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The reflections of the Hellenistic influence in the Fourth Gospel

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THE REFLECTIONS OF THE HELLENISTIC INFLUENCE IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

By

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(A.B., University of Pittsburgh, 1930)

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1932
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I

THE OLD AND THE NEW

The most important ecclesiastical event of the first century A.D. was the separation of Christianity from Judaism and its consequent invasion of the Graeco-Roman world as a Gentile religion. This change, representing a gradual process rather than a sudden transformation, began early during the ministry of Paul, and was practically accomplished by the end of the century. The Church, which at first numbered its converts only among the Jews, now expanded to the very borders of the Roman Empire. After the death of the original disciples of Jesus, the Jewish wing of the Church began withering, and soon disappeared altogether, leaving the field entirely open to the Gentiles who were being gathered in ever increasing numbers into the ranks. Dissuaded by the marked opposition of the Jews whose hostile attitude increased until every door was closed to the Christian missionaries, these early preachers of the Gospel turned to the Gentiles where they met with gratifying response. "It was plain that the future of the Christian movement lay among the Greeks, the Gentiles!"

In this gradual change which took Christianity out of its early Jewish background and transplanted it in the larger and more universal environment of the Gentiles, we are interested in seeing how Christianity affected the Graeco-Roman world which it invaded, and at the same time in discovering how the Gentile civilization in turn affected the Christian teaching. The emphasis hitherto has been placed largely upon the manner in

which Christianity has affected the world, and only recently has our attention turned toward the consideration of the converse of this, the way in which the world of the first century affected the Christian teaching and message.

It is natural that a new religion will be affected to a great extent by the environment in which it develops and grows. Such was the case with Christianity as it developed amid the cultural streams of the Graeco-Roman world. These streams of culture were mainly Greek because of the recognized superiority of Greek thought, literature, art, and language, and because of the work of Alexander the Great who, in the fourth century B.C., sought to weld the Mediterranean world into a solid unit both politically and culturally by encouraging the acceptance of the Greek civilization by the peoples of all the nations his armies had conquered. But while the civilization of the Graeco-Roman world at the time of the entrance of Christianity was predominately Greek, it represented also the syncretistic mingling of the cultural forces of other races and nations. The syncretism was particularly strong in the religious field. In a later section of this paper we shall consider the syncretistic culture of this period more fully, but here it will suffice to say that the environment in which Christianity spread among the Gentiles, was a heterogeneous mixture of all the cultural forces of all the peoples that made up the ancient Graeco-Roman world, and that the influences of this blended culture entered largely into the structure and content of Christianity and are discernible throughout every phase of the Christian religion.
The purpose of this thesis is to study the Fourth Gospel in an effort to discover the reflections of the Graeco-Roman influence and to account for the sources of these reflections. By limiting our discussion to the Fourth Gospel we do not deny the presence of this environmental influence in the other New Testament writings, but we make possible a more exact and efficient study by thus limiting our field of endeavor.

At the outset we are faced with a subtle danger against which we must constantly be on our guard. We are liable to regard the Fourth Gospel as being totally a product of environment, and forget that it contains any new revelation. There have always been two views of Christianity and the Fourth Gospel as a phase of that religion. One view is that Christianity is in every sense a new revelation containing nothing that can be traced back to any aspect of its environment. The other view is that Christianity is not a new revelation but entirely the product of growth and evolution from the religious and spiritual endeavors of the past. Throughout history each of these views has been held, but unfortunately each has been supported to the absolute denial of the other. One group has maintained stoutly that the Gospel is a unique revelation of God having absolutely no connection with past history or its contemporary environment. The opposite group has been just as emphatic in its assertion that Christianity owes its all to the religions that preceded it and were contemporary with it. Each of these schools has marshalled considerable material to strengthen its view. Both have appealed to the life and
teachings of Jesus and to the opinions of the New Testament writers, and here each position seems to find support. But we see at once the danger in the extreme of either view. Today the idea of growth and development has come to occupy too high a place in our thinking to deny its importance. The conception of anything springing completely new out of nothing is unbelievable. Each new thing, each new idea, regardless of its uniqueness, must have its attributive background which is largely responsible for its existence. Recent studies of Christianity from the historical point of view have shown us that in many instances it is dependent upon environmental sources and that much of its form and content was inherited or borrowed from other religions and systems of thought that were before it. Today we think of everything in terms of its past. This principle has been applied in Science and Philosophy, and we can think of it as being justifiable when applied to Religion. The work of scholars such as Renan, Wendt, and Ritschl is based almost wholly upon the historical method of approach, and we cannot but admit that our fund of knowledge is much richer for their endeavors. But at the same time we are finding that the historical method and the attitude which views Christianity as wholly a product of its environment have their decided limitations. The idea of development does not tell the whole story; it illuminates only one of the many facets of the diamond of Truth. Even on the phenomenal plane we are coming to see that evolution does not completely explain existence. There is something more there that can be accounted for only in terms of the new and the unique. In the religious realm we encounter even more difficulties when we
attempt to account for things purely on the ground of growth. The wide gap between phenomenal and metaphysical reality cannot be bridged by the idea of development alone; the conception of revelation must accompany it. The materials found in the plays of Shakespeare existed in the life of the times long before the genius appeared to put them together in a drama. But without Shakespeare those plays would never have been written. There was something new essential to the formation of "King Lear". That something was found in the spirit and personality of the author. The play could never have grown out of the life of that time had not the new and unique genius of the author been there to give it shape and form. And likewise the genius of the writer could never have written the play had he not had the material of the past at his hand to work with.

So we cannot deny that Christianity owes much to its environment; nor can we deny that it contained much that was new in a unique and hitherto unknown sense. Both elements are necessary to complete the picture. Our view, then, of Christianity and the Fourth Gospel, will be a middle one. We will not accept the extreme of either of these views we have been discussing. Nor will we fail to realize that there is a considerable element of truth in each view. We shall say that Christianity represents both the new and the old; it is both revelation and evolution. In our study of the Fourth Gospel, while our emphasis is of necessity concentrated upon the developmental side of Christianity, we shall bear strongly in mind that there is something in the Gospel that is gloriously and marvellously new, without which
the old would have no meaning, but which without the old would have no framework. The two conceptions of Christianity cannot be separated; they belong together as integral parts of our attitude toward our religion and toward everything else in the world that has value and permanence.

* There are two definite reasons why Christianity in the early years of its existence was a borrowing religion. (1). In the first place it was necessary that some sort of an intellectual framework be provided for the teachings of Jesus. His teachings contained no theology, nor did He feel that any was necessary. The great consciousness of His message and purpose served to unite all that He taught into a well rounded whole. He proclaimed the will of God, and revealed the power and purpose of that will in the lives of men. But He never coordinated His teachings under a rational system. Man, however, is a rational being, and lacking the clarity of vision that characterized Jesus, it is necessary for him to have the Christian message explained in terms of reason before he can adequately apprehend it. The faith of Christianity, the teachings of Jesus, must needs be recast into the doctrinal forms that would appeal to the rational minds of men, and the only forms available were those existing in the world in which Christianity grew. These forms the missionaries and writers borrowed, and it so developed that they were the best suited for this specific purpose. The Greek genius, as we shall see later, was perhaps the most advanced that the world had known up until that time. Angus says of it: "One can scarcely exaggerate the importance and value of the

* For a complete discussion of these views of Christianity see Scott: The Gospel and its Tributaries Chp. I.
Greek contributions and of the momentous decision of Greece to consecrate her matchless genius to Christ instead of Mithra! And we can also say, that one cannot overestimate the importance of the decision of the Christian thinkers to avail themselves of this matchless genius of Greece before the followers of Mithra seized the prize.

So Christianity represents a mixture of its own peculiar truth with all of the alien material which the early Christians borrowed to make their own truth more intelligible to the rational minds of men. Something within Christianity was new, but that something needed a framework. That framework was taken over largely from the culture of the Graeco-Roman world. This composite mass of content and framework was once accepted whole as the Gospel, but we are learning now to analyze and sift the mass and to separate in some measure the essence of reality from the forms in which it is encased. This task, however, can never be carried to completion. For in the mingling of content and structure the content has become inseparably attached to the forms in such a way that the one has become the supplement of the other. There are some who insist that we should completely disentangle the Gospel from all of the forms and doctrines in which it is bound. But this cannot be done, for the two have become so closely allied and so completely intertwined that any attempt to completely sever them would destroy both. The forms are the framework without which the Gospel would crumble, and the Gospel is the essence of reality that gives meaning and life to the forms.

(2). The second reason why Christianity was forced to borrow

* Angus: Religious Quests of the Graeco Roman World p. 2
forms and ideas from the Pagan world was that while Christianity was a universal religion even in the time of its earliest conception, it was first expressed in the narrow, national terminology of the Jews, and as such was entirely inadequate for and unintelligible to the Gentiles. Jesus used the Jewish terms to convey His message to His disciples, and we think sometimes as we study His life, that even He felt their failure to reveal completely His character and purpose. When the movement spread among the Gentiles the inadequacy of the Jewish phraseology was felt more keenly than ever. The Gentiles could not grasp the Christian message until it had been reinterpreted into their language and thought. It was a case of the necessity of translating the Gospel message from one language to another, from Aramaic to Greek and from Jewish terminology into the Gentile thought forms.

This reinterpretation was in large the conscious effort of the early preachers and writers of the Christian message. But it was even more an unconscious process. "The missionaries of the primitive Church had grown up in the Hellenistic world, and had been affected, more than they knew, by the influences around them" These men were for the most part Jews, but they were Jews who had lived among the Gentile influences and had come to look at life from the Gentile point of view. When they preached or wrote they used unconsciously ideas and thoughts which were Gentile, and which in their own minds had become more vital than their own Jewish ideas. "As a result the Christian teaching underwent a profound modification!" The New Testament writers had broken

* Scott: The Gospel and Its Tributaries p. 5
** op. cit. p. 21
with Judaism and had launched upon the task of Hellenizing Christianity. Under the subtle influence of the Greeks, they Hellenized more than they were conscious of doing. But at the same time, while the Hellenistic influence is strong in the New Testament, especially in the Fourth Gospel and in the Pauline Epistles, the writers still retained to its very fullest their hold upon the essential truths of the Gospel message. That is the great and wonderful thing about our Gospel. The real message that it brings is above change. From its beginning it was universal and adequate in its appeal and application. Only the forms in which it was conveyed to men needed to be changed. Often the content took on new meaning under the influence of the forms, and often the forms themselves took on some of the reality of the content, but the great central truths remained the same, unchanging and unchangeable. "With all of their Gentile thinking the Christian teachers have never lost their hold of the primary truths of the Gospel. Their whole aim is to assert those truths in a manner which they deemed satisfying. If any proof were needed of the intrinsic power of the Gospel, it may be found in this - that while it borrowed from the alien culture, it was never submerged."

Thus we come to our study of the Fourth Gospel bearing securely in mind that as a phase of Christian teaching it contains both the new and the old. It is old in that it has borrowed from its Gentile environment forms and ideas with which to express its message more consistently and coherently. But the essential message itself, the message of Jesus, is new. Just as "King Lear" is new through the breath of the spirit of Shakespeare; so

* Scott: op. cit. p. 21
is Christianity new through the spirit breathed into it through the personality and purpose of Jesus Christ. In our study we shall not lose sight of the new in our eagerness to see the old. We shall see both bound inseparably together.

From this preliminary study we now pass to the consideration of the Graeco-Roman world itself, in order that through understanding the life and culture of the Gentiles, especially the religious life, we may be better fitted to understand the manner in which the various elements of this Graeco-Roman civilization entered into and influenced the writing of the Fourth Gospel.

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II

THE HELLENISTIC INFLUENCE

The Graeco-Roman world of the New Testament times was a mighty empire including practically all of the lands of the great Mediterranean basin, united under the political authority of Rome and the cultural leadership of Greece. Earlier in history various rulers had attempted to conquer and unite the nations of this basin, but their efforts had failed because of the artificiality and weakness of their systems. Under the leadership of Alexander the Great, in the fourth century B.C., a strong, stable unity was affected. Alexander extended the power of Greece until it comprised all of the land from the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea on the North to Egypt on the South and from Greece on the West to the Indias on the East, and was preparing to march into Arabia with his army when his death occurred. He conceived the brilliant idea of making his political unification more secure by undergirding it with a cultural unity, and for this purpose he found the civilization of Greece ready and adequate. The conquered nations willingly accepted the Greek culture, recognizing its vast superiority to their own, "and within a century after the conqueror's death the whole East had been Hellenized".* When the Romans reconquered the world in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. they carried on the work begun by Alexander. "Hellenistic manners gained so substantial a place among the Romans themselves that their own culture had become largely Hellenistic",** and under the common system of law and administration established by the emperors and the peace which followed in the wake of the armies.

* Scott: The Gospel and Its Tributaries p. 108
** Case: The Evolution of Early Christianity p. 65
and "which enabled the most diverse races to hold intercourse with one another and to commingle in the great cosmopolitan cities" Greek culture became more and more the culture of the world and more and more deeply imbedded in the common life of its citizens.

This new age under Roman rule was an age of vast transition and blending of the cultures and peoples of the East and West. Here Jews of the Dispersion mingled with traders of Persia and Phoenicia; Romans met with Greeks and Egyptians in the market places. "All of these people were living together, generally on friendly terms, and meeting in the markets, in clubs and trade unions and in religious guilds and on town councils. Their more inquisitive members foregathered at great university centers such as Athens, Alexandria, Tarsus, or Rhodes! Each race had its own language, customs and religions; yet all peoples, regardless of race or nationality, enjoyed and used in common the more universal Greek tongue and manners, while their own usages thrown together in a great commingling underwent a profound syncretistic change. "Nationalism disappeared; racial barriers were thrown down and the world reduced to such a unity as hardly obtains today even with rapid transit of goods and ideas!"

This process of fusion entered into every phase of life, but in no aspect was its force more keenly felt than in the sphere of religion. The world was full of religions. Each nation had its own gods, and under the policy of Rome, was allowed to maintain its own worship. But these many religions "in conformity with the cosmopolitan spirit of the age, no longer remained within

* Scott: op. cit. p. 108
** Angus: The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World p. 15
*** " "": op. cit. p. 14
former national boundaries, but became in varying degrees world movements. This change occurring when the different religions came into close contact with each other, we have already referred to as "syncretism", by which we mean the mingling and merging of various types of faith to form one composite religion. Today while we have many religions existing side by side, this process is not so easily accomplished as it was back in the first century. The religions of today, Christianity, Mohammedanism, Confucianism, and Taoism, are in such sharp opposition to each other that any but the slightest syncretism is impossible. But the Pagan religions, of which there were very many, were all alike in that they were rooted in a more primitive nature-worship and could more easily reach a condition of common understanding. This was fostered by the tolerant spirit of the age. Then everyone believed in the existence of not one but many gods, and did not deny the existence of Gods other than his own. Instead, each person was careful not to offend the gods of religions other than his own, and was willing and eager always to invoke the aid and protection of these other gods and worship them. The result of this attitude was a natural and inevitable blending of many religions, each of which borrowed freely from the others, and all of which followed the principle that while they used different names and rites, they all worshipped pretty much the same thing. "The belief was entertained more and more consciously, that all religions were ultimately one, and were destined to unite in one common religion."

Now we consider another important factor in this syncretistic

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* Case: op. cit. p. 72
** Scott: op. cit. p. 109
current without which it would have amounted to nothing more than a jumble of faiths lacking any spiritual or social value. This factor is Greek speculation, which came into the syncretism of the age and vitalized it like leaven. Greek philosophy had its real beginning five hundred years before Christ, when under the Ionian philosophers, Heraclitus and Xenophanes, it resolved itself into a sort of nature-pantheism. It "subjected the mythical folk-lore of the Greeks to destructive criticism" and advanced the idea that it was foolish "to conceive the deity after the image of man; blasphemous to ascribe human short-comings and wickedness to it; useless to worship it with bloody animal sacrifice". So the idea of a polytheistic deity was dethroned, and instead one God was set up, the vitalizing Spirit which underlay all phenomena. In doing this, philosophy from the start divorced itself from religion, and proceeded through its own methods to solve the problems of God and life. The next notable advance came with Anaxagoras who went beyond the Ionian conception and posited the thought of a supermundane Spirit which was the cause of law and order in the world. But it was Socrates, "the father of philosophy", who carried speculation through its greatest forward step. He "called into being the divine movement of a moral world view which resulted in the suppression of heathen naturalism!" He conceived his mission to be that of showing that the moral nature of man and not the external nature should be recognized as being real. He advanced the idea of the autonomous personality for the first time, and demanded that his disciples should seek after the knowledge of self, and test the traditional

* Pfleiderer: Christian Origins p. 31
** " " " " : op. cit. p. 32
opinions solely upon the basis of their own personal insight. Thus he opposed his doctrine of individualism to the authority of custom and society, and placed in their stead as criteria of judgment, personal self-certainty and conviction.

Plato, the pupil of Socrates, accepted the dualistic view of knowledge that his teacher had advanced, and expanded it into a completely dualistic world view. There was one world of phenomena and sense experience which he conceived to be like shadows without any reality. The other world was one of spirit or ideas unknowable through the senses and approachable only through pure reason, which, penetrating the shadow world of experience, came into the real world of spirit. The material world was evil and unreal. The body as material substance was evil and had no place in the scheme of salvation. Only the spirit-soul could achieve the world of spirit that lay beyond. This philosophy of Plato, developed, was the philosophy of the Graeco-Roman world of the first century. The chief characteristic of the Greek spirit was its craving for rationality and its absolute dependence upon reason as the key to reality. The Greeks "believed with Aristotle that a thing ought to have beginning, middle, and end in due proportion," and were "always for sanity as opposed to caprice, and impatient of the monstrous fiction......when he (the Greek) sees the truth, like Phaedra, he will not let it go".

The first century, however, meant for the speculation of the Greeks, disillusionment. They found that for the understanding of the ultimate life problems, the philosophical methods alone were hopelessly inadequate, and were leading them only to failure.

* Angus: op. cit. p. 170
** Glover: The World of the New Testament p 39
The denunciation of the myths as false and the bold replacement of God by the Logos or pervading principle of Reason, had not brought the hoped-for results. So again philosophy turned to religion. The incoming religions of the Orient were found to be more congenial to the purpose and aim of philosophy than were the western cults, and accordingly speculation linked itself closely with them. They possessed a greater depth of spirituality, and their basic ideas, while they seem crude to us, were pregnant with a wonderful suggestiveness of higher values. Schleiermacher, the German theologian, has defined the fundamental elements of religion as (1) trustful dependence on God, (2) longing after redemption, and (3) an implicit alliance with the moral ideal. The Oriental religions struck two of these fundamental elements by offering above all else the promise of redemption which implied dependence upon the deity. They stressed the renewal of life in the soul through direct experience with the divine. In these promises, philosophy found points of attachment that made possible a close relationship between the two. So in this first century age there was a two-fold movement consisting on the one hand of philosophy falling back upon religion, and on the other of religions seeking to explain their beliefs and practices through speculative methods. Philosophy "recognized the existence of a higher realm of truth, of which the mind by its own natural light could render no account......By means of rapture or direct illumination the mind might attain to that higher truth which lay beyond the reach of reason". Religion recognized that the rites and legends of the various faiths had little or no value in themselves, but

* Knudson: The Doctrine of God pp. 45-46
** Scott: op. cit. p. III
as doors to more ultimate truth, could be opened by philosophical speculation.

