

Western Kentucky University

TopSCHOLAR®

Faculty/Staff Personal Papers

WKU Archives Records

Winter 2015

Written Gospel or Oral Tradition? (John 3:3, 5)

James W. Barker

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/fac_staff_papers



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty/Staff Personal Papers by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.

Western Kentucky University

From the Selected Works of James W. Barker

Winter 2015

Written Gospel or Oral Tradition? (John 3:3, 5)

James W Barker



Available at: https://works.bepress.com/james_barker/5/

Early Christianity

4

Volume 6
2015

Editorial

Christiane Zimmermann

Christinnen in Lykaonien **445–487**

Julia A. Snyder

Imitation of “We” Passages in Acts? Canonical Influence and the Internal (First Person) Narrator of the Acts of John **488–516**

Chris Keith

Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part Two) **517–542**

James W. Barker

Written Gospel or Oral Tradition? Patristic Parallels to John 3:3, 5 **543–558**

New Discoveries

Peter Arzt-Grabner, Neuigkeiten aus der Papyrologie (2) **561–569**

New Projects

Andreas Merkt with Tobias Nicklas and Joseph Verheyden, Das Novum Testamentum Patristicum (NTP): Ein Projekt zur Erforschung von Rezeption und Auslegung des Neuen Testaments in frühchristlicher und spätantiker Zeit **573–595**



Mohr Siebeck

Digitaler Sonderdruck des Autors mit Genehmigung des Verlages

Early Christianity

Herausgegeben von Jens Schröter (Geschäftsführender Herausgeber), Jörg Frey, Simon Gathercole und Clare K. Rothschild

Manuskripte, redaktionelle Anfragen und Rezensionangebote werden an die Redaktion erbeten:

Prof. Dr. Jens Schröter
Redaktion Early Christianity
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Theologische Fakultät
Unter den Linden 6
D-10099 Berlin
Germany
E-Mail: early-christianity@hu-berlin.de

Die Annahme zur Veröffentlichung erfolgt schriftlich und unter dem Vorbehalt, dass das Manuskript nicht anderweitig zur Veröffentlichung angeboten wurde. Mit der Annahme zur Veröffentlichung überträgt der Autor dem Verlag das ausschließliche Verlagsrecht. Das Verlagsrecht endet mit dem Ablauf der gesetzlichen Urheberschutzfrist. Der Autor behält das Recht, ein Jahr nach der Veröffentlichung einem anderen Verlag eine einfache Abdruckgenehmigung zu erteilen. Bestandteil des Verlagsrechts ist das Recht, den Beitrag fotomechanisch zu vervielfältigen und zu verbreiten, sowie das Recht, die Daten des Beitrags zu speichern und auf Datenträgern oder im Onlineverfahren zu verbreiten.

Für die Einreichung von Manuskripten sind die Richtlinien unter <http://www.mohr.de/ec> zu beachten. Die Herausgeber behalten sich vor, bei eingereichten Artikeln Änderungen zu verlangen.

Online-Volltext

Im Abonnement für Institutionen und Privatpersonen ist der freie Zugang zum Online-Volltext enthalten. Institutionen mit mehr als 20.000 Nutzern bitten wir um Einholung eines Preisangebots direkt beim Verlag. Kontakt: elke.brixner@mohr.de. Um den Online-Zugang für Institutionen/Bibliotheken einzurichten, gehen Sie bitte zur Seite: www.ingentaconnect.com/register/institutional. Um den Online-Zugang für Privatpersonen einzurichten, gehen Sie bitte zur Seite: www.ingentaconnect.com/register/personal

Verlag: Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Postfach 2040, 72010 Tübingen
Vertrieb: erfolgt über den Buchhandel.

© 2015 Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Tübingen

Die Zeitschrift und alle in ihr enthaltenen einzelnen Beiträge und Abbildungen sind urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlags unzulässig und strafbar. Das gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

Printed in Germany.

Satz: Konrad Tritsch GmbH, Ochsenfurt.

Druck: Gulde-Druck, Tübingen.

ISSN 1868-7032 (Gedruckte Ausgabe)

ISSN 1868-8020 (Online-Ausgabe)

James W. Barker

Written Gospel or Oral Tradition? Patristic Parallels to John 3:3, 5¹

Nach verbreiteter Auffassung haben Johannes, Justin der Märtyrer, Tertullian, Hippolyt, die Pseudoklementinen und die Apostolischen Konstitutionen für die Formulierung „von neuem“ bzw. „aus Wasser und Geist geboren werden“ unabhängig voneinander auf eine mündliche Tauftradition zurückgegriffen. Dieser Artikel zeigt, dass die patristischen Belege auf dem Johannesevangelium basieren.

Keywords: literary dependence, orality, reception history, redaction criticism

1. Introduction

Helmut Koester and his students have forged a methodology for distinguishing between literary dependence and oral tradition. These scholars agree on a quintessential case of continuing oral tradition, namely a baptismal saying about not entering heaven without being “born again” or “born of water and Spirit.” In slightly different forms, this saying appears in the Gospel of John (3:3, 5) and in half a dozen texts dating from the second to fourth centuries. Although the question has been raised whether all these parallels are independent of the Fourth Gospel,² the question has not yet received a thoroughgoing answer. The present essay reexamines this test case and finds a contradiction: if Koester’s school of thought has formulated a reliable methodology (as I think it has), then the conclusion about this orally transmitted baptismal saying is invalid and incorrect.³

1 My sincere thanks extend to the staff of the Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University for generously funding much of this research through a Visiting Scholar’s Fellowship in June 2013. I also wish to thank Charles E. Hill of Reformed Theological Seminary for offering helpful and supportive feedback on an earlier version of this article.

2 T. Nagel, *Die Rezeption des Johannesevangeliums im 2. Jahrhundert: Studien zur vorirenäischen Aneignung und Auslegung des vierten Evangeliums in christlicher und christlich-gnostischer Literatur* (ABIG 2; Leipzig, 2000), 98–99.

3 Others have offered similar critiques, not of Koester’s methodology per se, but of his inconsistency in applying it. E.g., P. Foster, “The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch and the

Upon closer scrutiny, each of the patristic sayings is shown to be literarily dependent on the Gospel of John.

