

The Book of Revelation and Discourse Analysis

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1. Survey of Modern Linguistics and Bible

Linguistics is the science of language, that is, of the forms and contents of words, sentences and texts. Linguistics of the twentieth century is particularly characterized by its understanding that the manifestations of language are essentially based on structural relationships. These relationships are the marrow of language and can be expressed with mathematic precision. The notion of language form is fairly solid today; the assessment of semantics and pragmatics, however, is still fluid. The latter examines the personal and social performance of language.

Following the platonic and aristotelic language theory, grammar and rhetoric, the Judeo-Hellenistic exegesis of the Septuagint and the rabbinical interpretation of the Masora owned a highly developed system of “linguistics”. Noticeable are the *Hexapla*, Synopsis and Lexica of Origen and Augustine. These approaches were deepened by the humanistic exegesis of the renaissance and illuminism, and then systematically developed in the historical-critical research done in the decades since R. Simon.

Currently, while still safeguarding the inspired character of the Word of God, scholars more commonly understand the text of the Bible to be a coherent system of signs with narrative structures and motives. Biblical texts are expounded as communication, with distinctions being made between *langue* and *parole*, diachronics and synchronics, *signifiant* and *signifié*, codes, actants, and interaction. Further modes of interpretation are “generative poetics” (Delorme), textpragmatics (Frankenmölle), and structural analysis (Marin, Stenger). Besides hermeneutic theories of interpretation, recent linguistics with its manifold sets of disciplines and schools has sharpened the methodical awareness of contemporary exegesis. It is now an integral part of the pluralism of exegetical methods.

2. Modern Linguistics and the Apocalypse

The profusion of exegetical commentaries written in an attempt to disclose the secrets of the Apocalypse of Saint John, from patristic until modern times, attests to the tremendous difficulties contained in it. It is the purpose of this paper to explain how the book of Revelation can be interpreted with the aid of discourse-linguistic tools, and to suggest some concrete methodical steps of how to go about that interpretation. The motivation for the choice of this text-oriented method is the desire to contribute to the solution of particularly defying questions discussed by contemporary scholarship. There are, for example, the occurrences of seemingly abnormal tense fluctuation, the puzzling merging or veiling of protagonists, the apparent lack of inter-textual logics, the textual intertwining, and also the mystifying amassing of imagery. It seems to be helpful if these complexities are treated with the text considered *qua textus*.

The most suitable method appears to be one that would investigate the logical flux of communication of the text, without scrutinizing its historical-critical features. Consequently, the method of discourse analysis, an innovative branch of mainstream linguistics, can be chosen. It works in accordance with the principles of text-grammatical hermeneutics. What procedural steps does this method employ?

Most typical of discourse analysis is how it looks beyond sentence boundaries. Whereas the historical-critical interpretation with its diachronic perspective receives its orientation from the chronological pattern of a respective textual genesis, discourse analysis, being essentially synchronic, gets its bearings from an intra-textual time pattern, the organic sequence of sentences. All features are taken as 'goal-directed' elements of communication. Text-relevant signs such as direct or reported speech, context/intertext, clause type and word order are examined. The 'archimedic point' that characterizes the whole text is the theme developed in dialogical communication.

The chosen pericope can be subdivided into several segments, called macro-sentences, which are derived from contents. Criteria for a meaningful text segmentation are, for instance, 'change in worlds', episode markers and change of active subjects. This step is followed by an investigation into the subsequence of direct speech, that is, the various descriptive, explanatory and prophetic text parts. Particular attention is paid to the instances of rather uncommon tense fluctuation, that is, when voices switch between perfect, aorist, imperfect, present, and future tenses without apparent reason. Also subject to scrutiny is the prosopological succession.

One major task consists in explaining the symbolic expressions. The focus of concern is not their theological value, however, but rather their profile as they evolve throughout the text. A keen awareness must be maintained of how figurative terms that stand in a relationship of mutual exclusion to one another (ex.gr., in Rev 21:1-22:5, Bride/wife; gold/glass; servant/kingship), become blended, and how intertextual connections with the Old Testament develop, that is, how certain expectations become attached to the text in the light of previous texts.

Thus, discourse constituents and communication rules can be defined by demonstrating how the inherent flux of communication, as well as the logical embodiment of words, clauses and macro-sentences combine to form the ultimate unit of exegetical analysis, i.e., the text.

