Master of Sacred Theology Seminar Papers   Concordia Seminary Scholarship

5-19-2000

"Blessed are they Who Keep These Words" An Examination of the Use of Language and the Intentionality of Solecisms in the Apocalypse

Timothy Rosenthal

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, timothy.rosenthal@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.csl.edu/stmsp

Part of the Biblical Studies Commons

Recommended Citation

CONCORDIA SEMINARY

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

"BLESSED ARE THEY WHO KEEP THESE WORDS"

AN EXAMINATION OF THE USE OF LANGUAGE AND THE INTENTIONALITY OF

SOLECISMS IN THE APOCALYPSE

A SEMINAR PAPER SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF SACRED THEOLGY

BY

TIMOTHY S. ROSENTHAL,
M.Mus., M.Div., D.Min.

ALTUS, OKLAHOMA

MARCH 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction

"I observe," intoned Dyonisius concerning John's writing of Revelation, "that his language and dialect do not conform accurately to Greek, but rather [I see], foreign, barbaric idioms and even solecisms" (...διάλεκτον μέντοι καὶ γλῶσσαν οὐκ ἀκριβῶς ἐλλενίζουσαν αὐτοῦ βλεπω, ἀλλ' ἰδιώμασι μὲν βαρβαρικοῖς χρώμενον, καί που καὶ σολοκίζοντα.).[1] George Bernard Shaw is credited with saying that Revelation is "a curious record of the visions of a drug addict."[2] Heavy criticism —one ancient, the other more recent— hardly seems like a way to begin a paper on the language of Revelation; yet, it is testimony that the language of the Apocalypse has never failed to intrigue theologians and linguists alike. R. H. Charles's monumental work on Revelation devotes a forty-two page chapter to the "Grammar of the Apocalypse."[3] In 1900, a few decades earlier, Archbishop of Canterbury Benson included a twenty-eight page essay in his commentary on Revelation which he curiously entitled, "A Grammar of Ungrammar."[4]

This paper purposes to examine the role and impact of the solecisms found in the Apocalypse. Before one can isolate a discussion about solecisms one must first address the issue of the style of Revelation (and, to some extent, that of the NT in general) and the degree to which Semiticisms appear. Thus, though the paper wishes to focus upon

---

[1] Edward White Benson, *The Apocalypse* (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1900), 131. The translation is my own. See also, Kenneth Newport, "Semitic Influence on the Use of Prepositions in the Book of Revelation," *The Bible Translator* 37:3 (1986), 328.

[2] Allen Dwight Callahan, "The Language of the Apocalypse," *Harvard Theological Review* 88:4 (1995) 543. Callahan observes, "[B]ut then modern literati have had a penchant for unkindness when it comes to the language of the Apocalypse."

[3] R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John,* vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark: 1920), cxvii-clix.

[4] Benson, 131-158.

solecisms, a rather large portion of the paper will necessarily first address the whole issue

of the nature and style of the Greek in Revelation so that a clear understanding of

solecisms might emerge.

In scholarly literature on the subject, three views arise. One is that the Greek of

Revelation is essentially Greek and that there are no major deviations from standard

usage. This view concedes: sloppiness or slips of the pen; things which might surface

due to the author writing in a second language (other than his native language); and the

possibility that John[5] deliberately flouted the rules of "correct" Greek. Another view is

that the Revelation is a translation from an Aramaic *Vorlage*. The third view is that

Revelation, being closely associated with the Greek of the LXX, is a unique Holy Ghost

Greek, or, if not that, it is at least a modified Jewish Greek dialect.[6] Similar to the first

position, this paper will champion the opinion that the language and style of the

Revelation, in the words of Callahan, "is not due to intellectual deficiency, but to

idiolectical peculiarity that is both intentional and resurgent."[7]

II. A Discussion of Style

Can one really enter into a discussion of style or dialect? In the absence of a

definition of "style" or "dialect," one is reduced to the domain of subjectivity, if not

conjecture.[8] Classical grammars emphasize syntax, and works such as Turner's *Style*

---

[5] For the purpose of simplicity, this author simply refers to the seer of the Apocalypse as John, namely, the apostle. It should be noted that this is the author's belief and does not necessarily reflect the various views of others.

[6] Porter, "The Language of the Apocalypse in Recent Discussion," *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989), 582-4. This is a condensation of Porter's summary.

[7] Callahan, 454.

[8] J. E. Botha, "Style, Stylistics and the Study of the New Testament," *Neotestamentica* 24 (1990), 173-84, *passim.*

(vol. IV of Moulton, *et al.*'s *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*), offer no systematic approach to style. Most commentaries discuss style in an effort to advance a thesis; a systemic discussion of style is wanting. Language is normally understood in terms of construction, but style is not so easily quantified, structured or analyzed. It is, ultimately, a subjective assessment.

Steven Thompson's more recent book, *The Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax*, following the lead of Turner[9] and others, suggests that John's language is a pidginized "dialect of a ghetto, of a subpopulation that has only partially assimilated *Koine* Greek."[10] R. H. Charles, whose thoughts shaped the attitude of many scholars, wrote in his comprehensive commentary, first published in 1920, a similar but less harsh opinion saying:

> How, then, are we to explain the unbridled license of his Greek constructions? The reason clearly is that, *while he writes in Greek, he thinks in Hebrew*, and the thought has naturally affected the vehicle of expression. But this is not all. He never mastered Greek idiomatically— even the Greek of his own period. To him very many of its particles were apparently unknown, and the multitudinous shades of meaning which they expressed in the various combinations into which they entered, were never grasped at all, or only in a very inadequate degree (emphasis added).[11]

D. W. Hadorn, then a professor at the University of Bern, echoes Charles when he writes:

> Die Sprache der Apocalypse gehört zur koine, ist aber in linguistische Hinsicht ganz einzigartig, verschieden von den LXX, wie von den Apokryphen des AT und dem griech der Papyri, hart, unbeholfen,

---

[9] Steven Thompson, *The Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1985). This book is based on Thompson's Ph.D. dissertation. Turner served as a Reader for Thompson's dissertation.