Regarding the notion of literary dependence, contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes the role of memory and orality in the early transmission of Jesus material.⁴ So it is important to acknowledge from the outset that literary, mnemonic, and oral transmission were not mutually exclusive processes. For the purposes of this essay, though, I argue that it was the written text of the Fourth Gospel being remembered in the texts from the second through fourth centuries.⁵ I readily acknowledge that the patristic authors might not have copied or paraphrased the Gospel of John via direct visual contact. Yet I maintain the terminology of literary dependence to emphasize that patristic “born again” and “born of water and Spirit” sayings were not unmediated by the Fourth Gospel.

In what follows, I review the methodological criteria of redaction, quotation, and recurrence as elucidated by Koester and others, and I tabulate

Writings that Later Formed the New Testament,” in *Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (ed. A.F. Gregory and C.M. Tuckett; Oxford, 2005), 160–186, here 174–176, 185, rightly observes that Ignatius of Antioch’s statement that Jesus was baptized by John “in order to fulfill all righteousness” (Ign. *Smyrn.* 1:1) meets Koester’s criterion for literary dependence because “to fulfill all righteousness” appears in Matt 3:15 as a redactional addition to Mark; yet Koester’s own study (*Synoptische Überlieferung bei den Apostolischen Vätern* [TU 65; Berlin, 1957], 57–59) appealed to a hypothetical source behind Ignatius’s quotation.

- 4 See esp. S. Byrskog, “The Transmission of the Jesus Tradition: Old and New Insights,” *EC* 1 (2010), 441–468. Though indebted to traditional form criticism, Byrskog critiques inconsistencies in its operation, particularly as elucidated by Rudolf Bultmann; see S. Byrskog, review of *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, by R. Bultmann, *JBL* 122 (2003), 549–555. For critiques and affirmations of form criticism from the perspective of social memory theory, see C. Keith, “Social Memory Theory and the Gospels: The First Decade (Part Two),” in this issue; my thanks to Chris for sharing with me his pre-production manuscript. For overviews of social memory theory vis-à-vis the gospels, see S.J. Davis, *Christ Child: Cultural Memories of a Young Jesus* (Synkrisis; New Haven, 2014), 14–18; E. Eve, *Behind the Gospels: Understanding the Oral Tradition* (Minneapolis, 2014), 91–98; C. Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy: Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee* (LNTS 413; New York, 2011), 50–70; A. Le Donne, *The Historiographical Jesus: Memory, Typology, and the Son of David* (Waco, Tex., 2009), 41–64; R. Rodriguez, *Structuring Early Christian Memory: Jesus in Tradition, Performance, and Text* (LNTS 407; New York, 2010), 39–80.
- 5 Byrskog, “Transmission” (see n. 4), 453–454, mentions competitive recitations of Homer’s works. H. Pelliccia, “Two Points about Rhapsodes,” in *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World* (ed. M. Finkelberg and G.G. Stroumsa; JSRC 2; Leiden, 2003), 97–116, here 115, has argued persuasively that such Homeric recitations necessitate a fixed text. Similarly, L.W. Hurtado, “Oral Fixation and New Testament Studies? ‘Orality,’ ‘Performance’ and Reading Texts in Early Christianity,” *NTS* 60 (2014), 321–340, here 339, has reasonably concluded, “There is no basis for claiming [...] that in early Christian circles texts were typically delivered from memory and not read out, or that they were composed in performance.”

all the previously adduced “born again” and “born of water and Spirit” sayings. I then I analyze each of these sayings in chronological order. Surprisingly, the argument for this orally transmitted baptismal saying has never rested on a sure foundation.

To establish literary dependence rather than oral tradition, Koester formulates a redaction-critical criterion: “Whenever one observes words or phrases that derive from the author or redactor of a gospel writing, the existence of a written source must be assumed.”⁶ Koester’s own dissertation at Marburg utilized this methodological principle,⁷ which became axiomatic in several dissertations he directed at Harvard, namely Melvyn Hillmer’s, Arthur Bellinzoni’s, and Leslie Kline’s.⁸ Some of them have elaborated Koester’s methodology. Hillmer recommends Rudolf Bultmann’s commentary on the Gospel of John as a general guide for identifying Johannine composition or redaction, and Hillmer adds a quotation criterion: “explicit quotation formulae accompanied by a citation or definite allusion to the Fourth Gospel [...] make certain the use of this gospel.”⁹ Bellinzoni now adds a criterion of recurrence: “Numerous parallels indicate more probable knowledge and/or use of a source [...]”¹⁰ Even after fifty years, Koester’s redaction criterion lies entrenched as the strictest methodological means of demonstrating literary dependence.¹¹

6 H. Koester, “Written Gospels or Oral Tradition?” *JBL* 113 (1994), 293–297, here 297.

7 Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung* (see n. 3), 3.

8 A.J. Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (NovTSup 17; Leiden, 1967), 4; M.R. Hillmer, “The Gospel of John in the Second Century” (Th.D. diss., Harvard Divinity School, 1966), 6; L.L. Kline, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (SBLDS 14; Missoula, Mont., 1975), 10.

9 Hillmer, “Gospel of John” (see n. 8), 6; in affirming this principle, A.F. Gregory and C.M. Tuckett, “Reflections on Method: What Constitutes the Use of the Writings that Later Formed the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers?” In id., *Reception of the New Testament* (see n. 3), 61–82, here 66–67, qualify that the absence of an introductory formula does not rule out the presence of a quotation.

10 A.J. Bellinzoni, “The Gospel of Luke in the Apostolic Fathers: An Overview,” in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers* (ed. A.F. Gregory and C. Tuckett; Oxford 2005), 45–68, here 51.

11 Bellinzoni, “Gospel of Luke” (see n. 10), 51; M. Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels: The Case for Thomas’s Familiarity with the Synoptics* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2012); Gregory and Tuckett, “Reflections on Method” (see n. 9), 71, 75–76; Gregory and Tuckett qualify that the strictness of the method sometimes limits its usefulness. See also L.R. Zelyck, *John among the Other Gospels: The Reception of the Fourth Gospel in the Extra-Canonical Gospels* (WUNT 2/347; Tübingen 2013), 13–21, who follows Hillmer, “Gospel of John” (see n. 8), and Nagel, *Rezeption* (see n. 2), closely.