3. Discourse Analysis applied to the Apocalypse

Within the vast array of methods and approaches applied to the Apocalypse of John¹, one needs to pinpoint one's own standpoint². An *approach* is like a ship's compass that ensures a reasonably safe cruise towards the port of destination. The starting point is the actual *text*³. The aim is to attain to the most precise possible comprehension of John's visionary experience by a careful scrutiny of the text *qua textus*. Since questions like, for instance,

Do verses 21:1-8 and 21:9–22:5 constitute a meaningful unity?
 Why such numerous repetitions of terms and images?
 What is the reason for often unexpected tense switches?
 Where do the intra-textual interpretations come from?
 What is the purpose of frequent contrasts?

burst the boundaries of sentence-based exegesis, one necessarily turns to a text-oriented analysis, using the methodological contributions made by both ancient and modern authors. What follows is the introduction of the text-oriented method, its position in modern Linguistics and an outline of its underlying text concept. Finally, a few practical exegetical steps of procedure will conclude the presentation.

3.1. Text *qua textus*: The point of departure is the argument that meaning is conveyed not by single words or sentences but by texts⁴, the highest methodically attainable platform, where the *said* becomes the *meant*⁵. The basic metaphysical working hypothesis is our trust in the verifiability of human language. Thus, our sights are set on a goal-oriented interpretation. To this end, the syntactic form of the text is being analyzed as a means of extracting its meaning. This approach is inspired by elements of modern text-theory, discourse grammar, and Pragmalinguistics. The hermeneutic key terms are *text*, *unity*, *dialogue*, *context* and *content*. The question now becomes, "Where are we within mainstream Linguistics?"

3.2. Position within modern Linguistics: The *Cours de Linguistique Générale* by the Genevan Ferdinand de Saussure, published posthumously in 1916, is widely held to be the foundation of modern Linguistics. In this work, he discussed three terms: i) *langage*, i.e., the faculty of speech present in all normal human beings, comprising ii) *langue*, the sum of words stored in the minds of individuals, and iii) *parole*, the concrete use of language by an individual. Whereas *langue* is collective and systematic, *parole* is individual and accidental. Thus *langue* is set in opposition to *parole* as it relates to the specific function of uttered speech.

The mutual relationship among these three terms was for decades a research subject⁶ during which time a *text* was tenaciously regarded as a simple *parole*. Likewise, it could be asserted that Revelation was seen as John's *parole*. In recent years, however, there has emerged an increasing trend towards analyzing the way sentences operate in sequence to produce coherent stretches of language, the upshot of which has produced an innovative branch of Linguistics called *discourse analysis*.⁷ Typical of this approach is the surpassing of sentence-boundaries with their syntactic limits, which results in a *text* being considered as relating more to the *langue* level than merely to the *parole*⁸.

The first and most basic challenge to scholars was the attempt to find a universal definition of “text”. This search resulted in the realization that a text can be defined not just by text internal components, but also by external factors such as the setting in which the communication takes place. Thus, diverse authors began to distinguish between i) a pragmalinguistic text-theory, and ii) a sign-oriented text-linguistics. Within the mainstream Linguistics of the second half of the 20th century, the division between the leading school of 'generative language comprehension', and that of 'functional language comprehension' became ascertainable. The latter held features of the structuralist text theory⁹, nourished by Saussure's preference for the preexistent language system *langue* before the concrete linguistic activation *parole*. Since then, modern Linguistics has evolved into a proliferation of disciplines that have sharpened the hermeneutic conscience of biblical exegesis. Textlinguistics in particular has become a thriving component of the exegetical method repertoire¹⁰. Since the present hermeneutic viewpoint is neither a historical-critical one, nor an esthetic-literal one, but rather the dialogical comprehension of the text, understood in its integration into the context of the entire book, the method used can therefore be defined as *synchronic-descriptive linguistics*.

3.3. Text concept: Text is communication. As such it is the *material object* of research¹¹. Yet, what is the meaning of *text*, or in other words, what is the *formal object* of consideration? Without confronting the 'Babel' of modern text theories, we will explore some facets of the reality *text*.

