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Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

THE USE AND ABUSE OF AUTHORITY: AN INVESTIGATION  
OF THE ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ PASSAGES IN REVELATION

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
Laszlo I. Hangyas

April 1997

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ABSTRACT

THE USE AND ABUSE OF AUTHORITY: AN INVESTIGATION  
OF THE ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ PASSAGES IN REVELATION

by

Laszlo I. Hangyas

Adviser: Jon Paulien

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: THE USE AND ABUSE OF AUTHORITY: AN INVESTIGATION OF  
THE ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ PASSAGES IN REVELATION

Name of researcher: Laszlo I. Hangyas

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Date completed: April 1997

The purpose of this dissertation is to carry out a linguistic, structural, and exegetical investigation of the term *ἐξουσία* as it occurs in the Greek text of the Apocalypse.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the pertinent literature dealing with *ἐξουσία*. The review follows a chronological order to demonstrate a trend in the development of *ἐξουσία* studies. Earlier works put more emphasis on the meaning of power or authority, whereas recent studies point to liberty and right as the primary meaning of *ἐξουσία*. The current tendency emphasizes

philosophical and socio-ethical aspects without due consideration of the etymology of the term.

Chapter 2 surveys the usage of ἐξουσία in nonbiblical (Greco-Roman, Papyri and Inscriptions, Jewish apocalyptic, Qumran, Hellenistic Jewish, Rabbinic) and biblical (LXX, Biblia Hebraica, Greek NT) literary sources that are linguistic backgrounds to the meaning of the term. The Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish works generally employ ἐξουσία with regard to human power relationships. The NT use of the term closely follows the LXX and the Jewish apocalyptic usage particularly in the area of delegated power/authority in human and supernatural relationships.

Chapter 3 focuses on the specifics of the twenty-one ἐξουσία occurrences in Revelation. These passages are investigated in the literary context and structure of the book. The role ἐξουσία plays in the overall literary context of the Apocalypse is further demonstrated by microstructural analyses of the passages. The term plays a special focusing role both in the macro- and the microstructures of the Apocalypse. Thus, it significantly contributes to the central message of Revelation, which is the activity and judgment of antdivine powers.

In the summary and conclusions of the dissertation the findings of the research are given. Theological and ethical implications are pointed out, and some areas for further study are suggested.

To my wife Marta and to our three children  
Robert, Melinda, and Roland, whose  
unceasing prayers made  
my endeavor fruitful

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
AS	Abbott-Smith, <u>A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament</u>
AUM	Andrews University Monographs
AUSDDS	Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series
<u>AUSS</u>	<u>Andrews University Seminary Studies</u>
BAG	Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, <u>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</u>
BDF	Blass, Debrunner, Funk, <u>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</u>
<u>BDT</u>	<u>Baker's Dictionary of Theology</u>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BGNTL	Baker's Greek New Testament Library
<u>BHS</u>	<u>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</u>
<u>Bib</u>	<u>Biblica</u>
BST	The Bible Speaks Today
B.T.	<u>The Babylonian Talmud</u> , I. Epstein, ed.
BZNW	Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary

CBL	The Complete Biblical Library
CBNTS	Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series
<u>CBO</u>	<u>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</u>
CBSC	The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
<u>CS</u>	<u>A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)</u> , Hatch and Redpath, eds.
DARCOMS	Daniel and Revelation Committee Series
DSBS	The Daily Study Bible Series
EBC	Expositor's Bible Commentary
EGT	The Expositor's Greek Testament
<u>ET</u>	<u>Encyclopedia of Theology: The Concise Sacramentum Mundi</u> , Rahner, ed.
<u>ETHL</u>	<u>Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses</u>
EUS	European University Studies
<u>EvO</u>	<u>Evangelical Quarterly</u>
<u>ExpTim</u>	<u>Expository Times</u>
GNS	Good News Studies
GNTE	Guides to New Testament Exegesis
GNT3	<u>Greek New Testament</u> , 3d ed.
HBB	Herald Biblical Booklets
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies

<u>IB</u>	<u>Interpreter's Bible</u>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<u>IDB</u>	<u>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</u>
<u>IDBSup</u>	Supplementary volume to <u>IDB</u>
<u>Int</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
IRT	Issues in Religion and Theology
<u>JATS</u>	<u>Journal of the Adventist Theological Society</u>
JB	Jerusalem Bible, Jones, ed.
<u>JETS</u>	<u>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</u>
<u>JSNT</u>	<u>Journal for the Study of New Testament</u>
JSNTSS	<u>Journal for the Study of New Testament</u> Supplement Series
JSOTSS	<u>Journal for the Study of Old Testament</u> Supplement Series
J.T.	<u>The Jerusalem Talmud</u> , A. Ehrman, ed.
<u>JTS</u>	<u>Journal of Theological Studies</u>
KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
KPG	Knox Preaching Guides
LC	The Lutheran Commentary
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	Liddell-Scott-Jones, <u>Greek-English Lexicon</u>
LXX	Septuagint
MM	Moulton and Milligan, <u>The Vocabulary of the</u> <u>Greek Testament</u>
MNTC	The Moffatt New Testament Commentary

MS(S)	Manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Bible
<u>NBD</u>	<u>New Bible Dictionary</u> , Douglas, ed.
NCB	New Century Bible
<u>NDCT</u>	<u>A New Dictionary of Christian Theology</u> , Richardson and Bourden, eds.
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<u>NIDCC</u>	<u>The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church</u> , Douglas, ed.
<u>NIDNTT</u>	<u>The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</u> , Brown, ed.
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
<u>NovT</u>	<u>Novum Testamentum</u>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
<u>NTG26</u>	<u>Novum Testamentum Graece</u> , 26th ed.
<u>NTGED</u>	<u>The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary</u> , Gilbrant, ed.
NTM	New Testament Message: A Biblical-Theological Commentary
<u>NTS</u>	<u>New Testament Studies</u>
<u>ODCC</u>	<u>The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church</u>

OT	Old Testament
OTL	Old Testament Library
PC	Proclamation Commentaries
PTMS	Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series
<u>RGG3</u>	<u>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</u> , Campenhausen, ed.
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBM	Stuttgarter Biblische Monographien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<u>SDABD</u>	<u>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary</u> , Horn, ed.
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SOTBT	Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology
SupNovT	Supplements to <u>Novum Testamentum</u>
TBC	Torch Bible Commentaries
<u>TBNT</u>	<u>Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament</u> , Coenen, Beyreuther and Bietenhard, eds.
<u>TDNT</u>	<u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</u> , Kittel and Friedrich, eds.
<u>TDOT</u>	<u>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</u> , Botterweck and Ringgren, eds.
TNTC	The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
<u>TWNT</u>	<u>Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</u> , Kittel and Friedrich, eds.
<u>TZ</u>	<u>Theologische Zeitschrift</u>
<u>UBD</u>	<u>Unger's Bible Dictionary</u>

WBC Word Biblical Commentary  
WPC Westminster Pelican Commentaries  
WTJ Westminster Theological Journal  
ZNW Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche  
Wissenschaft

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Finally, I am grateful to my wife and children who constantly encouraged, supported, and prayed for me from the beginning to the end of my research. May God grant eternal reward to all who had a part in the completion of this work.