Synopsis of John 3:3, 5 and Patristic Parallels

Protasis			
John 3:3b	ἐὰν μή τις	γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν	
John 3:5b	ἐὰν μή τις	γεννηθῆ	ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος
Justin, <i>1 Apol.</i> 61.4b	ἂν μὴ	ἀναγεννηθῆτε	
Tertullian, <i>Bapt.</i> 13.3	<i>nisi quis</i>	<i>renatus fuerit</i>	<i>ex aqua et spiritu sancto</i>
Hippolytus, <i>Haer.</i> 8.10.8	ἐὰν μή τις	γεννηθῆ	ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος
Ps.-Clem. <i>Recogn.</i> 6.9.2	<i>nisi quis</i>	<i>denuo renatus fuerit</i>	<i>ex aqua viva</i>
Ps.-Clem. <i>Hom.</i> 11.26.2	ἐὰν μὴ	ἀναγεννηθῆτε	ὔδατι ζῶντι ...
Apos. Con. 6.15.5	ἐὰν μή τις	βαπτισθῆ	ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος
Apodosis			
John 3:3b	οὐ δύναται	ιδεῖν	τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ
John 3:5b	οὐ δύναται	εἰσελθεῖν	εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ
John 3:5b (N*)	οὐ δύναται	ιδεῖν	τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν
John 3:5b (e)	<i>non potest</i>	<i>introire</i>	<i>in regnum caelorum</i>
Justin, <i>1 Apol.</i> 61.4b	οὐ μὴ	εἰσέλθῃτε	εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν
Tertullian, <i>Bapt.</i> 13.3	<i>non</i>	<i>introibit</i>	<i>in regno caelorum</i>
Hippolytus, <i>Haer.</i> 8.10.8	οὐκ	εἰσελεύσεται	εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν
Ps.-Clem. <i>Recogn.</i> 6.9.2	<i>non</i>	<i>introibit</i>	<i>in regna caelorum</i>
Ps.-Clem. <i>Hom.</i> 11.26.2	οὐ μὴ	εἰσέλθῃτε	εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν
Apos. Con. 6.15.5	οὐ μὴ	εἰσέλθῃ	εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν

As a compilation of the previously adduced – and presumably orally transmitted – “born again” and “born of water and Spirit” sayings, the synopsis above aligns the following sources: John 3:3b, 5b; Justin, *1 Apol.* 61.4 (SC 507.290); Hippolytus, *Haer.* 8.10.8 (PTS 25.329); Apos. Con. 6.15.5 (SC 329.344); Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.26.2 (GCS 42.167); Ps.-Clem. *Recogn.* 6.9.2 (GCS 51.192); Tertullian, *Bapt.* 13.3 (CSEL 1.289). The synopsis also includes two variants showing that “kingdom of the heavens” entered the transmission of John 3:5 at an early stage.¹² John 3:3b evinces similarities with Matt 18:3b (“Amen I say to you [plural], if you do not turn and become as children, you will not at all enter into the kingdom of the heavens”), and many have posited Matthew and John’s common use of oral tradition;¹³ the relation between the Matthean and Johannine sayings never-

12 The wording τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν originally stood in *Codex Sinaiticus* (N), and *regnum caelorum* stands in the Old Latin *Codex Palatinus* (e).

13 R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray; Philadelphia, 1971), 135 n. 4; C.H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge, 1963), 358–359; J.D.G. Dunn, *The Oral Gospel Tradition* (Cambridge, 2013), 156; J. Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries* (London, 1960), 51–52; B. Lindars, “John and the Synoptic Gospels: A Test Case,” *NTS* 27 (1981), 287–294;

theless lies beyond the scope of this article, given that all the patristic sayings align with John's "born again" or "born of water and Spirit" rather than Matthew's "turn and become as children."

2. The "Born again" and "Born of Water and Spirit" Sayings in the Gospel of John

The earliest extant "born again" and "born of water and Spirit" sayings appear in the Gospel of John. Because of the signs Jesus does, the Pharisee Nicodemus comprehends Jesus to be a teacher who has come from God (Joh 3:1–2).

Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen, amen I say to you, if someone is not born again (γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν), it is not possible to see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus says to him, "How is it possible for a person who is old to be born? It is not possible to enter into one's mother's womb a second time and be born, is it?" Jesus answered, "Amen, amen I say to you, if someone is not born of water and Spirit, it is not possible to enter into the kingdom of God. What has been born of the flesh is flesh, and what has been born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:3–6)

The surrounding context readily connects to baptism, for immediately following the Nicodemus discourse (John 3:1–21) Jesus and his disciples begin baptizing in Judea (John 3:22), and earlier in the Gospel John the Baptist distinguished his own baptism with water from Jesus's baptism with the Holy Spirit (John 1:33). The question remains, though, whether a free-floating "born again" saying *ipso facto* would have connoted baptism. In other words, did the Fourth Evangelist give the "born again" saying a baptismal connotation by placing it in its particular context, or did the saying inherently connote baptism, thereby engendering the surrounding baptismal references?¹⁴ To escape circularity when determining

J.W. Pryor, "John 3.3, 5: A Study in the Relation of John's Gospel to the Synoptic Tradition," *JSNT* 41 (1991), 71–95; R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (3 vols.; New York, 1968–1982), 1.367.

¹⁴ According to Bultmann, *Gospel of John* (see n. 13), 135 n. 4, 137 n. 1, the original "born again" saying was Gnostic and unrelated to baptism, yet the Ecclesiastical Redactor of the Gospel of John reinterpreted the saying as baptismal. According to Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Philadelphia, 1990), 257–258, the traditional saying always pertained to baptism because Justin's "born again" saying appears in a discussion of baptism and because 1 Pet 1:3, 23 indicates that "rebirth" (ἀναγεννώ) referred to baptism very early on; Koester's argument is accepted by Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 136, and Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 136. Another perspective altogether is that the "born again" and "born of water and Spirit" sayings are

the saying's transmission and reception, one can neither claim independent oral tradition by assuming that the "born again" saying was always baptismal; nor can one claim literary dependence by assuming that the baptismal contexts of patristic parallels already constitute proof of Johannine redaction. A methodologically sound argument for literary dependence would require additional signs of Johannine redaction.

3. The "Born again" Saying according to Justin Martyr

In the discussion of baptism in his *First Apology*, Justin writes:

For even Christ said, "If you [plural] are not born again (ἀναγεννηθῆτε), you shall not at all enter into the kingdom of the heavens." And yet that it is impossible for those being once born to embark into their birth-mothers is plain to everyone. (*1 Apol.* 61.4–5)

A persistent argument holds that Justin's saying in *1 Apol.* 61.4 was not only orally transmitted but also independent of, and probably even earlier than, the saying in John 3:3, 5.¹⁵

Scholars remain divided on the question of Justin Martyr's familiarity with the Gospel of John. Some deny a direct relationship,¹⁶ while others affirm Justin's use of John,¹⁷ including those who qualify that John's writ-

both Johannine compositions; see U.C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids, Mich., 2010), 2.122–125.