3.3.1. Sign system: A text is a tissue¹² of conventional signs, each one illustrating the other by flowing from one point to the next one, thus conveying meaning. All signs are defined by succeeding signs, resulting in a gradual process, therefore, of self-definition and sense limitation. There is no instantaneous text perception. That is why only the appreciation of the book's unified end product enables one to comprehend its single textual elements.

3.3.2. Communicative process: The text is the vehicle of communication¹³. It includes an *addresser*, upon whose identity the text meaning essentially depends. Important also is an assessment of the *addressee*. John writes to the seven Churches in Asia minor as his target group, and he utilizes a codesystem whose signs require analysis. The text meaning is therefore the result of many communicative factors. It is a social interactivity, i.e., a communicative process between the respective text-producer and text-recipient¹⁴. However, this communication is but the means to a goal, that is, to ascertain what a certain addresser intends to obtain from his addressees¹⁵. Meaning interacts with the extraction of the author's intention¹⁶.

3.3.3. From text meaning towards author's intention: To subjectively determine the writer's intention outside the text meaning is an exercise in futility, and ultimately brings the reader to ignore the text itself¹⁷. By means of the way in which he receives or processes the text, the reader deduces the text meaning: he proceeds from words to sentences, to the recognition of textual units, and eventually grasps the plan of the text. This plan is particularly effective in capturing John's uniqueness. His individuality is especially evident in the Apocalypse, and prevents the writer from categorizing him¹⁸.

3.3.4. Text integrity: Another key issue arises from the above reasoning, viz., the necessity of a methodical respect for textual and contextual integrity. Words and sentences convey their meaning depending upon how they are assembled and amalgamated into a text and context¹⁹, which explains the weakness of unilaterally sentence-based exegesis²⁰. The genuine sense of a text can be appreciated only by viewing each of its parts in relation to the wholeness of the text. Only then can true text emotion be perceived²¹.

3.4. Discourse analysis: To assume that the sentence is the principal unit of textual investigation²² could be compared to somebody entering a garden and being absorbed in contemplating every single flower, whereas the enjoyment of the beauty of a flowerbed lies in observing how its colors, shapes and textures blend into one harmonious unity. Just as a garden is more than the sum total of its flowers, so the text is more than the sum of its clauses. Therefore, we determine that, instead of concentrating on virtually untraceable stages of textual *production* (diachronics)²³, it is more fruitful to consider the *product* as the most self-revealing tissue. Discourse analysis, essentially *synchronic*, is based on the intra-textual time pattern, the sequence of its elements²⁴. This internal advancement of speech events could be designated as 'intra-textual diachronics', a method that scrutinizes a text in keeping with text-grammatical hermeneutics. It also looks for discourse rules, making sense of the text in terms of communication²⁵.

The text is, therefore, cross-questioned on its ellipses, redundancies, alternations, text relevant signs, direct/reported speech, descriptive/ explanatory/prophetic speech, context/intertext, clause type and word order. The *theme*, developed in various *rhemata*, serves as 'archimedic point'²⁶. This is what is meant by 'text-oriented interpretation'.

3.5. Practical steps of procedure: The initial effort should be to set forth the most formal possible text description, subdividing the chosen pericope into several units which have been derived from text sense and content. These sense portions are called macro-sentences²⁷ with each possessing its central predicate. Hence, sense segments can be related to each other. Criteria for a meaningful text segmentation are 'change in worlds', episode markers, and the like²⁸. Moreover, text features such as foreground, background and plot²⁹ need to be identified. A concise review of some major checkpoints follows.

3.5.1. Dialogical sequence: God's voice is customarily rendered perceptible to a certain community by way of an oracular dialogue between the visionary and the divinity within a cultic setting. There is also the dimension of a liturgical dialogue between the actual reader and an assembly, recurring ceaselessly throughout the centuries since *Revelation* was written. Thus, during liturgy the hearer comes in touch with the primordial addresser, God. Alternating features such as *direct speech*, *descriptive*, *explanatory* and *predictive* discourse parts, understood as *dialogue*, are analyzed.

3.5.2. Tense sequence: The verb is the lifeblood of a text³⁰. With particular care, the dynamics of all the verbs must be examined in order to establish the underlying chronological order and text levels such as foreground and background³¹. The tense choice is conditioned by the authorial attitude towards an event: thus, the present, perfect and future tenses are typical of John's taking

a rather *commenting* locution attitude, whereas tenses such as imperfect, pluperfect, aorist and conditional manifest a *narrating* attitude³².