[10] Callahan, 457. The quote is Callahan's characterization of Thompson's view.

[11] R. H. Charles, *Studies in the Apocalypse,* 2nd ed., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark (1915), 82. Voelz (*op. cit.* note 22) comments on the changes in Greek from Hellenistic to Koine and the trend towards simplicity and the disappearance of the nuances of the particles.

unregelmäßig und fehlerhaft. ...Der Verf der Offenbarung schreibt wohl griechisch, denk aber hebräisch, was sich in den häufigen Hebraismen verrät.[12]

Charles believed that the Apocalypse was even more Hebraic than the LXX[13] and he opposed the view of those (likely, he had in mind Thumb, Diessman, and Moulton[14]) who minimized the number of Hebraisms in the Apocalypse and posited that the language was characteristic of vernacular Greek. Charles countered, *"The style of the Apocalypse is absolutely unique in all Greek literature, while linguistically it is more Hebraic than the LXX"* (emphasis not added).[15] Charles' sweeping phrase, *"absolutely* unique in *all* of Greek literature," will not hold up to further scrutiny in this paper.

To be sure, the language of Revelation is unique. But is it so unique so as to justify calling it a pidginized, Hebraic, ghetto Greek, a separate dialect (or even a more sanctimonious, "Holy Ghost language")? Based upon his study of sociolinguistics and bi-lingualism, Silva suggests that the NT Greek is a Palestinian style of the Koine. Diessman said that Semiticisms did not put the NT outside the Koine, they were just birthmarks.[16] Schmidt observes that, since there is no consensus concerning the language in Revelation, recent scholarship "seems resigned to accepting the general description, 'biblical Greek' for the linguistic phenomena in Revelation."[17]

---

[12] W. Hadorn, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes,* Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung (1928), 20.

[13] Charles, *A Critical...,* cxliv; see also Turner, 149.

[14] Porter, 454, notes that in subsequent editions of Moulton's grammar he moved from calling the language, "hebraic Greek," to "colloquial Greek" to "common" Greek. Moulton's shift, observes Porter, was made on the basis of intensive study of the papyri.

[15] Charles, *Studies...,* 79.

[16] Moisés Silva, "Bilingualism and the Character of Palestinian Greek," *Biblica* 61 (1980), 198-219, *passim.*

[17] Daryl D. Schmidt, "Semiticisms and Septuagintisms in the Book of Revelation," *New Testament Studies* 37 (1991), 596.

When discussing the language or style of Revelation, or the NT in general, one must ask to which criterion the NT is held. The NT and Revelation are often described as sloppy or bad, but, as Porter[18] asks, "...sloppy or bad compared to what?" The answer is usually Classical Greek. This is an exegetical fallacy because it compares the NT diachronically to an idealized Greek of another era rather than comparing it synchronically to Hellenistic Greek. It would be like comparing the English of our day to the English of Chaucer and criticizing modern English because it no longer has cases. Current literary writings, including scholarly writings, would one and all be labeled as barbaric if they were held up to such an unwarranted standard. Moulton wrote concerning the author of the Apocalypse, "...there is no reason to believe his grammar would have been materially different had he been a native of Oxyrhynchus, assuming the extent of Greek education to be the same."[19] Moulton also said:

> ...[E]ven the Greek of the Apocalypse itself does not seem to owe any of
> its blunders to Hebraisms. The author's uncertain use of cases is obvious
> to the most casual reader... We find him perpetually indifferent to
> concord. But the less educated papyri give us plenty of parallels from a
> field whose semiticism cannot be suspected."[20]

Turner thinks it significant that the Apocalypse shows an almost complete absence of classical standards in the Greek of the NT. Porter responds, "This would be a convincing argument only if one were synchronically comparing the NT Greek with

---

[18] Porter, 154.

[19] Quoted by Nigel Turner, *Style,* Vol. IV *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, by James H. Moulton, Francis Wilber and Nigel Turner, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark (1976), 148. Moulton studied the papyri extensively (see footnote 14 above).

[20] quoted by Charles, *Studies....* 79-80. Charles calls this view "extreme."

5

Classical Greek." Turner thought that the NT Greek was "unique." With Porter we must again ask, "...unique compared to what?"[21]

As Greek became the *lingua franca* after the conquest of Alexander the Great, various dialects were absorbed into a more standard, common dialect. One would expect that, as more and more non-Greeks used the language, the dialects would multiply, but just the opposite is true. Local variances were only slight. Voelz succinctly profiled the three changes in Greek from the from Attic to common, Koine Greek:

> (1.) There are a multiplicity of new words, with new meanings attached to many old words. (2.) There is a tendency toward explicit expression. Lexically ...this tendency meant the preference for "fuller" and phonetically stronger forms. Syntactically it is seen chiefly in the increased frequency of prepositions (both proper and improper) and pronouns, and in the preference for direct, as opposed to indirect, discourse. (3.) There is a strong tendency toward simplicity. This tendency manifested itself in two ways. On the one hand, a firm movement toward uniformity is evident. Morphologically, this tendency meant elimination or modification of unusual forms of all parts of speech and the assimilation of potentially ambiguous forms to those more easily recognizable. On the other hand, the loss of fine distinctions is also apparent.[22]

Many of these same characteristics of the Koine, as well as the ones further enumerated by Voelz in his signal article (e.g., rich combination of particles, expansion of the use of ἵνα, and frequency of parataxis in place of hypotaxis),[23] are the very things for which the language of the Apocalypse is criticized. Porter writes:

---

[21] Porter, 594-5.