- 15 Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 136–137; Hillmer, "Gospel of John" (see n. 8), 57; Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 135–136; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (see n. 14), 361; id., "Gospels and Gospel Traditions in the Second Century," in Gregory and Tuckett, *Trajectories* (see n. 10), 27–44, here 31.
- 16 G.R. Beasley-Murray, "John 3:3, 5: Baptism, Spirit, and the Kingdom," *ExpTim* 97 (1986), 167–170, here 167; Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 134–138; E. Haenchen, *John* (2 vols.; Hermeneia; Philadelphia, 1984), 1.13; Hillmer, "Gospel of John" (see n. 8), 58; Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 139; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (see n. 14), 361; J.C. Salzmänn, "Jüdische Messiasvorstellungen in Justins Dialog mit Trypho und im Johannesevangelium," *ZNW* 100 (2009), 247–268, here 259.
- 17 F.-M. Braun, *Jean le théologien et son évangile dans l'église ancienne* (3 vols.; EtB; Paris, 1959), 1.135–144; R.M. Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (Philadelphia, 1988), 58–59; M. Hengel, *Die johanneische Frage: Ein Lösungsversuch* (WUNT 2/67; Tübingen, 1993), 64; C.E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (New York, 2004), 312–351; A. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to Saint John* (BNTC 4; Peabody, Mass., 2005), 18; W. von Loewenich, *Das Johannes-Verständnis im zweiten Jahrhundert* (BZNW 13; Giessen, 1932), 47; E. Luhumbu Shodu, *La mémoire des origines chrétiennes selon Justin Martyr* (Paradosis 50; Fribourg, 2008), 84–85; J. Romanides, "Justin Martyr and the Fourth Gospel," *GOTR* 4 (1959), 115–134, here 133; Schnackenburg, *John* (see n. 13), 1.199; G.N. Stanton, "Jesus Traditions and Gospels in Justin Martyr and Irenaeus," in *The Biblical Canons* (ed. J.-M. Auwers and H.J. de Jonge; BETL

ten Gospel mixed with continuing oral tradition.¹⁸ In a recent review article on the reception of the Fourth Gospel in the second century, Dan Batovici describes a methodological opposition between maximalists and minimalists.¹⁹ According to Batovici, maximalists such as Charles Hill and Titus Nagel consider strong verbal agreements as sufficient proof of literary dependence.²⁰ Conversely, to minimalists such as Koester and Hillmer, oral tradition just as easily and more likely explains strong verbal agreements.²¹ In Batovici's estimation, these minimalists employ rigorous criteria, which admit fewer instances of literary dependence. Such methodological rigor would seem to explain why this school of thought denies Justin's use of the Fourth Gospel for the "born again" saying in his *First Apology*.

In the specific case of Justin's "born again" saying, I consider Batovici's minimalist-maximalist dichotomy a mischaracterization, for his alleged maximalists actually adhere to the so-called minimalists' methodology. It is in accordance with Koester's redaction criterion that scholars such as Hill have deduced Justin's dependence on John. Hill demonstrates that Koester and others have inadequately contextualized *1 Apol.* 61.4:

Completely ignored in the treatments of this saying of Jesus by Koester, Hillmer, and Bellinzoni are the words which immediately follow it in Justin's apology (61.5): "Now, that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into their mothers' wombs is manifest to all," words which echo the reply of Nicodemus in John 3:4: "How can a man [*sic*] be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"²²

163; Leuven, 2003), 353–370, here 363; A. Wartelle, *Saint Justin: Apologies* (Paris, 1987), 290.

- 18 Nagel, *Rezeption* (see n. 2), 99–100; E.F. Osborn, *Justin Martyr* (BHT 47; Tübingen, 1973), 137; J.W. Pryor, "Justin Martyr and the Fourth Gospel," *SecCent* 9 (1992), 153–169, here 166. According to this line of reasoning, Justin's "born again" saying would be mediated by the Fourth Gospel even if Justin did not maintain visual contact and copy the source text directly.
- 19 D. Batovici, "The Second-Century Reception of John: A Survey of Methodologies," *CurBR* 10 (2012), 396–409.
- 20 Batovici, "Second-Century Reception" (see n. 19), 398–400.
- 21 Batovici, "Second-Century Reception" (see n. 19), 400–401.
- 22 C.E. Hill, "The Orthodox Gospel: The Reception of John in the Great Church prior to Irenaeus," in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel* (ed. T. Rasmus; NovTSup 132; Leiden 2010), 233–300, here 255. Others arriving at the same conclusion as Hill include Braun, *Jean le théologien* (see n. 17), 1.138–139; Jeremias, *Infant Baptism* (see n. 13), 52; von Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis* (see n. 17), 47; Lühumbu Shodu, *La mémoire* (see n. 17), 84; Nagel, *Rezeption* (see n. 2), 99–100; O. Skar-saune, "Justin and His Bible," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds* (ed. S. Parvis and P. Fos-

Even if “rebirth” commonly connoted baptism, then the ritual performance itself would not have necessitated an explanation of baptizands’ inability to reenter their mothers’ wombs. This obstetric gloss originated from the Evangelist in the context of the Nicodemus discourse, as Koester himself admits.²³ Justin’s reference to the mother’s womb ought to constitute Johannine redaction of the purportedly traditional saying. As Hill and others have rightly concluded, the combination of the “born again” saying and its non-literal explanation in the *First Apology* satisfies the criterion of redaction and thereby establishes Justin’s literary dependence on the Gospel of John in this instance.²⁴ Previous studies have also identified in Justin’s works numerous Johannine resemblances, the strongest of which would count as recurrence.²⁵

Hill actually noted that Justin’s and John’s references to the mother’s womb set these two sayings apart from those of Hippolytus, the Pseudo-Clementines, and the Apostolic Constitutions.²⁶ In effect, Hill granted for the sake of argument that these other patristic sayings may very well derive from “free tradition.”²⁷ In what follows, I extend his analysis to show that the minimalist methodology also denies these sayings’ claims to oral tradition.

4. The “Born of Water and Spirit” Saying according to Tertullian

In the treatise *De Baptismo*, Tertullian refutes the claim that the rite of baptism is unnecessary for those whose faith is sufficient:

ter; Minneapolis, 2007), 53–76, 179–187, here 185 n. 70; Wartelle, *Apologies* (see n. 17), 290.

