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Agapios AbuSaada

# **John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel**

An Exegetico–Theological Study





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# Introduction

## 1. Theme, Limitations of the Present Research and Purpose

### 1.1. *Theme*

The purpose of this study is to examine John the Baptist (hereafter: JB) in the Fourth Gospel (hereafter: FG) in the light of his true representative role of the Scriptures in the context of his Christocentric Testimony (1:6–8.15.19–37; 3:22–30; 5:33–36a and 10:40–42). His representative role relies on what the Scriptures of Israel testify about Jesus, since all the Old Testament (hereafter: OT) characters, according to the Johannine theological view, are considered as witnesses to Jesus.

### 1.2. *Limitations of the Present Research*

The fact that the FG calls JB 13x by name (1:6.15.26.28.32.35; 3:23.24.27; 4:1; 10:40.41[2x]) makes him a noteworthy object. It is striking that these passages are concentrated in the first ten chapters. Most Johannine scholars divide the Gospel, excluding the Prologue (1:1–18) and the Epilogue (21:1–25), into two parts in general, namely «the Book of Signs» (1:19–12:50) and «the Book of Glory» (13:1–20:31).<sup>1</sup>

One should recognize that, with the exception of the first two mentions in the Prologue, all mentions are made in the first part of the Gospel,

1. Cf. R.E. BROWN, *The Gospel according to John I–XII*, CXXXVIII; G.R. BEASLEY–MURRAY, *John*, XCI–XCII; G. ZEVINI, *The Gospel according to John*, 30–32.

«The Book of Signs», in which Jesus reveals himself through miracles and words, and in which the conflict with the Jews intensifies. Moreover, the Johannine John is not mentioned as a great character of Judaism, but from the very beginning of the Gospel, the FE places him in Jesus' closed circle, namely «his own», those who received him, who believed in his name (1:12), and thus became his own, his bride. This suggests that the FE does not give him an independent role as much as he instrumentalizes him in the salvation history.

I will have a deeper look into this theme with the means that the FE offered us in his Gospel through an attentive listening to the literary language and the theological message that belong to the biblical texts. I will limit myself to the research of the useful elements for understanding the representative role of the Johannine John, to arrive at defining how this theological character develops through all the occurrences that appear throughout the first part of the Gospel. My study of the Johannine John is limited to one work of the Johannine corpus only, namely, the FG, making mention of its relationship with the rest of the OT and the NT writings, when useful in developing a point.

### 1.3. *Purpose*

The Fourth Evangelist (hereafter: FE) places him firmly in the central time of salvation history as a character that is parallel to Jesus but in a limited sense. It is most significant that the FE intends to call a special attention to the place of his JB in salvation history. He is «the last representative» in the long line of God's messengers who announced the coming of the Christ.<sup>2</sup> In this context, his role agrees with that of the Scriptures: the positive, theological meaning of both JB and the Scriptures within the FG is that they testify to Jesus. It may truly be affirmed that JB embodies and epitomizes the OT prophecies and «testifies» the inauguration of the NT era by drawing his follower's attention to Jesus as «the Lamb of God» (cf. 1:37). In this sense, as such, John's testimony appears to be an integral part of the salvation history.<sup>3</sup>

2. S.M. AHN, *OT Characters*, 108.

3. A.J. KÖSTENBERGER, *John*, 45.



But what does the adding of the term «true» mean? Is there a false representative role within the FG?

Of course, yes. For this reason, the FE introduces the role of his John as a *true* representative of the Scriptures in contrast to the false representative role of the Jewish authorities who search the Scriptures, and thus refuse to believe in Jesus (5:39–40) as «the Son of God» (1:34). In this context, two expressions will summarize this role of the Johannine John: the noun ἀλήθεια, «truth» announced by Jesus himself (5:33) and the adjective ἀληθής, «true» announced by the crowd (10:41). Representing the Scriptures emphasizes his role as an authentic witness who speaks what the Scriptures testify about Jesus. On the other hand, representing the prophets means that he no longer stands in the period of prophecy as one of a line of prophets; his prophetic character stands in the time of fulfilment of prophecies alongside with Jesus.

Consequently, this study, through an analysis of all the passages regarding JB, will try to show how it is possible to consider him as a true representative of the Scriptures in the context of his Christocentric testimony. This means, for the immediate environment of Jesus, he seems to have a hermeneutic relevance. The following consideration of the individual places is thus based on the premise that his character serves the revelation of Jesus before the Jewish environment, thus relying on what the Scriptures of Israel say about him. The theological intention could be summarized as follows: whoever places his hope on Jesus, hopes for the God who speaks his word of promise in the Scriptures<sup>4</sup> as well. Therefore, this is the main role of the Johannine John as it will be shown in the course of this study. He is portrayed very positively in the Gospel, appearing as a true representative of the Scriptures.

