commentary on the Passion Narratives of the Four Gospels* (2 vols.; ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994); **R. Bultmann**, *Jesus and the Word*, trans. L. P. Smith and E. H. Lantero (New York: Scribner, 1934 [1926]); idem, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. K. Grobel (New York: Scribner, 1951–1955); idem, *Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting*, trans. R. H. Fuller (London: Thames & Hudson, 1956 [1949]); idem, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (London: SCM, 1960); idem, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. J. Marsh (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963 [1921]); idem, "The Primitive Christian Kerygma and the Historical Jesus," trans. C. E. Braaten and R. A. Harrisville, in *The Historical Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ: Essays on the New Quest of the Historical Jesus*, ed. C. E. Braaten and R. A. Harrisville (Nashville: Abingdon, 1964) 15–42; idem, *Faith and Understanding*, trans. L. P. Smith, ed. R. W. Funk (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); idem, "The Problem of Theological Exegesis," in *The Beginnings of Dialectic Theology*, ed. J. M. Robinson (Richmond: John Knox, 1968); **R. A. Burridge**, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Greco-Roman Biography* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); idem, *Four Gospels, One Jesus? A Symbolic Reading* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994); **R. A. Burridge and G. Gould**, *Jesus Now and Then* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); **S. Byrskog**, *Story as History—History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient History* (WUNT 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); **M. Casey**, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SPCK, 1979); idem, *From Jewish Prophet to Gentile God: The Origins and Development of New Testament Christology* (Cambridge: James Clarke; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991); idem, *The Solution to the "Son of Man" Problem* (LNTS 343; London: T & T Clark, 2007); idem, *Jesus of Nazareth: An Independent Historian's Account of His Life and Teaching* (London: T & T Clark, 2010); **J. H. Charlesworth**, ed., *Jesus' Jewishness: Exploring the Place of Jesus in Early Judaism* (New York: Crossroad, 1991); idem, ed., *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity; The First Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992); idem, *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Doubleday, 1993); idem, ed., *Jesus and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); idem, *The Historical Jesus: An Essential Guide* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008); **J. H. Charlesworth and P. Pokorný**, eds., *Jesus Research: An International Perspective; The First Princeton-Prague Symposium on Jesus Research, Prague 2005* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2009); **J. H. Charlesworth and W. P. Weaver**, eds., *Jesus Two Thousand Years Later* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000); **B. Chilton**, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program Within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); idem, *Pure Kingdom:*

ABRL Anchor Bible Reference Library
ABRL Anchor Bible Reference Library
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
LNTS Library of New Testament Studies
PA Probleme der Ägyptologie

Jesus' Vision of God (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996); idem, *Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 2000); **B. Chilton and C. A. Evans**, *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current* Research (NTTS 19; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994); idem, eds., *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU 25; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995); idem, eds., *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity, and Restoration* (AGJU 39; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997); idem, eds., *Authenticating the Words of Jesus* (NTTS 28/1; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999); idem, eds., *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus* (NTTS 28/2; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999); **H. Conzelmann**, *Jesus: The Classic Article from RGG Expanded and Updated*, trans. R. Lord, ed. J. Reumann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973); **P. Copan and C. A. Evans**, *Who Was Jesus? A Jewish-Christian Dialogue* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001); **J. D. Crossan**, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991); idem, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994); idem, *God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2007); **J. D. Crossan, L. T. Johnson and W. H. Kelber**, *The Jesus Controversy: Perspectives in Conflict* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999); **C. H. Dodd**, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: Nisbet, 1935); idem, *History and the Gospel* (London: Nisbet, 1938; rev. ed.; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964); idem, *The Founder of Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1970); **J. D. G. Dunn**, *The Evidence for Jesus* (Louisville: Westminster, 1985); idem, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); idem, *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); idem, "Remembering Jesus: How the Quest of the Historical Jesus Lost Its Way," in *The Historical Jesus: Five Views*, ed. J. K. Beilby and P. R. Eddy (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009) 199–225; **J. D. G. Dunn and S. McKnight**, eds., *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005); **B. D. Ehrman**, *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); **C. A. Evans**, *Life of Jesus Research: An Annotated Bibliography* (NTTS 24; Leiden: E. J. Brill 1996); idem, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006); idem, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus* (London: Routledge, 2008); **C. A. Evans and S. E. Porter**, eds., *The Historical Jesus: A Sheffield Reader* (BibSem 33; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); **D. Flusser, with R. S. Notley**, *The Sage from Galilee: Recovering Jesus' Genius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); **P. Fredriksen**, *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988); idem, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews: A Jewish Life and the Emergence of Christianity* (New York: Knopf, 2000); **R. H. Fuller**, *The Foundations of New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribner, 1965); **R. W. Funk**, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996); idem, "The Jesus Seminar and the Quest," in *Jesus Then and Now: Images of Jesus in History and Christology*, ed. M. Meyer and