23 Hillmer, “Gospel of John” (see n. 8), 55; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (see n. 14), 258; cf. Bultmann’s presumption that Justin independently attests the “rebirth” explanation (Bultmann, *Gospel of John* [see n. 13], 137 n. 1).

24 Hengel, *Johanneische Frage* (see n. 17), 64, adds a third element: in near proximity (*I Apol.* 60.2–3) Justin explains Moses’ bronze serpent (Num 21:4–9) as a type for the cross, which parallels Jesus’s statement to Nicodemus, “And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up” (John 3:14).

25 Braun, *Jean le théologien* (see n. 17), 1.13–44; Hill, *Johannine Corpus* (see n. 17), 312–342; von Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis* (see n. 17), 39–50; Luhumbu Shodu, *La mémoire* (see n. 17), 69–85; Nagel, *Rezeption* (see n. 2), 94–116.

26 Hill, “Orthodox Gospel” (see n. 22), 255 n. 61.

27 Hill, “Orthodox Gospel” (see n. 22), 255.

For the law of baptizing has been imposed and the form prescribed: “Go,” he says, “teach the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” [Matt 28:19]. This law compared with that explanation, “Unless someone has been born of water and the Holy Spirit, s/he will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens” [John 3:5], has tied faith to the necessity of baptism. (*Bapt.* 13.3)

Although Tertullian’s saying has been claimed as evidence of oral tradition,²⁸ the combination of quotations – one from Matthew and another from John – increases the likelihood that Tertullian draws from written Gospels. In near proximity to this “born of water and Spirit” saying, Tertullian clearly shows his knowledge of the Gospel of John as a written text: “‘But look,’ they say, ‘our Lord has come and has not baptized, for we read, ‘And yet Jesus himself did not baptize, but rather his disciples’”” (*Bapt.* 11.1; cf. John 4:2). Tertullian’s reference to *reading* these words meets the quotation criterion. Also, the clarification in John 4:2 that Jesus did not baptize constitutes an editorial gloss by the Fourth Evangelist,²⁹ and so Tertullian’s treatise satisfies the redaction criterion. Finally, quoting in separate places material from John 3:5 and 4:2 constitutes recurrence. Thus Tertullian’s “born of water and Spirit” shows literary dependence on the Gospel of John rather than continuing oral tradition.

5. The “Born of Water and Spirit” Saying according to Hippolytus

Hippolytus’s *Refutatio omnium haeresium* purportedly preserves a very old form of the orally transmitted baptismal liturgy.³⁰ The saying appears in Hippolytus’s discussion of the Docetists (*Haer.* 8.1–11). According to the Docetists, the Eternal Only-Begotten “did everything just as it has been written in the Gospels,” namely how he came down from above and – after an accompanying angel made the annunciation to Mary – was born and baptized and died on a cross (*Haer.* 8.10.7). However, the Docetists draw a distinction between “the body that has been born of the virgin” and “the body that had been formed in the water when he was baptized” (*Haer.* 8.10.7). That is, the body born of the virgin is flesh, whereas the body formed in the water is spirit. Hippolytus explains, “This is, [the Docetist] says, what the Savior says, ‘If someone is not born of

²⁸ Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 135.

²⁹ Bultmann, *Gospel of John* (see n. 13), 175–176, attributed John 4:1–4 to the editor.

³⁰ Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 137; Hillmer, “Gospel of John” (see n. 8), 54; Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 135; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (see n. 14), 361 n. 4.

water and Spirit, s/he will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens because what has been born of the flesh is flesh” (*Haer.* 8.10.8; cf. John 3:5–6). In the context of Hippolytus’s discussion, then, the Docetists quote John 3:5–6 as a proof-text to explain the Savior’s outward appearance, particularly how one body lived and another body died.

The Johannine saying in *Haer.* 8.10.8 hardly arises independently of the Fourth Gospel. Hippolytus satisfies the redaction criterion by quoting the “born of water and Spirit” saying along with the ensuing verse in the Gospel of John – a quotation of twenty words verbatim.³¹ In other words, Hippolytus knows the Johannine “born of water and Spirit” saying in its redacted context. This patristic text also meets the quotation criterion, for Hippolytus mentions written Gospels explicitly (*Haer.* 8.10.7), and the phrase, “this is, [the Docetist] says, what the Savior says,” serves as one of Hippolytus’s typical introductory formulas for scriptural quotations. For example, earlier in the discussion of the Docetists, Hippolytus writes, “And this be, those [i. e., Docetists] suppose, what has been spoken by the Savior,” at which point he quotes the beginning and end of the Parable of the Sower according to the redacted Gospel of Matthew (13:3b, 8, 9).³² Similar introductory formulas permeate Hippolytus’s *Refutatio*.³³

Hippolytus’s *Refutatio* includes ample recurrence of Johannine material. One other reference to being born of water and Spirit appears in the discussion of the Naassenes (*Haer.* 5.6–11). Hippolytus writes, “For, says [the Naassene], all that is born from below is mortal, but what has been born from above is immortal. For a spiritual – not fleshly – person is born of water alone and spirit; but the fleshly person is from below. This is, says [the Naassene], what has been written (τὸ γεγραμμένον), ‘What has been born of the flesh is flesh, and what has been born of the Spirit is Spirit’” (*Haer.* 5.7.40). Being “born from above” echoes John 3:3; being “born of water and Spirit” echoes John 3:5; and Hippolytus gives a typical intro-

31 This count includes “kingdom of the heavens” in Hippolytus’s text but excludes Hippolytus’s “will not enter” as opposed to John’s “it is not possible to enter”: τοῦτο ἔστι, φησίν, ὃ λέγει ὁ σωτήρ· ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἔξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, ὅτι τὸ γεγεν->ημένον ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς σὰρξ ἔστιν (*Haer.* 8.10.8).

32 The decreasing measures of hundred-, sixty-, and thirty-fold reflects Matthean redaction; cf. increasing thirty, sixty, hundred according to Mark 4:8 as well as sixty and one hundred twenty according to Gos. Thom. 9.

33 E.g., Hippolytus’s discussion of the Peratics in *Haer.* 5.12–18 uses the formula “this is/ be, says [the Peratic] what is spoken/has been spoken (τοῦτο ἔστι/εἶναι, φησι, τὸ λεγόμενον/εἰρημένον)” to introduce Col 1:12 (*Haer.* 5.12.5) as well as John 3:17 (*Haer.* 5.12.7), 3:14 (*Haer.* 5.16.11), and 10:9 (*Haer.* 5.17.8).

ductory formula before quoting John 3:6 verbatim. Hippolytus's ensuing discussion has the Naassenes quote the Fourth Gospel at least six more times.³⁴ Hippolytus thus does not appear to know, independently of the Fourth Gospel, a baptismal liturgical saying about being born of water and Spirit.