## 2. Methodology

The synchronic approach is the adopted approach. It allows to establish the theological significance of JB's character in the text of the FG that has come to this day. However, the main synchronic purpose does not prevent, where necessary to better understand the text, to recourse to the his-

4. K. WENGST, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 92.

torical–critical approach<sup>5</sup> or other valid approaches in the current exegesis. Consequently, it is unforgettable that the different natures of texts and the richness of the ways in which a scholar can examine the text of the Scriptures, allow different approaches to be used. In order to understand the richness of the biblical text today, the researcher cannot limit himself to the horizon offered by a single exegetical approach. My thoughts, therefore, draw various techniques.

In carrying out this approach, I will adapt the integral approach proposed by the Pontifical Biblical Commission in the document «The interpretation of the Bible in the Church»: «The text is explained as it stands, on the basis of the mutual relationships between its diverse elements. Rather than considering the text’s development through time (diachronic analysis), synchronic study considers the text as the reader encounters it in its completed form».<sup>6</sup> With this approach, the final form of the text is examined in terms of language and literature.<sup>7</sup> It concentrates on the present «text» and, even more, on the present «reader». In this context, my choice of synchronic approach aims mainly to extract the theological message that is transmitted by the final text of the FG: what matters is to explain the text.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, my study of JB’s character in the FG is *exegetico–theological*. In this light, through the chosen methodology, my exegetico–theological study will seek to answer two principles questions: the first is *if* JB described as a true representative of the Scriptures; and the second is *how* the FG explains this representative role.

### 3. The Arrangement of the Study

Bracketed between an Introduction and a Conclusion, the study is arranged in five chapters.

5. Pontificia Commissione Biblica, *L’interpretazione della Bibbia nella Chiesa*, 119. Williamson also argues this point by stating that «This is the reason why a historical–critical study that examines the development of a biblical text must be completed by a synchronic study of the text now in our possession». (P.S. WILLIAMSON, *Catholic Principles*, 31).

6. P.S. WILLIAMSON, *Catholic Principles*, 68.

7. For further details about the synchronic approach, see W. EGGER, *Metodologia*, 75–167.

8. A. NICCACCI, *Metodo*, 45.

The Introduction concentrates on the purpose of the study: JB is the true representative of the Scriptures in the FG. This purpose is mainly reached through his Christocentric testimony. His representative role relies on what the Scriptures of Israel testify about Jesus, since all the OT characters, according to the FG's theological view, are considered as witnesses to Jesus.

Chapter I is entitled: «A Line of Development of John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel». It includes four different points as follows:

- The Synoptics.
- The Beloved Disciple (hereafter BD).
- The State of the Question (Status Quaestionis).
- The Originality and Newness of the Study.

Chapter II, which is entitled: «John the Baptist's Mission as a Divine Choice», analyzes the mentioning of JB in the Prologue, specifically Jn. 1:6–8 and 15. This chapter is divided into two scenes as follows:

- Scene I: A Prophetic Character (Jn. 1:6–8).
- Scene II: A Prophetic Witness (Jn. 1:15).

Chapter III is dedicated to JB's three-fold testimony, which is entitled: «As a Prophet-like-Deutero-Isaiah». This chapter is divided into three scenes as follows:

- Scene I: The Voice of Deutero-Isaiah (Jn. 1:19–28).
- Scene II: The Isaianic Influence on John's Testimony (Jn. 1:29–34).
- Scene III: The Concluding Voice of the OT (Jn. 1:35–37).

Chapter IV, which is entitled: «The Friend-Witness: A Prophetic Imagery» (3:22–30), examines the role of JB as the *shosh<sup>e</sup>bin* (יְשׁוּבֵינִי = best man) of the new messianic wedding. Jesus, the unknown Bridegroom in Jn. 2:1–11 becomes known in Jn. 3:29 through JB's testimony. He appears here as a character from the NT, i.e., the Bridegroom's friend of the messianic community.

Chapter V, which is entitled: «Scriptural Interpretation of John's Testimony», deals with his testimony as an event in the past but still sounds in

the life of Jesus and the Johannine community. This chapter is divided into two scenes: the first indicates the testimony of Jesus about JB, while the second deals with the testimony of «many» about him:

- Scene I: The Witness to the Truth (5:33–36a).
- Scene II: His Testimony was True (10:40–42).