This process of the rationalization of religion and the faith-izing of philosophy was furthered by the syncretistic spirit of the age. Religion and philosophy were more able to unite under the belief that all of the religions were aiming at the same general end and would ultimately be merged into one large, conglomerate faith. This close connection between speculation and faith had given new impetus and life to both of them, and the Graeco-Roman age throbbed with a religious enthusiasm distinctly uncommon in other periods of history. Contrary to the belief of some that this age was religiously dead, it was very much religiously awake. Not only in the circles of the learned and scholarly but also among the masses of the people was philosophic-religious speculation a common pursuit. The age was philosophically and religiously minded, and philosophy and religion were so closely intertwined that they were integral parts of a larger whole. The philosophical terminology of Paul and the speculative depth of the Fourth Gospel, which today are unintelligible to many people, were readily understood by the masses for whom the Epistles and the Fourth Gospel were written. In fact they were written in that style and manner for the express purpose of being readily understood by their first century readers. This was only a part of the attempt of the Gospel writers to translate their message into a language the Gentiles could comprehend.

The religion of the Graeco-Roman world, then, was achieved
through the combination of two streams of human endeavor, and was distinct from any religious type the world had ever known. On the one hand the religions of the world had commingled in a great religious syncretism to produce a new, composite religion, and on the other hand, this syncretism had been guided and quickened through Greek philosophy which itself entered into a syncretistic relation with the religious life of the world to produce a new religion that was essentially rational and which at the same time included the highest spiritual factors which to that time had been developed. This religion was based upon the longing for redemption from the bondage of mortal existence, which philosophy had taught men to believe was the evil condition that withheld them from the realization of their true being. With this went the feeling that man was destined for a newer and larger world of freedom wherein his personality would be allowed to develop to its fullest extent. So the Greek approached his religion philosophically, demanding first and above all else deliverance from bondage so he would be able to press on in the achievement of his larger and truer self.

Concerning bondage and deliverance, there were certain conceptions which we must examine. Bondage was thought of first as due in large measure to ignorance. The Socratic emphasis on knowledge as the key to release from ignorance still held sway in the Gentile mind, and since the time of Sophocles "redemption through knowledge had been the grand aim of philosophy". This aim had been popularized and spread among the masses by the Stoics who sought self-realization and self-reliance through reason. "This

* Scott: op. cit. p. 114
quest was based on the conviction, first, that man can do all things necessary for his highest life, and secondly, that all other things (beyond human power) can be accepted in resignation to the will of God? But with the breaking down of the faith in speculation and the consequent dependence of philosophy on religion, knowledge came to have a new, religious meaning. It was not something which man achieved alone, but something which came from above in the form of revelation or illumination, and which alone could save man from ignorance. John's definition of eternal life, "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ"(John 17:3) illustrates this new conception of knowledge and the emphasis that was placed on it.

Bondage was also thought of in terms of material existence. The Platonic view of the world was held by the religious man of the first century. He thought of his body as evil, something from which he must escape for salvation. He must get away from the material bondage in which his soul was enslaved, and find his way to the real world of spirit from whence his soul had originally come. Necessity, too, was considered a form of bondage from which the Gentile sought to escape. He was surrounded by forces over which he had no control and encompassed by a fate from which there was seemingly no chance for release. This idea of necessity was the outgrowth of the astrological ideas that had come from the Orient. Each man was born under a star which became his own star and influenced him throughout his life. No matter where he turned he could not escape; he was shadowed by an inevitable destiny. Yet

* Angus: op. cit. p. 28
despite this pessimistic necessitarianism, man felt the throbbing of the yearning for freedom in his soul, and this yearning could be accounted for and satisfied only through religion. "To the Gentile Christians the new religion was not one, an escape from the curse of the Law, but a release from slavery to the elements, that is, the star deities!"

The effect of these religious conditions upon Christianity was four-fold. In the first place the Hellenistic interpretation attached itself to the redemption which Christ had effected. Previously this salvation had been couched in the Jewish terminology and understood in the apocalyptic sense. It would take place at a definite time, a Judgment where Jesus would decide upon the fitness of men for the Kingdom over which God ruled. Those found acceptable would be rescued from the powers of evil and the miseries of their earthly existence and would enter into the promised life. These apocalyptic ideas were now supplemented with Hellenistic ideas. Men were held prisoners in their material bodies and in ignorance, and their longing was to escape from this necessity and ignorance not only in the world to come, but here in earth. "If Christ was the Redeemer, He must offer this present liberty. Salvation must consist not merely in a deliverance at the coming Judgment but in the attainment even now of a new kind of life!" The second effect upon Christianity was the conception of life in terms of a metaphysical essence. The Hellenist with his philosophical belief of the evil nature of the world found the ethical teachings of Jesus inadequate for his conception of the higher life. Evil did not come from the will, but from the environment of the will; and salvation did not consist merely in the

* Angus: op. cit. p. 36
** Scott: op. cit. p. 118
renewal of the will, but in the complete transformation of man's nature through the entrance of the Spirit of God into his soul. The third effect lay in the increased emphasis on knowledge. Jesus found the cause for the moral and spiritual degredation of the world in men's ignorance of God's character and will, and sought to impart the knowledge necessary for salvation. But the Greek mind conceived of knowledge in a different way. To the Gentile knowledge was the knowing of the mysteries of life, the origin of the soul, the difference between the human and the divine; it was the power of reason to grasp reality. The answer to these metaphysical queries, the Greek found in Jesus. He thought of Jesus as the incarnation of the divine nature, the Logos, through whom the unknowable God was made knowable to men. "We have insight into His being and His secret counsels. In this illumination which comes to us by the knowledge of Christ, we have eternal life!" Fourthly the Graeco-Roman religions influenced the growth of sacramentalism in Christianity. Baptism and the Supper had been ordinances of Christianity from the first, but their meaning had been merely symbolic. But in the Gentile world they became invested with a new importance and reality. They were thought of as being endowed with some sort of a mysterious efficacy, a miraculous content that was essential to conversion and the Christian life. "They now became in the full sense sacraments. By means of them men not only signified their desire for the higher life, but believed that in some real fashion they procured it!" The fifth influence upon Christianity can be summarized by the word "mysticism! This idea connoting a type

* Scott: op. cit. p. 119
**Scott: op. cit. p. 119
of ecstatic communion with God through super-moral and even super-rational means, was lacking in the teachings of Jesus. Doing the will of God, understanding His high ethical nature, were the elements of Jesus' idea of communion. But into Christianity Hellenism poured the thought of a mystical union between man and God, based upon the conception of the divine spiritual nature of the soul and the longing of that soul for deliverance from the trammels of matter to the greater Divine Nature of which it was originally a part.

The Mystery religions of the East have been resorted to by many scholars to explain the entrance of these ideas into Christianity. This is in part true, but we must not forget that these religions were also involved in the syncretism of the Graeco-Roman world and that their influence was always accompanied by the influence of other streams of religious and philosophic thought. These Mysteries closely resembled each other in practice and belief, being centered "in the cult of a divinity originally the symbol of reviving vegetation, who had died and had been restored to life. They were characterized by public observances and by "mysteries" to which only the initiates could gain admittance. Little is known of these secret affairs, but it is generally supposed that the candidate witnessed some crude dramatization of an episode from the life of the divinity, handled sacred objects, and listened to "awe inspiring abjurations." The objective of all this seems to have been to induce a state of trance or ecstasy where the initiate would into a direct, mystical union with the divine. That there is some parallel between
the practices of these religions and Christianity can scarcely be denied, but some have jumped from this observation to the impulsive conclusion that Christianity was completely taken over by them and changed throughout in its appearances and content from its original conception. There appears to be a great deal of exaggeration here, for as we see in our study of the Christian records, the main tie-up of Christianity is with Judaism, and while in the Graeco-Roman world new forms of expression were borrowed and new meanings were given to certain aspects of the Christian message the essential truths of the Christian religion, universal from the first, remained unchanged. The change came only in the expression and application of the Gospel, and much of this change can be accounted for in the light of the fact that in this syncretistic age there were certain usages, terms, ideas, and practices that "were in the air" and were the products and possessions of all the religions.

The modifications wrought in the Christian message through the influence of Hellenism are discernible in all of the books of the New Testament, but more especially in the Epistles and in the Fourth Gospel. John's Gospel is referred to as "the most completely Hellenized book in the New Testament". All of these Hellenistic books are written from a different point of view than the more Judaistic Synoptic Gospels. Where the Synoptics emphasized the moral teachings of Jesus, the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles laid stress on the mystical content of His revelation. "Yet the Jewish longing for redemption was in its essence the same as the Hellenistic, although it had shaped itself under different historical conditions. There was no perversion, not even a misunder-

* Angus: The Environment of Early Christianity p. 212
standing of the message of Jesus. The recasting bears witness, rather, to the intensity with which its inner purport was realized. There was a new conception of Jesus accompanying the new conception of His teachings. "He was no longer the Prophet and Teacher, or even the Messiah, but a Divinity, who henceforth took the place of the gods many and the lords many of the Pagan world." The hiatus between the Sermon on the Mount and Paul's doctrine of the mystical, divine Saviour seems bewildering to us; yet the Synoptics serve as the basis for Paul's ideas. His interpretation was one of theology rather than history, and the same may largely be said of the Fourth Gospel. Yet Christ remained the same, the Founder of the Kingdom and the Power through whom that Kingdom could be realized.

Some significant and serious modifications resulted, however, from this Hellenistic interpretation of the Gospel. The ethical teachings and the earthly life of Jesus were pushed into the background to make place for new mystical concepts, doctrinal ideas, sacraments, and rites. Yet from its contact with the Greek culture, certain lasting benefits accrued to Christianity that cannot be overlooked. In the first place the narrow, nationalistic bonds of the Gospel were cut asunder and it took its place as a universal factor in the lives of men. New ideas and new conceptions replaced the older Jewish forms and expressed the real content and meaning of Christ in a far more adequate way. In the alliance of Christianity with mysticism, the two became inseparably joined together. Mysticism alone means nothing, but filled with the marvelous content of the Christian message, a mysticism giving us the profound, immediate, numinous sense of

* Scott: op. cit. p. 127
** Scott: op. cit. p. 127
the Presence of God is a decided addition. Mysticism lies at the root of religion, and this invaluable root was supplied through the contact of Christianity with the Greek world. While the reality of God is implicit in the teachings of Jesus, the mystical element is lacking. Jesus focused His attention on the knowing and doing of the will of God. The Greek added to this conception the idea of an intimate, personal mystical fellowship with the Father. He defined the concept of the Eternal Spirit, and revealed to the Christian the hidden purport in the apocalyptically phrased and bounded life and message of Jesus.

One other phase of the Hellenistic culture remains to be considered. This phase is the Alexandrian philosophy as it was expressed through Philo. While the complete culture of the Graeco-Roman world entered into the making of the New Testament and especially the Fourth Gospel, this particular aspect of Hellenistic thought bears a closer relationship to the conceptions and teachings of the Fourth Gospel and therefore merits our attention.
III

THE ALEXANDRIAN INFLUENCE

The Alexandrian influence is but a phase of the larger Hellenistic environment which played so profound a part in the modification of early Christianity. Yet, for us, it is the most important aspect of the Greek influence because it represents the most direct Hellenistic source of the Fourth Gospel, and because through it the Fourth Gospel inherited the finest and best of Hellenistic endeavor and that of the Hebrew mind as well, for in the Alexandrian system the Jewish and Greek streams of thought were merged.

This combination of Hellenistic thinking with Jewish religion was brought about through the movement of the Jews into the Graeco-Roman world, known as the Dispersion. Two centuries before Christ the Jews had become established throughout the Mediterranean world and especially in the great cities. Our interest centers in Alexandria and in the amalgamation of the Jewish and Hellenistic cultures there because the Alexandrian thought was a direct source of the writer of the Fourth Gospel.

We cannot think of these Jews as giving themselves over completely and without protest to the culture of their Gentile environment. They were extremely scrupulous in their religious life and passionately devoted to the Law, sometimes even more so than the Palestinian Jews. Wherever they went, they established their synagogues, and clung to their religious faith and practices with all the tenacity that is characteristic of their race even today. They held their religion to be superior, supreme in the
world, and maintained a strict allegiance to the mother Church at Jerusalem. The accounts of their pilgrimages to Jerusalem at the feast times and their offerings to the Jews back in Palestine attest their loyalty to the religion of their forefathers. Yet they were profoundly affected by the ideas and modes of thought of their Gentile environment. This was the case especially in Alexandria which had become the center of Hellenistic literature and culture. Here the Jews took full share of interest in the intellectual life, and while holding steadily to their ancestral beliefs, sought more and more to interpret and explain them in the Gentile philosophical terms with which they were surrounded. This desire to interpret Judaism in terms of Hellenism is based upon two factors. In the first place the Jews were anxious to justify their religion to the Gentile world. They wanted to show that their rites and customs were not barbarous and grotesque, as had been charged, but that they were merely the outward symbols of deeper inward realities of their souls. They interpreted Judaism as a philosophy wherein the truth was conveyed by the outward ceremonial symbols. They tried to show that there was a connection between their own religion and the philosophy of the day, that in essence they were similar, and that even Moses had anticipated in the Law the wisdom of the Greek thinkers. In the second place they needed to explain their religion to themselves from the new Gentile point of view which, through association, had become vitally their own. They had been influenced by the Gentile world to a greater extent than they knew, and the Gentile ideas and terms of thought had become their own. Now they must take their ancestral religion, phrased as it was in the terms of ancient Israel,
and reinterpret it in the light of their own Hellenistic point of view. "They have acquired the Greek mind, and have no other means of understanding their religion than by resolving it into the categories of Greek thought!"

We find the personification of this alliance between Jewish and Greek thought in Philo, the Hebrew theologian of Alexandria (50 B.C. - 20 A.D.). He was the outstanding figure in this fusion of Hebraism and Hellenism, and in reality one of the keenest minds in the ancient world, although his method of recording his work, allegorically and without system or order, kept his ideas from being widely known and applied in contemporary and later thought. His greatest effort is represented in his commentaries on the Old Testament narrative, and herein the ripest fruit of the combination of Hellenism and Hebraism is preserved for us. "Equally versed in Rabbinic learning and in Greek philosophy, particularly Plato and the Stoics, he strove to interpret the latter into the Old Testament writings!" While we are liable to overestimate the Hellenic strain in Philo's work, which at first sight seems to predominate, we must remember that in his efforts we find both the Hebraic and Hellenistic streams of thought. The fact that the Greek culture influenced the Jewish point of view to a great extent cannot be denied, but at the same time, the Jewish ideas had a profound effect upon the Hellenistic mode of thinking, especially in Alexandria, and this was brought about largely by Philo. The higher conceptions of Hellenism are strangely indicative of the ethical and religious conceptions of Israel, and likely can be traced in large to the Hebraic characteristics of Philo's writings. We find the underlying motives in his work to

* Scott: The Gospel and its Tributaries p. 160
** Pfleiderer: Christian Origins p. 49
be almost wholly Jewish, despite the fact that on the surface his writings seem to be "the Stoic or Platonism masquerading under the guise of commentator on the Law". His belief was that the Jewish religion in its inner content embodied the highest possible religious concepts, and he sought to interpret those concepts in the light of Greek thought and by means of Greek categories.

The God of Greek philosophy was the God of intellect. He was the supreme Intelligence, and could be approached only by the intellectual method. Reason was the ultimate truth, and hence religion must be rational. Philo, true to his Jewish background, conceived of something higher than knowledge. For him "reason was but a mode of divine life, the rational process by means of which we ascend to God, but when it has carried us its farthest, He is still beyond us". Religion was not only reason; it was more. Reason alone was hopelessly inadequate. Worship is the primary element of religion, worship not in the sense of rites and ceremonies, but in the sense of an inward attitude of the soul of which the outward acts are merely symbols, and by means of which attitude man can find God. Man's highest privilege, according to the Hebraic thinking of Philo, is to "appear before God". As God's creature man finds his highest joy and satisfaction in direct communion with God. This communion alone is worship, and is the essence of religion. The ritual acts are explained as symbols of the deeper inner impulses of the Soul in its search after God, and throughout his work runs the theme of worship, spiritual worship, which alone can satisfy the longing of the human soul to stand in the presence of the Infinite.

* Scott: op. cit., p. 162
** Scott: op. cit. p. 162
Thus Philo seeks to interpret Judaism in terms of the Greek philosophy and commend it to the Greek world as the true religion. The rites and customs which have been scorned as barbarous and grotesque are but the outward symbols of the inner reality of the Law which in its high spiritual conception of God and religion has not only embodied and anticipated the truths which the Hellenistic philosophers have arrived at, but has carried man even further in his search for God. His allegory is more than a mere literary trick. It is his way of showing that he is wholly in accord with the Platonic idea of the phenomenal realm as the symbolic reflection of the higher spiritual order of truth. The world we perceive with our senses is all allegory, the reflection of the reality hidden behind it. We must penetrate beyond the material symbols to the spiritual realities. This also holds true with the Scriptures. In material ways they have presented to us spiritual reality, but before we can pierce the vail of symbol we must apply the light of the Spirit of God. This Spirit of God Philo finds to be the Logos.

God, to Philo, was the Absolute, Infinite, Independent, Personal God of the Old Testament. He is completely transcendent, "elevated beyond the world throughout and incomparable with any finite being; so that there can be no imperfection, nay more, no particular attribute can be predicted of God." He is unknowable and at the same time the beginning and end of all existence. He is an ethical God better than the highest good we know or the highest beauty, purer than the "One." He is not only intellectual; He is that and more; He is the supreme and absolute Being in which the intelligence and all other phases of life are embodied in their

* Pfleiderer: op. cit. p. 49
purest and most complete aspect. It is not difficult to see that while Philo's conception of God includes the important conceptions of the Greeks, it goes beyond that to the more ethical, personal, idealistic God of Judaism. But even this conception is entirely unsatisfactory. It brings us to agnosticism, affirming a God who is unaffirmable, and seeking to know a God who is unknowable.

Philo bridges this gap with his doctrine of the Logos. Here again he is dependent largely upon Greek thought, although some connection is made between his Logos and "The Word" of the Old Testament. But the Logos conception as Philo found it in Alexandria was in the main the product of Greek thinking. As understood by the Greeks, especially the Stoics, it was the all-pervading Reason in the world, the controlling power. The Logos idea was first advanced by Heraclitus of Ephesus who supposed it to be made out of fire. Later under the influence of the Stoics a spiritual existence was assigned to it, and it not only controlled the world, but became synonymous with God and took the place of God. To Philo, however, the Logos was not absolute. It was the "Logos of God, a principle which goes forth from God and shares in the divine nature, but which is yet distinct from God and subordinate to Him!" Through the Logos God created the world and through It He maintained communication with the world and revealed Himself to man. "The Logos conception, the pivotal point of Philo's system, combines the Jewish idea of the creative word of revelation with the Stoic thought of the active, divine Reason in the world!"