6. The "Born again" Saying in the Pseudo-Clementines

Two "born again" sayings from the Pseudo-Clementine literature – one each from *Homilies* and *Recognitions* – purportedly attest continuing oral tradition.³⁵ The strongest evidence for oral transmission in the Pseudo-Clementines would come from certain sayings of Jesus not found in the canonical Gospels; for example, Jesus commands, "Become expert bankers" (Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 3.50.2), and he explains, "The evil one is the tempter" (*Hom.* 3.55.1).³⁶ However, the evidence is not as strong for orally transmitted "born again" sayings. Even though the Pseudo-Clementines do not identify any written Gospel by name, they do make direct use of the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John.³⁷ Material from the Fourth Gospel includes the question and answer concerning the man born blind (John 9:2–3; Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 19.22.6) and Jesus's saying about his sheep hearing his voice (John 10:27; Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 3.52.3),³⁸ which meet the criterion of recurrence.

The two Pseudo-Clementine "born again" sayings also meet the quotation criterion. There was only one "born again" saying in the Pseudo-Clementine source text, and the occasion – in both the *Homilies* and *Recognitions* – is Peter's final sermon at Tripolis,³⁹ where the apostle quotes the same three Scriptures in the same order: first is Jesus's "born again" saying

34 E.g., Hippolytus records Naassene quotations of John 1:3–4 (*Haer.* 5.8.5), 2:11 (*Haer.* 5.8.7), 4:10 (*Haer.* 5.9.18), 6:53 (*Haer.* 5.8.11), 8:21b (cf. 13:33; *Haer.* 5.8.11), and 9:1 (*Haer.* 5.9.20).

35 Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 137; Hillmer, "Gospel of John" (see n. 8), 55; Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 135; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (see n. 14), 361 n. 4.

36 The "bankers" saying appears in numerous patristic sources (e.g., Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.7.2); the other saying likely glosses the phrase in the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matt 6:13; Did. 8:2).

37 See, e.g., Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 104, 125, 131.

38 See Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 131–133.

39 According to both accounts, at the conclusion of the scene at Tripolis, Peter baptizes the converts in the fountains by the sea, celebrates the Eucharist with them, and appoints Maro as bishop in addition to twelve presbyters along with deacons and widows; after three months Peter leaves for Antioch (Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.36; *Recogn.* 6.14.5).

(John 3:5; Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.26.2; *Recogn.* 6.9.2), which Peter attributes to “the Prophet”; second is Jesus’s condemnation of scribes and Pharisees for cleaning the outside of the cup and plate but leaving the inside dirty (Matt 23:25–26; Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.29.2; *Recogn.* 6.11.3), which Peter attributes to “the Teacher”; and third is Jesus’s denunciation that the Queen of the South and the men of Nineveh would accuse the present generation (Luke 11:31–32; Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.33.1–2; *Recogn.* 6.14.2–3),⁴⁰ which Peter again attributes to “the Prophet.” The attribution and quotation of the “born again” saying is thus consistent with other attributions and quotations that certainly derive from written Gospels and that appear in the same narrative episode of both Pseudo-Clementine texts.

There are slight differences between the sayings in the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*, and the latter preserve the more original form. According to the *Recognitions*, Peter says, “Amen I say to you, unless someone has been born again of living water, s/he will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens” (Ps.-Clem. *Recogn.* 6.9.2). According to the *Homilies*, Peter says, “Amen I say to you, if you are not born again in living water – in the name of Father, Son, Holy Spirit – you shall not at all enter into the kingdom of the heavens” (Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.26.2). The Trinitarian formula clearly identifies itself as secondary and would thus represent the Homilist’s redaction. The Homilist also changed the verbs for “born again” and “enter” from the third-person singular, as they appear in John 3:3, 5 and in the Pseudo-Clementine source text; in the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*, Peter introduces this quotation by saying that “the Prophet” (i. e., Jesus) swore to “us” (ἡμῖν; *nobis*; i. e., the disciples), and so the Homilist would have changed the verbs to the second-person plural to give the effect of Jesus’s direct address.

The introductory phrase “Amen I say to you” meets the redaction criterion and presents the strongest evidence for the Pseudo-Clementines’ direct use of the Gospel of John for the “born again” saying. The sayings in John 3:3, 5 each begin, “Amen, amen I say to you.” Of all the previously adduced patristic baptismal “born again” sayings, only the Pseudo-Clementine texts include the “Amen” introduction, which is reminiscent of the Fourth Gospel – albeit with one Amen rather than two. Bellinzoni and

40 Cf. Matt 12:41–42, according to which the men of Nineveh precede the Queen of the South.

Kline suggest that “Amen I say to you” was sometimes added to the orally transmitted baptismal saying,⁴¹ yet this amounts to a circular argument.

In every occurrence of “Amen” in the canonical Gospels,⁴² Jesus is the speaker and the word is part of the formula, “Amen, I say to you.” In the remainder of the New Testament, “Amen” predominantly concludes a doxology;⁴³ without exception in the Apostolic Fathers, the word “Amen” concludes a prayer or doxology.⁴⁴ According to Justin, the people say “Amen” at the conclusion of the leader’s Eucharistic prayer (*1 Apol.* 61.3–4; 67.5); Justin explains the word as a sign of the people’s assent meaning “let it be” (γένοιτο). Indeed Greek ἀμήν is a transliteration of Hebrew אָמֵן (“truly”), which is predominantly translated as γένοιτο in the Septuagint;⁴⁵ אָמֵן and אֱמֵן derive from the same root and convey the same meaning.⁴⁶ Throughout early Jewish and Greek Christian Scriptures, then, the introductory phrase “Amen I say to you” only appears in Jesus’s sayings in the Gospels, including the “born again” saying in John 3:3. It would therefore be unprecedented for John to have encountered a free-

41 Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 137–138; Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 137. Elsewhere Kline, “Harmonized Sayings of Jesus in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies and Justin Martyr,” *ZNW* 65 (1975), 223–241, here 239, makes an argument from silence: it cannot be proven that Justin’s text did not contain an “Amen” introduction.