---

NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies
AGJU Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AGJU Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies
NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies
RGG Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. K. Galling (3rd ed.; 7 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1957–1965)
trans. translator, translated by
PA Probleme der Ägyptologie
rev. revised
NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies
BibSem The Biblical Seminar

C. Hughes (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001) 130–39; **B. Gaventa and R. B. Hays**, eds., *Seeking the Identity of Jesus: A Pilgrimage* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008); **B. Gerhardsson**, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, trans. E. J. Sharpe (ASNU 22; Lund: Gleerup, 1961); **K. Hammann**, *Rudolf Bultmann: A Biography*, trans. P. E. Devenish (Salem, OR: Polebridge, 2013); **H. Harris**, *David Friedrich Strauss and His Theology* (SJTMS; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); idem, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990); **A. E. Harvey**, *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982); **M. Hengel**, *Was Jesus a Revolutionist?* trans. W. Klassen (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971 [1970]); idem, *Victory over Violence: Jesus and the Revolutionists*, trans. D. E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973 [1971]); idem, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*, trans. J. Greig (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1981 [1968]); idem, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I Until 70 A.D.*, trans. D. Smith (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989); **T. Holmén and S. E. Porter**, eds, *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011); **R. A. Horsley**, "The Zealots: Their Origin, Relationships and Importance in the Jewish Revolt," *NovT* 28 (1986) 159–92; idem, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987); idem, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York: Crossroad, 1989); idem, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Order* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003); **R. A. Horsley and J. S. Hanson**, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements at the Time of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Winston, 1985); **R. A. Horsley and N. A. Silberman**, *The Message of the Kingdom: How Jesus and Paul Ignited a Revolution and Transformed the Ancient World* (New York: Putnam, 1997); **J. Jeremias**, *Jesus and the Message of the New Testament*, ed. K. C. Hanson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002); **L. T. Johnson**, *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996); idem, *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999); **Käsemann**, *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W. J. Montague (London: SCM, 1964); **L. E. Keck**, *A Future for the Historical Jesus: The Place of Jesus in Preaching and Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971); idem, *Who Is Jesus? History in Perfect Tense* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001); **H. C. Kee**, *Medicine, Miracle, and Magic in New Testament Times* (SNTSMS 55; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); **C. S. Keener**, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Raids: Eerdmans, 2009); **C. Keith and L. Hurtado**, eds., *Jesus Among Friends and Enemies: A Historical and Literary Introduction to Jesus in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); **W. H. Kelber and S. Byrskog**, *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009); **J. Klausner**, *Jesus of*

PA Probleme der Ägyptologie
trans. translator, translated by
ASNU Acta seminarii neotestamentici upsaliensis
trans. translator, translated by
SJTMS Scottish Journal of Theology Monograph Supplements
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
NovT Novum Testamentum
trans. translator, translated by
SNTSMS Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series

Nazareth: His Life, Times, and Teaching, trans. H. Danby (London: Allen & Unwin, 1925); **W. G. Kümmel**, *The New Testament: History of the Investigation of Its Problems*, trans. S. M. Gilmour and H. C. Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972 [1970]); idem, *Vierzig Jahre Jesusforschung (1950–1990)*, ed. H. Merklein (2nd ed.; BBB 91; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum, 1994); **B. F. LeBeau, L. Greenspoon and D. Hamm**, eds., *The Historical Jesus Through Catholic and Jewish Eyes* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000); **G. E. Lessing**, *Lessing's Theological Writings: Selections in Translation*, trans. H. Chadwick (London: A & C Black, 1956); **A.-J. Levine, D. C. Allison Jr. and J. D. Crossan**, eds., *The Historical Jesus in Context* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); **H. D. A. Major, T. W. Manson and C. J. Wright**, *The Mission and Message of Jesus: An Exposition of the Gospels in the Light of Modern Research* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1937); **T. W. Manson**, *The Teaching of Jesus: Studies in Its Form and Content* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931); idem, "The Life of Jesus: Some Tendencies in Present-Day Research," in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology: Studies in Honour of C. H. Dodd*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964) 211–20; **S. McKnight and J. B. Modica**, eds., *Who Do My Opponents Say That I Am? An Investigation of the Accusations of the Accusations against Jesus* (LNTS 327; London: T & T Clark, 2008); **J. P. Meier**, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; New York: Doubleday; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991–2009); **B. F. Meyer**, *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1979); **S. Neill and T. Wright**, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861–1986* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); **J. Neusner**, *In Search of Talmudic Biography: The Problem of the Attributed Saying* (BJS 70; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984); idem, *Why No Gospels in Talmudic Judaism?* (BJS 135; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988); **C. C. Newman**, ed., *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1999); **B. Pearson**, "The Gospel according to the 'Jesus Seminar': On Some Recent Trends in Gospel Research," in *The Emergence of the Christian Religion: Essays on Early Christianity* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997) 23–57; **N. Perrin and R. B. Hays**, eds., *Jesus, Paul and the People of God: A Theological Dialogue with N. T. Wright* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011); **S. E. Porter**, ed., *Handbook to the Exegesis of the New Testament* (NTTS 25; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997); idem, *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals* (JSNTSup 191; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); **M. A. Powell**, *Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998); **H. S. Reimarus**, *Fragments*, trans. R. S. Fraser, ed. C. H. Talbert (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970); **H. G. Reventlow**, *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World*, trans. J. Bowden