Perhaps the outstanding characteristic of the Logos according to Philo is its activity. It is the source of the world's creation and the constant means of revelation from God to the

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* Scott: op. cit. p. 165
** Pfleiderer: op. cit. p. 51
world. It is "the world-forming and world-sustaining principle which acts by separating and uniting opposites, hence its name, the Bond, the Law, the Necessity of all, the All-permeating, the All-ordering, and the All-guiding." It becomes the Spirit through whom approach to God is made possible. The Stoic idea of man's duty of conforming to the Logos of Reason becomes for Philo a cooperative function between man and the Logos. Man is to advance as far as possible through reason and worship, and the Logos will assist him to attain the presence of God. Through the Logos, God is constantly seeking men and helping them to come unto Him.

Philo's teaching on man, like his teaching on God and the Logos, is tinged with both the Hebraic and Hellenistic streams of thought. With Plato and the Stoics he agreed that the real man was the spiritual man and that the earthly body was the soul's prison, the source of all its burdens, evil, and suffering. This view he tried to harmonize with the Jewish view by finding in the accounts of the first and second chapters of Genesis a two-fold creation story. God first created an incorporeal man, the spiritual ideal in His own image. But man through his fall became a second creation, the creation of earth, a mixture of angel and animal. The escape of the "angel" from the "animal" was salvation, but this escape was impossible for man when attempted by his own powers. It was possible only through the aid of the Logos which cleansed the souls of men to fit them for the divine residence. The emphasis here was carried over from the idea that Salvation is to be achieved through man's active use of his own reason, and placed upon the idea that man's passive reception of the divine power of the Logos was the essential thing. Faith instead of active worship was stressed.

* Pfleiderer op. cit., p. 51
the activity of the Logos being superior to the activity of man. This faith to which was added love was considered by Philo to be the most sublime form of piety, and resulted in man's mystical seeing of God's saving power, as an ecstatic union of man and God where the understanding of man departs to make room for the supreme understanding of God. This religious experience was an ineffable rapture, highly mystical, and in his conception of it, Philo reaches the peak of his religious thinking. He teaches a sincere piety, utter dependence on God, and a strong human longing to rise above the material existence to a fellowship with the Infinite, "in short, a mysticism of the pious soul, rising far above the limitations of the national religion, the earthly eudaimonistic dreams of the Messiah and the legal formalism of Judaism, a mysticism with but one purpose, to find God and be blessed in Him!"

But here Philo's dependence upon Greek thought limits rather than aids him. This union between God and man could never be fulfilled in the light of his view of the essential dualism between God and the world. This antithesis was too great to be bridged by an ecstatic experience, and is in reality insurmountable to the Hebrew theologian. He fails to grasp the truth that man's spiritual life in his own soul with its reasonable content of the good and the true is the highest revelation of God that we have. He stops outside the door of Christianity, and it remained for the Christian thinkers to translate the Logos conception into terms of God and man, and at the same time to make this union possible.

This brief consideration of the Alexandrian school of Philosophy as personified by Philo illustrates three different directions in which the Fourth Gospel is dependent upon Philo's teachings.

* Pfleiderer: op. cit. p. 54
First is the use of the allegorical method so thoroughly applied by Philo in his treatment of the Old Testament. This influence is purely Greek, the outcome of Greek speculation, and taken over from the Greek thinkers by Philo himself before he transmitted it to John. The second instance lies in special passages of the Fourth Gospel which can be paralleled with passages from Philo's writings. The third instance, and the most important, is the dominant conception of the Logos.

While we are dealing with the Hellenistic sources of the Fourth Gospel, it is well for us to remember that these are by no means the only sources upon which the Evangelist was dependent. Scott recognizes three primary sources; (1) the Synoptic tradition, (2) the Pauline writings, and (3) the Hellenistic environment and thought. In addition to these he makes allowance for other sources both oral and written which the author of the Gospel may have used, but which are unknown to us. * From the Synoptics John derived the historical material he uses; from Paul he got some of his dominant conceptions such as the idea of the pre-existence of Jesus, the doctrine of the Saviour's work, of the Holy Spirit, of Life, of union with Christ, and the idea of Christianity ushering in a new dispensation of faith entirely different from the old dispensation under the Law. All of his source material John takes and works over to suit his own purpose, to present his understanding of Jesus as he has found Him revealed in history and in his own soul, in the terms of the Greek world, his own terms, and terms that the Gentiles will be able to understand. He selects his material to this end, leaving some and taking some, adjusting what he takes to suit his own mind, modifying and changing, adapting and enlarging. Sometimes

* Scott: The Fourth Gospel pp. 30-32
the original meaning and character of the material are lost in the modification process. "John works in a spirit of freedom. He borrows continually, but adapts whatever he borrows to his own purpose! Yet we must concede the honesty of his purpose. He was writing in a time when, three generations after the life of Jesus, there was probably considerable play in the statement of supposed facts. He was writing in a world that placed its emphasis not on the historical value of a fact, but on the deeper spiritual meaning behind it. John was interested in portraying to the world the Jesus he knew, the Jesus who had made Himself manifest in the Evangelist's own soul. At a time when there was a danger of Christianity fading out because of its great emphasis upon the historical Person of Jesus, the call for John to give to the world the living conception of the living Christ must have been unusually keen. But a spiritual Christ could be portrayed only as a historical character who not only lived in the flesh, but was living still in the Spirit and was as accessible to men now as He had been back on the Galilean hill sides. In the face of the Gnostic menace which would make of Christ a mere ghostly essence, this emphasis on the physical side of Jesus' life was essential. But for the larger purpose, that of giving to the world the Living Christ, the historical outline of the earthly existence was not enough. In fact to follow it too closely would be to limit the realization of the vital purpose. So John selects what he needs from the Synoptics, from Paul, from contemporary thought and culture, and adapts his borrowings to suit the picture he wants to paint.

We cannot think of John wholly in terms of sources. There is something distinctly new which we must take into account. John

* Scott: op. cit. p. 65
borrowed on all sides and changed what he borrowed to suit his purpose, but at the same time he imparted to his borrowed material something which it lacked before. John is the most individual writer of the New Testament; his originality is everywhere apparent. But his was not the creative, discovering originality. The ideas in his Gospel are few and recurrent. They were not his own; they came from outside sources. "His originality, however, is one of attitude, of temperament. Through his own inward experience he has arrived at a new conception of the meaning of Christianity, and he assimilates the results of earlier thoughts to this conception. They enter into new combinations and assume new values; in every case they have something added to them which changes their whole character."

So as we think of the Sources of the Fourth Gospel, and in particular the Hellenistic sources, we must bear in mind that they do not tell the whole story. In depending too much upon the sources and attempting to read their influence into every term and idea used in the Gospel, we are liable to miss entirely the essential import which the author intended for us to receive. We must take into account his personality, and although here we are on indefinite ground, we must remember that it was the personality of the author that gave the Gospel its true meaning and uniqueness. Our research among sources is justified by the knowledge it brings, but we must consider that "what he borrowed was for the most part rude material; what he gave was spirit and life" and not seek to explain away the life and spirit in terms of Gnosticism, Platonism or any other aspect of the Greek environment. "Spirit and Life" can be explained only in terms of the author's own personality.

* Scott: op. cit. p. 29
IV

THE LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IV GOSPEL

In dealing with the literary characteristics of the Fourth Gospel, we must bear in mind that some of them, while they are literary in their implications, may also be classified otherwise and accordingly will be treated in a different light in later chapters.

The first literary characteristic is the language of the Fourth Gospel. Like the other books of the New Testament, it was written in Greek rather than Aramaic in order that it could be read by Christians throughout the Gentile world. The Greek of the Fourth Gospel, however, is different in some respects from that of the other New Testament writings, and as such is indicative of the personality and individuality of the author. His Greek, while not that of an academician, is comparatively smooth in comparison to the rough, sometimes blunt expressions of Mark's Gospel. There are peculiarities of vocabulary present in the Fourth Gospel that are uncommon to the others such as the use of the Greek words, "antlema," "bibroskein," "didumos," "Theke," and "kerma." The author manifests also a fondness for certain words that are almost technical and which by repetition have acquired an almost special meaning. Such words as "thos" (23 times), "kosmos" (78 times), and "ginoskein" (55 times), reflect the technical religious language of the age in which John wrote. His Greek is also peculiar in that he uses the connective, "kai" for all of the various connective particles of the Greek language. "A common phenomenon in the Johannine writings is the simple juxtaposition of sentences, often producing by the mere use of "kai" and in fact sometimes without it, an adversative, concessive and peculiar emphasis."

This is especially noticable in "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness apprehendeth it not" (John 1:4), and in "Ye search the Scriptures because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me" (5:39). A fourth peculiarity in this connection is his use of the word "Logos" to designate a conception of Christ, in the prologue, and his failure to use it in that sense in the remainder of the Gospel. Moffatt says of the Fourth Gospel and the language in which it was written: "The Fourth Gospel represents the first serious attempt to restate the primitive faith for some wide circles who were susceptible to Hellenistic influences, and the author in translating the Gospel of Jesus for their benefit, shows himself a martyr not only in his selection of the matter he had to convey but in his grasp of the language in which he had to reproduce his beliefs."

The style of the Gospel, like that of both the Hellenistic and Hebraic writings of the age, is strongly meditative. In John this meditative style is marked by the peculiarity of "one thought coming to the surface, succeeded by another and another, and itself again appearing and reappearing". John is not writing a biography of Jesus, but is seeking to convey certain impressions of his own concerning the Master to the minds of his readers, and is content to dwell for a long time on what he considers to be the important aspects of his conception. And having passed from one aspect to another, he is willing at any time to come back to the first to reiterate its importance or to emphasize some new detail that has occurred to him. This same trait is present in

* Moffatt: Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament p. 57
** Fowler: History and Literature of the New Testament p. 407
his usage of certain words and ideas such as "life", "light", and "darkness" which convey some important connotation and which he lingers over and repeats to be certain that his own particular meaning will be understood.

Another feature of the style of the Gospel is the use of discourses. Most of the historical events recorded in the Gospel are not included merely for their own sake, but are made to serve as porticos for long discourses on the author's favorite themes. The incident of the meeting of Jesus with the Samaritan woman is an outstanding example of this, As in the dialogues of Plato the figures give the background for the words spoken, but the speech is considered of greater importance. In these discourses which take the form of dialogues or monologues, "the literary form resembles that of Plato's dialogues or Xenophon's Memorabilia". The opinion has been advanced by some scholars, among them Goodspeed, that the historical events accompanying the discourses are themselves parables to a large extent. This view does not deny the historicity of the event itself, but insists that the persons appearing are merely the archetypes of various groups in the Graeco-Roman world that had some connection with the Church. The Samaritan woman represents the Jewish-heathen element of the Gentile world; Nicodemus stands for those who adhere closely to the Law; Thomas becomes the spokesman for all doubters; John the Baptist personifies the Baptist sect which grew up contemporaneously with Christianity and which had given the Church considerable opposition. In fact the whole Gospel is a parable. "It represents an interpretation of Jesus in the form of the narrative of His ministry." Such a view, we see at once, if carried to its logical

* Fowler op. cit. p. 408
** Goodspeed: The Story of the New Testament p. 117
extreme, practically denies the value that these historical events and persons have of themselves, and limits their place in the Gospel to that of being merely the background for the more important symbolic teachings. The Gospel, on the other hand, seems to indicate that an especial importance and significance was attached by the author to these persons and events in and of themselves. This will appear more emphatically in our study of the Gospel and Gnosticism in a later chapter. But here it will suffice to say that while, in the light of the author's stated purpose to present his own definite conception of the spiritual Christ, and in the light of the fact that these persons appearing in the Gospel can well be made to personify groups and movements that existed in the Graeco-Roman world, the symbolic view of the persons and events recorded contains a likely element of truth, we must not forget that the historical events and personages have an autonomous value and importance quite apart from the discourses that accompany them.

This leads us to the Evangelist's use of allegory. In our consideration of the Alexandrian influence we noticed that one of the major phases of this influence was the allegorical method of teaching and writing. In John this method is carried out to its fullest extent. A symbolic content can be attached to almost every verse in the Gospel. But here again we must be discreet in deciding where the author has really embodied the real behind the symbol. Surely we make no mistake in the selection of the chapter of the Good Shepherd and the chapter of the Vine as examples of John's use of allegory. Jesus is the Good Shepherd and His followers
are the sheep. A peculiar Hellenistic twist is found in the statement: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring" (10:16). John is referring here to those of other faiths in the Graeco-Roman world who had in their own religious systems approached some of the essential truths of Christianity, and were awaiting only the realization that in Christ their desires and needs would be met, in order to believe and have life in His name. Jesus is also the Vine, and the Branches, disciples, have no life apart from their organic connection with the Vine itself. Other uses of allegory are evident in such passages as "I am the bread of Life" (6:35), and "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life" (6:54). We might go through the entire Gospel pointing out the instances where the use of allegory is plainly evident and warns us to look for the double meaning expressed.

One final element of the style of the Fourth Gospel is the manner in which the author comments upon the sayings he ascribes to Jesus, so that it is difficult to determine where Jesus has left off speaking and John has begun. He dwells on the saying of Jesus "to repeat and enforce them by expansions of his own, which keep coming back to the same point". As we have seen before, the sayings of Jesus, the discourses, almost always accompany the presentation of some historical event. "Each incident is followed by a speech or dialogue in which its inward significance is unfolded, and these discourses appear to be composed freely according to the method employed in the narrative proper. Words actually uttered by Jesus are expanded and interpreted. Sayings are ascribed to Him which He may not literally

* Scott: The Fourth Gospel p. 3
have spoken, but which express His essential thought, as the Evangelist conceived it! Today for a writer to permit such freedom would be considered a grave breach of literary ethics, but at the time of the writing of the Fourth Gospel, an entirely different standard obtained. It was unnecessary then for a writer to state his obligations to his sources, to use quotation marks to define clearly the utterances of his characters, and to refrain from adding opinions of his own without first making his reader well aware that he was so doing. In amplifying and expanding the sayings of Jesus, "probably the Evangelist did not discriminate or even try to discriminate!" The phenomenon persists, however, and practically the only reasons we can find for its presence are in the meditative style and purpose of the writer, his eagerness to have his readers grasp the full significance of what he was saying, and in the freedom granted under the literary customs of the Graeco-Roman world.

In the structural form of the Gospel as well as in its tongue and style, we see the reflections of the Hellenistic influence. We approach the structure of the Gospel through an understanding of its stated purpose. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness apprehendeth it not"(1:4-5). "Many other signs did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through His name"(20:30). The purpose of John, then, was a

* Sanday: The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel p. 167
** Sanday: op. cit. p. 167
an evangelistic one, to impart to Christians and Pagans alike the belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, so that through this faith they might have eternal life. He was not writing a biography of Jesus, but attempting to present a particular aspect of Jesus' life. Accordingly, all of the material used in the Gospel is selected material, and contributes toward his purpose. The Gospel, then, is a thought out piece of work, done by this artist of life just as paintings are conceived and planned by the artists of the brush. Charnwood likens the Gospel to a great drama or symphony. "...........The Fourth Gospel is in a very high degree a compact and well ordered whole, of which every part falls within a design thought out beforehand........this is a work of very elaborate and very conscious art in which - worthily and nobly, of course - the writer is keenly aware of the effect which he means to produce on you, and relies for it not merely upon the substance of what he says, but also on the form in which he casts it........it in a way reminds one of a great piece of music, in which several related themes are successively developed, with at least as many subordinate themes worked in on the way........the drama, so to call it, has a prologue in which the subject is........set out clearly........and within a few more verses........the three great themes which determine the structure of the greater part of the book, and which are blended in the conclusion as in the prologue. The themes are: He came unto His own........His own received Him not...........But as many as received Him........."

To this great central purpose and the three subordinate

* Charnwood: According to Saint John p. 61
themes all of the material selected by John is related. John the Baptist appears twice in the story, and each time his presence is utilized to give testimony to the divine nature of Jesus. The story of the Samaritan woman is also used to this end. The Gospel is the story of the gradual self-revelation of Jesus to His disciples who become more and more attached to Him, and the gradual growth of the hostile attitude of the religious leaders which comes to a climax when Jesus is hung on the cross, despised and rejected by all save a few of his closest friends.

Prominent in the structural scheme of the Gospel are the miracles, each of which is especially selected to further the purpose of the writer. "This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested His glory" (2:11). This shows the Johannine emphasis on the miracles. They were "signs" of Jesus' divine nature, not manifestations of His sympathy and compassion. There are seven miracles recorded in the Gospel, declaring the divinity of Jesus, and attesting His great power. The broader implications of the miracles outside of their structural significance will be discussed in a later chapter, and need not be considered here.

Another feature of the structure of the Gospel is the manner in which incidents are transposed to give new effects. The story of the cleansing of the temple is placed at the close of Jesus' life by the Synoptic authors, but John places it at the beginning because he feels that here it better exemplifies the true God-hood of Jesus. This is but one example of this
Johannine trait, but it serves to show how the author made free use of all the material he borrowed. This free, adaptive use of sources is in itself a reflection of the Hellenistic influence in that it is in accordance with the freedom and looseness of the literary ethics of the times.

The sequence of ideas is a further Johannine characteristic. "Mark, for example, one sequence running through twelve chapters, of which any simple analysis is inadequate, the sounding at intervals of notes like these: the life - the light - the life - the wine - the water of life - work ("My Father worketh) - the bread of life - work - the life - the resurrection and the life - the water of life - the light - walk in the light - the darkness and judgment." We see not only the same ideas coming to the surface time and again, but as we proceed we find each idea gathering unto itself new thought, and building up gradually and steadily to a previously planned and well conceived climax.

The almost paradoxical union of opposites throughout the Gospel also serves to strengthen its main structure. "Light" is played on the stage with "Darkness"! "Life" and "Death" appear together in violent contrast. There is literary strength in this use of contrast, and John seems to have realized as much as possible from the trick. Yet, as Scott maintains, he often weakens rather than strengthens his story because of the inconsistencies that creep in when opposite conceptions are so used. For example, the passages that show the world as completely evil and identified with darkness produce a jarring contrast

* Charnwood: op. cit. p. 66
when set beside those passages showing God's love for the world.