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to report the results of a linguistic, structural, and exegetical investigation of the term ἐξουσία as it occurs in the Greek text of the Apocalypse.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the pertinent literature dealing with ἐξουσία. The review follows a chronological order to demonstrate a trend in the development of ἐξουσία studies. Within a given period journal articles, which address the same NT book, are grouped and studied together.

Chapter 2 surveys the usage of ἐξουσία in nonbiblical (Greco-Roman, Papyri and Inscriptions, Jewish apocalyptic, Qumran, Hellenistic Jewish, Rabbinic) and biblical (LXX, Biblia Hebraica, Greek NT) literary sources that are linguistic backgrounds to the meaning of the term. The survey follows an approximate chronological order due to the uncertainty of the dates of some ancient works.

Chapter 3 focuses on the specifics of the twenty-one ἐξουσία occurrences in Revelation. These passages are

investigated in the literary structure and context of the book. The role ἐξουσία plays in the overall literary context of the Apocalypse is further demonstrated by microstructural analyses of the given pericopes.

In the summary and conclusions of the dissertation the findings of the research are given. Theological and ethical implications are pointed out, and some areas for further study are suggested.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

From a linguistic point of view, ἐξουσία has not been treated in a comprehensive manner as one of the key terms of Revelation. Neither macrostructural nor microstructural analysis of the ἐξουσία passages has been carried out to investigate the role the term plays within the literary structure of the Apocalypse. The dissertation explores the impact of ἐξουσία clustering on the formulation of the literary units of Revelation. The purpose of John's irony, especially in the central chapters (11-13) of the book, is also investigated.

#### **Statement of Thesis**

The ἐξουσία clustering in some parts of the Apocalypse (chaps. 9 and 16-18), and particularly in the central chapters (11-13), clearly indicates John's

intention. He employs the term in an artful way to highlight major movements in the antiodivine power struggle. This anti-Christian rebellion culminates in Rev 13, where one-third of the ἐξουσία occurrences are concentrated. The life-and-death struggle focuses on the issue of worship. This *apocalyptic combat* theme is the conceptual backdrop to Revelation. In the center of the *chiastic focus* (11:19-15:4), John's call for *wisdom* expresses his understanding that Christians are the fulfillment of the prophesied מְשֻׁבָּתִים in Dan 11:33 and 12:10.

#### **Delimitation of Study**

The literature review is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of studies dealing with ἐξουσία, but to present a selective and representative collection of works in chronological order. The criteria for selection are presenting new shades of meanings of the term and showing a trend in the development of ἐξουσία studies.

Although the background study covers some hundreds of years, it cannot be exhaustive especially in the case of the Greco-Roman, Qumran, and Rabbinic writings. Hellenistic Jewish studies are limited to the works of Josephus and Philo.

The dissertation does not address questions related to NT introduction. Both macro- and microstructural

analyses are based on the Nestle-Aland Greek text of the NT. References are made to the Critical Apparatus of the Greek text where it provides a better understanding. In some instances the differences between the LXX and the Theodotion translations are pointed out in comparison with the MT.

The discussion of the ἐξουσία passages is arranged according to the parallel elements of the chiastic structure of Revelation. The resulting dissertation is not a commentary or a detailed exegesis of the Apocalypse.

### **Research Methodology**

As a linguistic and exegetical study of the Greek noun ἐξουσία, the dissertation focuses on the use of the term in nonbiblical and biblical literary sources. The major emphasis is on the NT usage of the word, particularly its use in Revelation. The ἐξουσία occurrences within a literary source are grouped and studied according to different shades of meaning.

The twenty-one ἐξουσία passages in Revelation are investigated by both inductive (an analysis of the Greek text in its canonical form) and deductive (following a priori definitions of literary forms) methodologies. The passages are first studied in the macro-context of the Apocalypse, then a microstructural analysis of the given

literary unit is provided, and finally key terms and stylistic peculiarities are pointed out.

The purpose of the contextual and microstructural analyses of the ἐξουσία passages is not to study the literary structure itself, but to demonstrate the role the term plays in a given unit. The overall purpose of this investigation is to reconstruct the original meaning of the text, as far as possible, by literary, topical, and terminological structures. The main emphasis of this dissertation is to contribute to the groundwork for a more detailed exegesis of the Apocalypse by providing an in-depth study of one of its key terms.

#### **Definitions of Terms**

Non-English translations of ἐξουσία are always underlined. Italics are employed for definitions and emphasis. A brief explanation of the most important and frequently used terms or expressions is usually given in the footnotes, at the first occurrence of the particular phrase.

The titles "Revelation," "Apocalypse," or "Book of Revelation" are used interchangeably. The name "John" indicates the author of Revelation without further comment. The term "investigation" describes both the contextual studies and the micro-analyses of the ἐξουσία passages in the Apocalypse.

## CHAPTER I

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the pertinent literature dealing with the Greek feminine noun ἡ ἐξουσία as it occurs in the Greek NT and especially in the Book of Revelation.<sup>1</sup> It appears that no comprehensive study of the ἐξουσία passages in Revelation or in the NT has ever been written.<sup>2</sup>

The literature review in this chapter follows a chronological order to demonstrate a trend in the development of ἐξουσία studies. First, nine decades before TWNT are surveyed then Werner Foerster's article in TWNT/TDNT is discussed. Next, the literature between 1936

---

<sup>1</sup>While ἐξουσία occurs 102 times in the Greek NT, it appears more frequently in Revelation (21 times) than in any other NT book.

<sup>2</sup>I found one unpublished M.A. thesis by Arthur J. Alexander, entitled "An Examination of Exousia and Dunamis in the Greek New Testament" (Wheaton College, January 1969). This study does not focus on the Book of Revelation and it considers authority "only in relationship to power, not authority per se" (6). A detailed review of this work follows.

and 1964 is surveyed and followed by a review of Otto Betz's article in TBNT/NIDNTT. Finally, studies between 1966 and 1986, and in the last decade are discussed. Within a given time period journal articles, which address the same NT book, are grouped and studied together.