42 There are 30 occurrences in Matthew, 13 in Mark, 6 in Luke, and 25 in John including John’s double-Amen formulas.

43 Rom 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 16:27; 2 Cor 1:20; Gal 1:5; Eph 3:21; Phil 4:20; 1 Tim 1:17; 6:16; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 4:11; 5:11; 2 Pet 3:18; Jude 25; Rev 1:6; 7:12 (twice). The word also concludes a blessing (Rom 15:33; Gal 6:18) and functions as a response to praise (Rev 5:14), thanksgiving (1 Cor 14:16), and blessing/cursing (Rev 1:7; 19:4; 22:20); in Rev 3:14, the only remaining New Testament occurrence, “the Amen” serves as a title for Jesus.

44 1 Clem. 20:12; 32:4; 38:4; 43:6; 45:7, 8; 50:7; 58:2; 61:3; 64; 65:2; 2 Clem. 20:5; Did. 10:6; Diogn. 12:9; Mart. Pol. 14:3; 15:1; 21:1; 22:3. Similarly, in the Apostolic Tradition attributed to Hippolytus, “Amen” occurs only at the conclusion of a prayer (*Trad. ap.* 3.6; 4.13; 8.5; 9.12; 22.1; 23.8, 10; 28.5); Irenaeus conveys the same usage (*Haer.* 3.25.7) and reports that the congregation says “Amen” in unison (*Haer.* 1.14.1).

45 As a translation of אָמֵן in the Septuagint, γένοιτο appears in response to instructions (1 Kgs 1:36) or curses (Num 5:22 [twice]; Deut 27:15–26 [once per verse]; Jer 11:5) as well as a response or conclusion to doxologies in the Psalms (Ps 40:14; 71:19; 88:53; 105:48); similarly, in the portions of the Septuagint having no Hebrew counterpart, ἀμήν marks the conclusion of a prayer (Tob 8:8), the conclusion of a doxology (3 Macc 7:23; 4 Macc 18:24; Odes Sol. 12:15; 14:28, 35), and the people’s response to a doxology (1 Esd 9:47). In response to a doxology or blessing/cursing, אָמֵן is occasionally transliterated as ἀμήν (1 Chr 16:36; Neh 5:13; 8:6) or translated as ἀληθῶς (“truly”; Jer 28:6); in Isa 65:16 the word is twice translated as ἀληθινός in the title “God of truth.”

46 אָמֵן is translated as ἀληθῶς in Gen 20:12; Josh 7:20; אֱמֵן is translated as ἀληθῶς (Gen 18:13; Ruth 3:12) or ἀλήθεια (“truth”; 2 Kgs 19:17; Job 9:2; 19:4; 36:4; Isa 37:18) or left untranslated (Job 12:2; 19:5; 34:12).

floating liturgical baptismal saying already attached to an “Amen” introduction. The most probable conclusion is rather that “Amen I say to you” reflects the Pseudo-Clementine source text’s knowledge of the “born again” text in its redacted Johannine context.

7. The “Baptized of Water and Spirit” Saying in the Apostolic Constitutions

The Apostolic Constitutions purportedly attest an independent, liturgical, baptismal formula.⁴⁷ The text reads, “For the Lord says, ‘If someone is not baptized of water and Spirit, s/he shall not at all enter into the kingdom of the heavens’ [cf. John 3:5]; and again, ‘The one who believed and was baptized will be saved, but the one who did not believe will be condemned’ [cf. Mark 16:16]” (Apos. Con. 6.15.5).

In my assessment, the combination of the Johannine baptism saying with a saying from the longer ending of Mark strongly suggests that the Apostolic Constitutions here quote the written Gospels rather than oral tradition.⁴⁸ An ensuing passage confirms the familiarity of the Apostolic Constitutions with the written Gospel of John. A discussion of the relation between Law and Gospel satisfies the quotation criterion:

For he did not annul the natural Law, but he confirmed it. For the one who has spoken in the Law, “the Lord your God is one Lord” [Deut 6:4], the same one says in the Gospel, “that they may know you, the only true God” [John 17:3]. And the one who has said, “you will love your neighbor as yourself” [Lev 19:18], in the Gospel [the one who] renews [the Law] says, “a new commandment I give you, that you love one another” [John 13:34]. (Apos. Con. 6.23.1)

⁴⁷ Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 137; Hillmer, “Gospel of John” (see n. 8), 54; Kline, *Sayings of Jesus* (see n. 8), 135; Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (see n. 14), 361 n. 4.

⁴⁸ Apos. Con. 2.57.7 uses the plural term Gospels and places them in the Western order, Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark; the canonical order Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John appears in Apos. Con. 8.47.85. The Apostolic Constitutions more characteristically refer to the singular “Gospel” when referring to material from any of the four canonical ones. Apos. Con. 5.14 even harmonizes the Four Gospels’ accounts of Jesus’s trial, crucifixion, and resurrection: for example, the text includes the identification of Annas as Caiaphas’s father-in-law (John 18:13; Apos. Con. 5.14.10), the accusation that Jesus said not to pay taxes (Luke 23:2; Apos. Con. 5.14.11), and a clarification that Jesus was sentenced at the third hour and died at the sixth (Apos. Con. 5.14.14; cf. Mark 15:25, which places Jesus’s crucifixion at the third hour, as opposed to the sixth hour according to John 19:14a); this long section concludes, “And these things also are written in the Gospel” (ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ ἀνεγράφη, Apos. Con. 5.14.19).

The quotation of John 17:3 also meets the redaction criterion because this verse comes from the Johannine “Farewell Discourse,” a composition of the Fourth Evangelist.⁴⁹ The Apostolic Constitutions elsewhere refers to “reading the Law, the Prophets, the Psalms until cocks’ crow, and baptizing your catechumens, and reading the Gospel in fear and trembling” (Apos. Con. 5.19.3). Then the text not only quotes the crowd saying, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15; Apos. Con. 5.19.4) but also mention the resurrected Jesus showing his wounded hands and side to Thomas (John 20:25–27; Apos. Con. 5.20.1). These references surpass the recurrence criterion. Since the Apostolic Constitutions are definitely not independent of the Gospel of John, the baptismal saying in Apos. Con. 6.15.5 more likely derives from the written Gospel than a piece of oral tradition continuing down to the fourth century.

8. Conclusion

According to so-called minimalists, common oral tradition explains the verbal resemblances to John 3:3, 5 found in the works of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Hippolytus, the Pseudo-Clementines, and the Apostolic Constitutions. To demonstrate literary dependence on the Fourth Gospel, subsequent texts must show knowledge of Johannine redaction; a quotation formula introducing Johannine material and recurrence of Johannine material strengthen the argument for a patristic author’s use of John. A thoroughgoing application of these criteria has revealed that every previously adduced “born again” and “born/baptized of water and Spirit” saying derives from the redacted Fourth Gospel and rather than oral tradition.