"Man according to one order of passages, decides for himself whether he will respond to Christ; according to another, he is determined by a power outside of him. The miracles of Jesus are alternately put forward as the main proof of His divine claims and disparaged as a quite secondary evidence. The intellectual view of religion is combined with a strongly ethical view. The idea of an eternal life in the future stands side by side with that of a life realized here and now, etc" *

These opposites show weakness rather than strength, a departure from the plan of the Gospel rather than an adherence to it. But that there is strength in the dramatic use of such opposites as Light and Darkness, Life and Death, we cannot deny. In them as in the opposites mentioned above which tend to weaken the Gospel, we find a reflection of the Hellenistic influence. They can "be partly accounted for by the peculiar position of the writer, who stands between two epochs, two worlds of culture" **

There are a few remaining literary characteristics of minor importance which cannot be classified under any of the broader headings we have been discussing, but with which we must deal separately. The first of these is the Johannine habit of affixing explanatory notes to references to Jewish customs and translations to Jewish phrases. For example the Jewish word "Rabbi" in (1:38) is followed by the explanation: "which is to say, being interpreted, teacher". Judas is mentioned, not as Judas Iscariot, but as Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. The meaning of the word "Cephas" as stone is given immediately following its use. These are characteristic of John's attempt to interpret his story to the minds and understandings of his Gentile readers, and as such are directly reflective of the Greek

* Scott: op. cit. p. 11-12
** Scott: op. cit. p. 12
influence. The use of numbers in the Gospel is also a characteristic of literary style, and is strongly suggestive of the Hellenistic sources. "In view of his relation to the allegorical schools of Philo, we are prepared to find the mystical values of numbers playing a part in his work, and this expectation is borne out to a greater extent than is at first evident! The two sacred numbers are "three" and "seven" and both appear in the Gospel in different ways. There are three journeys to Galilee, three Passovers, three other feasts; John the Baptist appears three times; Jesus is condemned three times, speaks three times while He is on the cross, and appears three times after His resurrection. There are seven miracles recorded, seven references to "the hour", seven repetitions of the Phrase, "These things I have spoken unto you", and seven uses of the introductory phrase, "I am". Scott points out also that the entire structure of the book can be interpreted according to this numerical scheme. There are seven divisions, each of which can be subdivided into three sections. There is a danger, however, of carrying this idea too far, for we are liable to lose sight of the real content of the Gospel in our search for structural technicalities. Yet there is a similarity here with the methods of the Alexandrian school that merits our attention.

Finally, in contrast to the other Gospels which are silent in this respect, the Fourth Gospel contains several references to the Greeks. Chapter seven, verse 35 reads: "...will He not go unto the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?" Likewise in chapter twelve, verse 20, certain Greeks

* Scott: op. cit. p. 21
** Scott: op. cit. p. 22
come seeking Jesus, and are received with Joy by the Master. These two incidents are mentioned here with the literary characteristics because they show John's contact with the Greek world. Later they will be considered in a more pertinent connection.

Thus we come to the end of our discussion of the literary characteristics as reflections of the Hellenistic influence. The Greek background against which John wrote is most pronouncedly seen in the discourses of the Gospel, in the use of allegory, in the Greek Koine in which the Gospel was written, in the meditative, repetitive style, in the symphonic structure, and in the minor characteristics which include the explanatory notes affixed to Jewish terms and ideas and the numerical scheme in which the sacred numbers, three and seven are worked out in all their mystical significance. This Hellenistic presentation of a Jewish story is interesting because it represents a dual approach to the task of portraying the life of Jesus. The material used was selected from an age and a place entirely removed from the time and place of the writing of the Gospel. John writes "To emphasize the ideas which he desires to impress upon the Christians of the province of Asia in his own time", but he clothes the ideas in the history of an age already several generations past. Writing of the Jesus of Galilee, John cannot help but mingle in his picture the preoccupations of his own age. "This is the preoccupation which distinguishes the Fourth Gospel from the other three. Jesus is still the center of revelation. The

* Fowler: op. cit. p. 410
mystical inwardness of the faith rests on history, but the story is recast until the allegorical or symbolical methods make it a new thing". To quote further from Moffatt in this connection: "......but in no Gospel, indeed, in no book of the New Testament, do the Hebrew and Greek worlds meet so conspicuously......The presentation of the Lord's life and teaching is recast in order to confront the speculative difficulties of Hellenism in the contemporary Asiatic world....The author seeks to interpret the Christian revelation afresh......it (the Gospel) comes from a circle at Ephesus toward the close of the first century, and whatever be its sources, its affinities are Greek in thought and language".

* Moffatt: "John" in Abingdon Bible Commentary p. 857
** " " : loc. cit. p. 857
CONTROVERSIAL INTERESTS

When we consider that the Fourth Gospel grew out of the needs and problems of the early Church, we can understand how and why it is to a large extent controversial in character. Christian principles were continually coming into conflict with Pagan ideas and practices. Groups within the Church were entertaining Pagan heresies that endangered the life and growth of the orthodox faith. Groups on the outside were vehement and determined in their opposition. Many other New Testament writers faced and attempted to deal with the problems of the Church. This is the express purpose of the Pauline letters and of the other Epistles. John, too, was caught in this same current, and throughout his Gospel the controversial purpose is discernible. It is not, however, so easily seen in the Fourth Gospel as in some of the other New Testament books. John is limited greatly by the setting He has chosen for his story and by the narrative form in which he tells it. The scene is laid back in Galilee, and the characters are those who have lived years before and are now dead. It would have been impossible to deal directly with the problems of his own age in a story of a preceding age. Any linking up between the narrative and his own time the author must achieve through implication, allegory, or indirect allusion. We are handicapped in seeing the controversies of the Gospel also by the limitation of our own knowledge of the age in which John lived. Our factual knowledge is very fragmentary, and we are forced to feel our way into an under-
standing of this age largely through inference. In the third place the Gospel does not limit itself to the controversial interests, but includes them among a number of other more important considerations. So we are forced to separate and analyze our data to distinguish one aim from the other.

The controversial interest is present however, and "comparison with the Synoptics at once makes it evident that the criticism thus dealt with is different in kind from that which Jesus encountered during His lifetime. The writer is carrying back into the Gospel period the discussions of his own age." John is more concerned with the opposition directed against his own Church than he is with the hostility of the Pharisees toward Jesus, and throughout the Gospel we are conscious of the fact that he is dealing with the Church problems symbolically in the problems faced by Jesus. We saw in the preceding chapter how the figure of the historical Jesus symbolizes the spiritual Christ whom John knew through his own religious experience. And just as John reads the Christ of his own experience back into the historical Jesus; so does he read the problems of his own Church back into the problems that the historical Jesus faced. In John 3:11 we have a definite expression of this dual interest on the part of the author: "Verily I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness! Here at the same time Jesus is speaking to His enemies, John is speaking to the enemies of the Church.

Three controversies are apparent in the Gospel, and merit our consideration. The first of these deals with the Jews.
controversy looms large in almost every chapter. The Jews are not spoken of as any sect or particular group within the Jewish nation, but simply as "The Jews!" There are two possible ways of explaining this. Either the details of the opposition to and the crucifixion of Jesus had been forgotten during the years that had passed, so that the blame was affixed to the whole race rather than to one small group within the race, or John as a Jew of the Diaspora, may have used this term to designate the Palestinian Jews upon whom the Hellenistic Jew often looked with contempt. There is, however, another element here that substantiates the controversial view. In the Synoptics the opposition to Jesus centers on His attitude toward the Law, but in the Fourth Gospel it assumes a quite different character. No complaint is found in the Fourth Gospel against the orthodoxy and Messiahship of Jesus. The denunciations of Jesus against pride, hypocrisy, and personal wickedness are lacking, and the Messianic question is completely obscured by the Johannine emphasis upon the divinity of the Christ. "The objections urged against Him by the Jews are all of a kind which suggest a later age, when the broad lines of Christian theology had been definitely laid down!" Such complaints as "He makes Himself equal with God!" "Can this man give us His flesh to eat?"; "We were never in bondage to any man, and how sayest Thou, ye shall be made free?" all showing the conflict between Christianity and Judaism when the two religions had become bitter rivals, are present in the Gospel. These are objections, not against the claims of Jesus or against His popularity, but against the

* Scott: op. cit. p. 70
spiritual Christ who had been acknowledged Lord and Head of the Church. Christianity had elevated Christ to the position of Lord; it had knocked the foundations from beneath Jewish legalism and nationalism by its declaration of Christ as the true salvation. The controversial dialogue between Jesus and the Jews on the Bread of life (6:32-59) seems to strike directly at the controversy between the Jews and the Church concerning the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which did not exist until later in the century when the sacrament had become established in the Church.

John also presupposes certain criticisms that might come as a result of the picture of Christ he has presented in his Gospel, and in many instances goes out of his way to avoid possible misunderstandings. He is very careful to assert the publicity of Jesus' mission, and to place most of His work in Jerusalem instead of Galilee (7:4; 18:20). He emphasizes the declaration of Pilate that Jesus is not a malefactor and cannot, therefore, be condemned as such (19:4). This attempt is also apparent in "How knoweth this Man letters, having never learned?" (7:15), and in "Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed on Him?"(7:48). In all of these passages John picks out the places where the Jewish argument against the Church will likely affix itself, and seeks to answer their charges. Knowing that the Gentiles would not likely know the definite instances or details of the Jewish opposition to Jesus, John is careful to show just what these details were - how the Jews urged that Jesus came from an obscure village, was uneducated, was out of line
with the Prophets and the Law, was found to be a malefactor by both Romans and Jews, and finally was betrayed by one of His closest friends. These were the arguments the Jews brought against the Jesus-Christ, the head of the Christian Church. They were arguments that had been developed through meditation and scheming. The Gospel takes notice of them and seeks to answer them to the satisfaction of both the Christians and the opposition. But there are also in the Gospel places where the author seems to be in close sympathy with the Jews. Nathaniel is "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile". Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that salvation must come of the Jews. These and other passages of similar tone stand in vivid contrast to the other instances we have noticed, and may be accounted for by the racial affinity of John which occasionally asserts itself despite his antagonism to the hostility of his own people.

The second controversy of the Gospel deals with the Baptist sect which had grown up contemporary with the Church, and was built around the personality of John the Baptist. The passages in which John the Baptist is mentioned are all carefully constructed so as to emphasize the Person of Jesus and disparage the Baptist. The testimony of John himself discredits his own claim to greatness and exalts Jesus. He does not appear as a leader in the Fourth Gospel, and when he has completed his work of bearing testimony to Jesus, he is allowed to slip quietly off of the stage. Jesus does not speak of him with praise as He does in the Synoptics. Upon first consideration this treatment of the Baptist seems merely to emphasize the divinity of Jesus, but
it is also possible that John was seeking to discredit the claims of the Baptist sect. There is another element in this controversy, if controversy it is, that to some extent softens it. Unlike the Jews who were wholly opposed to the Church, the Baptists differed from the Christians in only a few instances, and for the most part held to the beliefs of the Church. The attitude taken by John, shown in the attitude of the Baptist toward Jesus, was that these people should come into the Church and find there the logical completion of their own religion. The Hellenistic reflections in these two controversies are slight. They are reflective of the Pagan world only insofar as they show us the Church battling amid some of the problems of that world. These problems were not those raised through contact with the Pagan forces but problems that were more or less internal, within the Church, in nature.

The final controversy of the Gospel deals with Gnosticism. Here we are confronted with something entirely foreign to the "quarrels" with the Jews and Baptists, and it behooves us to enquire into the nature of the Gnostic movement itself, before we attempt to see how the author of the Fourth Gospel dealt with it. "Gnosticism is a comprehensive term for a phase of religion which appeared in Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity, but it was in Christianity that it grew most aggressively." Thus Angus defines this religion within other religions, and following his own definition he gives those of some other theologians. To Harnack it was "the acute secularizing or Hellenizing of Christianity!" Reitzenstein saw it as "not the Hellenizing but a more

* Angus: The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World p. 377
extensive orientalizing of Christianity" To Farnell it was "the doctrine which labored most zealously to combine the various elements of the Pagan and Christian Creeds." These definitions all show how hard it is to define Gnosticism. They are more descriptions of some outstanding characteristic of the movement than comprehensive definitions of it. We will be safer if we take our cue here and seek to fix in our minds some of its distinctive features rather than attempt to define it. In the first place it was a religious movement that made itself felt within the religions, not only of the Pagan world, but in Judaism and Christianity as well. And secondly, Gnosticism was not the same in all the different periods of these first centuries, but was marked by intensive change. The Gnosticism of the time of John was considerably different from that in the time of Jesus, nor was it nearly so advanced as that which claimed the attention of the Church fathers in the second century. Because of its ever changing development and intrinsic complexity, Gnosticism is exceedingly difficult to understand. Elements of all of the religious systems of the world entered into its make-up and growth. It was of necessity a borrowing, syncretistic movement.

Gnosticism was founded primarily on knowledge. "It was the natural evolution of the Hellenistic demand, 'know thyself' and 'thereby thou shalt know the universe' and obtain salvation." The Greek word Gnosis means to know, and the Gnostic was one who knew in the higher spiritual sense. We are interested in this movement as it existed within the Church at the time when the Fourth Gospel was written; so we shall examine it more closely.

* Angus: op. cit. p. 377
** Angus: op. cit. p. 379
in this connection. Although the sources of Gnosticism were outside Christianity, the movement, once established within the Church, completely reinterpreted its purpose and message in terms of the content of the Christian message. The primary purpose of Gnosticism as stated by Pfleiderer was "the salvation of the soul from the powers of death, and the assurance of a happy life in the world to come!" On this practical purpose it built its superstructure in accordance with the speculative atmosphere of its existence. "The world of matter and the world of spirit are two distinct entities. The soul of man is a spark of heavenly fire belonging to the divine sphere, but has become so entangled in matter that release is impossible without divine aid. That aid is mediated in the form of revealed knowledge, Gnosis, which is a mysterious wisdom attained only by those who have been initiated. Through this divine enlightenment the soul now attains liberation, at the same time learning the secret of a successful journey to the abode of the blest after death."

Thus we see in Gnosticism the application of the Platonic idea of the dual nature of the universe, and the Pagan religious practices of allowing their "salvation" to be procured only by the few initiates by means of mystical rites and ceremonies. Nor is it difficult for us to see how the Gnostics would find much in Christianity that was to their liking. They took over bodily the Pauline teaching on Jesus, the Son of God who had come down from heaven, had offered the reconciling sacrifice of death, had emerged conqueror over death and the powers of Hell, and had become the Saviour of both the living and the dead.

* Pfleiderer: Christian Origins p. 249
** Case: The Evolution of Early Christianity p. 327
To Jesus they transferred all they had hitherto thought and claimed for their own mystical deities, and changed the earthly Messiah of the disciples and Paul's divine Son of God into a vague, mystical divine Being, "the subject of their exuberant speculation and the center of their mystical rites". Thus Gnosticism became Christianized, and became a movement within the Church. In accordance with the Platonic world view, the Gnostics held to a strictly spiritual interpretation of life. They decried physical existence as something shadowy and unreal. They taught asceticism, abstinence from sexual acts, and the rejection of marriage. They denied that the bodily form of Jesus was real, and insisted that it was but a shade or a body borrowed by Him while He was here on earth. They denied His actual death and resurrection claiming that someone had died in the place of Jesus whom the disciples thought to be Jesus Himself, or that the story of the death was a fabrication. They even went so far as to repudiate the value of the Old Testament as a part of Christian Scriptures. They held that the God of the Old Testament was not the same as the God of Jesus. This God, they held, had created the evil world, and was in all respects inferior to the God who had created Jesus. Some of them even regarded the Gospel story itself as a sacred myth and valuable only as a basis for theosophical doctrines.

The presence of the Gnostic current within Christianity had its counter effect upon Christian teaching. The Christians could not allow the Gnostics to go beyond them in the worship of a spiritual Christ; so, flinging their hopes of an earthly

* Pfleiderer: op. cit. p. 251
Kingdom overboard, they followed in apotheosizing Jesus. But at the same time, while they followed the Gnostics in their spiritual emphasis, the Christians were not so ready to relinquish their hold on the human Jesus. Insofar as spiritual things were concerned there was little or no conflict between the Christians and the Gnostics. But the Gnostic lack of concern in the human, physical Jesus, seemed to menace the unity and monotheism of the Christian faith; so consequently the majority of the Church held to the belief in the human as well as the divine Jesus. To the Gnostic extremism and to the danger that it gave rise to, the Fourth Gospel has an answer. We see John's standpoint in the Prologue, "And the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us." Here he states once and for all that Jesus was as much a figure of history as a spiritual Being. This attitude is also found in the meticulous description of the details of the physical death of Jesus and in the description of Jesus resurrection, "not as a return from the dead, but as a reanimation of the dead body from the tomb with tangibility and visibility." The thrust of the spear, the print of the nails, the allusions to thirst and weariness, the omission of all reference to Simon of Cyrene, whom the Gnostics declared had been crucified in place of Jesus, the details of Jesus' earthly life, all affirm Him physical reality. The fact that John consciously writes a "Gospel" and follows the material of the Synoptics shows further that he was interested in showing Jesus as an historical person. And in its silences as well as its utterances the Gospel seems to refute Gnosticism.

"The hierarchy of spiritual agencies which plays an all-essential

* Angus: op. cit. p. 391
part in Gnosticism, entirely disappears! There is no mention of angels, and few references to evil spirits. In the Prologue appears a statement, which, taken along with these silences, seems to mean the complete overthrow of the Gnostic system of intermediate beings. "And without Him was not anything made that was made!" This attitude of opposition to the Gnostics is furthered by the Gospel consideration of the Old Testament. There is no indication of John's believing that the God of the Old Testament was any other than the God of Jesus. Abraham, Moses, and the prophets are spoken of with great reverence, and their words are accepted as truth. The power given to men to become the children of God (1:12) also runs counter to the Gnostic teaching. John saw eternal life, sonship, as a gift obtainable only through Christ, but the Gnostics thought of it as an inherent quality in the natures of the elect few who were initiates in the Gnostic religion. Finally, we see opposition to Gnosticism in the conspicuous absence of certain Gnostic words and phrases. While the Gospel dwells on ideas that would naturally be conveyed by the words, "gnosis;" "sophia;" and "pistis;" these words are no-where used in the Gospel, but are replaced in every instance with other forms or with entirely different words.

But while he opposed Gnosticism, John was also influenced in his thinking by much of the Gnostic teaching, and the evidences of this as just as discernible as are the evidences of the opposition pointed out above. The Johannine emphasis upon the divine nature of Jesus, which overshadows His interest in the human Person, is strikingly similar to the spiritual emphasis of the Gnostics. The Logos-Christ figures prominently in the Gospel

* Scott: op. cit. p. 91
as we shall see in a later chapter. The dualistic world view expressed in "light" and "darkness," and the emphasis on knowledge are in close harmony with Gnosticism. "This is life eternal to know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (17:3).