#### **Before TWNT**

The period surveyed before TWNT spans over nine decades beginning with the Greek-English lexicon by Liddell and Scott,<sup>1</sup> who derived ἐξουσία from the impersonal ἐξεσσι, "it is possible/proper/permitted/lawful."<sup>2</sup> The following three shades of meaning are provided: (1) *power, means, authority to do a thing, permission, license*, (2) *absolute power, authority, might as opposed to right*, and (3) *abundance of means, resources*. The Latin potestas is also supported as it refers to an office or magistracy.<sup>3</sup> No

---

<sup>1</sup>Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon Based on the German Work of Francis Passow (Oxford: University Press, 1843), s.v. "ἐξουσία."

<sup>2</sup>This derivation is usually followed in subsequent works.

<sup>3</sup>In this regard cf. the following later revisions: Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, rev. Sir Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; idem, A Greek-English Lexicon, rev. Sir Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), s.v. "ἐξουσία." In these editions, which are enlarged by more Classical Greek sources, Papyri, and Inscriptions, one finds *office, magistracy* as the second meaning, and *pomp* as the

biblical references are listed, but only classical Greek literary sources.

The new feature in Edward Robinson's lexicon<sup>1</sup> is that he defines ἐξουσία as power (moral power) and ability.<sup>2</sup> He is the first to make references to the book of Revelation.<sup>3</sup> The four<sup>4</sup> subsequent meanings of the term given over-emphasize the notion of *power* at the expense of *authority*.<sup>5</sup>

---

fourth meaning of the term. Biblical references are only marginal.

<sup>1</sup>Edward Robinson, A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, new ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), s.v. "ἐξουσία."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 262. This idea later surfaces in Alexander Souter, A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament (London: Oxford University Press, 1956; reprint of 1916 ed.), p. 88, where he refers to (1) *power, authority, weight, especially moral authority, influence*, and (2) in a quasi-personal sense *a spiritual power, and an earthly power*, often in combination with ἀρχή. There is no a single reference to Revelation.

<sup>3</sup>See (1) Rev 9:3-19, where the specific meaning is *strength, force, efficiency*, (2) Rev 22:14, meaning *right*, (3) Rev 9:10; 11:6; 13:5, indicating *power as entrusted*, and (4) Rev 2:26; 6:8; 12:10; 13:2, 4, 7, 12; 14:18; 17:12, 13; 16:9; 18:1; 20:6, where the term denotes *power over persons and things*. Robinson's and all subsequent other references to biblical and nonbiblical books besides Revelation are dealt with in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

<sup>4</sup>See (1) *power to do anything, ability, faculty*, (2) *power to do or not to do, i.e., license, liberty, leave, right*, (3) *power as entrusted, i.e., commission, full-power, authority*, and (4) *power over persons and things, dominion, authority, rule*, in the LXX for מְטָשָׁלָה, dominion, kingdom.

<sup>5</sup>This tendency characterizes later works as well.



On the other hand, in Lightfoot's commentary on Colossians,<sup>1</sup> originally dated in 1875 the emphasis shifts to "license."<sup>2</sup> He considers the Pauline corpus and Luke, but not Revelation.

Cremer's Biblico-Theological Lexicon<sup>3</sup> states that ἐξουσία is a combination of the ideas of *right* and *might*.<sup>4</sup> The lexicon also compares the German bevollmächtigen (to authorize), and its synonyms Berechtigung (entitlement) and Ermächtigung (authorization). Thus, Cremer's focus is on *right* and *permission*.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>J. B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon, new ed. (London: Macmillan, 1879).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 141, where ἐξουσία "properly signifies 'liberty of action' (ἐξέσσι)," and the "corresponding English word is license." Lightfoot also gives two "secondary ideas": (1) "authority," "delegated power" (Luke 20:2), and (2) "tyranny," "lawlessness," "unrestrained or arbitrary power" (Luke 22:53). Cf. LSJ, 1973 ed., 482; Robinson, 262.

<sup>3</sup>Hermann Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, trans. William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1880), s.v. "ἐξουσία."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 236.

<sup>5</sup>This meaning is detected in Rev 6:8 and 18:1.

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon<sup>1</sup> defines ἐξουσία as "power";<sup>2</sup> nevertheless, his interpretation is more balanced between *power* and *authority*.<sup>3</sup> He is the first to note that, beside the Hebrew מְשָׁלָה, the Aramaic מְשָׁלָה (dominion, power) is also translated by ἐξουσία in the LXX.<sup>4</sup>

The study by Walter Grundmann<sup>5</sup> insists that ἐξουσία is the rendering of the Aramaic מְשָׁלָה (in Dan 7:14)<sup>6</sup> meaning

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1886), s.v. "ἐξουσία."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 225; cf. Robinson, 262-263.

<sup>3</sup>The following three shades of meaning are provided with regard to Revelation: (1) *power of choice, liberty* (Rev 22:14); (2) *physical and mental power*, which one either possesses or exercises (Rev 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6; 13:2, 4, 5, 12; 18:1); and (3) *the power of rule or government*, generally translated *authority* (Rev 2:26; 6:8; 11:6; 12:10; 13:7; 14:18; 16:9; 17:12, 13; 20:6).

<sup>4</sup>Thayer, 225; cf. George Abbott-Smith, A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, 3d ed. (London: T. & T. Clark, 1937), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; Abbott-Smith also refers to the above Hebrew and Aramaic terms but emphasizes *freedom* (Rev 22:14) and *right* (Rev 12:10) for ἐξουσία. See also James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1952; reprint of 1930 ed.), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; the primary meaning of ἐξουσία is defined as *power of choice and liberty of action*.

<sup>5</sup>Walter Grundmann, Der Begriff der Kraft in der neutestamentlichen Gedankenwelt (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1932), 57-58.

<sup>6</sup>He does not mention the Hebrew מְשָׁלָה (dominion, kingdom) in the OT.

power (Macht)<sup>1</sup> and authority (Herrschaft). He concludes that in ἐξουσία "the power (Macht), received from God, is expressed as a sound of full power, authority (Vollmacht)."<sup>2</sup>

Summarizing the review of the representative studies for this period, one notices that the majority of the works tend to over-emphasize the notion of power as the primary meaning of ἐξουσία. Later studies, however, point out that permission or right are also important shades of meaning of the term. None of the works notes the importance of ἐξουσία in the Book of Revelation.

#### **The Importance of TWNT/TDNT**

Werner Foerster's article in TWNT/TDNT<sup>3</sup> is the most comprehensive exposition of ἐξουσία. He too derives ἐξουσία

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. R. Dahrendorf, "Macht," Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft, ed. Hans F. v. Campenhausen et al. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1957-65), 4:564-572; here Herrschaft denotes an institutionalized relationship of power with the presence of subordination.

<sup>2</sup>Grundmann, 57.