The Conclusion bears the fruit of our research; in other words, the comprehensive image of JB as it is depicted in the FG. The conclusion also takes into consideration the message of his character to the church of the day.<sup>9</sup>

9. Note: All the English quotations from the OT, unless noted otherwise, are from the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB). However, the English quotations from the NT are from Nestle–Aland Novum Testamentum Graece (28th ed.). Despite that, the Johannine texts that are related to the passages of JB in the FG are my own translations (1:6–8.15.19–37; 3:22–30; 5:33–36a; 10:40–42).

## A Line of Development of John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel

### 1. The Synoptics

The purpose of this study is to examine the special theological significance which the FG's assigns to JB. To appreciate the specificity of the Johannine presentation, we should first review briefly how far all four Gospels concur in their treatment of JB and the Synoptics portray him for their own purposes. Therefore, a comparison between the Synoptics and the FG regarding JB will show the motivation that lies behind the FE to create the character of his John, since this Gospel differs, both literarily and theologically, from the Synoptics.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the image of the Johannine John is literally and theologically different from the Synoptics.

There is a lot of his history and life-events from the standpoint of historical biography<sup>2</sup> that are found in the Synoptics narrative, but they are not mentioned in the FG's narrative, as contained, for example, the childhood narrative in the Gospel of Luke (1:5–25.39–45.57–80); his explicit designation as a «prophet» and his role as a preacher of repentance (Mt. 3:11; 11:9; Lk. 3:3).<sup>3</sup> Moreover, there are no references to the beheading narrative like Matthew (14:1–12) and Mark (6:14–29). The description of John as «the Baptist»<sup>4</sup> in the Synoptics is also striking for its absence from

1. J. ERNST, *Johannes der Täufer*, 186.

2. W. WINK, *John the Baptist*, x.

3. C.H. WILLIAMS, «John the Baptist», 46.

4. Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής (cf. Mt. 3:1; Lk. 7:20) or Ἰωάννης [ὁ] βαπτίζων (cf. Mk. 1:4).

the FG's narrative. The FE has John «the Baptist» baptizing although «Baptist» is not given to him as a surname.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Synoptics, Jesus' baptism inaugurates his public ministry, while according to the FG, it is John's testimony that inaugurates Jesus' public ministry. As a matter of fact, the only textual similarity between the FG and the Synoptics is found in the phrase τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν, «The Spirit descended as a dove» (Jn. 1:32; Mt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10; Lk. 3:22).<sup>6</sup>

Obviously, he who compares the Johannine narrative with that of the Synoptics realizes that the Johannine John is quite different from the Synoptic John. The FG portrays him as a witness *par excellence*,<sup>7</sup> but at the same time, this role is inseparable from his other roles such as prophet, teacher, friend, and the lamp. He is indeed the authoritative witness who was ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ, «sent from God» as a prophet to reveal Jesus' identity as it is drawn in the Scriptures. Thus, our study intends to highlight, especially, the FG's profound and authoritative teaching on JB's character and his testimony in relation to Jesus: God sent him to testify and to reveal the Christ to Israel and likewise will send all who believe in him to testify and to reveal him in the world: «As the Father has sent me, so I send you» (20:21).

## 2. The Beloved Disciple

### 2.1. *The Witness–Motif in the Fourth Gospel*

The significance given to the witness–motif characterizes the FG in relation to the Synoptics. In the Acts of the Apostles, the notion holds an important place, as we see from the beginning: «You will be my witnesses», declares the Glorified Jesus to his apostles and thanks the help of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

The FG is among the Gospels and Acts that speaks more frequently and with greater depth and richness of the testimony, especially regarding

5. J.M. BOICE, *Witness and Revelation*, 81.

6. H.T. ONG, «The Johannine Community», 118.

7. R.G. MACCINI, «Testimony/Witness», 812.

JB's testimony. It could be called «the Gospel of Testimony». A vastness of texts that deal with the witness–motif in the FG such as the testimony of JB, the Samaritan Woman (4:29.39), the works of Jesus (5:36; 10:25), God the Father himself (5:37), the Scriptures (5:39), the multitude (12:17), the Holy Spirit (15:26), the disciples (15:27) and the BD (19:35; 21:24).<sup>8</sup> Thus, the witness theme, or rather the characters who play the role of major witnesses of Jesus in the FG, might have a structuring function in the organization of the Gospel.<sup>9</sup>