---

trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
BBB Bonner biblische Beiträge
PA Probleme der Ägyptologie
trans. translator, translated by
LNTS Library of New Testament Studies
BJS Brown Judaic Studies
BJS Brown Judaic Studies
PA Probleme der Ägyptologie
NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies
JSNTSup Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by

(Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); idem, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, 4 vols., trans. L. G. Perdue and J. O. Duke (4 vols.; SBLRBS 50, 61, 62, 63; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009–2010); **J. M. Robinson**, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London: SCM, 1959); idem, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); idem, *The Gospel of Jesus: In Search of the Original Good News* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005); **E. P. Sanders**, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977); idem, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); idem, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Allen Lane; Penguin Press, 1993); **F. Schleiermacher**, *The Life of Jesus*, trans. S. M. Gilmour, ed. J. C. Verheyden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); **J. Schröter and R. Brucker**, eds., *Der historische Jesus: Tendenzen und Perspektiven der gegenwärtigen Forschung* (BZNW 114; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002); **A. Schweitzer**, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God: The Secret of Jesus' Messiahship and Passion*, trans. W. Lowrie (London: A & C Black, 1914); idem, *The Problem of the Lord's Supper According to the Scholarly Research of the Nineteenth Century and the Historical Accounts*, trans. A. J. Matill Jr., ed. J. Reumann (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1982); *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, ed. J. Bowden (1st complete ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001 [1913]); **J. Z. Smith**, "Good News Is No News: Aretology and the Gospel," in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*, ed. J. Neusner (4 vols.; SJLA 12; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975) 1:21–38; **D. F. Strauss**, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, trans. G. Eliot, ed. P. C. Hodgson (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972); idem, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History: A Critique of Schleiermacher's Life of Jesus*, trans. L. E. Keck (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977); **G. Theissen**, *The Shadow of the Galilean: The Quest of the Historical Jesus in Narrative Form*, trans. J. Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress 1987); idem, *Jesus als historische Gestalt: Beiträge zur Jesusforschung; Zum 60. Geburtstag von Gerd Theissen*, ed. A. Merz (FRLANT 202; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003); **G. Theissen and A. Merz**, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*, trans. J. Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998); **G. Theissen and D. Winter**, *The Quest for the Plausible Jesus: The Question of Criteria*, trans. M. E. Boring (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002); **A. C. Thiselton**, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); **G. H. Twelftree**, *Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (WUNT 2/54; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993); **R. E. Van Voorst**, *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000); **G. Vermes**, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (London: Collins, 1973); idem, *Jesus in His Jewish Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003); **W. P. Weaver**, *The Historical Jesus in the Twentieth Century, 1900–1950* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999); **J. Weiss**, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*, trans. R. H. Hiers

---

trans. translator, translated by
SBLRBS Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
trans. translator, translated by
BZNW Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
trans. translator, translated by
WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
PA Probleme der Ägyptologie
trans. translator, translated by

and D. L. Holland (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971); **A. Witmer**, *Jesus, the Galilean Exorcist: His Exorcisms in Social and Political Context* (LNTS 459; London: T & T Clark, 2012); **W. Wrede**, *The Messianic Secret*, trans. J. C. G. Greig (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971); **N. T. Wright**, *The New Testament and the People of God* (COQG 1; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992); idem, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (COQG 2; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996).

C. Brown[1]

LNTS Library of New Testament Studies
trans. translator, translated by
COQG Christian Origins and the Question of God
COQG Christian Origins and the Question of God

[1] C. Brown, "Quest of the Historical Jesus," ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, Second Edition* (Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; IVP, 2013), 718–756.