<sup>3</sup>Werner Foerster, "ἐξουσία," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1933-1979), 2:559-571; cf. idem, "ἐξουσία," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1964-1976), 2:562-574. In the following footnotes the paging of TDNT is provided since it gives an exact translation of the German original and is usually quoted by English scholars.

from ἐξῆστί, meaning an "ability to perform an action" to the extent that "there are no hindrances in the way."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the term denotes the possibility granted by a higher norm or court, or "the right to do something or the right over something."<sup>2</sup> Foerster notes that this "right" or "possibility" is illusory unless backed by real power (e.g., the power of the state); consequently "it is not always possible to separate between authority and power."<sup>3</sup>

As a direct background to the NT usage of ἐξουσία, Foerster refers to the LXX, where the term first means "right, authority, permission or freedom in the legal or political sense," and then "the right or permission given by God."<sup>4</sup> Ἐξουσία therefore can be the rendering of the Hebrew מְשָׁלָה in the sense of "kingdom" or "sphere of power," or it can be used for the Aramaic שְׁלַטָּה when the reference is to God's power to express "the unrestricted sovereignty of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 2:562.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 2:563.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 2:564.

God"<sup>1</sup> (cf. Dan 4:14). Foerster concludes that "formally the usage of the NT<sup>2</sup> is closest to that of the LXX."<sup>3</sup>

In regard to the use of ἐξουσία (or ἐξουσίαί) for political relationships (e.g., in a general sense for "government"),<sup>4</sup> it is stated that the singular form of the term can also be employed for "the absolute monarchical power of God," or "the sphere over which one disposes," or simply "sphere or kingdom."<sup>5</sup>

Discussing the NT concept of ἐξουσία, Foerster lists three specific roles the term plays when it denotes the power that decides: (1) the invisible power of God whose Word is creative power, (2) the lordship of God in a fallen world where nothing takes place apart from His ἐξουσία or

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 2:564, 565.

<sup>2</sup>The term can mean the power of God in nature and in the spiritual world, the power that Satan exercises and imparts, and especially the power or freedom that is given to Jesus, and by Him to His disciples; cf. Foerster, 2:565.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., where Foerster argues that this meaning is borrowed from the rabbinical legal term רְשׁוּתָא (ruling power, the right/freedom of possession to something, authority or commission, and government), and he concludes that רְשׁוּתָא is "co-extensive with ἐξουσία, but it goes beyond it in the very matters in which the NT does so."

<sup>5</sup>Foerster suggests that "if almost all the NT passages where ἐξουσία occurs can be construed with the help of רְשׁוּתָא, derivatives from the stems מְשַׁל and שְׁלַח may also be taken into consideration" (2:566).

authority,<sup>1</sup> and (3) the freedom or authority which is given to the community.

When Foerster details the NT usage of ἐξουσία, he supports six shades of meaning along with references to Revelation: (1) absolute possibility of action; (2) the ἐξουσία and power of God variously displayed (Rev 14:18, where the context shows that nature is regarded as an ordered totality; Rev 6:8; 9:3, 10, 19; 16:9; 18:1, where ἐξουσία is given by God to the forces of destruction in nature and history); (3) ἐξουσία, which is Satan's sphere of dominion (Rev 13: 2, 4, 5, 7, 12, when the Antichrist is given a free hand decided by God); (4) Christ's divinely given power and authority to act (Rev 12:10); (5) the authority or freedom imparted to the community (Rev 2:26-28; 11:6; 22:14, where power cannot be used arbitrarily); and (6) a special use of ἐξουσία for supernatural powers, which leads to the concept of several cosmic powers (especially in the Pauline corpus) with whom "human life is connected in many ways."<sup>2</sup> He makes the following important comment on the power of evil: "The final mystery is not the power of

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<sup>1</sup>Foerster adds: "Indeed, ἐξουσία is given to the Antichrist for his final activity, so that nothing takes place apart from the ἐξουσία or will of God" (2:566).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 2:573. Rev 20:6 is the only text on which he does not comment.

evil itself. It is the fact that the power of evil, which is radically hostile to God, may be exercised as such and yet encompassed by the divine overruling."<sup>1</sup> Foerster also notes on the special use of ἐξουσία for supernatural powers.<sup>2</sup>

In conclusion, Foerster mentions the Latin potestas as equivalent to ἐξουσία and makes the linguistical observation that ἐξουσία "is abstract, like the related θρόνος and κυριότης."<sup>3</sup> The relationship between ἐξουσία and θρόνος is especially determinative for the thematic arrangement of Revelation.<sup>4</sup>

Summarizing, Foerster presents a wealth of information and makes a significant contribution by broadening the scope of meaning of ἐξουσία in the NT. To the Hebrew מְשָׁלָה and the Aramaic מְשַׁל, he adds the rabbinical legal term מְשַׁלָּה as co-extensive with ἐξουσία, referring to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 2:567.

<sup>2</sup>Usually together with ἀρχαὶ, κυριότητες, and δυνάμεις in Col 1:16 and Eph 1:21. Foerster later remarks: "It is not possible to distinguish between ἐξουσία and ἀρχαὶ, and to assign to them the different functions of two groups of powers, since neither the NT nor parallels give any indication in this direction" (ibid., 2:573).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 2:572.

<sup>4</sup>ἐξουσία and θρόνος appear more often (21 and 47 times respectively) in Revelation than in any other NT book.

the absolute monarchical power of God. He seems to be the only author who devotes several paragraphs of his article<sup>1</sup> to the discussion of ἐξουσία in Revelation.

#### Studies between 1936 and 1964

The journal articles of this period are constantly struggling either with Markan or Pauline passages containing ἐξουσία (or ἐξουσίαί). There is no discussion of the term in the Apocalypse.

Oscar Cullmann's article<sup>2</sup> draws the much-debated conclusion that ἐξουσίαί in Rom 13:1 means both "the State and the Power [die Engelmächte] behind it" but "Christ's reign is over the Powers [der Herrschaft Christi ist über die Mächte]."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See *ibid.*, 2:565, no. 3; 2:566, no. 5; 2:567, no. 2; 2:568, nos. 3-4; 2:569-570, no. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Oscar Cullmann, "Zur neuesten Diskussion über die ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΙ in Röm. 13,1," Teologische Zeitschrift 10 (1954): 321-336.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 336.