[22] James W. Voelz, "The Linguistic Milieu of the Early Church," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 56 (1992), 86.

[23] Voelz at this point cites, in a footnote, Porter's article on the language of the Apocalypse and comments on its significance.

Virtually every scholar of Hellenistic Greek recognizes the presence of Semiticisms in the NT, but they are seen as not affecting the essential grammatical structure or code of the language (and discussion of the Apocalypse by Thompson and others does not usually focus on an idiolect). Hellenistic Greek then held sway as a single essentially sub-dialectless variety until the Byzantine and modern periods, when modern Greek again developed dialectal distinctives.[24]

Voelz contends that there is simply no strong evidence to support the notion, that Thompson and others have put forth, of a Jewish dialect in the NT.[25] Callahan may have said it best when he wrote:

Greek and Roman critics of Jewish communities in the Diaspora, who lodged many complaints about every aspect of Jewish life they found objectionable, nevertheless said little about Jewish linguistic habits. The Jews were calumnied as misanthropic, cannibalistic, and incestuous; but no polemic of antiquity, to my knowledge, ever accuses the Jews of splitting infinitives.[26]

There is no evidence to suggest that Koine was a provincial language while the elite and educated continued in Attic Greek.[27] Koine was not "the language of the province, but of the empire."[28] The likelihood of a separate Palestinian dialect of Greek was indeed slight since Palestine was not isolated from the rest of the Greek-speaking world. Thus, the common Greek linguistic patterns would continue to be reinforced in social, educational,

---

[24] Porter, 596-7.
[25] Voelz, 92.
[26] Callahan, 458.
[27] cp. Voelz's reproduction of the W. L. Wonderly diagram illustrating the full range of Koine Greek., 88-9.
[28] Callahan, 569.

political, economic and even religious circles.[29] Voelz rightly asserts that—despite the Semiticisms—in the final analysis the Hellenistic characteristics of the NT are dominant:

> Yes, Semitic constructions do appear. Yes, Semitic vocabulary does abound. But the Greek of the New Testament is still Greek—true Hellenistic Greek—not basically Hebrew disguised as Greek nor Aramaic in Greek dress. It is truly Greek, Koine Greek with a Semitic tinge, and a tinge which may be traced in large measure to the Septuagint... and this should not surprise us in the least."[30]

Having discussed the register of Hellenistic Greek, with application to the Apocalypse, let us now turn our attention to Semiticisms in further detail so that they might not be identified as solecisms.

III. Semiticisms

There is little agreement on the definition of a Semiticism. Voelz describes two types of Semiticisms: one is vocabulary where there is the presence of foreign words or the ascription of non-Greek meanings to Greek words, and the other is grammatical constructions. Following the lead of Moulton, he distinguishes between primary and secondary Semiticisms. A Primary Semiticism is unnatural Greek and would be something that a native Greek speaker would never say. A Secondary Semiticism is not bad Greek *per sé*, but is similar to a Hebrew or Aramaic construction. Voelz gives the following examples: (1.) ἐν τῷ with an infinitive in a temporal sense; (2) the order of attributive adjective and nouns is like Hebrew word order (article-noun-article-adjective); (3) adjectival genitives like Hebrew and Aramaic: the use of a noun in genitive rather

---

[29] Porter, 602.
[30] Voelz, 93.

8

8

than an adjective to modify another noun; and (4) the instrumental us of ἐν, (like the Hebrew ב), as in Rev. 2:16, μετανόησον οὖν· εἰ δὲ μή, ἔρχομαί σοι ταχύ καὶ πολεμήσω μετ' αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ ῥομφαίᾳ τοῦ στόματός μου. The cause of Semiticisms can be external, such as a quote from the LXX or reported speech of our Lord; or they can be internal Semiticisms, which come from the author himself.[31] However, Semiticisms by way of the LXX[32] may occur not because the LXX is quoted, but because its style had a great impact on early Christian speech. A parallel is seen in the use of the religious sounding English which mimics the style of the King James Version of the Bible.

Voelz is clearer yet in saying that it (in this case, a Secondary Semiticism) is really an argument of frequency. He adds that the evidence changes day by day as the papyri is continuously studied. A study by Stanley Watson, for example, proved that the use of ἵνα plus a future indicative, once thought to be rare in Koine and a Semitic reproduction of a frequent construction in Hebrew and Aramaic, is, after all, quite common in Koine parlance of the first century; thus, this construction cannot be called a Semiticism at all.[33]

According to Turner, Charles also recognized that Semiticisms are a matter of degree not of kind.[34] In a pointed but justified criticism of Thompson, Porter writes concerning Semitic interference on the syntax of the Apocalypse:

> The concern must not be with individual instances but with cumulative
> evidence of several examples of the same phenomenon, otherwise one
> runs the risk of building a structure upon the slight foundation of a mere

---

[31] IBID., 90-2, see also Schmidt, 594, regarding Moulton's two-fold definition of Semiticism.

[32] One may wish to consult Kenneth Newport's fine articles about LXXisms, "Semitic Influence on the Use of Some Prepositions in the Book of Revelation," *The Bible Translator* 37:3 (1986), 328-334 and "Some Greek Words with Hebrew Meanings in the Book of Revelation," *Andrews University Studies* 26:1 (1986), 25-31. While Newport's articles are compelling, he stops short of saying that the Apocalypse is written in a separate dialect, etc.

[33] Voelz, 91.