For Justin’s saying in *1 Apol.* 61.4, the protasis, “If you are not born again,” parallels John 3:3, and the apodosis, “you will not at all enter into the kingdom of the heavens,” parallels John 3:5. In *1 Apol.* 61.5, the explanation concerning the impossibility of returning to the womb matches John 3:4, which comes from the hand of the Evangelist, thereby establishing Justin’s knowledge of Johannine redaction.

John 4:2 claims that Jesus did not perform baptisms, and this verse comes from the redactor of the Fourth Gospel. The presence of John 4:2 in Tertullian, *Bapt.* 11.1, thus satisfies the redaction criterion, and Ter-

⁴⁹ Bultmann, *Gospel of John* (see n. 13), 459, calls John 15–17 “fully Johannine in both content and form.”

tullian presents the verse as a Scripture quotation. The “born of water and Spirit” saying in *Bapt.* 13.3 exemplifies Johannine recurrence.

Hippolytus knows the “born of water and Spirit” saying in its redacted Johannine context because he quotes the next line of the Fourth Gospel, “what has been born of the flesh is flesh” (*Haer.* 8.10.8; cf. John 3:5–6). Hippolytus also introduces the sayings as a quotation, and Johannine material recurs throughout his *Refutatio*.

The Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* (11.26.2) and *Recognitions* (6.9.2) introduce the “born again” saying as a quotation, and the formula “Amen, I say to you” constitutes Johannine redaction (John 3:3, 5). The protasis concerning not being “born again” derives from John 3:3, and the apodosis about not entering the kingdom comes from John 3:5. Much other Johannine material recurs throughout the Pseudo-Clementines, especially in the *Homilies*.

John 17:3 is part of the “Farewell Discourse,” which is a composition of the Fourth Evangelist. The presence of John 17:3 in the Apostolic Constitutions (6.23.1) thus meets the redaction criterion. Moreover, the verse appears as an explicit quotation of the Gospel. In one of several instances of Johannine recurrence, Apos. Con. 6.15.5 quotes the Fourth Gospel’s “born of water and Spirit” saying (John 3:5) – albeit changing “born” to “baptized.”

In conclusion, John 3:3–6 is the one text that can account for all six of these patristic “born again” and “born/baptized of water and Spirit” sayings. Previous arguments for oral tradition have demanded rigorous criteria for determining literary dependence. However, this essay has shown that these studies have not applied their own criteria rigorously enough, for the plausibility of an orally transmitted baptismal saying diminishes in light of Johannine redaction, quotation formulas, and recurrent Johannine material. A last defense for oral tradition might ask how one can know for sure that a baptismal saying was not circulating independently all the while; yet this would be an argument from silence. The patristic sayings *ipso facto* have always constituted the main proof for an orally transmitted saying. *Mutatis mutandis* the written Gospel of John more reasonably and more simply explains the patristic parallels to John 3:3, 5.

James W. Barker

Western Kentucky University
1906 College Heights Blvd.
Bowling Green, KY 42101
USA
james.w.barker@gmx.com

Early Christianity

Edited by Jens Schröter (Managing Editor), Jörg Frey, Simon Gathercole and Clare K. Rothschild

Please send manuscripts, editorial inquiries and all book review proposals to:

Prof. Dr. Jens Schröter
Redaktion Early Christianity
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Theologische Fakultät
Unter den Linden 6
D-10099 Berlin
Germany
E-Mail: early-christianity@hu-berlin.de

Acceptance for publication will be given in writing, provided that the manuscript has not been offered for publication elsewhere. Upon acceptance, the author will transfer to the publisher the exclusive copyright for his/her work. This right to publish and sell the work expires with the termination of the duration of copyright stipulated by law. The author retains the right to grant another publishing company permission to reprint the work one year after the original publication. The right of publication comprises the right to reproduce the work photomechanically and the right to store the data in a retrieval system and to transmit it in online processing. Articles should conform to the stylistic guidelines, available at the publisher's website: <http://www.mohr.de/ec>. The editors reserve the right to specify revisions of submitted manuscripts.

Full Text Online

Free access to the full text online is included in a subscription. We ask institutions with more than 20,000 users to obtain a price quote directly from the publisher. Contact: elke.brixner@mohr.de. In order to set up online access for institutions/libraries, please go to: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/register/institutional>. In order to set up online access for private persons, please go to: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/register/personal>

Publisher: Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Postfach 2040, 72010 Tübingen
The journal may also be purchased at bookstores.

© 2015 Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Tübingen

The journal and all the individual articles and illustrations contained in it are protected by copyright. Any utilization beyond the narrow confines of copyright law without the publisher's consent is punishable by law. This applies in particular to copying, translations, microfilming, and storage and processing in electronic systems.

Printed in Germany.
Typeset by Konrad Tritsch GmbH, Ochsenfurt.
Printed by Gulde-Druck, Tübingen.

ISSN 1868-7032 (Print Edition)
ISSN 1868-8020 (Online Edition)

Early Christianity

volume 6 (2015), no. 4

“The new journal is concerned with early Christianity as a historical phenomenon. Uncontroversial though that may sound, its editors share a quite specific understanding of this broad field of research. In seeking to further the study of early Christianity as a historical phenomenon, we aim to overcome certain limitations which – in our view – have hindered the development of the discipline. To identify a limitation is already to have seen the possibility of moving beyond it ...”

From the Editorial Manifesto

Editors

Jens **Schröter**, Berlin (Managing Editor)
Jörg **Frey**, Zurich
Simon **Gathercole**, Cambridge, UK
Clare K. **Rothschild**, Chicago

Advisory Board

(2014 – 2016)

Peter **Arzt-Grabner**, Salzburg
Hans **Förster**, Vienna
Klaus **Hallof**, Berlin
Christos **Karakolis**, Athens
John S. **Kloppenborg**, Toronto
Annette Yoshiko **Reed**, Philadelphia
Stephan G. **Schmid**, Berlin
Daniel R. **Schwartz**, Jerusalem
Janet **Spittler**, Charlottesville
Jürgen K. **Zangenberg**, Leiden



Mohr Siebeck www.mohr.de



1868-7032(201512)6:4;1-7

Digitaler Sonderdruck des Autors mit Genehmigung des Verlages