We cannot deny that Gnosticism influenced John as much positively as negatively, and perhaps we do not want to deny it. That there were certain values in the Gnostic emphasis as well as certain disvalues, we shall see when we come to the consideration of the Logos in the Gospel. Here we must remember that, despite any or all of his seeming agreements with Gnostic teaching, John did not lose hold of the eternal truths of the message of Jesus. We must also remember that in these influences we have mentioned there may be elements that can be traced to other sources outside of Gnosticism. It is probably true that many of the views common to both the Fourth Gospel and the Gnostics were taken over from the general religious atmosphere of the times or from the Hellenistic schools of thought. It is also well for us to take into account in this connection that while the spiritual emphasis of the Fourth Gospel, its wider and more universal view of religion and life, borrowed as they were from the Gentile environment, altered the original meaning of the Christian message to some extent, that their influence was on the whole a wholesome one. They enabled Christianity to throw off the bonds of the narrow nationalism of Israel, and to replace the narrow Jewish forms with new conceptions more adequate to express and formulate the living Christ, and to express His message so that it would be understood the world over.
VI

THE CHURCH

Closely allied with the controversial element of the Fourth Gospel and representative in much the same manner of the Hellenistic influence are the ecclesiastical reflections. While we do not find the Church mentioned as such in the Fourth Gospel, we are convinced that in many instances the thought of it was uppermost in the mind of the author as he wrote. There is every reason for us to believe that John was profoundly concerned with the Church of his time. The interest surrounding the Church was at its height. Like a great wave Christianity was sweeping over the Gentile world. The Gospel was coming into direct contact with the religions and cultures of the Pagan world. All of this growth and contact raised problems that were most acute and vital to the continued life of the Church. It was a time when the Pagan influences were making themselves most keenly felt in the Church organization and doctrine. We have seen in the preceding chapter how Gnosticism entered Christianity and became a menace to the very uniqueness of the Gospel message. This was but one of the problems the Church was called upon to face. It is extremely difficult, therefore, to think of John, the Churchman, writing for Church members in an age when the Church was the center of interest and conflict, it is difficult to think of him as not being acutely interested in the life and problems of the Church to and for which he was writing. It is difficult to think of him as remaining aloof from the interests and problems of the Church when they were so fascinating and
compelling. We cannot conceive of him as being unconcerned with the solution of the Church's problems when such a solution was so vital and necessary to the life and growth of the Church in the future. So we are prepared to find in the Fourth Gospel definite reflections of the author's attitude toward the Church and his solutions of some of its problems. "It is reasonable to infer that the doctrine of the Church, which filled such a large place in contemporary thought, is a matter of vital concern to him!" Here, however, we must recognize the limitations under which John wrote. He was writing at a time when Christianity was almost completely a Gentile religion and when its interests and problems were fully developed. But he was writing of a time when the Church as the organization of believers had not yet made its appearance. He was dealing with the life and times of Jesus, untouched by the Gentile environment, and limited in its activity to the Jews. Hence John could not mention the Church as such, nor could he refer openly to the problems the Church was facing. It must all be done indirectly by inference and symbol. He must use his historic material to reveal symbolically the thoughts of his own mind concerning the contemporary affairs.

Before we go further we must settle to our own satisfaction the extent to which we shall read the presence of the Hellenistic influence in these ecclesiastical implications of the Fourth Gospel. The Hellenistic influence in this connection is not philosophic. It does not lead us back to Greek thought and speculation. Rather, the reflections here are of the religious and

* Scott: *The Fourth Gospel* p. 108
cultural conditions of the Graeco-Roman world. This is the influence we find in the Church considerations of the Fourth Gospel. It is not a Hellenistic influence in the pure sense of the term. But it is an influence of the Graeco-Roman age, and as such merits our attention. Insofar as the ecclesiastical aspects of the Fourth Gospel are reflective of the Pagan religious beliefs and practices, insofar as it is reflective of the culture of the contemporary environment of the Church, it is a part of the general Hellenistic influence.

We come upon the most striking presence of the thought of the Church in the prayer of Jesus recorded in the seventeenth chapter. This prayer, while it deals with the life of Jesus and His earthly fellowship with His disciples, is in reality the Johannine conception of the foundation and future growth of the Church. It comes at the close of Jesus' life as the climax of the work He had done, and shows Jesus summarizing that work and looking forward to its continuance in the future. He had spent His life with a small band of intimate followers, and had imparted to them the revelation and life of the Father. They had been won to a faith in Him as the eternal Son, and in them Jesus saw "the first fruits of a great multitude who will afterwards believe through their word." Thus this prayer consecrating the disciples is the consecration of the Church. Jesus prays "That they all may be one even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us: that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me" (17:21). God is urged to protect the faithful and keep them in His love just as Jesus has been

* Scott: op. cit. p. 108
protected and has protected the disciples while they were under His care. He sets them apart from the world as the elect of God, and prays for their steadfastness to the Light and for their future success in imparting their faith to others. He desires "that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me"(17:24). The place of this prayer both in the life of Jesus and in the organization of the Gospel is further evidence that John was dealing with the beginning and growth of the Church. Through His life as the cross draws near, His attention centers more narrowly upon the disciples. Their increasing faith in Him is gradually and consistently developed, while the deepening hostility of the world is shown to emphasize Jesus and His band as separate from the world and becoming more intimate in their own inter-relations. And now in this final prayer we see the purpose of Jesus, the purpose of John, standing out clearly. These disciples are the first Church, the nucelus from which the later Church is to develop. "They represented in miniature the great community that Christ would gather to Himself hereafter out of the world!" The story of Christ and His disciples is the historical presentation of the start and growth of the Church. It was to the Church, to this early band of disciples that Christ had given the gift of eternal life. It was the Church which in the years to come was to be responsible for the further impartation of that gift to men.

So in this prayer we see not only the beginnings of the Church, but the prophesy of its future growth. This second element is further emphasized in other portions of the Gospel.

* Scott: op. cit. p. 109
Writing at a time when the main constituency of the Church was Gentile, John was forced to prophesy of the growth of the Church among the Gentile nations. But he is limited here by the Jewish setting of the story he is telling, and again is forced to employ invention to accomplish his aim. This he does in two significant passages. The first of these deals with the visit of Jesus to Samaria and His conversation with the Samaritan woman (4:4-42). He offers the woman the water of Life, and she accepts the gift recognizing Jesus as the Christ. Through her Jesus meets a large number of the natives of the village, and many of them come to believe in Him. The second passage comes at the close of His ministry and deals with a number of Greeks who come expressing a desire to see Jesus (12:20) They make their request known to Philip who in turn tells Andrew who communicates the message to Jesus. Jesus manifests joy upon receipt of this news, and immediately begins to speak of His own glory. Taken by themselves these two instances seem insignificant enough, but interpreted in the light of John's ecclesiastical interests, they become of major importance. The visit to Samaria shows the willingness of Jesus to impart His life to other than Jews and the corresponding willingness of the Pagans to accept it. In the request of the Greeks and the joy of Jesus "the allusion is unmistakable to the Gentile mission in which Christianity was to achieve its permanent triumph!" Thus we see the figure of the Church looming up behind the scenes of history. Jesus is not only winning personal friends to whom He will impart the gift of

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* Scott: op. cit. p. 111
life, He is building the foundations of His Church. Through that early group the Church would expand until it numbered its members among all men and nations everywhere. In the visit to Samaria and the welcome of the Greeks, Jesus had himself begun the wide mission: "Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white even now unto harvest!" (5:35)

We can trace two lines of thought in the mind of John as he gives us his conception of the Church. In the first place he regards the Church as universal, but in the second place he modifies and limits that universalism by insisting upon the complete separation of the Church from the world. The Church was not for the Jews alone, but for all men. Jesus was the Logos that lighteth every man. "God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son" (3:16). "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold... and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd" (10:16). The Samaritans recognize Him as "indeed the Saviour of the world!" He tells His disciples, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (12:32). We shall have more to say of the universal character of the Fourth Gospel in a later chapter, but here it is important for us to notice that John conceived of the Church as a universal Church, not restricted to the Jews, but expanded to include all people.

But while the Church was universal, it was also closely limited. It was to be separated from the world just as Jesus and the disciples were separated from the world. This is in accord with the dualistic nature of John's thinking, which is
everywhere apparent in the Gospel. It is also a reflection of His Greek point of view. The message of the Church is for all men, but at the same time it is restricted to certain of the "all men" who are capable of receiving it. This idea is decidedly in line with the common Pagan and Gnostic ideas of salvation. Not all men were to be saved, but only those who by nature were qualified to enter upon the scheme of salvation and who had submitted themselves to the initiatory rites of the Church. Salvation was for the few; the great mass of mankind was outside of the sphere of influence of religion. A sharp line of demarkation is drawn between the Church and the world. Only those whom the Father gave to Jesus can share the Life. The rest were forever outside the fold. Only those who are of the truth are eligible for redemption. Only the "scattered children of God" can come into the Church. In their fellowship the world can have neither part nor interest. They are bound together by ties which the world does not know. There is an exclusiveness here which closely approximates that of the fraternal orders of our modern times. There is an exclusiveness closely similar to that of the Pagan Mysteries. John's conception of the Church was two-fold. The Church was at the same time universal and decidedly limited in its reach. It included both Jews and Gentiles, but only those Jews and Gentiles whom the Father had chosen for it, only those fitted by nature for membership, only the elect. It is in this dual conception that we see the Greek thought of John standing out. The universality of his Church is to be explained in the light of the Gentile Church which he
knew and of which he was a part. The exclusiveness is understood in the light of the common Hellenistic view of salvation. As the Greek thought of soteria as something to be given only to the select few, so John thought of the salvation of the Church.

We see John's ecclesiastical interest also in his controversies with the Jews, Baptists and Gnostics. He is speaking not only from his own personal viewpoint, but from that of the Church. He is defending the Church against the opposition and menace of these other sects. In his theology which we shall consider in the following chapter, we can trace the desire to provide a sound doctrinal basis for the Church. We can understand this when we think of the confusion of his age. The Church was surrounded by opposing forces that threatened its very existence, movements both within and without that were seeking to change its message. The great question facing the Church was, what is its true nature? John attempts to provide a theological basis in which the nature of the Church would be undeniably inherent. And while he is seeking to lay in the life of Jesus the solid foundation of the Church, he is also interested in providing for the inclusion of the truth which his own age had produced and which succeeding ages would achieve. The original foundation in Jesus was the true foundation, but at the same time John's Hellenistic mind had convinced him that his own age had brought forth additional truth that belonged to the Christian message. "He so broadens his conception of Christianity as to admit much that has come to him from alien
sources; and not only so, but he secures an inward principle of
development by which the Church may be able from time to time to
renew and enlarge its knowledge of the truth.*

The ecclesiastical interest of John is also apparent in the
sacramentalism of the Gospel, but since this aspect will be
studied more fully at a later place, we need not go into it here.
Enough for us to know that the distinct element of sacramental-
ism in the Gospel reflects John's interest in the Church and
in the problems brought about through the contact of the Church
with the Pagan religions. The references to Church government
and organization are not so readily detected, but there are
several episodes which can be interpreted in this light. When
John was writing, the organization and government of the Church
had come to occupy places of especial importance. Nor does this
seem strange when we consider that the Church was becoming more
and more removed from the intense faith that had characterized
its earlier existence and that it was face to face with problems
that called for keen leadership and strong defense mechanism.
The Fourth Gospel does not oppose this growing leadership em-
phasis, and we find instances where John seems to indorse the
principle, going so far as to state: the qualifications of
good leaders. This is most apparent in the allegory of the Good
Shepherd. John is speaking not only of Jesus as the supreme
Shepherd, but also of the Christian leaders, the under shepherds.
"He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd. And the sheep
hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth
them out"(10:2-3). These and the verses immediately following

* Scott: op. cit., p. 121
deal with the Church leaders. When Jesus speaks of Himself as the Door, He is not only opening the gateway to eternal life, but is also placing a condition upon those other leaders who would lead the sheep through the door. They also must have gone through it, believing in Christ as the Son of God and abiding in His commandments. The leadership of the Church is at issue also in the place which the disciples have in the Gospel and the work they are given to do. They are the first leaders of the Church and in them is set the example for the authorities of all succeeding time to follow. "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" (20:21). "Ye shall also bear witness because ye have been with Me from the beginning" (15:27).

The disciples are presented as already in positions of authority. They are near to Jesus, and enjoy a special fellowship with Him. They are the agents through whom others approach Him (12:21-22). They baptise converts rather than allow Jesus to do it (4:2). After the resurrection they are definitely commissioned and set aside for their task as leaders in the Church (20:21-23).

Thus we see in the Gospel a theory of the Church. True to the Johannine duality, the historical facts have a second meaning. They are symbols for other facts and conceptions. So behind the story of Jesus's relationship to His disciples we see the story of the Church. And this story is likewise influenced by the dual strain. The Church is universal and at the same time a limited body complete and separate from the world. It is a world-wide brotherhood, but at the same time a brotherhood which demands certain qualifications for membership. In this dual view
we see a mental conflict between two forces, the material and the spiritual, the Pagan and the Christian. The spiritual force is emphasized in the universal picture of the Church, in the widened doctrinal boundaries, in the provision for future development, in the spiritual interpretation of the sacraments, in the insistence upon the lofty and noble standard of Christian character and leadership. But it is the Pagan, material force that limits this conception to include only the few, that stresses the material, magical value of the sacraments, and sanctions the official system of the Church. "Thus in every direction he enforces the spiritual idea of the Church, and at the same time magnifies the outward institution!"* We are gratified to see the spiritual element of this dual view emphasized most, but at the same time the other material element is present to an alarming degree. How can we account for this? In the first place it is based upon a growing tendency within the Church toward externalism. The first inspiration of the Church was beginning to fade, and more and more consciously was the need felt for an organization to take its place. "The unity of Spirit gave way to an outward uniformity which was secured by a hierarchy of officers, a fixed ritual, a harder definition of creed, a closer amalgamation of the scattered companies of believers!"** This trend toward externalism was furthered by the infiltration of Pagan ideas of the selective nature of salvation and the mystical efficiency of the sacraments. But pitted against the group of externalists was another group quite extreme in its opposing view. Viewing with alarm the growing materialism of the Church, this left-wing

* Scott: op. cit. p. 139
**Scott: op. cit. p. 140
group advocated the abandonment of all organization and the return to the faith and spontaneity of the Apostolic times. The influence of this group was beginning to be felt when John wrote. As the representative of the Church, John is partially in sympathy with both forces. He sees the benefits and the need for each of them, and realizes the danger of them if they are carried to the extreme. He finds value in organization and ritual, but insists that these be filled with a spiritual content to guard against any empty autonomous value that might be attributed to them. But at the same time he sees danger in the extreme left-wing view, and accepts the organization and ritualism of the Church as necessary, while he simultaneously attempts to impart to these forms a new spiritual meaning.

In addition to these opposing forces, there was another factor that influenced the Johannine duality. This was the two-fold theory of the Christian revelation itself. John thought of Jesus as the incarnation of the eternal Logos Christ who imparted life to man. And he conceived of the Church as being in a sense the continuation of the incarnation of the Logos after Jesus had died. The Church becomes "the body of Christ" the incarnation through which the Logos still imparts life to men (17:11). Yet beside this Logos conception of the Christ and the Church there is also the simple, religious conception which in the final analysis receives the primary emphasis. It is the religious conception that is deepest in the heart of the Evangelist, and which is most eloquently expressed. The Logos doctrine, however, exerts a strong influence over his thinking and as we shall
see, does much to obstruct the real message of his Gospel. But the stronger religious emphasis breaks through to assert itself. This happens in the conception of the Church. It is primarily a spiritual brotherhood, united by the bond of love and committed to realizing the ideals of Jesus. Its membership is not restricted to the few, but includes all who call upon the name of Christ in faith and humility. "The one condition for membership is to share in the Spirit of Christ through personal communion with Him. In the little company of disciples gathered around Jesus at the Supper, John sees the prototype of the future Church; and he speaks of one among them, who lay on Jesus' bosom, whom Jesus loved." This to John is the true Church, the Church of love.

This final emphasis on the true nature of the Church is gratifying, but we must return for a moment to the other conception, the universal yet limited Church, the Church wracked by disintegrating forces, to ground our idea of the Hellenistic influence. Here we find the reflection of the world and the Church which John knew; we see the religious unrest of the Pagan world; we see the influence of the great syncretistic movement with all of its borrowings and lendings; we hear the voice of the Greek philosopher in the Logos conception of the nature of the Christ and the Church. As John, standing in the pulpit, answered the Jews, the Baptists, the Gnostics, as he sought to infuse the organization and ritualism of the Church with spiritual meaning at the same time he was sanctioning them, as he did these things; so is his Gospel reflective of the Hellenistic influences amid which he wrote.

* Scott: op. cit. p. 144
"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness apprehendeth it not.

"There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.

"There was the light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

* John: 1:1-14
story intelligible to his Gentile readers, and second, in the reflections of the culture and religious life of the Graeco-Roman world of the first century Church. In several instances we intimated a third type of Hellenistic influence, namely the doctrinal or theological, philosophical or speculative influence. This influence, which we now consider in full, deals with the Greek thought which pervades the Gospel and colors its conceptions of the doctrinal issues the evangelist attempts to portray.

It is necessary for us to begin our study with the Logos doctrine, for this is not only the first conception in the very Prologue of the Gospel, but it is the conception that forms the philosophical basis for all of the theology that follows. The Hellenistic thought influence enters the Fourth Gospel through the Logos gate, and spreading through every chapter, leaves the unmistakable impress of its character upon the Johannine conceptions of Christ, His work, His relation to God and the world, Life; Redemption, and the Sacraments. These phases of the theology of the Gospel together with a discussion of the universal character of John's story will form the burden of the present chapter.

We must remind ourselves again that in the consideration of the theological aspects of the Gospel as in the other connections, we shall not find the Hellenistic influence existing in its pure form. The chief source of the Greek thought which John borrowed was Philo who personifies the Alexandrian speculation as the mingling of both the Greek and the Hebraic
streams of thought. Through him Hellenism was Hebraised almost as completely as Judaism was Hellenized. John, moreover, was not content to use what he borrowed from Philo just as he found it, but rather modified and changed it to suit his own viewpoint. So we cannot pick out any one idea or conception and claim that it is of pure Greek parentage. Rather we are forced to say that among the streams of Judaism, Paulinism, and John's own thought we can detect the presence of the Hellenistic stream mingled with the others. In view of this we assert again, nor can we emphasize it too strongly, that the story of the Hellenistic influences in the Fourth Gospel is by no means the complete picture. It is merely one design worked in with many others in the pattern John weaves... but one of the brilliant facets of the Johannine diamond.

Our consideration of the Fourth Gospel Logos resolves itself into two parts. First, there is the Logos as the borrowed form in which the Evangelist cast his own conception of the Christ of his own experience. Secondly, there is the Logos as a philosophical doctrine which becomes the speculative basis upon which John's theology is erected. We must first, however, consider briefly the relationship between the Logos of John and the Philonian Logos, the probable source of John's conception.

While the Logos of John represents a distinct advance over that of Philo in many respects, we are in agreement with the majority of scholars in assigning to it a partial Hellenistic parentage. It is almost unanimously conceded that John borrowed this conception directly from Philo. He reproduces the main features of the Philonic figure. The eternal existence of the
of the Word is emphasized. The relation of the Word toward God is thought of as "towards Him" (pros ton Theon) and yet distinct from Him and in a sense subordinate to Him. Creative activity is thought of as an attribute of the Word, and its Function is conceived of as the illumination of men with the divine essence and light. The vague, mystical, philosophic content and connotation of Philo's Logos is also present in the Johannine conception. That Philo is the source of "The Word" is furthered by the presence of the same Jewish ideas in John as characterized the Philonic idea. The Old Testament idea of "the Word" which was present in the Philonic Logos is also present in John's conception, as is also the definite Judaistic religious coloring.