[34] Turner, 149.

slip of the pen (This would be like promoting a single "grammatical error" into a canon of style.).[35]

Porter then accuses Thompson of making rules for whole books, or even for the entire NT, on the basis of just a single occurrence of a syntactical phenomenon. Instead, one should rather speculate about the significance of its singular occurrence. Thompson, *et al.*, attempt to build general grammatical rules when they might rather focus on the idiolect of this particular author.[36] J. Schmid, according to Mussies, is the authority in textual criticism of the Apocalypse and Schmid developed an "important view that the majority of the syntactical peculiarities in the Apocalypse should not so much be seen as structural characteristics but, rather, as *tendencies*." John's use of the language fell within the possibilities found in Koine-Greek. Mussies notes that De Saussure's structural linguistics made this distinction between the general structure of a language and idiolect with his concepts of *langue* and *parôle*.[37]

In response to Thompson, Porter addresses the issue of the alleged Semiticisms in the Apocalypse and demonstrates that they are not Semiticisms; for, they are found elsewhere in the Koine, and sometimes in Classical, Greek. Among them are: (1) the participle used as a finite verb; (2) The use of ἵνα and the future indicative (Stanley Watson's study mentioned above showed that the use was common in Koine, and Porter found it in Classical Greek); (3) the use of λεγῶν to introduce a quote; (4) the use of καί

---

[35] Porter, 587.
[36] IBID., 596-7.
[37] G. Mussies, *The Morphology of Koine Greek as Used in the Apocalypse of St. John* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 10.

with conditional sentences; (5) the mixing of perfect and present tenses;[38] (5) the alleged misuse of the aorist (which, according to Thompson, occurs frequently in conditional statements without past tense and this is due to the Greek adapting to the Hebrew perfect tense);[39] and (6) words alleged by Thompson to derive their primary meaning from Hebrew equivalents. Porter shows that the same meanings are found in other Koine and classical writings (e.g., θαυμάζειν for "appalled" instead of "astonished;" Δίδοναι used in a causative sense; and εὑρίσκω used in the sense "to be" rather than "to be found"). Porter also notes that Thompson's study depends heavily on standard lexica which have only a small sampling of extant Greek manuscripts. Thompson's sweeping statements about common Koine uses are unfounded and not based on all the evidence. Since the release of Thompson's book in 1985, the Thesaurus Linguae Greacae (TLG) project has "made available virtually all extant ancient Greek in machine readable format (63 million words)."[40]

Rather than seeing Semiticisms as an accident of John's condition and circumstances, we ought to entertain the possibility that John knew exactly what he was doing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that he intentionally used Semiticisms (and even some solecisms) for his own purposes. Evidence for this is suggested when we observe that there are also instances where John could have used a stock, Semitic phrase but instead, opted for a Greek one. For example, he concludes the Apocalypse with the words, ἔρχου κύριε, in 22:20: Λέγει ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα, Ναί, ἔρχομαι ταχύ. Ἀμήν,

---

[38] cp. K. L. McKay, "On the Perfect and Other Aspects in NT Greek," *Novum Testamentum* 23 (1981), 289-329.

[39] Frank Stagg's article, "The Abused Aorist," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91 (1972), 222-231, adequately dispenses with the "punctiliar" view of the aorist.

[40] Porter, 584-92.

ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ. By contrast, however, Paul similarly closed his first letter to the Corinthians using the Aramaic, Μαρανα θα. Another example is Revelation 9:11 where we read, ἔχουσιν ἐπ' αὐτῶν βασιλέα τὸν ἄγγελον τῆς ἀβύσσου, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστὶ Ἀβαδδὼν, καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ ὄνομα ἔχει Ἀπολλύων. The usual term in the LXX is Ἀπώλεια not Ἀπολλύων. Why did John not use the LXX version if he was so helplessly steeped in Semiticisms? As I have suggested, John knew what he was doing and in this case he might have even used Ἀπολλύων to counter the Greek god Apollo. [41]

IV. Solecisms

Many scholars present varying lists of solecisms in Revelation. A great many of what they term as solecisms may be dismissed in light of the discussion above on Semiticisms and the range of Koine. However, a few other solecisms warrant consideration. Having discussed a few, I will proceed to consider another prospect: the intentionality of the solecisms on the part of John.

Frequent on the list of solecisms is the lack of agreement between genders and between case of nouns and pronouns. I believe that Turner betrays his own bias when he rejected Moulton's efforts to justify these common mistakes from the papyri. [42] Revelation 21:9 is believed to contain such an instance when participle τῶν γεμόντων (the ones —masculine— being full) does not appear to agree with φιάλας (bowls), which is feminine. But when one looks at the whole verse it is possible to see a masculine antecedent, namely, the angels: Καὶ ἦλθεν εἷς ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἀγγέλων τῶν ἐχόντων τὰς

---

[41] Louis Brighton, *Revelation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 241, footnote 24.
[42] Turner, 146-7.

12

ἑπτὰ φιάλας τῶν γεμόντων τῶν ἑπτὰ πληγῶν τῶν ἐσχάτων. Swete considers this

possibility and says it may suggest that these angels "were still full of the great task they

had accomplished, and that St. John's guide came fresh from the scene of the Last

Plagues..."[43] Lenski takes it this way when he writes:

> The reading τῶν γεμόντων (with the following genitive after a verb of
> filling) is fully assured and should not be changed. The verb γέμω is used
> with reference to ships that are filled with cargo. When Zahn and a few
> others are confused by this genitive and think it should be an accusative
> modifying φιάλας, this confusion is caused by their translation, "filled
> with," i.e., bowls, not angels, filled with seven plagues. But filled ships
> are laden ships. Translate properly, like the R.V.: of the angles "who *were*
> *laden with*," literally, "of those *laden with*." Note that τῶν εχότων has the
> apposition τῶν γεμόντων in perfect grammatical order (emphasis not
> added).[44]

Turner[45] and Charles[46] give the example found in Revelation 1:15 of genders

which do not agree: καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ (masc.) ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ

πεπυρωμένης (fem.) καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ... They suppose it is a solecism because "brass,"

χαλκολιβάνῳ (masc.), and "being refined," πεπυρωμένης (fem.), do not agree. However,

πεπυρωμένης can also simply mean "burning," and the word immediately preceding it,

"furnace," καμίνῳ, is also feminine. Consequently, it would make perfect sense to

instead translate it: "Burning furnace," not "burning brass." Thus, we have, "And his feet

like brass in a burning furnace and his voice..."