Two greatest testimonies are present in the FG, thus interesting to our topic: JB and the BD, since the first testimony dominates the first part of the Gospel, the so-called «The Book of Signs», where the second dominates the second part of the Gospel, the so-called «The Book of Glory».<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the FG is framed, in its definitive edition, by two proclamations indicating well the orientation of the book: ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος [...] ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν [...] Καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ Ἰωάννου, «A man came into being [...] came for testimony [...] and this is the testimony of John» (1:6–7.19) and καὶ ὁ ἑώρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία [...] οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ μαρτυρῶν, «He who saw this has testified, and his testimony is true [...] this is the disciple who is testifying» (19:35; 21:24).<sup>11</sup> In this context, the credibility of the Gospel itself relies on JB's testimony and that of the BD.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly,

8. Boice mentions seven types of witnesses. These are: (1) John the Baptist. (2) Other human witnesses (among whom he includes the Samaritan woman, the multitude who witnessed the raising of Lazarus, Jesus's disciples, the beloved disciple, and the blind man). (3) The Father. (4) Jesus Christ. (5) Christ's works. (6) The Scriptures. (7) The Holy Spirit. (J.M. BOICE, *Witness and Revelation*, 25–27; see also L. MORRIS, *John*, 80). However, Marti argues that the witness–motif in the FG could be divided into four groups: (1) People's testimonies (John the Baptist, the Samaritan woman, the people who say Lazarus raised from the dead, Jesus' disciples, and the Evangelist). (2) Objects' testimonies (Jesus' works and the Scriptures). (3) Deity's testimonies (the Father and the Son either alone or together, and the Holy Spirit). (4) Other testimonies (Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, Nicodemus, the Samaritans, the multitude on the mountain, Peter, the officers of the Pharisees and the chief priests, the man born blind, many beyond the Jordan, and Martha). (F.A. MARTI, «Witness» and «Bearing Witness», 162).

9. J. ONISZCZUK, «Testimonianza», 3.

10. J. ONISZCZUK, «Testimonianza», 7.

11. R. VIGNOLO, *Personaggi*, 173.

12. «From John (the Baptist) to John (the Apostle) witness has been borne, and continues to be borne, as long as the Gospel is read, having as its purpose, which is stated in John 20:31». (A.J. KÖSTENBERGER, *A Theology*, 244).

John's testimony, in the first part of the FG, conforms to Scriptural expectations and requirements, while the BD's testimony fulfils these Scriptural prophecies.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.2. *A Johannine Overview of the Two-Witnesses*

The witness-motif, in which the FE's proclamation is summarized (20:30–31), characterizes the role which JB — pretty much like «the disciple whom Jesus loved» (19:25–27; 21:24) — fulfils in the FG (1:68.15.19.34; 3:26; 5:33; 10:41). He holds a special place. He is already named twice in the Prologue (1:6–8.15); he testifies first before οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, «The Jews» (1:19–34), then before δύο μαθηταί, «Two disciples» (1:35–37); he is found at the end of the third chapter (Jn. 3:22–30); Jesus himself testifies to him in 5:33–35 as well as the πολλοί, «Many» in Jn. 10:40–42.

The mention of the «disciple whom Jesus loved» is found 5x in Jn. 13–21 (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7.20). According to the FG, he is an unknown character; he is «the disciple whom Jesus loved» (13:23; 19:25–27; 21:7.20); he is the other disciple (20:3–9; 21:8) and he is the disciple who gives testimony (19:34–35; 21:24). At the Last Supper, he stands next to Jesus, and then describes himself as lying on the chest of Jesus (13:23.25); a position that puts him in a perfect proximity to Jesus. The BD has accompanied Jesus to the Cross manifesting an unshakeable faith, as a true friend, who can be trusted. He is a welcoming model, to whom Jesus entrusts his mother (19:26–27).<sup>14</sup>

In addition to that, he gives testimony of having seen the pierced side of the Crucified Jesus (19:34–35). He is the first one to believe in the Resurrection of Jesus (20:8). For this reason, he is also the first one to recognize him in the daily life (21:4–7), reminding Peter that ὁ κύριός ἐστιν, «He is the Lord».<sup>15</sup> Therefore, he may give testimony for the generations of disciples of all times (21:24a). However, it is the community itself that reaffirms that what is said by this disciple is a true testimony and so can be trusted (21:24b). The same progression applies to JB as well. He is the first believer in Jesus (1:6–8.15); he is the first to recognize Jesus' true identity, thus confesses him as «the Son of God» (1:29–34). And it is the «many»,

13. C.A. EVANS, *Word and Glory*, 174.

14. A. VALENTINI, «Maria», 198.

15. R. VIGNOLO, «Il discepolo che Gesù amava», 4.



that is, the voice of the Johannine community that confirms that what he said was a true testimony (10:41).