3.5.3. Prosopological sequence: In order to answer the question: *who* says *what* and *why* in *which channel* and *when* and to *whom* and with *what effect*³³ one needs to analyze how John presented each character emerging along the discourse. To identify the addresser and addressee³⁴ means to determine their status, which is crucial for understanding the message. Their utterances are seen as 'speech events', i.e., truly signifying actions, equivalents to realities, provoking things to being set in motion. Most eloquent in this respect are text relevant signs such as verbs, pronouns and other time/space- pertaining particles of speech and adverbial conventions. Undeniably, the multiplication of actants also is a highly effective literary device of dramatization, amplifying the vivacity of a given text.

3.5.4. Symbology axis: There has always been a sentiment of perplexity in face of the book's symbolism. How do these images coalesce through the chapters to finally converge and flow, for instance, into 21:1–22:5? Applying the strategies of discourse analysis, the focus is not trained on their theological value, but rather on their textlinguistic profile³⁵. A matter of particular attention is the conjoining of two symbols that are mutually exclusive. This analysis, however, should be viewed as a side effect of the more text-oriented exegesis.

3.5.5. Intertextual awareness: What are the echoes and pressures of anterior Scripture passages perceivable in the text³⁶? To identify the varied forces and expectations attached to the text against the backdrop of preceding or surrounding texts is called *intertextuality*³⁷. Relationships between writing and reading, text and context, authorial intent and textual meaning are to be thought of in terms of pressure, interference and systematic change rather than a linear development, authorial design and textual influence. Intertextuality is one of the reasons for the text to be viewed as a dialogue.

3.5.6. Text preparation: The first step in the text interpretation is to determine its borders (*text demarcation*)³⁸ with its initial and final transition points, usually determined both by content and formulation. Before examining the text in its segmented form, however, it seems indispensable to state its textual oneness or indivisibility (*text unity*)³⁹. Finally, the chosen pericope must be defined in its textual transmission (*text standardization*). In an almost bi-millennial history of text transmission, the Apocalypse of John presents relatively few text-critical problems. The appraisal of the most relevant variants may take place *in situ* along the discourse analysis proper. To facilitate its analysis and consultation, the text can be subdivided into minor units, textlinguistically called *syntagmata*.

3.6. Concluding assessment: The previous information indicates that the method employed is *inductive*: by examining a given pericope of the book of Revelation, common discourse constituents and communication rules are identified. The intent is to show the inherent flux and logical embodiment of words, sentences and sections between the narrower and broader context⁴⁰. How does the dialogue unfold from one part to the next? An attempt must be made to show how each text segment fits together with the preceding and succeeding one. The ultimate objective is a clearer understanding of the visions contained in the Apocalypse which is achieved by taking the path of its dialogical reality. Lastly, Pope Benedict XVI has repeatedly invited the

community of Catholic biblicists to rethink and refine existing scriptural methods⁴¹: the above approach wishes to be part of this larger picture of renewed efforts in this important area of biblical research.

¹ For more details on hermeneutics and methodologies utilized in the past to explain the book of Revelation, the reader is referred to authors like Kenneth Strand, *Interpreting the Book of Revelation: Hermeneutical Guidelines, With a Brief Introduction to Literary Analysis* (Worthington, OH: Ann Harbor Publishers, 1979); Adela Yarbro Collins, "Reading the book of Revelation in the twentieth Century", *Interp.* 40 (1986): 229-242; George Caird, "On Deciphering the Book of Revelation", *ET* 74 (1962-63): 13-15, 51-53, 82-84, 103-105; Barnabas Lindars, et al., *The Johannine Literature* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 213; Frederick Murphy, "The Book of Revelation", *CR:BS* 2 (1994): 181-226.

² Worth considering is the updated bibliography on methodology in Wilhelm Egger, *How to read the New Testament, An Introduction to Linguistics and Historical Critical Methodology* (Peabody: Hendrickson 1996), xiii-xxxvi.

³ "My research [...] involved putting all secondary sources aside until I had control of the text itself." G.W. Buchanan, *Introduction to Intertextuality* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1994), 96.

⁴ "However, defining the sentence as the largest unit of grammatical description fails because in fact the sentence is a grammatical constituent of the discourse, a larger grammatical form." B.K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 78.