---

[43] Henry Barclay Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1909), 283.

[44] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (Columbus: Wartburg Press, 1942),
627.

[45] Turner, 147.

[46] Charles, *A Critical...*, clii.

Charles notes that the neuter, πυρὸς, in 19:20, is further described by a feminine participle, καιομένης, (burning) which is a disagreement in gender: ἐβλήθησαν οἱ δύο εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρὸς τῆς καιομένης ἐν θείῳ. Since "fire" in Hebrew and Aramaic is feminine, Charles suggests that this is therefore a semiticism. We observe that "lake" (τὴν λίμνην) is feminine. It is possible that τοῦ πυρὸς is an Attributive Genitive describing the content of the lake (genitives can be used to express material or contents[47]) and that the feminine, genitive participle, τῆς καιομένης, qualifies the lake as well. Thus, we would have, "the burning lake of fire," not the "lake of burning fire." Wallace describes a genitive chain (or concatenative genitives) construction in which the substantives need not agree in gender. He cites Romans 8:21 as an example: εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης(f.) τῶν τέκνων(n.) τοῦ θεου(m.). [48] *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, by Blass and Debrunner also gives examples of this construction which does not agree in gender (viz., 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 14:8).[49]

V. Intentional Solecisms

Influenced by Hirsch's structuralism, James W. Voelz develops three levels of signifiers when he writes about the semantic divisions of a text. Level 1 is the marks on the page or the sounds; level 2 is the images and ideas which are evoked and depicted by

---

[47] Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar,* rev. Gordon M. Messing (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1956), 318.

[48] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 86-88.

[49] F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament,* translated and revised by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §168, 93

the marks on the page; and level 3 is the fact that the words and their meanings, having been written by a particular author, also convey meaning.[50] With this framework in mind, I suggest that the theological prerogative of meaning at level 2, and even level 3, grant a certain solecistic franchise to level 1. Put another way, I believe that one can often find a conflation of sign (level 1) and referent in the Apocalypse because John intentionally gave precedence to the theological meaning over that of grammatical accord; indeed, the unusual grammar may serve as a devise to call attention to deeper theological issues..

Most scholars attribute the cause of the solecisms to the fact that John, while imprisoned, did not have access to an anemnusis and, without this secretarial help, he did not polish the Apocalypse as he did the gospel or as other NT writers refined their writings. Charles's stock phrase, that John "thought in Hebrew and wrote in Greek," frequently surfaces in scholarly literature. Turner charitably suggests that the occurrences are due either to the seer's lack of opportunity make revisions, or to the possibility that this style foreshadowed later Greek.[51]

John, himself, prepares the reader and sets the stage in 1:9 for some unusual Greek. John lets the reader (or auditor) know that, while imprisoned, he was likely without secretarial help:[52] "I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Aside from what may be the result of scribal errors, or errors in transmission (Porter's "slips of the pen"), I believe that John

---

[50] James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean?* 2d ed., (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995) 156-167, 365.
[51] Turner, 146-7.
[52] Callahan, 464.

15

used solecisms deliberately and that this intentional use was not merely a shallow attempt to emulate an antiquated style of Greek (by way of the LXX, for example). John sought not to make a stylistic, or even literary, impression so much as he sought to make a *theological* impression; what is more, it reflects the immanent nature of the event: the vision which he *experienced*. Theology, more so than stylistic innovation, was the driving force of the solecisms in the Apocalypse. This is not to say that style was an ancillary concern nor does it suggest that there are few affinities with the LXX. I suggest, however, that the substance—indeed, the event—determined the style; the style did not determine the substance. Let us consider a few, noteworthy examples.

In Revelation 1:4-5 we note that ἀπὸ is followed not by a genitive, as it should be, but by a nominative: 4 Ἰωάννης ταῖς ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησίαις ταῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ· χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἑπτὰ πνευμάτων ἃ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου αὐτοῦ. In the next verse (and in 14:14), the appositives are also in the nominative case: 5 καὶ ἀπὸ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός, ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς.

Wallace describes "Nominatives in Apposition to Oblique Cases" and adds that, while it is rare in the NT, it is found especially in Revelation. Explaining the significance he writes: "The Seer of the Revelation seems, for the most part, either to have considered the substantive in the nominative case as an indeclinable title (2:13), a quotation (1:5; 17:5)" —here Wallace notes that the nominative is also used for appellation— "...or simply as imitating the LXX usage (1:5; 17:4). It seems that he used this *to emphasize*

the word in the nominative, for his audience would certainly take note of such a construction" (emphasis not added).[53] Callahan writes:

> The crudest *Koine* Greek speaker would no doubt balk at the prepositional phrase of ἀπό followed by the nominative case in Rev. 1:4. James Montgomery, an early critic of Charles, suggested that this phrase "as it were, lifts the Absolute One above grammatical government"... The author of Revelation knows that the genitive is obligatory for ἀπό and complies with this basic rule of grammar elsewhere. Similarly, in Rev. 1:13 and 14:14, the author follows ὅμοιον with υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in the accusative and not in the obligatory dative case. *It is only in these two instances, however, that the seer violates this grammatical rule... He is—in accordance with some principle yet to be discovered— quite selective in his commission of solecisms* (emphasis added).[54]

As suggested above, I believe this "yet to be discovered principle" is John's theological impetus, not some stylistic naiveté. Surely it cannot escape the notice of even the most casual reader that these peculiarities concern themselves with subject matter of God and his holy name. Charles: "Our author knows perfectly the case that should follow ἀπὸ, but he refuses to inflect the divine name."[55] It is not as if this solecism happens randomly with a variety of subjects. Hadorn gets it half right when he, in an explanation of the use of this solecism in 1:4, describes it as: "Die invariabilität des Gottesnamens;" but then he, inexplicably, fails to see the same theological significance of "like the Son of Man," ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, of 1:13 and 14:14 saying that this is "certainly careless" ("Nachlässigkeit wohl").[56]

---

[53] Wallace, 62.
[54] Callahan, 456.
[55] Charles, *A Critical...*, clii.
[56] Hadorn, 20.