One can notice that the FG is eager to keep the anonymity of the disciple «whom Jesus loved». This name has its meaning. The love of Jesus becomes his name. Through anonymity, this disciple is presented as a typical character of Jesus' disciple; he expresses the type of the disciples: he is the man of faith.<sup>16</sup> This disciple carries a symbolic dimension for believers. At the same time, he is a historical character in the story. By his quality of disciple, his testimony in Jn. 19:35 is of a particular significance.

The act of seeing «from him who has seen» (ὁ ἑωρακώς) in Jn. 19:35a is highlighted by the verb ὁράω. This verb expresses a penetration of the mystery of the one who sees (1:34; 19:35; 20:8.18.25.29). At the same time, the verb ὁράω with the other verbs of vision θεάομαι, βλέπω and θεωρέω imply a physical vision. The verb ὁράω, in the form of participle perfect active ἑωρακώς (19:35a), underlines the status of the eyewitness: one must see to testify. The FG uses the testimony of the BD in order to strengthen the faith of the community that does not see Jesus with their eyes.

According to the FG's theology, the witness is not a witness of facts as much as he is a witness of his faith. The BD, therefore, becomes a witness of the fulfilment of the Scriptures in the Crucified Jesus. This testimony of the fulfilment of the Scriptures was already prepared in JB's testimony, who was the true representative of the Scriptures. In the same line of thought, the FE tends to show that he is also a witness of his own faith. In this context, he does not introduce him in his salvific–historical «once–for–allness» but also as the permanent beginning of the faith and formation of *the coming church*, represented in the character of the BD, especially that the whole passage of Jn. 21 is devoted to his ecclesiastical mission.<sup>17</sup>

JB's testimony continues as an active and permanent testimony through the presence and the testimony of the BD. His character and that of the BD testify to Jesus and his Johannine identity.<sup>18</sup> Thus, both greatest witnesses act as two WINGS of the same EAGLE by whom this message of salvation is brought to the reader.<sup>19</sup>

16. M. DIBELIUS, «Traditions problem», 127.

17. I. DE LA POTTERIE, «Le témoin qui demeure», 349.

18. D.A. LEE, «John the Baptist and the Beloved Disciple», 3.

19. J. ONISZCZUK, «Testimonianza», 26.

JB	The BD
The witness of the first part of the FG known as «The Book of Signs» (1:19–12:50).	The witness of the second part of the FG known as «The Book of Glory» (13:1–20:31). <sup>20</sup>
The purpose of his testimony: «in order that all believed through him» (1:7).	«So that you also may believe» (19:35).
Oral testimony: «This is the testimony of John» (1:19).	Written testimony: «This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them» (21:24).
καὶ γὰρ ἑώρακα καὶ μεμαρτύρηκα, «I myself have seen and have testified» (1:34).	καὶ ὁ ἑωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν, «He who saw this has testified» (19:35).
John's standing next to the Bridegroom (3:29).	The BD's standing next to the cross of the Bridegroom of the church (19:25–27).
The special friendship relationship: «The friend of the Bridegroom» (3:29).	The special friendship relationship: «The disciple whom Jesus loved» (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7.20). <sup>21</sup>
«All that John said about him was true» (10:41).	«His testimony is true» (21:24).
His character was connected to the first coming of Jesus (1:6–11).	His character is connected to the second and definitive coming of Jesus (21:22–23). <sup>22</sup>

As this table shows, under the profile of the testimony, it is first and foremost with JB, «And I have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God» (1:34; see also 1:7.19). At the end of the FG, there is an inclusive reference, with almost analogous words, applied to the BD, «He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe» (19:35; see also 21:24).<sup>23</sup> The whole Gospel marks the essential progress between the testimony of JB and that of the BD, expressed in the variation from «to testify» (1:7) to «so that you may come to believe» (20:31): the first announces a dominating Messiah, without seeing the glory of the Cross, while the second, in front of this, brings the Cross back to the announcements of the first.<sup>24</sup>

The «ancient» testimony, summarized and symbolized in that of JB in the book of Signs, can be recovered and understood in the light of the