⁵ "We are convinced that it is not enough to show *how* texts make sense [proper to Structuralism], that is, what are the mechanisms through which a text is meaningful, but what the text really means." Christopher Tuckett, *Reading the New Testament, Methods of Interpretation* (London: SPCK, 1987), 156.

⁶ See on the implications of the opposition liaison between the Saussurean *langue* and *parole*: William Hanks, *Language and Communicative Practices* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 21-36.

⁷ The term 'discourse analysis' was first employed in 1952 by Harris, designating "a method for the analysis of connected speech or writing", that is "for continuing descriptive linguistics beyond the limits of a single sentence at a time.", quotation according to Kirst Malmkjær and J.M. Anderson, *The Linguistic Encyclopedia* (London & New York: Routledge, 1991), 100; see also Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1989), 230-292.

⁸ For supplementary data regarding the historical background of discourse analysis, cf. Teun van Dijk, *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (London: Academic Press, 1985), 1-11; Yoshinobu Endo, *The Verbal System of Classical Hebrew in the Joseph Story, An Approach from Discourse Analysis* (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1996); on discourse analysis as a new cross-discipline useful for exegesis, cf. S.E. Porter and D.A. Carson, eds., *Discourse Analysis and Other Topics in Biblical Greek* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

⁹ Cf. Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson, *Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (Kentucky: University Press, 1993).

¹⁰ C.R. Taber, "Exegesis and Linguistics", *BiTr* 20,4 (1969): 150-153, describes how in a few decades linguistics has become an "ancillary science of exegesis. [...] What was in 1969 still a wish is nowadays reality".

¹¹ It is L. Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), who intimates that any linguistic analysis ought to start from the original datum, which is the text; it then proceeds to ever smaller elements until those basic parts have been reached that are not further analyzable.

¹² From the Latin verb root *texere*, with its lexical equivalent 'to weave'.

¹³ "A very simple and general way of defining communication is to view it as an information process going on between two human communicators [...] embedded in a context and a situation." R.E. Asher, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1994), 614.

¹⁴ "In text linguistics, it is the regarding of text as a unitary object, a sign in the process of communication or even a communicative activity, or a network of signifiers. [...] Both text and context can be sharply defined in terms of linguistics and the primary purpose of texts, namely *communication*." W.S. Vorster, "'Genre' and the Revelation of John: A study in text, context and intertext", *Neotest.* 22,1 (1988): 103-123.

¹⁵ As maintained by Pragmalinguistics: "Our primary business as reader is to make purposive sense of it, so as to explain the *what's* and the *how's* in terms of the *why's* of communication." Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative. Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

¹⁶ Without overlooking the fundamental hermeneutic canon "Sensus non est inferendus sed efferendus."

¹⁷ E.D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 1-23, argues that text meaning and author's intention are inextricably attached to each other.

¹⁸ "The mere classification of texts according to shared characteristics can be interesting, but classification for the sake of classification is of little use." VORSTER, "'Genre'", 107; furthermore, from the same author: "[...] it is difficult to speak of a 'genre apocalypse' and that more attention should be paid to the mode of writing or the way in which material is organized in a discourse." "'Genre'", 104; see also Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: an Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Oxford: University Press, 1982).

¹⁹ Laconically: *verba valent usu*; let us also recall the classical contextual coordinates: *causa - locus - occasio - tempus - instrumentum - modus*.

²⁰ "Although it is true that the sentence is the most popular and more or less natural unit of language use, the meaning of a discourse is not satisfied by merely adding the meaning of sentences together. The multiple relationships demand a larger stretch as a unit for analysis." J.P. Louw, "Discourse Analysis and the Greek New Testament", *BiTr* 24,1 (1973): 101-18; and from yet another angle: "As a complex means of communication language can only be explained within the framework of the context of communication, and this can only be accomplished through an integrated theory of syntax, semantics and pragmatics", R.W. Oller, "On the Relation between Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics", *Linguistics* 83 (1972): 43-55.

²¹ "The effect on the emotions and will of the hearer is a dimension of Revelation which goes beyond a rational grasp of its 'message'." M.V. Lee, "A Call to Martyrdom: Function as Method and Message in Revelation", *NT* 40,2 (1998): 164-194.