Yet the Johannine Logos advances beyond that of Philo both in the sense that some entirely new attributes are assigned to it and that some of the ideas carried over from Philo are modified and changed in accord with John's own point of view. Philo never thought of the Logos becoming Flesh. It is a new conception with John. Likewise the personality accredited to the Logos of the Fourth Gospel is a radical departure from Philo. We sometimes think of the Philonian Logos as being personal in a vague sense, but nowhere is the idea of personality definitely stated in his system. We can understand this when we remember that in Philo's time the category of personality was wanting from men's thinking. "It is of course true that the Evangelist identifies the Logos with the person of Jesus Christ, whereas it is doubtful how far the Philonian Logos is to be

* See Psalms 33; 107:20, 147:15,18; Isa.40:8; 55:10,11; Wisd.9:1
regarded as in any sense personal. A further difference lies in the subordinate position granted the creative function of the Johannine Logos. Only one mention is made of the creative activity of the Logos (1:3) and the attention centers rather upon the life-giving function of Christ. Then, the Logos here is endowed with a strong religious significance which advances it far beyond the Philonic conception. To John the Logos was more "the Word" than "the Reason." The Alexandrian conception embodied both ideas in accordance with the Greek and Jewish thought streams, but the emphasis was placed upon the Reason of the Logos. John, however, found in the Logos "the ultimate ground of all things was the Word, the Word of power by which God uttered Himself." "The central point in Philo's conception is the philosophic idea of the divine Reason; the center of St. John's is the religious idea of the divine Word." And finally there is a literary difference noted in the absence of such "Philonian Catchwords" in the Fourth Gospel as presbutatos, presbutatos uios, protologos, mesos ton akron, amphoteris omerueun, and logos aidios o eggutato eikon uparchon Theon.

The points of similarity are accounted for by the belief that John did borrow his Logos conception from Philo, while the equally strong points of contrast point to John's Pauline and Synoptic background and his own religious point of view. We agree, then, that in large measure the Logos of John is Hellenistic in its source, and that as a form of expression it is a reflection of the Greek influence. Its various implications

* Sanday: The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel p. 192
**Scott: The Fourth Gospel p. 158
*** Sanday: op. cit. p. 193
**** " " : op. cit. pp. 191-192
moreover, are to be considered as Hellenistic influences.

The first significance of the Logos as an element of the Hellenistic influence is as a form of thought in which John cast his conception of Christ in order to make it attractive and intelligible to the Gentile minds, and to reconcile it to the Graeco-Roman religious demand for a Mediator between God and man. When we think of the Logos in this manner, we are considering what was likely the Evangelist's primary motive in his use of the idea. John was not a philosopher; he was a religious thinker and writer. His interest lay, not in philosophy and speculation, but in religion. True, he shared the Greek point of view common in his day, and lived and wrote in the midst of a speculative environment; so that it was inevitable that this philosophic atmosphere would pervade his thinking and writing to some extent. But primarily he was concerned with religious things, and wrote mainly from the religious point of view. His Gospel was written, not to present the philosophic basis for his belief in the divine nature of Jesus, but to state as an indisputable fact the presence of two natures, human and divine, in the historical Person. To John this duality of Jesus' nature was a fact that needed no explanation, no further emphasis than the statement of it in the Prologue. It is not the burden of his Gospel, but the presupposition upon which the real burden is based. He had known the historical Jesus either through his sources or through his own personal experience and had known in his own soul the experience of the living Christ who had brought him into a vital fellowship with God. To

* We do not consider the problem of the Johannine authorship here because it does not pertain to our particular emphasis.
him the living Christ and the historical Jesus were one and the same Person; Jesus was the Christ in human form. The task John faced was not the explanation of this fact, but the statement of it in such a way that his readers would understand him. The eternal Christ who had been with God from the beginning, who was of the same substance as God, who was God's agent of creation, revelation, and redemption, and who had in Himself the power of imparting His own divine life to men, became Man in the historical Jesus in order to carry out His purpose of salvation. The human incarnation was necessary for men could not see nor approach the divine; only to the Christ—become—flesh could they come, and only from Him could they receive life eternal. This was the fact. Jesus was the incarnation of the Christ.

But writing for Gentile readers and knowing well the Greek Logos doctrine, John realized that in Christ, the Christ made flesh, he had found in reality that for which the world had been seeking in theory. The Gentiles thought of the Logos as a "second God," the Mediator between God and men, the only way men could find God. They believed that through this Logos Spirit man's fundamental nature was changed so that he escaped from the bondage of life to the free companionship with God, the divine Reason. But was not the Christ which John knew all that the Greeks imputed to their Logos— and more? Had He not existed from the beginning, the Son of God, sharing His life and attributes to an even greater extent than did the Logos? Was He not the creative agent of God and the Mediator between God and man
through whom God revealed Himself and affected His salvation? And like the Greek Logos, was He not just a little lower than God, of the same substance but subordinate to Him? "Here, you Gentiles, is your Logos, your hope of salvation, realized in Jesus Christ. Here in Him is more than you could ever hope for in your Logos doctrine. Here is God present among you in human form. Here is God's love for you personified! Such may have been the reasoning of John as he saw this relationship between the Christ and the Logos. Why not declare Christ as the Logos? The Greeks all knew what the Logos meant. They could not but understand who and what Christ was if He were presented to them in terms they all knew. So taking the Logos conception, John poured the vital content of the Christian message into it. He used the Greek form as the mould in which to cast his interpretation of Christ. "The opening sentences (of the Prologue) present the main ideas in words intelligible and attractive to Greek minds". The Gentiles could comprehend the meaning and significance of Christ when He was presented to them as the realization and fulfilment of the Logos hopes in the Logos terminology. John realized this and made use of the Greek form for that very purpose. He states in the Prologue not only the belief of the Hellenistic world, but the Christian belief as well. He facilitates the meeting of the Greeks and Christians on common ground and the entrance of Greeks into Christianity. So in the first instance John uses the Logos in an attempt to phrase his conception of Christ in the terms of the Gentile world. "It was easy for persons of Greek education

to understand the claim that Jesus was the divine Logos, or Word, of Stoic philosophy, and a Gospel which began with such a claim would be likely to arrest their attention! "The Evangelist, writing in the philosophical environment of Asia, adopts the term, Logos, in an effort to express in current vernacular something of the truth he had found in the historical Jesus, who by becoming flesh had spoken God's thought to men! In this usage of the Logos there was no philosophical intention. It was intended to present Jesus as the realization and fulfilment of the Hellenistic Logos hopes. In the first instance the concept is taken over by John, not to transform Jesus into an abstract principle, a cosmic agent, or a principle of reason, but to make "more intelligible to his own minds and to the minds of his readers the divine nature of Jesus Christ". John is not concerned with reasoning out the philosophical implications of the Logos, but in showing how Jesus has fulfilled and completed the Logos qualifications. When he has stated this position, he goes on to the consideration of his main thesis, the Christ made flesh, and the "Logos" as such is dropped from his terminology.

This brings us to the second manner in which the Logos is significant as a form of the Greek influence. Despite the fact that the term Logos is not used save in its ordinary sense in the Gospel after its appearance in the Prologue, the Logos idea persists throughout, and influences the conceptions of the Evangelist in every chapter. The Logos was more than a Greek form; it was a Greek philosophical system. When John borrowed the form

* Goodspeed: op. cit. p. 117
** Fowler: The History and Literature of the New Testament p. 407
*** Scott: op. cit. 160
to express his conception of Christ, he also took over the philosophical implications and content of that form and committed himself to the problem of dealing with these implications throughout the remainder of his Gospel. The Logos becomes the speculative basis for the theological doctrines of the Fourth Gospel as well as the form for the reinterpretation of the author's conception of Christ.

But there is a view expressed of this implication of the Logos theory as an instance of Greek influence that to my mind is exceedingly overdone. Gilbert says, "The view that Jesus was identical with the Logos, however numerous the differences in detail between Philo on the one hand and the author of the Fourth Gospel on the other, completely shatters the view of Him which is contained in His own words and acts*" Pfleiderer and Schmiedel both think that John has completely surrendered to the Logos doctrine and so doing has irreparably obscured the historical Jesus. We must agree with Scott that "there can be little doubt that by thus importing the doctrine into the Gospel record, John is not only compelled to do violence to the historical fact, but empties the life of Christ of much of its real worth and grandeur, while seeming to enhance it" but at the same time we must remember that in the final analysis the religious interest of John breaks through and saves him here as elsewhere from vain philosophical speculation, and that the Logos doctrine, regardless of its negative effects, is not completely a Greek influence, but the result of the commingling of the many streams of influence upon which John depended. The Logos is

** Scott: op. cit. p. 173
not a uni-elemental conception as it appears in the Gospel, but represents the blending of many streams of thought, the Greek, Judaistic, Pauline, and John's own religious view. So we cannot regard the influence of this doctrine as completely Greek, but as a composite influence in which the Greek element was strong and likely predominant. The Greek element worked in conjunction with the other influences, and it was the composite conception of the Logos that was responsible for the theological and doctrinal implications of the Gospel. Nor can we say that the influence of this Logos was totally bad. It is true, as we shall see, that the metaphysical attributes of the Logos Christ replaced the homely attributes, the trust, pity, forgiveness, sympathy, and compassion of the historical Jesus to a great degree. But the replacement was not complete, and the Fourth Gospel does lay considerable stress upon these more human qualities. That the metaphysical attributes have a religious value in and of themselves we cannot deny. Pity, trust, and compassion do not completely express Jesus. Some other expression of his nature is necessary to complete the picture. This other expression was not to be found in the national conceptions of the Jews. John found it in the philosophy of the Greeks and enriched his conception of Christ by applying it to his picture. And finally, let us acknowledge that by blending the two conceptions of Jesus, the divine and human, John achieves a result that is religiously sound even though its rational consistency may be questioned. We have only an example in the purely historical presentation. There can be no power there above and beyond
the inspiration of high ideals achieved in human life. On the other hand, the purely divine Jesus is like God Himself, too far removed from our powers of comprehension and perception for us to grasp. Only in the Logos made flesh, in Jesus the Christ, do we have a God expressed in our own terms and nature. This is the Johannine conception, the conception that appears furtively in the Synoptics. Whether this conception is arrived at through the use of philosophy or not, it is the only conception which, in the last analysis, can satisfy the religious needs of mankind.

So having cleared the ground of a preliminary obstacle, we come to the consideration of the effect of the Logos conception as a philosophical system. As we think of this effect, we recognize that the influence is not primarily Greek alone, but a blending of several streams of thought, and that while the effect is tremendously important, it is overshadowed by the even greater religious emphasis of the Gospel.

The first influence of the Logos conception is shown in the divine emphasis placed upon the historical Jesus. While He is human, He is also divine, and this divinity completely sets Him apart from the people among whom He moved and worked. He is referred to as the only begotten Son of God, the Monogenes (1:14), and throughout the Gospel He is revealed as such. There is a glory about His Person, His speech, His actions, that is peculiarly the "glory as of the only begotten from the Father". His life is presented as the glorified life, and all of the incidents recorded in it are chosen to this end. This is particularly true in the case of the miracles He performs. There are seven of them
in all, and each one is stressed as a sign of His divine character. How different from the love and pity revealing miracles of the Synoptic accounts are these "signs" of the Fourth Gospel. The elements of compassion and tenderness give way almost entirely to the motive of glorification of the divine nature. The miracle performed at Cana is concluded with this statement: "This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed on Him" (2:11). There is no possible motive of sympathy here. The healing of the nobleman's son (4:46ff) is an exhibition of sheer/in which the idea of compassion figures but little. Likewise the healing of the blind man (9:1-7) is a manifestation of glory and power rather than pity and tenderness. The blindness had been arbitrarily placed upon the man for the express purpose of showing Jesus' divine power. The raising of Lazarus is undoubtedly the most profound of all the miracles recorded, but even here the element of compassion while present, is subordinated to the desire to express power. Jesus waits two whole days in order that His miracle will be more impressive (a cold calculation for which Schmiedel censures Him severely). He weeps at the grave, not in the sorrow of bereavement, but in the divine sorrow of a God for the unfaithfulness of men. He prays to His Father, not for strength, but "because of the multitudes that standeth around.......that they may believe that Thou didst send Me"(11:42). The miracle of Jesus' walking on the sea is empty of all ethical content, and is concerned with emphasizing the Logos character of the Master. In all of these miracles the
element of the marvellous is heightened to add to the effect. The nobleman's son is cured at a distance; the blind man has been blind from birth; Lazarus has been in the grave four days. In the miracles John "found proof that Jesus as the incarnate Logos exercised a power that belonged distinctively to the divine character."

The Fourth Gospel ascribes several attributes to Jesus which were undoubtedly the attributes of divinity and could be found only in a person possessing the Logos character. Jesus is endowed with omniscience. He is able to tell the Samaritan woman all that she has ever done (4:39). He knows the secret of Nathaniel's life (1:47-48). He is able to fathom the character of Peter immediately upon meeting him, and remarks: "Thou art Simon the Son of John; thou shalt be called Cephas" (1:42). When He asks Philip how they will feed the multitude (6:1-6) He does it knowing full well what will be done. "He knew all men, and......He needed not that anyone should bear witness concerning man; for He Himself knew what was in man" (2:25). Here we see that John "credited Jesus with minute knowledge of future stations and events."** When, on a later occasion, Jesus was commenting on the faith of those about Him, He is presented as knowing "from the beginning who they were that believed not and who it was that should betray Him" (6:64). His statement concerning Lazarus, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby" (11:4) is another indication "that Jesus knew the outcome of the sickness of Lazarus and knew also that He should raise him from the dead; that

* Scott: op. cit. p. 165
** Gilbert: op. cit. p. 180
is to say, He knew future events in absolute independence of the sources of human information! The self-consciousness of Jesus is an omniscient self-consciousness, fully developed and unchanging from the beginning. He is aware from the very first what His mission will be and what events will occur in it. There is no trace of any human limitation in this knowing power. Jesus sees and knows all, and John takes intricate pains to present this knowledge as supernatural, a manifestation of Jesus' divine nature. This unique self-consciousness can be explained only from the Logos point of view. Only as the Logos could Christ exercise these powers that are uniquely the powers of God.

This supernatural power of Jesus is also carried out in the Fourth Gospel conception of His omnipotence. He could walk on the surface of the sea (6:19). He could make Himself invisible, and pass unnoticed through the crowd (8:59). He could present Himself suddenly and without warning (9:35). This Logos-power seemed to radiate from His personality at all times, overwhelming people by its sheer force. "Never man so spake" was all that the soldiers sent to apprehend Him could report back to their superiors. When before His death the Romans came to seize Him, they were awed by His presence and fell to the ground. "An impression is borne in every episode of the history that while He tabernacled with men He was more than human - that He was a heavenly Being who could exercise at will the perogatives of God!"

A certain aloofness is characteristic of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, and this further emphasizes His divine nature.

* Gilbert: op. cit. p. 181
** Scott: op. cit. p. 166
There is a radical difference between the nature of the human Jesus and the natures of the men with whom He associated. Unlike the Jesus of the Synoptics, He does not mingle with the Publicans and sinners. He does not call the sick to repentance. His manifestations of power, His miracles, do not show His human, but His divine element. His whole life reflects His divine nature which separates Him from mankind. He is presented, not as the compassionate friend of man, not as the companion of sinners, but as the majestic, divine Person who has given up the life and fellowship He had with the Father and condescended to take upon Himself the life and limitations of mortals. He stands apart from human need and distress. Even when He is alone with His closest friends, the air of aloofness is present. When He is washing the feet of the disciples, His consciousness of His coming from God and His imminent return to Him is apparent. He does not cry to humanity, "Come with Me and be saved," but "Come to Me and be saved." And He is aloof from humanity not only by virtue of His power, but also through His immunity to moral struggle, uncertainty, and sin. There is no temptation scene in the Fourth Gospel; the Logos Christ was above temptation. There is no Transfiguration; His life is one complete revelation of a pre-existent transfiguration. There is no Gethsemane; death is no bitter cup which He must drink against His will, but the deliberate method He has chosen as the final episode in His own glorification. There are no simple, homely parables, no short, plain utterances; only vague, oracular sayings can issue from His mouth. He acts always in accordance with His own will, and
never under outward compulsion. Against His will His enemies are powerless until the self-appointed hour comes (7:30; 8:20). No man dares to interfere as He goes about His work in perfect security (11:9). He has power "to lay down My life, and power to take it up again"(10:18). When His work is finished, He goes of His own accord to His death. There is no sense of failure or incompletion accompanying His cross. He does not permit His time to come until His work is finished (19:30). "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come"(2:4). "Mine hour is not yet come"(7:6). These instances all show the aloofness and the self-determination of a Logos Christ.

In addition to the power ascribed to Jesus, the witness borne Him further attests His divine nature. In His own utterances He is constantly referring to Himself as the Son sent from God to reveal and impart the true life to men. "What is ye behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before?"(6:62).

"For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life"(3:16). "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself"(5:26). He can speak to Nicodemus of the heavenly things because He "descended out of Heaven"(3:12-13). He knows God because He is "from Him", and His witness is true because He knows "Whence He came and whither He goes"(7:29; 8:14). "Before Abraham was I am"(8:58) and "Glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was"(17:5) also bear His own witness to His divine character. These and the discourses where He speaks of Himself

as the Good Shepherd and the True Vine all manifest His firm belief, in fact His positive knowledge, that He is God's Son, has come from God, and will return to God when His task is completed. This self-witness is accompanied in many instances by a witness even more authentic than His own. It is the witness of the Father which in the last analysis proves Him to be the Logos Son. His works bear the witness of the Father (5:36). "The Father Himself, which hath sent Me, hath borne witness of Me" (5:37). These and many others are the witnesses of God to Jesus. Then, there are the testimonies of those men to whom it had been given of the Father to comprehend the true significance of Jesus. John the Baptist hails Him, "Behold the Lamb of God", and "I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God" (1:29, 34). Peter is represented as asking Him "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (6:68). Likewise the Samaritan woman tells her neighbors of the Man "who told me all of the things I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" (4:29), and the neighbors later, in the glow of the Spirit, confess, "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (4:42). Nathaniel recognizes His divinity at their first meeting and is forced to exclaim, "Thou art the Son of God" (1:49).

The Logos influence is manifested also in the Johannine idea of the relationship of Christ to God. The three Synoptic names for Jesus, viz: "The Christ" "The Son of Man" and "The Son of God" are all used in the Fourth Gospel. The term Christ is made practically synonymous with The Son of God, and The Son of Man, while
approaching more closely the usage of the Synoptics, is modified to express the contrast between the historical, human revelation of Jesus and the true nature of His divine glory (1:51; 6:62; 3:13; 12:23; 13:21). But the term, Son of God is the one most often used to designate Jesus. Here the divine implication of the term is often strengthened by the "Philonian epithet" monogenes (1:14, 18; 3:16, 18). The relation of Jesus to God is, through His divine nature, of a different kind than the common relation between men and the Father. Jesus is of the same substance with God; He shares God's attributes; He is actually the Son of God. "The filial relation is taken literally as defining the nature of fellowship between Jesus and God. The names, Father and Son, are worked out theologically in their whole implication." In accordance with the Johannine conception of Christ, He is thought of as of the same substance as God, sharing God's powers and prerogatives, acting as God's personal agent here in earth. Yet in accord with the Logos principle this relationship subordinates Jesus to God. Jesus is the second divine principle within God, Himself; He is the "second God." This idea was worked out by Philo who applied the title, "Son of God" to his conception, and it is altogether likely that John had Philo's view in mind when he used this same term to designate the Christ.