Friedrich A. Strobel<sup>1</sup> argues, contra Cullmann's hypothesis, that in the above passage ἐξουσία simply refers to the "profane, civil-state,"<sup>2</sup> where we are taxpayers.<sup>3</sup>

In their very short articles under the same title, "ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων," H. J. Flowers<sup>4</sup> and Donald F. Hudson<sup>5</sup> agree that this phrase in Mark 1:22 (par. Matt 7:29; Luke 4:32) can be derived from the Hebrew לְשֹׁמֵר (cf. לְשֹׁמֵר, to rule, have dominion), denoting "as one exercising authority."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Friedrich A. Strobel, "Zum Verständnis von Rom 13," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 47 (1956): 67-93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 93; cf. Ernst Käsemann, "Römer 13, 1-7 in unserer Generation," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 56 (1959): 376, concludes that ἐξουσία cannot mean angelic powers because "Diese Welt ist nicht Regnum Christi. . . . Aber die Welt wird Regnum Christi."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Frederick F. Bruce, "Paul and 'the Powers That Be'," Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester 66 (1983-84): 88, argues that the *authorities* in this passage are those "to whom taxes are paid, and it is unnecessary to import angelic powers into the picture." For similar conclusions, see also Robert H. Stein, "The Argument of Romans 13:1-7," Novum Testamentum 31 (1989): 325-343.

<sup>4</sup>H. J. Flowers, "ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων," Expository Times 66 (1954-1955): 254.

<sup>5</sup>Donald F. Hudson, "ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων," ExpTim 67 (1955-1956): 17.

<sup>6</sup>See Flowers, 254; Hudson, 17. Flowers remarks that "the translation should be bold and clear, *like a king*." Hudson, on the other hand, insists that "the authority is not merely that of a king, but of an emperor!" Hudson's argument is based on his conviction that in *Monumentum Ancyranum* ἐξουσία is the Greek translation of the Latin *auctoritas*, denoting non-legal, personal authority, although

John Coutts<sup>1</sup> considers all ten occurrences of ἐξουσία in the Gospel of Mark<sup>2</sup> and divides them into two groups: (1) the authority Jesus exercised, and (2) the authority He delegated to the Twelve. He identifies the paradox of Mark as "the Twelve . . . endowed with unlimited powers [ἐξουσία] almost wholly inhibited."<sup>3</sup>

Joseph A. Fitzmyer's article<sup>4</sup> investigates a possible Qumran background to 1 Cor 11:10, where ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν . . . διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους is an unparalleled Pauline construction.<sup>5</sup> One needs to be reminded here that the

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in the Koine ἐξουσία often indicates legal authority or jurisdiction. My observation is that in *Monumentum Ancyranum*, ἐξουσία is the Greek rendering of potestas whereas ἀξιώμα stands for dignitas or auctoritas; cf. Res Gestae Divi Augusti in LCL, 332-405.

<sup>1</sup>John Coutts, "The Authority of Jesus and of the Twelve in St. Mark's Gospel," Journal of Theological Studies 8 (1957): 111-118.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. 1:22, 27; 2:10; 3:15; 6:7; 11:28, 29, 33; 13:34.

<sup>3</sup>Coutts, 117.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "A Feature of Qumran Angelology and the Angels of 1 Cor 11:10," New Testament Studies 4 (1957-1958): 48-58.

<sup>5</sup>See *ibid.*, 57, where he asserts that "the unveiled head of a woman is like a bodily defect," which is not permitted in the church "because 'holy angels are present in their congregation'." Fitzmyer makes references to 1QM 7:4-6 and 1QSa 2:3-11 (and also to Lev 21:17-23), but in those sources the word *woman* does not occur.

debate over the interpretation of ἐξουσία as "veil" is not settled yet.<sup>1</sup>

The dictionary articles of this period represent a balanced understanding of ἐξουσία, as both *power* and *authority*,<sup>2</sup> although they make no further contribution. With the exception of the Greek-English Lexicon by Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich,<sup>3</sup> references to Revelation are marginal.

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<sup>1</sup>David R. Hall, "A Problem of Authority," ExpTim 102 (1990-91): 40, asserts that the literal English translation of ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν is "have authority." Therefore he assumes that Paul's purpose is "to establish the right of a woman prophet to do what she wished with her own head--e.g., in this context, to keep it covered"; Annie Jaubert, "Le voile des femmes (I Cor. XI. 2-16)," NTS 18 (1971-72): 430, argues that in this cultic and cultural context, to have a "veil" (ἐξουσία) on a woman's head can "signify 'permission' in accordance with contemporary traditions"; Günther Schwarz, "ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς? (1. Korinther 11 10)," ZNW 70 (1979): 249, proposes that as an equivalent to ἐξουσία the Aramaic ܐܘܪܘܚܐ should be understood, which means (1) power, strength, force, and (2) head cover, veil.

<sup>2</sup>J. Marsh, "Authority," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. G. A. Buttrick et al. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 1:319-320, is the first to supply the Latin auctoritas (authority, dignity) instead of potestas (authority, power); W. C. G. Proctor, "Authority," Baker's Dictionary of Theology, ed. Everett F. Harrison, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Carl F. Henry (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1960), 80-81; W. E. Vine, "Authority," A Comprehensive Dictionary of the Original Greek Words with Their Precise Meanings for English Readers, 4 vols. (London: Oliphants, 1939-1941), 1:89, notes a development from permission/liberty to right in the meaning of ἐξουσία.

<sup>3</sup>Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; support four shades of

Cyril H. Powell's book on power<sup>1</sup> gives only a simplified version of Foerster's explanation of ἐξουσία in TWNT/TDNT.<sup>2</sup>

This section concludes with the studies of John L. McKenzie<sup>3</sup> and D. Ritschl.<sup>4</sup> These articles do not focus on any particular Bible text but make the general observations that "the power base of authority in the NT is love"<sup>5</sup> and ἐξουσία and δύναμις in the Bible denote "much more than our modern word 'power'."<sup>6</sup> It appears that these comments are more philosophical than exegetical, which has been one of

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meaning of ἐξουσία with references to Revelation: (1) *freedom of choice, right to act, decide, or dispose of one's property as one wishes* (Rev 13:5; 22:14), (2) *ability to do something, capability, might, power* (Rev 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6; 13:2, 4, 12; 16:9; 18:1; 20:6), (3) *authority, absolute power, warrant* (Rev 2:26; 6:8; 11:6b; 12:10; 13:7; 14:18), and (4) *the power exercised by rulers or others in high position by virtue of their office* (Rev 17:12, 13, where the meaning is *ruling power, official power*). For a similar grouping, see Thayer's lexicon.

<sup>1</sup>Cyril H. Powell, The Biblical Concept of Power (London: Epworth Press, 1963).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 101, Powell argues that ἐξουσία "involves the possibility of its performance in freedom, without obstacle either from right or might"; cf. Foerster, 2:562.

<sup>3</sup>John L. McKenzie, "Authority and Power in the New Testament," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 26 (1964): 413-422.