One "like the Son of Man" hearkens back to the well known apocalyptic prophesy of Daniel, chapter seven, which spoke of divine judgment. Christ called himself the Son of Man most frequently in the gospels and we see it again in Revelation in connection to the Son of Man coming in judgment on the clouds. Everywhere else in the Apocalypse, except 1:13 and 14:14, John uses ὅμοιον properly with the dative (nineteen occurrences).

Concerning these titles of God here in 1:4-5; "like the Son of Man" in 1:13 and 14:14; and in 2:13 the title applied to "Antipas my faithful witness" (καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἀντιπᾶς ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστός μου), Callahan writes that these were well known epithets and titles which were undoubtedly known by John's audience. "By leaving each of these words in the nominative case, he showed that they are not to be understood as individual lexica, but as inseparable parts of an indeclinable whole. He has privileged the integrity of these epithets over the dictates of Greek grammar..."[57]

Other well-known epithets appear in 20:2. In this instance, the nominative is in apposition with the accusative: καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὸν δράκοντα, ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὅς ἐστιν Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, καὶ ἔδησεν αὐτὸν χίλια ἔτη. "The dragon" is in the accusative while the well known epithets, "the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan" are found in the nominative.

Above, it was noted that John used words which do not agree in gender with their antecedents and, there, I offered some grammatical explanations. Could there not also be theological explanations? In Rev. 21:14 we encounter another, curious disagreement of gender: καὶ τὸ *τεῖχος* τῆς πόλεως *ἔχων* θεμελίους δώδεκα καὶ ἐπ᾽ αὐτῶν δώδεκα

---

[57] Callahan, 467.

ὀνόματα τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων τοῦ ἀρνίου. "Wall," τεῖχος, is neuter and the participle, ἔχων, is masculine. As Brighton observes, in this chapter of the Apocalypse it is clear that the enemies of the church are vanquished and, thus, a protective function of a city wall would be out of place. Not surprisingly, the Sixth Century Greek commentaries of Oecumenius and Andreas, and the Latin commentary of Primasius, identify Christ, himself, as the wall. This interpretation is supported by OT passages such as Isaiah 26:1 and Zechariah 2:4-5. In the latter passage, Yahweh says, "I, myself, will be a wall of fire" around Jerusalem.[58] Both texts pointedly speak about an apocalyptic Jerusalem. It is not surprising, then, that John may indeed have intended the wall to be understood as Christ. The odd grammar certainly gives us reason to pause and consider the possibility of this solidarity with OT imagery.

Another example of disagreement in gender is found in 11:4 where the two olive trees (αἱ δύο ἐλαῖαι), and the two lamps (αἱ δύο λυχνίαι), both of which are feminine, are further characterized by the masculine participle, "standing" (ἐστῶτες); not by a feminine participle (ἐστῶσαι) as one might expect: οὗτοί εἰσιν αἱ δύο ἐλαῖαι καὶ αἱ δύο λυχνίαι αἱ ἐνώπιον τοῦ κυρίου τῆς γῆς ἐστῶτες. The referent for the imagery of two trees and two lampstands (apparently rooted in Zech. 4) is the "two witnesses" of the God found in the previous verse who will prophesy in sackcloth for 1,260 days. Since the referent is decidedly masculine, John, in accord with his practice, uses a masculine participle.

_____

[58] Brighton, 610.

At times, Charles seems to rightly understand John's deliberate use of solecisms saying the he "deliberately sets at variance the grammarian and the ordinary rules of syntax;" while, at other times, he seems critical.[59] Ozanne believes that the solecisms are deliberate, and says, contrary to Charles, that John did not "write in Greek while thinking in Hebrew." Rather, the solecisms were "devised to signify solidarity with OT prophets."[60] Surveying several writers Callahan writes:

> Several commentators agree that the language of the Apocalypse is not a product of ignorance, but artifice. I. T. Beckwith argued in 1922 that "the departures from correct usage are not due to ignorance: the writer shows a knowledge and command of Greek too accurate to make such a supposition tenable." More recently, G. K. Beale has observed that "the fact that most of the time the author [of the Apocalypse] does keep the [grammatical] rules further points to the solecisms being intentional." A. M. Farrer described John's language as "completely artificial and antiquarian...not the dialect of the Asian ghetto, but an elaborate archaism." "We are forced to the position that all the grammatical abnormalities of the Apocalypse were deliberately devised by the author who wished to signify solidarity of his writings with those of the Old Testament," concludes C. G. Ozanne.[61]

Callahan further writes: "To change even one jarring solecism is to compromise the integrity of the discourse... the seer insisted not a jot or tittle of his work be altered until every effect has come to pass." The intentionality of the words of the prophesy—including the solecisms—are indicated internally by the text itself (22:18-19):

> For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

---

[59] Charles, *Studies...*, 81.
[60] C. G. Ozanne, "The Language of the Apocalypses," *Tyndale House Bulletin* 16 (1965), 8-9.
[61] Callahan, 458-9.