Closely related to Jesus as the Son of God is the Johannine idea of the nature of the work Jesus came to do. Here there is a wide departure from the conception of the Synoptics. Jesus' task was not the task of the prophet; He did not come with the

* Scott: op. cit. p. 191
dominant idea of revealing the will of God to men and introducing the Kingdom. The Fourth Gospel Jesus comes as a divine character whose primary purpose is to bring the life of God into the lives of men and thereby transform their natures. He was the Mediator between God and man. He had in Himself the life and light of God. Man could not of himself approach God and receive that same life. Jesus as the Mediator was necessary to bring the unapproachable power of God down into the human terms that human power could grasp. In this we see clearly the Johannine view of man, the world, and God. Man was in himself of a dual nature. His soul was divine; yet he was earthly, bound by the fetters of material existence from which he could not escape unaided. The world as a material entity was evil. It represented the antithesis of the God of Spirit for which man longed. Jesus prays that His disciples be kept safe from this world. And yet God loves the world; He loves the souls of man in the world, the spiritual essence of the world that had its source in Him and longed to be taken back into communion with that spiritual source (3:16). God is pure Spirit. He is opposed to the material world. Only with the spiritual essence of the world, the soul of man, is He in harmony. He is afar off from the world of the material. Man held there cannot hope to reach Him. Jesus therefore must be the Go-between. His divine nature enables Him to know and comprehend God; His human nature enables Him to bring this light to man. All of this is in accord with the Logos idea and the religious faith of the Graeco-Roman world. To them God was absolute and apart. His world of Spirit was the true world.
It was entirely distinct and separated from the evil, shadow world of the material. Man was in the material world, but his soul was of the spirit world. That soul was encaged in the flesh from which it longed to escape. That escape he could not affect himself. His powers were too limited. Such an escape, such a salvation meant not only the knowing of the will of God and the desire to do it, but also the complete transformation of his nature so that it would be like God's. Such a task only the Logos could accomplish. He could enter the souls of men with the light of God, and here and now they could and would be transformed into God-like beings. Such was the Greek, the Gentile conception of salvation. Such was the Fourth Gospel conception. Under this influence of the Gentile world the Fourth Gospel escapes the narrow apocalypticism that is sometimes apparent in the Synoptics.

There is more concerning the Johannine conception of the salvation of Christ that merits our attention. As we have seen salvation was thought of as not merely the renewal of the will but as the complete transformation of the nature of man. It was a salvation that not only came in the after life, but also in the present life. And it was a salvation conceived of as knowing God. We have seen how the Graeco-Roman world thought of knowledge as the escape from ignorance to light, and we have seen how this conception of knowledge gradually grew from a purely epistemological conception to a religious conception. Such was its meaning in the Fourth Gospel. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast
sent" (17:3). Knowing God was not merely the intellectual grasping of Him, but the deep, satisfying, changing spiritual knowing of Him. Spiritual knowledge is the true light and the true life. John here goes beyond the Greek view of intellectual knowledge and beyond the Gentile view of religious knowledge with his own religious view which is based upon the strong foundation of personal experience. He realizes all that the Gentiles with their intellectual-religious view of a knowledge salvation were seeking, and goes beyond them to a new spiritual height. The ideas of light and life are both Greek and Hebraic in their background. They connote both mental and religious striving and achievement. John uses them in this composite sense to designate the redemption of Jesus. There is light both in the intellectual sense and in the religious sense. Fortunately the religious emphasis is the stronger. Yet there is an unmistakable Greek atmosphere in the use of these terms. Jesus refers to Himself as the Light of the world, the Light that lighteth every man. He comes to bring light and life, the divine light and life of God into the hearts of men. All of this is consistent with the Logos theory, and as such is an example of the Greek as well as of the Hebraic and Johannine influence.

So we see the Hellenistic influence of the Logos manifested in the Theology of the Fourth Gospel. It is present in the picture of the historical Jesus who is at once both human and divine. It is present in the relation of Jesus to the Father. It is manifest in the mission that Jesus came to execute. It is manifest in His scheme of redemption and in the idea of salvation. It is present in
the Johannine conceptions of man, God, and the world. In these conceptions we see the influence of not only the Logos system but also the Graeco-Roman religious streams at work.

There yet remain two phases of the Fourth Gospel that are significant from the standpoint of the Greek influence. The first of these is the Johannine treatment of the sacraments. We have mentioned the sacramentalism of this Gospel in connection with our discussion of the ecclesiastical interests, but a fuller discussion of it is in order here. Christianity carried with it two practices when it invaded the Graeco-Roman world. These practices were the rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But they were used only in the symbolical sense as the outward manifestations of the inner spiritual realities; Baptism was the symbol of the inward cleansing of the soul by the Spirit, and the Supper commemorated the death of our Lord. It was not long, however, before certain ideas that had grown up around the Pagan religions began to transfer themselves to these Christian rites in such a way as to alter completely their meaning and significance. The Pagan religions, and especially the mysteries, stressed the mystical value of certain physical rites and ceremonies which of themselves were thought to have a spiritual efficacy and were essential to salvation. Through them, and only by participating in them could the initiate enter into the full mysterious fellowship with the gods. Through them the actual presence of the deity was imparted to the believer. There was in some instances a strong resemblance between these Pagan rites and the Baptism and Supper of the Christians. The Pagans had a meal observed as a sacrament in which the gods were
thought to be actually present in the food eaten. This meal, however, was usually a gruesome affair. In some cases the actual flesh and blood of humans were devoured; sexual license prevailed; and the whole observance was more of a drunken orgy than a religious occasion. There was also the sacrament in which the candidate was sprinkled with water or blood, and here also the actual presence of the gods in the elements was conceived. These performances were necessary to salvation in the mystery religions. In fact they constituted practically the only way in which communion between man and the gods could be established. They were endowed with a high degree of mystical importance. They were semi-physical, semi-magical rites in which the initiate came into actual fellowship and contact with the divine, and through which the initiate's whole nature was transformed from the earthly into the spiritual.

The entrance of this Pagan sacramental significance into the Christian rites was practically accomplished when John wrote his Gospel. Ritual had become a very important factor in the Church. Baptism had lost much of its symbolic value, and was considered a mystical sacrament essential to conversion. The Supper had been transformed from a memorial into an elaborate feast where the blood and body of Christ were present, and which was necessary to the beginning and the maintainence of the Christian life. And with the growing externalism of the Church, these rites came to have more and more of an autonomous value. People were rapidly coming to think that they alone were sufficient to salvation. The Spiritual element was losing ground, and its
place was being taken by a set of physical rites which of themselves were considered adequate for salvation. The spiritual glow of the Apostolic Church had dimmed, and the need was felt for something to take its place. This need was met by a new emphasis on organization and the sacraments. The Baptism and the Supper lost their early symbolic significance and more and more came to be reverenced as outward rites with a per se validity of their own. And just as their importance as rites increased; so the emphasis on the inner working of the Spirit decreased. The physical-mystical benefit supposedly obtained from these sacraments assumed gigantic proportions of importance with the result that the real message of Jesus was largely emptied of its meaning, and the real Jesus became obscured by the mere outward forms. Such were the conditions in the Church when John wrote his Gospel. A "regnant sacramentalism" had been combined with the other forms of externalism, and was rapidly transforming the Church into a mere outward institution with a mystical salvation achieved through physical rites and with the inner spiritual content minimized and shoved far into the background.

In dealing with this problem John took a middle course. He did not agree with the extreme sacramentalists, but at the same time he allowed the sacraments a place in the Church. He accepts the sacraments as being of value, but he disparages any autonomous validity and efficiency that was attached to them, and stresses the spiritual side as the most important and essential in the life of the Church. With his keen spiritual insight
he sees the danger in the overemphasis upon the outward rite and the ever widening separation from spiritual reality. But at the same time he accepts the view of the Church that the sacraments were an essential part of the Christian scheme of salvation. What he really attempts to do is to effect a union between the sacramental and spiritual views. The inward element of spirit is primary in his consideration and all rites, whatever they are, are subordinate to it. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples" (13:34-35). In the last analysis it was not Baptism nor partaking in the Supper that designated one as a Christian, but the presence of the love of Christ in a person's heart. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you"(14:27). "Not a ritual ordinance, but the inward spirit of love, truth, peace, was Christ's real bequest to His disciples, by which they would be kept in fellowship with one another and declare themselves to the world!" In this connection we note also that John emphasizes the spiritual inner content above the sacraments by omitting the episode of the institution of the last supper by Jesus, and relating the account of the feet washing in its place. Here Jesus urges His disciples to love and serve one another in mutual friendship and consecration.

But while he is concerned primarily with emphasizing the spiritual nature of Christianity, John also gives a prominent place to the sacraments. His is a modified, refined sacramentalism, in no manner equaling the extreme custom of the Church, but

* Scott: op. cit. p. 123
seeking to correct the crass materialism of the Church practices. In the discourse following the feeding of the five thousand we find him dealing most conspicuously with the Eucharist. Scott tells us that even the language put into the mouth of Jesus is technical in nature and has been borrowed from contemporary discussion of the Supper. The discourse itself is based upon the miracle preceding it where Jesus is presented as the Giver of the bread of life. It seeks to show how Jesus communicated this life to those who believe on Him. The first part of the discourse is strongly spiritual in tone, so that it seems from first appearances to state the spiritual transmission of Life through faith as the only satisfactory means of communication. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the signs, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled. Work not for the food which perisheth but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him the Father, even God, hath sealed" (6:26). "The bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven and giveth life unto the world" (6:33). But as He draws to the close of His statement, Jesus seems to associate more closely the sacramental idea with the more spiritual view. "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I give for the life of the world" (6:51). "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (6:53). This passage in particular reflects the popular insistence upon the necessity of the outward acts as conditions of salvation. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me and I in him" (6:56).
We see John struggling with the duality of his own thoughts in this discourse. Jesus has the divine life which is to be given to men. On the one hand the purely spiritual communication of this life is stressed as adequate and essential. But almost in the next instant Jesus Himself is presented as identifying this impartation of life with the sacramental rites. In the treatment of the Baptism, the position of the Evangelist is practically the same. In the discourse with Nicodemus (3:1-16) Jesus gives expression to the view of the Baptism as a mere outward symbol and also as the agent co-operative with the Spirit in procuring salvation. The Baptism of John is granted a certain value, but this is obscured behind the controversy the Gospel was waging against the Baptist sect. Here John is careful to subordinate this Baptism "with water" to the true Baptism "with water and the Spirit! Returning to the scene with Nicodemus, we find "Except one be born anew he cannot see the Kingdom of God"(3:3), indicating that conversion was primarily a spiritual matter. But later we discover "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God"(3:5). John's own sacramentarian view has pushed itself in along side the spiritual view, with the result that both the water and the Spirit become necessary to salvation. But we must notice that John gives no indication that the sacrament alone is sufficient for rebirth. In fact, he takes pains to emphasize that without the inner spirit the outward form is meaningless. Nor is the Spirit always necessarily present when the rite is performed. "The wind bloweth where it will"(3:8). There are two other passages of interest
in this connection. The first of these is the healing of the blind man. After He has anointed his eyes, Jesus commands the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. The man does as he is directed and returns seeing. The supreme miracle is worked through the Spirit of Jesus, but is completed only when the man has bathed in the pool. Thus the water becomes necessary. It is not only a symbol, but the necessary element in the completion of the work of the Spirit. The second passage is in the feet washing scene. Peter protests to having his feet washed, and Jesus replies, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" (13:8). Here to insist on a complete sacramental interpretation would be folly, for it is more than likely that it was a spiritual cleansing Jesus was referring to. But at the same time there may have been a Johannine sacramental emphasis in the scene itself and in the "except I wash thee!"

Thus John presents the sacraments. He takes a dualistic view and is constantly finding himself standing in an embarrassing position. He wants above all to emphasize the primary importance of the Spirit over all rites, but at the same time he seeks to show the importance of the rites themselves as the necessary complements of the Spirit. The Sacraments are more than seals and symbols; they have a real religious significance, and are essential for salvation. They complete and round out the work of the Spirit. But without the presence of the Spirit they are of no avail. Of themselves they have no value. Only when they are accompanied by the inner experience do they account for redemption. He opposes the Pagan views of the magical-physical operation of these rites. "Nowhere does the writer advance the position
of any per se validity of an ordinance, nor does he intimate that consecration brings down supernatural powers into material objects of cult, nor does he venture to assert that Spirit is always the concomitant of correct ritual. Thus we see in John's two-fold attitude toward the sacraments his recognition of the danger in the faith in the Baptism and Supper as ends in themselves as the means of imparting the power of life, and at the same time his recognition of the sacraments when they are carried out in their true religious implications. He opposes the materialism of the Pagan world which has crept into the Church, and emphasizes the primacy of faith and love as the elements of religion without which no ordinance could be of any value. Yet when they are observed as the complements of the Spirit, when a deep religious significance is read into them, the sacraments to John become not only meaningful but necessary to salvation. They are the body and blood of Christ actually present, but before they can be effective they must be accompanied by the actual Spirit of Christ.

This dual view of the sacraments is consistent with the duality of the entire Gospel and with the Logos conception of the Christian revelation. The Logos principle is worked out in this conception of the sacraments. The Spirit is the Logos Spirit whose work is the salvation and redemption of man. But just as the Logos by necessity became incarnate in the human Jesus in order that man could comprehend and grasp Him; so must the Spirit of Christ become incarnate in the elements of the sacraments before it could effect the change in man's nature.

* Angus: The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World p. 209
that was essential for salvation.

In the sacramentalism of the Fourth Gospel we see the Hellenistic influence at work in two ways. First it was present in the reflection of the sacramentalism of the Pagan world that had come into the Church to raise the problem with which John is forced to deal. Secondly, it is manifest in the dual position which John takes in accord with the duality of his own thought and with the Logos conception of the nature and mission of Jesus. John does not equal the extreme sacramentalism that was running wild in the world and Church of his day. But he does reflect the influence of this sacramentalism on Christianity and the influence of his Hellenistic outlook in the manner in which he seeks to dispose of the problem it creates.

The final aspect of the Fourth Gospel to merit our study is its universal nature. We touched upon this phase in our discussion of the Church, but it is necessary that we consider it here in more detail. The universal character of the Fourth Gospel stands out in vivid contrast to the narrow, national and apocalyptic boundaries of the Synoptics. There are traces of a more universal appeal in the other Gospels, but in John this universalism becomes paramount. Jesus, the Messiah of the Synoptics, becomes the world's Saviour in John's Gospel, and the Church even in its earliest beginnings contains a Gentile element, while its future growth and development is forecast as being almost entirely among peoples outside of the Jewish race. John the Baptist hails Jesus as "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (1:29). The Samaritans recognize Him
as the Saviour of the World. God's love is expressed as being for the world. The mission of Jesus is conceived as world-wide and not limited to any one race or nation. Jesus is the light of the world (8:12; 9:5; 12:31). If He is lifted up from the earth, Jesus will draw all men unto Himself (8:26; 12:32).

He prays that through the disciples the world will be led to faith in Him (17:21-23). In the Synoptics Jesus is presented as primarily a national figure, "but when we pass over to the Fourth Gospel, the national character of the work of Jesus is well nigh lost in its universal character!" The "Other sheep... ..not of this fold;" the Greeks who come to see Jesus, the visit to Samaria with its significant results, all these reflect strongly the universalism of the Johannine Gospel. Jesus is not the Messiah; He is the Life and the Light of men. His is not a slowly, painfully developing self-consciousness, but the fully developed Logos consciousness of the Son of God. His task as Mediator is a world-wide task.

We can see two elements entering into this universalism of the Fourth Gospel, each of them containing a marked strain of Hellenism. First in the light of the universal character which Christianity had achieved by the time of John, we cannot think of him as doing otherwise than weaving the threads reflective and descriptive of this universality into his story. We see this same influence at work in the furtive universalism of the Synoptics. But we must remember that Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote from a different point of view and background than John, and were not so completely engulfed in the atmosphere of the Gentile world as

* Gilbert: op. cit. p. 189
John was. Secondly, in the light of the Logos doctrine of the Fourth Gospel, it is difficult to imagine a picture of Jesus that would not be as universal as the concept upon which the picture was built was universal. As we have seen, we cannot accept the Logos of John as completely Hellenistic. It was a blend of Hebraism, Paulinism, Hellenism and Johanninism.

Even some of the elements in the concept which bear a resemblance to Greek thought are to be thought of not as examples of Greek thought but as parallels of it, having been achieved in Judaism and early Christianity quite independent of Hellenistic endeavor. But we agreed that the primary source of the Logos was Philo of Alexandria, and that in large measure it is representative of the Hellenistic thought. The philosophical implications of the Logos come from the Greeks; the vague, speculative air of the conception is reminiscent of the Hellenistic spirit. And so we conclude that insofar as we find the Logos principle working out in the theology, the soteriology, the eschatology, the ecclesiasticism, the sacramentalism and the universalism of the Fourth Gospel, we find it as partially representative of the "Glory that was Greece"; and as such its implications and manifestations are reflections of the Hellenistic influence. So the Hellenism in the Fourth Gospel Logos is of a two-fold nature. First there is the Logos form in which John reinterpreted his Christ into the language of the Gentile world, and second, there is the Logos system which, once borrowed, forced itself into the mind of John throughout the book he wrote and colored everything he said with its own peculiar substance.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We began our study of the reflections of the Hellenistic influence in the Fourth Gospel with a preliminary consideration of the old and the new in the Gospel. The new we found to be contained in the unique and distinct revelation of God through Jesus Christ. The old we saw as the developmental, evolutionary element inherited from Judaism and borrowed from the contemporary religious movements. Each of these views has claimed a large number of adherents down through the ages. There have been many who have pointed to Christianity as above and beyond any other religion, standing distinct and separate by virtue of its own unique essence in the revelation of Jesus Christ. There have been others who, on the other hand, have seen Christianity, not as something new, but as a religion growing logically out of its historical antecedents and contemporaries. That the truth of the Gospel surpassed the endeavors of the other religions, this group would agree, but it would claim that this superiority was due to the consummation of all religious truth into one system rather than to the presence of anything new and distinct. Each of these views of the Gospel has been held usually to the exclusion of the other, and each has been characterized by an extreme emphasis. But our course we found to be the middle one. In the light of the modern scientific spirit and the emphasis on evolutionary development, it is difficult for us to conceive of anything springing absolutely new out of nothing. We can completely understand a thing only when we take its background into consideration.
and treat it as in part the result of a long evolutionary process. But while this element of development is of extreme importance it by no means tells the whole story. In addition to the sum total of its inherited and borrowed qualities, each movement is the possessor of a quality that is new and unique and that distinguishes and sets it apart from all other movements. It is this element of the new that gives a thing its own peculiar identity. So we think of Christianity as both new and old. It is indebted to its predecessors and contemporaries for much that it has incorporated within its own structure and message. But at the same time it is characterized by something entirely new which gives it its supreme value and sets it off as a religion distinct from any other in the world.