<sup>4</sup>D. Ritschl, "Biblical Passages on Power and Its Use," Student World 57 (1964): 169-177.

<sup>5</sup>McKenzie, 418.

<sup>6</sup>Ritschl, 170.

the characteristics of most of the dictionary articles too, since the 1960s.<sup>1</sup>

In summary, dictionaries of this period provide a more balanced understanding of ἐξουσία, although later works tend to leave out the corresponding Hebrew/Aramaic terms, and minimize the references to Revelation. Journal articles deal only with certain passages in the Gospel of Mark or the Pauline corpus.

### **The Concept of TBNT/NIDNTT**

Otto Betz's article in TBNT/NIDNTT<sup>2</sup> brings a fresh approach to the understanding of the rich meaning of ἐξουσία. The grouping of the term with δύναμις and θρόνος<sup>3</sup> appears to be a unique feature of his article.<sup>4</sup> Betz

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<sup>1</sup>See my summary below at the end of studies between 1966 and 1986.

<sup>2</sup>Otto Betz, "Macht, ἐξουσία," Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament, ed. Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther, and Hans Bietenhard (Wuppertal: Theologischer Verlag Rolf Brockhaus, 1965), 2:926-929; cf. idem, "Authority, ἐξουσία," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 2:606-611. In the following footnotes the paging of NIDNTT is provided since it gives an exact translation of the German original and is usually quoted by English scholars.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Foerster, 2:572, where he mentions θρόνος and κυριότης as related terms.

<sup>4</sup>Perhaps the listing of W. Wink comes closest to that of this grouping; cf. Walter Wink, The Powers, vol. 1, Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New

compares δύναμις and ἐξουσία, and concludes that the latter "indicates the power to act which given as of right [*sic*] to anyone by virtue of the position he holds."<sup>1</sup> 'Εξουσία is "freedom of choice, right, power, authority, ruling power, a bearer of authority."<sup>2</sup>

Considering the LXX background to ἐξουσία, Betz observes that the term rarely translates the Hebrew הַשָּׂרָף. He asserts that the Book of Daniel is an "important background material for the NT use of the word," where ἐξουσία is the Greek equivalent in the LXX for the Aramaic אַרְרָא (dominion, power).<sup>3</sup>

He, like W. Foerster,<sup>4</sup> notices that the range of meaning of ἐξουσία is particularly influenced by the rabbinical Hebrew הַשָּׂרָף, and the Aramaic הַרְרָא (power of attorney, power to act, freedom to do something). Betz,

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Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 13-35, where we find the following list for the NT concept of power: ἀρχή / ἄρχων, ἐξουσία, δύναμις, θρόνος, κυριότης, ὄνομα, and ἄγγελος.

<sup>1</sup>Betz, 2:601.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 2:606. Betz gives only potestas as the corresponding Latin word.

<sup>3</sup>Commenting on Dan 2:21; 4:31; 7:12, Betz states: "The authority of the human world-rulers originates from the supernatural realm; it is delegated by God, the Lord of history" (2:607).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Foerster, 2:565-566.

however, makes an important reference to some Qumran writings,<sup>1</sup> where the Hebrew מְלִכּוּת corresponds with the Greek ἐξουσία, denoting kingdom or dominion.

When going into detail regarding the NT usage of ἐξουσία Betz lists three main shades<sup>2</sup> of meaning of the term, which are further subdivided. He is the only one so far who observes that ἐξουσία appears most frequently in Revelation, Luke, and 1 Corinthians.<sup>3</sup> It is surprising, therefore, that he only provides eight ἐξουσία references to Revelation discussed under the subheading "God's delegated eschatological authority": (1) Rev 6:8, an angel who punishes; (2) Rev 9:3, 10, 19, other creatures are involved in the judgment; and (3) Rev 13:2, 4, 12, the devil, like God, delegates his rule over the world to others, e.g., the Antichrist.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Particularly, 1QS 1:18, 23f.; 2:19; 3:23; 1QM 13:5f.; 14:9; 17:5f.; 18:7f.

<sup>2</sup>Betz, 2:609, states that the "power, authority, and freedom of action belongs: (1) to God himself, (2) to a commission in the last days, and (3) to a Christian in his eschatological existence."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 2:608: "In the NT ἐξουσία appears 108 times." This number evidently includes the occurrences of ἐξουσιάζω (4 times) and κατεξουσιάζω (2 times) which leaves a total of 102 ἐξουσία passages in the Greek NT. The occurrences of ἐξουσία for Revelation, Luke, and 1 Corinthians are 21, 16, and 10, respectively.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 2:609-610.

In summary, Betz's article provides some unique features: grouping ἐξουσία, δύναμις, and θρόνος; noticing the importance of the Book of Daniel and some Qumran writings as background materials; and observing the frequency of ἐξουσία in the Book of Revelation. His overall emphasis is on the *freedom, right, authority* meaning of ἐξουσία, rather than simply on *power*.

#### **Studies between 1966 and 1986**

Within this period Arthur J. Alexander's thesis, Wayne Richard Kempson's dissertation, and volume one of Walter Wink's trilogy are discussed first.

The 104-page M.A. thesis of Arthur J. Alexander<sup>1</sup> is the only unpublished study I found that aimed to "survey δύναμις and ἐξουσία as being representative of the concept of power in the New Testament."<sup>2</sup> The thesis is predominantly influenced by Foerster's article in TDNT. At the end of chapter 1 Alexander concludes that "ἐξουσία is best translated 'authority' and δύναμις 'power'."<sup>3</sup> In chapter 3

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<sup>1</sup>The full bibliographical entry is given on page 6 of this dissertation.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander, 7.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 22.



one finds five references to Revelation,<sup>1</sup> and Alexander comments on the jurisdiction of God and the limited authority of Satan in the Apocalypse.<sup>2</sup>

The stated purpose of the 286-page Ph.D. dissertation by Wayne Richard Kempson<sup>3</sup> is "to treat in depth, as much as possible, the motifs and themes [of Revelation] which exegetical study generates."<sup>4</sup> Kempson's "interpretative conclusions" are founded "on a combination of the preterist, futurist and idealistic schools."<sup>5</sup> He perceives that "the literary structure is the key for constructing the theological structure"<sup>6</sup> of Revelation. Based on a content analysis, Kempson "asserts the centrality of chapters 12 through 14 both in a theological sense and a

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 6:8; 9:3; 13:5, 7, 13.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander asserts that "the Apocalypse clearly reveals that, although Satan and his cohorts can bring calamity and disaster upon the earth, this ability is within the jurisdiction of God who is the true possessor of τὴν ἐξουσίαν," and that "the authority of Satan may be universal in scope but it still is a limited authority" (ibid., 87).