Callahan, perhaps with a bit of excess, suggests that the "blessings of the book" are not so much knowing the meaning of its contents, but in "keeping its words, just as they are, in all their solecistic glory."[62] Charles comes close to the mark when he writes:

> "We have found that these abnormalities are not instances of mere license nor yet mere blunders, as they have been most wrongly described, but are constructions deliberately chosen by our author. Some of these belong to the vernacular of his known time, some of them do not."[63]

In his exceptionally brief Ph.D. dissertation on the Apocalypse's solecisms presented to the faculty at Princeton University in 1902, T. Cowden Laughlin concludes:

> Viewing the evidence as a whole, the impression is strong that the author of the Apocalypse made use of the LXX and Hebrew idiom in a conscious effort to reproduce the manner and spirit of the ancient prophets; it was not through ignorance of correct Greek usage.[64]

VI. Conclusion

This paper frequently referred to Charles's writings on Revelation because his monumental work is still very influential. To be sure, he will at times speak disparagingly about the language of the Apocalypse. Turner, however, goes too far when, on the basis of Charles's work, he says that one "must protest" the idea that Revelation is

---

[62] IBID., 469-70.
[63] Charles, *A Critical...*, clii.
[64] T. Cowden Laughlin, *The Solecisms of the Apocalypse* (Princeton: C. S. Robinson & Co., University Press, 1902), 22.

21

literary, sophisticated or not full of solecisms, and that it obeys self-imposed laws.[65] This

paper has opened the distinct possibility that several, if not many of the solecisms, were

quite intentional and theological. Furthermore, Turner does not read Charles fairly, for

Charles himself acknowledges the "sublime" style of the Apocalypse, saying that the seer

was an artist like the great Hebrew prophets of old. Charles writes: "His object is to drive

home his message with all the powers at his command, and this is done in some of the

sublimest passages in all literature (emphasis added)."[66]

The language of the Apocalypse is Greek that was quite common, owing itself not

in the least to the high probability that John was without secretarial help while a prisoner

on the Island of Patmos. Turner seems to illumine, perhaps unwittingly, this same point

when (trying to indicate that the style is more distinctive than the papyri) he says that it

has the style of a "natural orator."[67] Porter rightly asserts that the language of the

Apocalypse falls "within the range of possible registers of Greek usage in the first

century."[68] Naturally, Revelation uses—out of necessity— common religious

terminology found also in Jewish apocalyptic sources.[69] "As with lexical glosses in the

LXX" writes Callahan, "the strangeness of the Greek...is most readily explained by the

influence of the Greek Bible. For other syntactical oddities, a wider reading of Koine

Greek will account for these 'barbarisms.'"[70]

---

[65] Turner, 149.
[66] Charles, *Studies...*, 81.
[67] Turner, 148.
[68] Porter, 603.
[69] IBID., 600
[70] Callahan, 456. The "barbarisms" he had in mind were the use of the nominative and the
infinitive, and the resolution of oblique participles or articular infinitives into a finite verb (instead of a
participle or infinitive). He notes that both of these have precedent in the LXX.

Hadorn writes, like Charles, that the strophic sections of Revelation do not follow the rules of Greek but they follow that of Hebrew prose. The poetic sections are like the Hebrew poetry of Psalms. On this basis, Hadorn concludes that the Revelation was obviously intended for public reading in the congregation ("Da die Offenbarung ausdrücklich für die Vorlesung in der Gemeinde bestimmt war.")[71]

Given the nature of an ecstatic vision, the Apocalypse accordingly does not follow a formula of composition nor the standard organizational features that one might see in John's gospel, for example. John's Gospel is well thought-out. The Apocalypse is a vision: no one *can* lay it out. In the Gospels, the Lord's activity was planned and presented. In Revelation, the action simply occurred and John wrote what he saw *as* it happened. Louis Brighton writes:

> The literary style of Revelation is more that of an artist than of a technical writer (cf. 12:1-2). He thinks and writes in visual patterns rather than in logical axioms. His artistry is even evident in his use of grammar and syntax. ...All these oddities and irregularities, whether due to the author's Semitic background or to his own peculiar use of language, are used in a skilled, disciplined fashion.[72]

Indeed, the style of the Apocalypse faithfully reproduces the frantic recording of the visions as they occur, while some sections of the book, e.g., the introductory section, do not appear to be written in such haste. Similarly, the Revelation does share with John's Gospel breaks in the narratives which serve as explanations to the reader. This might be likened to footnotes in today's writing.[73]

---

[71] Hadorn, 21.
[72] Brighton, 24.
[73] Benson, 133-146.

Ozanne, along with C. F. Barney and F. J. A. Hort, supposed that John sought to model the Apocalypse after the grammar of classical Hebrew so that it sounds like we are listening to the last of the Hebrew prophets.[74] Although attractive, this view assumes that the readers (or even more problematic, the auditors) have an intimate knowledge of classical Hebrew grammar. That the Revelation does certainly sound like a great OT prophet, however, is a conclusion worthy of consideration. Trudinger writes that the Greek in Revelation is influenced by Semitic forces with "a strong feel for memorable titles, epithets, and phrases of a slogan-like nature."[75] Callahan says that the "Seer's language is more than mere imitation." In a like manner, Luke wrote Luke 1-2 and Acts 1-6 in the style of LXX with grace; it was not a cheap imitation. Quoting Lindars, Callahan writes, "There would thus seem to be a sociological dimension to claim that the Apocalypse is written" in this style.[76]

Surveying several writers, Schmidt paints a rich collage of commentary about the style of the Apoclypse: "G. K. Beale describes the 'stylistic use of the OT' in Revelation as indicating 'intentional solecisms' designed to create a 'Biblical' effect on the hearer." The Apocalypse is "saturated with the apocalyptic images and phrases of Ezekiel and Daniel" so that we get "the flavor of the LXX whose words are interwoven in the text at every turn."[77] Schmidt continues: "Austin Farrer finds a writer who 'expresses himself with simple force and often with high poetic effect; using the 'prophetic style'' of the OT 'and that means writing in the style of the Greek translations of the Hebrew books...'"