What applies to Christianity applies also to the Fourth Gospel as an expression of Christianity. It is neither absolutely old, nor is it absolutely new. It is both old and new. In our study we are interested in what is old in the Fourth Gospel. We are interested in what the Fourth Gospel has inherited and borrowed from the other religious movements, and we are concerned primarily with seeing what has been borrowed from the religious streams of the Hellenistic world. But in our emphasis on the old, we shall not forget for an instant the new. We shall realize that the old can be interpreted only when we take the new into consideration, and that without the new the old will have no meaning. We shall also realize that the old is of tremendous importance insofar as it has affected the new. The two elements exist inseparably interwoven, and we cannot think of one without considering the other.
From this introductory statement of position we proceeded to the understanding of the environmental background of the Fourth Gospel. We saw that the Hellenistic world was in the main a syncretistic world where peoples of all races and nations were mingling together, where languages and customs, cultures and religions were blended together into one great composite stream. In this composite civilization two elements stronger than the others served as a unifying influence. Under the government of Rome the Graeco-Roman world was unified politically and enjoyed peace and progress. Under the influence of Greece there was a cultural unity that obtained. The one common world language was the Greek koine. The one common culture was the Greek culture. The one common system of thought was the Greek philosophy. The syncretism of this world was most profound in the religious life of the peoples. It was a tide time in world history for religious interest. From the East had come the Oriental mysteries to mingle with the religions of the West. A spirit of broad tolerance prevailed. Religious customs and beliefs were loaned and borrowed freely as the many religions lived side by side. What was the property of one religion was soon the property of all of them. There was a great commingling of rites, beliefs and practices. There were forms of religious expression to meet almost every conceivable human desire and need. And running through them all was the rational, enervating spirit of Greek philosophy. But the world was not satisfied. There was a deep religious unrest and an unsatisfied longing for reality manifest in the widespread interest in all religious things. The Pagan religions were for the few initiates. The mass of humanity was excluded from vital
religious life. There was a keen sense of religious need. The world was seeking reality. The people were eager for new and vital truth. Into such a world Christianity came with the freshness of a Spring day.

Against this broader Hellenistic background with its syncretism and religious interest, we arrayed the forces of the Alexandrian philosophical influence as the more immediate source of the Greek influence in the Fourth Gospel. Here the cultural and religious syncretism centered in the blending of Greek thought with Jewish religion. Philo, the personification of the Alexandrian system, was a Jew of the Dispersion, who had brought about the most thorough alliance between the Hebraic and Greek streams of thought. He achieved a tie-up between the Greek philosophy and Jewish Scriptures and literature through the use of allegory, and interpreted the findings of philosophy in the prophesies of Israel. Our main interest in Philo's contribution was the Logos doctrine. This he conceived to be the consummation of all of the subordinate spiritual beings who waited on God and carried out His commands as His active agents. The Logos was a "second God" who had existed from the very beginning with God, and through whom God had created the world and maintained connection and communion with it. The Logos was endowed with the divine attributes, but was forever subordinate to God and distinct from Him. God was thought of in the Graeco-Judaistic sense as the supreme Reason and the Absolute Word in the religious sense of the term. The idea of Reason, coming from the Greeks, was the most important
element in the Philonic conception of the Deity, and this same principle was in turn made the most important quality or attribute of the Logos. The world according to Philo was of a dual nature. Taking the view of Plato, he stressed the evil nature of the material world and the blessed, real nature of the world of spirit. The soul of man belonged originally to the spirit world, but had become imprisoned in the material world in the body. Salvation consisted in the escape of the soul from the material bondage of fate, ignorance, and earthly existence to the freedom of the spiritual realm. This salvation meant the complete transformation of the nature of man through the work of the Logos who would replace ignorance with knowledge, fate with freedom, and earthly existence with spiritual blessedness.

We recognized in addition to these Hellenistic sources of the Fourth Gospel, other sources upon which John drew for his material. The two other primary sources were the Synoptic Gospels and the Pauline writings. The borrowings from the Hellenistic culture and thought are in every instance colored by the viewpoints of these two sources and also modified and changed by John's own personal religious view which contained in itself both the Hebraic and Hellenistic elements.

Our first search for the actual reflections of the Greek influence was made among the literary characteristics of the Fourth Gospel. Here we found that the language of the Gospel was Greek, the common Greek koine used all over the Graeco-Roman world, yet modified by some outstanding peculiarities characteristic of the author. It was a smooth though not scholarly Greek
that John used to tell his story to the Gentiles. This is our first direct reflection of the Hellenistic influence. A further reflection was found in the style of the Gospel. The constant meditative tone of the Gospel was not unlike that of the early Greek philosophers. The constant repetition of words, phrases and ideas reminded us of the Greek pedagogue. The discourses, sometimes as monologues and sometimes as dialogues, uttered in vague, oracular language, the allegorical method of making the historical facts the symbols of greater spiritual truths and the manner in which the author comments on the speeches of his characters, all were found to contain reflections of the contemporary Hellenistic methods. The structure of the Gospel was well planned and executed. The major theme, "The Logos became flesh" was supplemented with three minor themes, "He came unto His own"; "His own received Him not"; and "But as many as received Him......." In our consideration of the structure, we paid particular attention to the use of miracles, the transposition of incidents, the union of opposites, and the selection of events as John's own manner of building up the particular picture he wished to present. These things, in the sense that they revealed the age in which John lived and the literary methods and ethics of that age, are reflective of the Hellenistic influence. In addition to language, style, and structure, there were several miscellaneous items that came in for consideration under the literary characteristics. The first of these was the prevalent occurance of explanatory notes throughout the Gospel. We saw them as an attempt of the author to interpret the Jewish terminology
and ideas of his Gospel for the Gentiles. The second was the use of the numbers "three" and "seven", and the fact that these religiously significant numbers should be carried out in a scheme in the Gospel is indicative of the presence of both the Judaistic and Hellenistic streams of influence.

Passing from the literary characteristics, we considered the controversial interests of the Gospel as evidences of the Greek influence. These we found were three, the polemic against the Jews, the argument against the Baptists, and the corrective quarrel with the Gnostics. In the controversy with the Jews we saw the reflections of the conditions in the Church of John's age and the problem it was facing in the outside opposition of the Jewish sects. The Baptist controversy is significant in the same sense. It reveals a problem the Church was facing on the outside. The Baptists like the Jews were threatening to overthrow the Church and curtail its growth and development among the Gentiles. The Gnostic quarrel is more reflective of the Hellenistic environment than are the other two. Here we see John combatting a movement within the Church that has come in from the religious realm of the Pagan world. He is opposing the extreme position of the Gnostics, and at the same time is agreeing with them in many instances. Thus we see in this argument the reflections of the menace of Gnosticism and the Pagan religions to Christianity and also the reflections of the Gnostic principles which have worked their way into the Christian religion and exerted a profound influence upon the mind of the Evangelist of the Fourth Gospel. The final spiritual emphasis placed upon the
Person and work of Jesus, and the docetic air that attaches itself to the Christological conceptions throughout the Gospel are all indications of the Gnostic influence.

We found also the reflections of the Church of the age of John superimposed upon the story of the historical life of Jesus. John is seeking to find in this early life of Jesus and His associations with the disciples, the true foundation for the Church, and at the same time to find here indications that will account for and justify the expansion of the Church among the Gentiles. Accordingly he reads back into the life of Jesus the story of the founding of the Church, symbolically told through the historical relations of Jesus with His disciples. The disciples represented the Church in its first conception, and through them the truth of Jesus would be carried and the organization would be expanded among all of the nations of the world. This expansion is seen primarily among the Gentiles, and Jesus Himself is presented as beginning the Gentile mission.

In his dual view of the Church, John is further reflective of his Hellenistic background. The Church is thought of as universal, reaching all nations, but at the same time as distinct and apart from the world, a select brotherhood to which only those chosen of God could be admitted. Here we see the common exclusiveness of the Pagan religions penetrating the mind of John. The universality of the Church is understood in the light of the Logos conception of Christ and the constituency of the Church in the time when John wrote. Both the exclusiveness and the universality are elements of the Greek influence, the former being a reflection
of the exclusiveness of the Pagan mysteries, and the latter reflecting the author's broader Hellenistic outlook and the broader constituency of the Church in the author's time. The particular reflections of the Church deal first with the problems confronting the Church in the opposition of the Jews and Baptists and the menace of the Gnostics, where John took the position of the Church's defender and spokesman, second, with the theology upon which John seeks to establish the Church, third, with the growing externalism of the Church manifest in the increasing need for a solid foundation and a comprehensive organization, and in the growing importance attached to the outward rites of Baptism and the Supper as essential and autonomous steps in the process of salvation. The Hellenistic influence as we found it in the Fourth Gospel conception of the Church, then resolves itself into two parts, first as the Church and the age in which John wrote are reflected in his Gospel in this connection, and second, as a definite tie-up between the issues of the Gospel and the rites and practices of the Pagan religious and philosophical streams are present.

We next considered the Logos conception as an instance of the Hellenistic influence. We found that it was significant first as the Greek form in which John had cast his picture of the Christ to make it intelligible and attractive to the Greek minds. But we also discovered that as a philosophical system the Logos doctrine pervaded the entire Gospel and colored all of the Johannine religious conceptions with its speculative implications. This was true especially in the picture of Jesus, where the divine nature was
emphasized until the human nature was practically excluded. This was achieved through a stress upon the miracles of Jesus as signs of His divinity, through emphasis upon His omniscience and omnipotence, through the testimony borne Him through His own witness, the witness of God and the witness of the men with whom He associated. Not only was the Logos principle worked out in the presentation of the importance of the divine nature of Jesus over the human nature, but it was also apparent in the Johannine views of the world, man, God, the relation of man to God, and the mission of Jesus and His relation to God. We saw the Logos, however, as a blending of the Greek, Hebraic and Johannine beliefs rather than as a purely Greek conception. The influence, nevertheless, is mainly Greek, and is detectable in the vague, philosophical atmosphere of the conception itself, and in the application of the philosophical implications of the doctrine in the conceptions mentioned above. Throughout the discussion of the Logos we noticed that the duality of the Johannine thought presented a problem with which he himself was constantly forced to reckon, and was in itself a reflection of the Hellenistic spirit. But we were grateful to see that in the last analysis the more profound religious interest of the Evangelist emerged and saved him from a complete surrender to the Logos philosophy. Where the Logos characteristics were emphasized, the human Jesus suffered, and was robbed of much of His real worth and grandeur. But where the primary religious emphasis of the author was allowed to assert itself, the Logos was shoved into the background and Jesus became a revelation of the love and will of God rather than a speculative figure of Greek philosophy.
In our discussion of the sacramentalism of the Fourth Gospel we found John taking a position midway between the extreme materialistic, external view of one group in the Church and the extreme spiritualistic view of another group. He found value in the sacraments as the actual carriers of the body and blood of Christ, but he denied them any per se validity or value in and of themselves unless they were accompanied by the presence and working of the Spirit. The Hellenistic influence is present in the reflections of the sacramentalism of the Pagan world and the entrance of this sacramentalism into the Church, in John's acceptance of the sacraments as the necessary conditions of the Christian life, and in the further implication of the Logos doctrine in the position that in the sacraments as in the historical Person of Jesus, the Spirit of Christ is incarnate. But here again we find the religious viewpoint of the author saving the situation by its insistence upon the true salvation as the salvation of love mediated through the Spirit of Christ in inter-communion between Christ and the believer and the true sign of Christian living as the manifestation of brotherly love rather than participation in outward rites and worship.

The universality of the Fourth Gospel is consistent with the ever growing universality of the Church and also with the universal character and mission of the Logos Christ. This universality almost completely obscures the historical nationalism of the Gospel over which it is laid. It is reflective of the Hellenistic age in that it represents the more tolerant, more cosmopolitan and more universal currents of thought that characterized the Graeco-Roman world, and in that it shows a direct connection with
the universal implications of the Hellenistic philosophy in connection with the manifestations of the principles of the Logos doctrine.

In conclusion we shall emphasize four points. (1). There is a Greek or Hellenistic influence in the Fourth Gospel. This influence we have seen in its effects upon the historical picture John was attempting to paint, and in the many tie-ups between the Gospel and the world for which and in which the Gospel was written. (2) This Greek influence can be roughly divided into two phases, one the influence of environment as such, and the other as the influence of thought. The reflections of the environment of the Gospel we see in the reflections of the Church, the forces and movements working against the Church, the problems the Church was facing, the Pagan religious customs and beliefs that were entering the Church practice, the reflections of the peoples of the Graeco-Roman world, and the reflections of the Johannine acceptance of the Hellenistic point of view concerning the Pagan rites and ceremonies and systems of value. These reflections are for the most part direct reflections of the Hellenistic world and the Hellenistic influence in the Gospel. The reflections of Hellenistic thought center in the Logos conception, and as we have seen are not pure Hellenistic influences. They represent rather a blending of the Hellenistic with the Hebraic systems of thought, and are modified in their use in the Fourth Gospel by the writer's own religious outlook. But in their philosophical and speculative and universal implications they are in large part reflective and representative of the Hellenistic
thought influence. (3) Following this same line of thought we can distinguish two usages of the Greek influence. First it was used as a method of reinterpreting or recasting the Gospel message into forms intelligible and attractive to the Greek minds. This was the primary purpose of John as he borrowed from the Hellenistic religious and philosophical storehouses. But when he borrowed forms for the purpose of recasting his message for his Gentile readers, he often committed himself to the philosophical content that these forms carried with them. Such was the case in his use of the Logos conception. It was more than a form; it was a philosophical system, and its presence in the Gospel created a problem with which John was forced to deal constantly. In so doing he submitted in many instances to its demands and limitations, and so doing obscured his own religious convictions and his historical purposes. Thus while the Hellenistic influence is to be thought of in the first instance as being the usage of forms and terms in which the Gospel message is interpreted to the Gentiles, it is also to be considered as a system of thought that accompanied the forms and served to modify and change the author's point of view and his conceptions to the extent that the Greek philosophy in many instances triumphed over the religion of the Spirit. (4) The presence of these Hellenistic influences in the Fourth Gospel worked both good and evil. As the Hellenistic influence has drawn John away from his primary religious aims into the philosophical, theological maze of the Logos conception, it has to a great extent proved harmful. It has obscured the humanity of Jesus, hidden His moral significance under
a cloud of philosophical implications, and by making Him more God than man, has removed Him from the reach of our grasp.

It has concealed the Jesus of love, pity, sympathy, compassion, kindliness, friendliness, loyalty and devotion; it has transformed the example of self-sacrificing love into an exhibit of self-glorifying divinity. It has destroyed the hope of close, personal, intimate fellowship with an understanding, loving Friend, and has placed in its stead as the condition of salvation the intellectual recognition of the Logos character of Christ as the Son of God. It has done away with the salvation achieved through seeking, knowing and doing the will of God, and has replaced it with a salvation consisting in knowing the nature of God, and partaking of that nature through rites, ritual, and mystical experience. The Logos principle is entirely inadequate to reveal the whole Personality and character of Jesus, and insofar as John finds it adequate he limits and obscures the real appeal of the Christian message to men. "If it had been carried out with any strictness and consistency, it would have destroyed the whole meaning of the Christian message. Instead of the real Person who has drawn all men unto Him, there would have remained only a philosophical abstraction, clothed with apparent life, like a figure in allegory". Thus, as it tended to make Jesus an abstract principle, as it tended to render Him apart and aloof from men, as it tended to make Him unsympathetic to human problems and interested only in heavenly speculations, the Logos conception, and the Hellenistic influence in the Fourth Gospel worked harm. As we have seen, this was done to a great extent, but it was stopped, and the real picture of Jesus was allowed to emerge because

* Scott: op. cit. p. 174
of the presence of another more powerful force in the Gospel, namely, the primary religious faith and interest of the author. Yet in a sense the Hellenistic influence worked for good. It freed the Christian message from the narrow nationalism and apocalypticism so characteristic of the Synoptics. It enabled John to state his conception of the Jesus of history and the Christ of experience as one and the same Person. It enabled the reinterpretation and recasting of the universal truths of the Christian message in the universal language and thought forms of the Graeco-Roman world. It gave to the world in a language the world understood, the message of Jesus. It linked the Spiritual message of the Gospel with the highest spiritual achievements of other world religions and made possible the acceptance of Christ by the followers of Pagan deities.

Now in conclusion we ask what our study has meant to us. Briefly it has meant this: It has brought us to a new understanding of our own religion as the adequate means of salvation of the world. It has made us conscious of the debt we owe to the Graeco-Roman world which supplied the forms that gave our religion universal expression, application and appeal. It has shown us that while Christianity has borrowed much from other religions and cultures, that it is distinctive, not for what it borrowed, but for what it brought as its own new contribution to the spiritual life of mankind. It has shown us that the essential truths of Christianity were essential and adequate from the beginning, and that they emerged unchanged and unchangable when the confusion of the Hellenistic contact had passed. It has shown us that in these
great central truths there is the power of Christ unto salvation, and that while environmental forms of thought and expression are essential to the apprehension and understanding of these truths, they are not essential to their power to redeem men. Our study has made us appreciative of the old in Christianity, of its great value in making the new understandable and meaningful. It has taught us to look upon the old as the common meeting ground where the contributions of men meet the contributions of Christ, and it has shown us that both contributions are necessary to complete the picture. It is the new, the contribution of Christ that carries the spiritual power, but it is the old, the contribution of men that makes this spiritual power available for us. We have learned also to be critical, not in a destructive irreverant sense, but in the sense that we see things in their proper perspective and in their proper scale of values. It has led us to evaluate the new in Christianity, the revelation of God in Christ as the essential truth without which all forms are meaningless and empty, but it has led us to evaluate the forms, not as values and entities in themselves, but as the means in which the essential truths are made available for our salvation. We have become less hasty in the formation of our conclusions, less intolerant of the opinions and achievements of others, more sympathetic of other's attempts to achieve reality, more appreciative of the value of their attempts, more generous in our attitudes toward others, and more thoughtful in our attempt to construct for ourselves the view of life and God that will in the end bring us the greatest degree of satisfaction and worth.
As we leave the Greeks, the Gentiles, we cannot do so but with a feeling of admiration, sympathy and gratitude for their earnest endeavors to seek and find religious reality. We cannot but feel thankful in our hearts that they were persuaded to consecrate their genius to Christ instead of Mithra, and we are happy that to them Christ and His way proved the way out of their own discouragement and disillusionment and confusion into a new unity of faith and spirit through which they conquered the world for Jesus.

Finis
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(NOTE: The Fourth Gospel in the American Revised Version of the Holy Bible used as source throughout this thesis)