<sup>3</sup>Wayne Richard Kempson, "Theology in the Revelation of John" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 36.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 37.

literary sense."<sup>1</sup> He suggests that "the notion of power serves well as the theological center of the book."<sup>2</sup>

Kempson not only states that the Book of Revelation is "a theology of power"<sup>3</sup> but also argues that there is a strong emphasis, especially in the second half of the Apocalypse, on the nature and tactics of any "abusive (tyrannical) power."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, his final conclusion is the following: "Perhaps the greatest contribution the Apocalypse can make likes [sic] in the evaluation of abusive power as demonic and the denunciation of oppressive religion as bestial."<sup>5</sup> It makes one wonder why he did not use the term "authority" more often in his study, or why he omitted any comment on the importance of ἐξουσία in the Apocalypse.

The trilogy of Walter Wink on power certainly is the most exhaustive study ever on the theme of power in the NT. The first volume<sup>6</sup> was published in 1984 and presents an important study on the use of ἐξουσία in Revelation. The

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 131.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 145; cf. his similar conclusions on 146, 158, 220, 277, 279.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 146.

<sup>4</sup>Similar expressions appear on pages 225, 226, 230, 243, 245, 285.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 285.

<sup>6</sup>The full bibliographical entry is given on page 21 of this dissertation.

second volume (1986) does not study ἐξουσία. The third appeared in 1992 and thus belongs to a later period.

In the 165-page first volume one finds a two-page explanation of ἐξουσία.<sup>1</sup> Wink defines the term as bearing "the sense of the right or authorization to exercise power."<sup>2</sup> He proposes that "'legitimation' comes closest to catching its meaning."<sup>3</sup>

Wink also remarks that 87 out of the 102 uses of ἐξουσία in the NT are "for the impersonal capacity for action which is bestowed by an office."<sup>4</sup> Further he argues that "85 percent of its [ἐξουσία] uses refer to a *structural dimension of existence*, that permission or authorization provided by some legitimate authorizing person or body"<sup>5</sup> (*italics his*).

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<sup>1</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 15-17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid; cf. similar definitions in Cremer's Biblico-Theological Lexicon, 236; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599; Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, 225.

<sup>4</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 15.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 15-16, Wink also states that the ἐξουσία in the NT are, "in the vast majority of cases, not spiritual beings but ideological justifications, political or religious legitimations, and delegated permissions."

An interesting feature of his study is the listing of "paired expressions for power"<sup>1</sup> in the NT; in it one finds three references to Revelation.<sup>2</sup> In the case of ἐξουσία and δύναμις he states: "Exousia denotes the legitimations and sanctions by which power is maintained; it generally tends to be abstract."<sup>3</sup> Dynamis overlaps with exousia in the area of sanctions; it refers to the power of force by which rule is maintained"<sup>4</sup> (italics his).

In the last chapter of his book, "Interpreting the Powers," Wink notices the "different picture of Revelation" in regard to the language of power in the NT.<sup>5</sup> He particularly mentions John's use of ἐξουσία for "political rulership (2:26; 17:12-13)," for "the dominion of angels (14:18)," and for "delegated authority (9:3; 13:4, 5, 7,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>2</sup>See (1) Rev 17:13, under the pairs δύναμιν and ἐξουσίαν, (2) Rev 13:2, under the expressions δύναμιν, θρόνον and ἐξουσίαν, and (3) Rev 12:10, under the expressions σωτηρία and δύναμις, and βασιλεία and ἐξουσία. It seems that Wink does not notice the frequency or importance of ἐξουσία in the Apocalypse.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Foerster, 2:572.

<sup>4</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 10.

<sup>5</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 99. Here, among other things, he points out that one of the characteristics of John is that he uses θρόνος 45 times and ἐξουσία 20 times. The correct figures are 47 times and 21 times, respectively.

12)." <sup>1</sup> His final remark--something of an overemphasis--is that "Paul's letters, like the rest of the New Testament, can be described as a theology of power."<sup>2</sup>

Journal articles of this period only deal with certain passages in the Synoptics and the Pauline corpus. Thus, the accounts of Matthew,<sup>3</sup> Mark,<sup>4</sup> and Luke<sup>5</sup> are discussed. Within the Pauline corpus the focus is on Romans.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 100.

<sup>3</sup>Birger Gerhardsson, "Gottes Sohn als Diener Gottes: Messias, Agape und Himmelsherrschaft nach dem Matthäusevangelium," Studia theologica 27 (1973): 73-106, argues that the Hebrew מְשִׁיחַ (Aramaic מְשִׁיחָא) stands behind the Greek ἐξουσία in Matthew, and its German synonyms are: "erteilte Erlaubnis, Vollmacht, Macht, Souveränität, Freiheit" (81); Ian S. Kemp, "The Blessing, Power and Authority of the Church: A Study in Matthew 16:17-19," Evangelical Review of Theology 6 (1982): 9-22.

<sup>4</sup>Aubrey W. Argyle, "The Meaning of ἐξουσία in Mark 1:22, 27," ExpTim 80 (1969): 343; Thomas L. Budenheim, "Jesus and the Disciples in Conflict with Judaism," ZNW 62 (1971): 190-209; David Daube, "ἐξουσία in Mark I 22 and 27," JTS 39 (1938): 45-59; idem, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (New York: Arno Press, 1973; reprint of 1956 ed.), 205; cf. Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and H. Stuart Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon: A Supplement (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), s.v. "ἐξουσία." Here the new entry reads: "ἐξουσία I, add '4. Licence conferred on teachers of Jewish law, *Ev. Marc.* I.22'."

<sup>5</sup>James M. Dawsey, "Confrontation in the Temple: Luke 19:45-20:47," Perspectives in Religious Studies 11 (1984): 153-165.

<sup>6</sup>Ray Barraclough, "Romans 13:1-7: Application in Context," Colloquium 17 (May 1985): 16-21; Pol Vonck, "All

Interestingly, two of the better dictionaries<sup>1</sup> do not have entries for authority. On the other hand, some of the Greek-English,<sup>2</sup> and especially the theological dictionaries,<sup>3</sup> generally emphasize *liberty* and *right* as the

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Authority Comes from God: Romans 13:1-7--A Tricky Text about Obedience to Political Power," African Ecclesial Review 26 (1984): 338-347.

<sup>1</sup>N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, eds., The Oxford Classical Dictionary, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), one finds an entry for "autonomy" but not for "authority"; Siegfried H. Horn et al., Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary, rev. ed., Commentary Reference Series, 8 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1979), here is no entry for "authority" or "power."