20. H. MAHFOUZ, «The Disciple Who Testifies», 11.

21. R. VIGNOLO, «Testimonianza», 182.

22. R. VIGNOLO, *Personaggi*, 173.

23. For further details, see L.S. NAVARRO, «Estructura testimonial», 514–516.

24. L. CARDELLINO, «Testimoni», 83.

«new», given by the BD in the book of Glory. Consequently, one cannot access the revelation of Jesus as the «Lamb of God», and as the One who gives the Spirit without measure, while disregarding the testimony of these two characters. This is true for the early historical disciples (true Israel), who welcome Jesus on the indication of JB, and for the post-apostolic church of all times, which welcomes the Book of the BD.<sup>25</sup> We can deduce then that JB is the true representative of the Scriptures through the OT's lens, while the BD is the representative of the Apostolic church.

### 3. The State of the Question (Status Quaestionis)

The texts, which present JB in the FG, though seem to belong to the relevant themes of the Gospel, have not been analyzed in a precise and detailed way in a specific study but only hinted at by the Johannine commentators without an in-depth analysis, except for the study carried by M. Stowasser as we will see soon. The exegetical and theological introductions on the FG seem to neglect the character of JB.<sup>26</sup> Among the investigations that are closer to our specific topic, we may list the following studies of which we do not intend to present their content but consider only their main trends. We do not intend to present the entire history of the research here; we will mention only some works that offer a significant contribution in this regard.

#### 3.1. W. Wink (1968)<sup>27</sup>

Wink's book consists of an introduction, a conclusion, and five chapters. Four chapters are dedicated to discuss JB in the Canonical Gospels. Chap-

25. For further details about the relationship between JB and the BD in the FG, see R. VIGNOLO, «Il doppio letterario tra Giovanni Battista e Discepolo Amato», 83–108; D.A. LEE, «Witness in the Fourth Gospel: John the Baptist and the Beloved Disciple as Counterparts», 1–17.

26. Cf. R.E. BROWN, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 2003; A. CASALEGNO, «Perchè contemplino la mia gloria» (Gv 17,24): Introduzione alla teologia del Vangelo di Giovanni, 2006; A.J. KÖSTENBERGER, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 2009; P.A. RAINBOW, *Johannine Theology: The Gospel, the Epistles and the Apocalypse*, 2014; R. BAUCKHAM, *Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology*, 2015.

27. W. WINK, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition*, 87–105.

ter two is dedicated to JB in Q. His approach swings between tradition and redaction. Wink has devoted one chapter in his book to JB in the FG. He divides it into three parts: analysis, polemic and apologetic, and role.<sup>28</sup> His thesis seems to focus on JB's relationship with Jesus as a witness<sup>29</sup> without using the language of exaggeration in describing his role as it appeared in the Synoptics. The reader of Wink's hypothesis can discover its polemical–apologetic interests against his disciples, thus saying that the FE «makes John a witness against his own disciples to the messiahship of Jesus».<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Wink concentrates on the ecclesiastical aspect by saying that «the church is regarded as a direct outgrowth of the Baptist movement (1:35ff.; 3:22ff.; 10:40ff.) ».

### 3.2. F. Manns (1982)<sup>31</sup>

Manns' article includes two points with a brief introduction. He builds his article upon the redaction–criticism approach, since he deals with the texts as the final editor has delivered. The emphasis of his study is on the testimony in its historical context.<sup>32</sup> It is obvious that Manns focuses in his texts–analysis on their concentric–structures in order to draw the light on the themes they consist of. Through his analysis, Manns draws a close attention to define JB as a witness to Jesus.

### 3.3. J. Ernst (1989)<sup>33</sup>

The book includes an introduction, three chapters and a conclusion. The author adopts the historical–critical approach. Ernst has devoted one chapter in his book to JB in the FG. He agrees with Wink's hypothesis that the author of the FG has a Christological–Theological tendency against the over–evaluation of the Baptist by directing the reader towards an antithetical parallelism

28. Wink concentrates, in his study, on how the early church understood the role of JB in God's redemptive purpose, proceeding from his role in the Gospels and Acts. (W. WINK, *John the Baptist*, xii).

29. W. WINK, *John the Baptist*, 89, 105.

30. W. WINK, *John the Baptist*, xi.

31. F. MANNS, «Jean–Baptiste, témoin de Jésus d'après le quatrième Évangile», 97–119.

32. F. MANNS, «Jean–Baptiste», 97.

33. J. ERNST, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation – Geschichte – Wirkungsgeschichte*, 186–215.