²² The sentence-oriented grammatical analysis can be retraced to an ancient Greek and Latin Grammar tradition, which disposed of little means to handle the phenomenon *text*; modern Grammarians would still approve of the view that "the sentence is the largest unit of grammatical description.", J. Lyons, *Introduction to theoretical Linguistics* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 172; regarding the subject of the transition from sentence-based to text-oriented Linguistics, see W.R. Bodine, *Discourse Analysis of Biblical Literature: What it is and what it offers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 1-5; Z.S Harris, "Discourse Analysis", *Lg.* 28,1 (1952): 1-30.

²³ To be sure, communication analysis is distinct from a source-oriented inquiry: "Discourse-oriented analysis [...] sets out to understand not the realities behind the text, but the text itself as a pattern of meaning and effect. What does this piece of language – metaphor, epigram, dialogue, tale, cycle, book – signify in context? What are the rules governing the transaction between storyteller or poet and reader?", Sternberg, *Poetics*, 15.

²⁴ On the contemporary differentiation made between diachronic and synchronic exegesis, cf. Daniel Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis? Guides to Biblical Scholarship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1976), 9-20.

²⁵ "Discourse Analysis extends the borders of linguistic investigation beyond the sentence to encompass entire sections of material viewed as communicable wholes." Bodine, "Linguistics", 330; and: "Discourse-oriented analysis [...] sets out to understand not the realities behind the text but the text itself as a pattern of meaning and effect." Sternberg, *Poetics*, 15.

²⁶ See Harald Weinrich, *Tempus: Besprochene und Erzählte Welt* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1964), 12.

²⁷ Others labelled them as 'meta-communicative sentences'.

²⁸ Cf. Bodine, *Discourse Analysis*, 58.

²⁹ On 'plot' in the Apocalypse, cf. J.L. Resseguie, *Revelation Unsealed, A Narrative Critical Approach to John's Apocalypse*, Biblical Interpretation Series 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 23-27.

³⁰ Verb forms being a veritable vantage point for the analysis of biblical narrative.

³¹ On 'foreground' and 'background' in discourse, cf. T. Givón, *Syntax and Semantics* (New York: Academic Press, 1979).

³² Cf. the distinction between 'besprochene' (*commented*) and 'erzählte' (*narrated*) world in Weinrich, *Tempus*, 22.

³³ The so-called *Lasswell's formula*.

³⁴ Following the terminology established by Gerhard Mussies, *The Morphology of Koine Greek as used in the Apocalypse of St. John: A Study in Bilingualism* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 227, regarding *addresser, addressee, participant and non-participant*; M.E. Boring, "The Voice of Jesus in the Apocalypse of John", *NT* 34,4 (1992): 344, "The voices of Revelation, both the variety of those heard in the vision and John's own this-worldly voice, do not remain distinct, but fade into each other. This is not typical of apocalyptic. This phenomenon suggests that John regards the whole of his document in the prophetic perspective as the word of John/angel/Christ/God *simultaneously*."

³⁵ For further details see William Beardslee, *Literary Criticism of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 53-63.

³⁶ “The Bible is by far the strongest literary influence on Revelation. [...] While these texts [Sibyllines Oracles, 1 Henoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruc] attest to a conceptual and symbolic world shared by their authors, one cannot claim with confidence that Revelation manifests a literary dependence on any one of these texts as it clearly does on the Bible. [...] The Bible is a sourcebook shared by all of these authors, and it is the bedrock on which our author stands.” Murphy, *Revelation*, 30.

³⁷ Cf. S. Moyise, “Intertextuality and the Book of Revelation”, *ET* 104 (1992): 295–298; M. Nystrand and J. Wiemelt, “When is a text explicit? Formalist and dialogical conceptions”, *Text* 11,1 (1991): 25-41.

³⁸ Cf. Roland Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis, An Introduction to Biblical Rhetoric* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 317-326.

³⁹ There is considerable unanimity among commentators in affirming that Revelation is a literary unit, the work of a single author.

⁴⁰ For further discussion on *context* see Deborah Schiffrin, *Approaches to Discourse: Language as Social Interaction* (Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell, 1994), 362-385.

⁴¹ J.F. Thornton and S.B. Varenne, eds., *The Essential Pope Benedict XVI: His Central Writings and Speeches* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2007), 243-258.