---

[74] Ozanne, 3-9.
[75] Quoted in Turner, 148.
[76] Callahan, 457.
[77] Schmidt, 602.

According to James Montgomery, the Seer is a poet who knows the "Bible literature by heart, the original[78] and its versions" making him "the most cultured of the NT writers... a genius who has produced one of the most remarkable compositions in all literature."[79] Of course, the ability of the readers, or auditors, to identify these nuances depends on their pre-existing knowledge of Biblical literature.

Louis Brighton describes John's use of the OT in the Apocalypse like a mosaic: it doesn't use verbal quotes but it, throughout, pieces together phrases and imagery from the OT. He observes that John calls himself a "prophet" and not an "elder" or even an "apostle." This is an intentional effort by John to identify himself with the prophetic tradition of the OT. Brighton comments that the style of the Apocalypse is not written with Aristotelian logic nor is it erudite like Paul: it is *artistic*. It is more Semitic than John's gospel. The Apocalypse addresses cataclysmic issues with simple language and vocabulary. During the visions, John often took dictation and didn't seem to have the time to give it literary polish. The Greek is ungrammatical at times but the artistry of the Apocalypse is greater than a Stevenson or a Bach. It is even above Greek Tragedy. *Revelation is not didactic; rather, it appeals to the senses to emotionally confirm what we already know* (emphasis added). [80]

Though the popular mind may liken the style of the Apocalypse to science fiction, I have often compared the Apocalypse to the finále of a great Wagnerian opera. It is grandiose, cataclysmic, emotional, and dramatic, but it really doesn't advance the plot

---

[78] Concerning John's use of Αβαδδών Callahan (*op. cit.*, 462) writes: "This is the only time in the entire book that the seer gives direct testimony to any knowledge of Hebrew."

[79] Schmidt, 594-5.

[80] From the author's class notes, *The Revelation of St. John,* Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, Winter Quarter, 1997-98, taught by Dr. Brighton.

any further. I concur whole-heartedly with the observation of Brighton adding, with reference to John's use of solecisms, that the style is like the artistry of Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn*. To be sure, Twain's book is replete with

grammatical error, but no one in his or her right mind would imply that these "solecisms" give evidence that Mark Twain was a literary buffoon whose command of the English language was helplessly corrupted by a pidginized ghetto, or even an ebonic, dialect. With un-rivaled mastery Twain reproduces the speech of poor white people, slaves and a host of others, living in Missouri along the Mississippi River during the nineteenth century. Like the Apocalypse, Twain's narrative sections are written in standard literary style but his discourse accurately and artistically reflects the Koine, as it were, of the anachronistic milieu. As a former homiletics professor of mine, Prof. L. Rossow, used to say, it is all right to break the rules of grammar if you know what you are doing; but, to pass something off as serious literature when you violate grammar unawares is an entirely different thing. I believe that John knew exactly what he was doing when he recorded the visions he had received from our Lord and, aside from possible errors in transmission, his many solecisms are artistic—indeed, theological—representations of the immanent character of the ecstatic vision that he experienced.

Bibliography

Benson, Edward White. *The Apocalypse*. London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1900.

Blass, F. and A. Debrunner. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* Translated and revised by Robert W. Funk. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Botha, J. E. "Style, Stylistics and the Study of the New Testament." *Neotestamentica* 24 (1990): 173-84.

Brighton, Louis A. *Revelation*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999.

Callahan, Allen Dwight. "The Language of the Apocalypse." *Harvard Theological Review* 88:4 (1995) 453-70.

Charles, R. H. *Studies in the Apocalypse.* 2d Ed., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1915.

————— . *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John.* Vols. I-II, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920.

Hadorn, W. *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*. Vol. XVIII *Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament.* Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1928.

Laughlin, T. Crowden. *The Solecisms of the Apocalypse*. Princeton: C. S. Robinson & Co., University Printers, 1902.

Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation.* Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1943.

McKay, K. L. "On the Perfect and Other Aspects in NT Greek," *Novum Testamentum* 23 (1981): 289-329.

Mussies, G. *The Morphology of Koine Greek as Used in the Apocalypse of St. John.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971.

Newport, Kenneth G. C. "Semitic Influence on the Use of Some Prepositions in the Book of Revelation." *The Bible Translator* 37:3 (1986): 328-334.

—————. "Some Greek Words with Hebrew Meanings in the Book of Revelation." *Andrews University Studies* 26:1 (1986): 25-31.

—————. "The use of *EK* in Revelation: Evidence of Semitic Influence." *Andrews University Studies* 34:3 (1986) 223-230.

Ozanne, C. G. "The Language of the Apocalypse" *Tyndale House Bulletin* 16 (1965): 3-9.

Porter, Stanley E. "The Language of the Apocalypse in Recent Discussion." *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989): 582-603.

Schmidt, Daryl D. "Semiticisms and Septuagintisms in the Book of Revelation." *New Testament Studies* 37 (1991): 592-603.

Silva, Moisés. "Bilingualism and the Character of Palestinian Greek." *Biblica* 61 (1980): 198-219.

Smyth, Herbert Weir. *Greek Grammar*. Revised by Gordon Messing. Boston: Harvard University Press, 1956.

Stagg, Frank. "The Abused Aorist." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91 (1972): 222-231.

Swete, Henry Barclay. *The Apocalypse of St. John*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1907.

Thompson, Steven. *The Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Turner, Nigel. *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965.

—————. *Style*. Vol. 4, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek,* by James H. Moulton, Francis Wilbert and Nigel Turner. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976.

Voelz, James W. "The Linguistic Millieu of the Early Church." *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 56 (1992): 81-97.

—————. *What Does This Mean?* 2d ed. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995.

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.