<sup>2</sup>Barclay M. Newman, Jr., A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament (London: United Bible Societies, 1971), s.v. "ἐξουσία," lists the following six shades of meaning of the term: (1) *authority, right, liberty*, (2) *ability, capability*, (3) *supernatural power*, (4) *ruling power, government, official*, (5) *jurisdiction*, and (6) *disposal*; Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament, rev. ed. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), s.v. "ἐξουσία," support only *authority* and *right*. Cf. Bruce M. Metzger, Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek, new ed. (Princeton, NJ: By the Author, 1983), simply gives *authority* as the corresponding English word for ἐξουσία, but also provides some etymological insights when he groups ἐξουσία with εἶμι, ἀπειμι, πάρειμι, παρουσία, and ἔξεστι (56).

<sup>3</sup>Samuel J. Mikolaski, "Authority," The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. J. D. Douglas, Earle E. Cairns, and James E. Ruark (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), 90; J. I. Packer, "Authority," New Bible Dictionary, ed. J. D. Douglas et al., 2d ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993; reprint of 1982 ed.), 108-109; John Rea, "Authority," Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia, ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard F. Vos, and John Rea (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 1:179-180. They also differentiate between ἐξουσία and δύναμις, lawful power and physical power, respectively.

primary meaning of ἐξουσία. In two cases the philosophical or practical aspects<sup>1</sup> of the term are dominant without any reference<sup>2</sup> to ἐξουσία passages.

The major study by Gunneweg and Schmithals<sup>3</sup> furnishes Latin,<sup>4</sup> Greek,<sup>5</sup> French,<sup>6</sup> and English<sup>7</sup> equivalents of the German Herrschaft.<sup>8</sup> An important comment is also

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<sup>1</sup>R. P. C. Hanson, "Authority," A New Dictionary of Christian Theology, ed. Alan Richardson and John Bourden (London: SCM Press, 1983), 58-60, makes a distinction between *external* and *internal* authority; The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), s.v. "Authority," a difference is emphasized between *civil* authority which enforces obedience, and *ecclesiastical* authority that influences belief.

<sup>2</sup>With the exception of Geoffrey W. Bromiley, "Authority," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, et al., fully rev. in 4 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), 1:364-371, beside several other OT and NT passages, particular attention is paid to Rev 6:8; 9:3, 10, 19; 12:10; 13:2. The following important remarks are insightful: "The right (authorized power) expressed by *exousia* is not abstract. It carries with it real power, even though this be extrinsically rather than intrinsically derived. . . . The true answer to misuse [of authority] is not surrender but true and proper use" (1:365-366); cf. Foerster, 2:563.

<sup>3</sup>Antonius H. J. Gunneweg and Walter Schmithals, Authority, Biblical Encounters Series, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. dominium, potestas, auctoritas, imperium.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. ἀρχή, κυριότης, δεσπότης, ἐξουσία.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. domination, pouvoir, autorité.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. dominion, rule, command, power, authority.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 9.

made on *Monumentum Ancyranum*<sup>1</sup> stating that no other Western language, except Latin, makes a distinction<sup>2</sup> which perhaps indicates that the ideal unity of *power* and *authority* will never be attained.

Max Weber's study<sup>3</sup> discusses the theme of social relations, under the subheading, "Power, Authority, and Imperative Control." Regarding the latter, he states: "'Imperative control' (Herrschaft)<sup>4</sup> is the probability that a command with a specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Hudson, 17.

<sup>2</sup>While *auctoritas* is "personally related" and "has to do with freedom," *potestas* is "institutionally related" and "has to do with compulsion." The first means a "persuasive power" but the second denotes "submission by force" (Gunneweg and Schmithals, 17).

<sup>3</sup>Max Weber, Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building, Selected Papers, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

<sup>4</sup>Since Weber is concerned with *legitime Herrschaft* (which he believes usually not to be found in historical cases in "pure" form), "authority" is both an accurate and a far less awkward translation than "imperative control"; cf. *ibid.*, 15-16, n. 9. An even better rendering would be "domination, rule, reign"; cf. Langenscheidt's New College German Dictionary (New York: Langenscheidt, 1990; reprint of 1973 ed.), s.v. "Herrschaft."

<sup>5</sup>Weber, 15, also makes a distinction between authority and power: "'Power' (Macht) is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests."



Summarizing the tendencies of this period, Alexander, although realizing the difference between *δύναμις* and *ἐξουσία*, focuses on *power*. Kempson's dissertation asserts that Revelation is "a theology of *power*," and that one of the purposes of the Apocalypse is to unmask any "abusive power." The first volume of Wink's trilogy proposes that "legitimation" comes closest to catching the meaning of *ἐξουσία*, and that the entire NT is "a theology of *power*." Journal articles only deal with a limited number of *ἐξουσία* passages in the Synoptics and the Pauline corpus.

Some of the dictionary articles distinguish between *power* and *authority* and emphasize the *liberty* and *right* aspects of *ἐξουσία*. They generally do not support the corresponding Hebrew/Aramaic or Latin terms and limit their Bible references. The arguments tend to be more philosophical than biblical.

### **Recent Developments**

Jack D. Kingsbury discusses the relationship between *authority* and *irony* in Mark's Gospel without exploring *ἐξουσία* in context.<sup>1</sup> Ron Farmer addresses the question of God's *power* in the Apocalypse by applying the methodology of

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<sup>1</sup>Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Religious Authorities in the Gospel of Mark," *NTS* 36 (1990): 42-65.

process hermeneutic.<sup>1</sup> Farmer concludes that Revelation provides "a new perspective on power, both divine and human."<sup>2</sup>

Interestingly the Anchor Bible Dictionary<sup>3</sup> does not have an entry for authority per se. Some theological encyclopedias and lexica, however, continue to emphasize the difference between power and authority.<sup>4</sup> Molinski's article

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<sup>1</sup>Ron Farmer, "Divine Power in the Apocalypse to John: Revelation 4-5 in Process Hermeneutic," in Society of Biblical Literature 1993 Seminar Papers, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 70-103. Farmer points out that the main title for God in Revelation is παντοκράτωρ, usually translated "almighty," "all-powerful," "omnipotent," "ruler of all things." The term occurs 10 times in the NT, 9 of which are in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22).

<sup>2</sup>Farmer also argues that God's power is "persuasive not coercive, influencing not controlling, relational not unilateral," whereas the Beast's power is "clearly coercive, controlling, and unilateral" (91, 97).

<sup>3</sup>David Noel Freedman et al., eds. The Anchor Bible Dictionary, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992). Only the following entries are found: "City Authorities" (1:1049-1050) and "Scriptural Authority" (5:1017-1056).

<sup>4</sup>Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, 2 vols. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), s.v. "ἐξουσία." The shades of meaning of ἐξουσία are listed under nine different entries: "Supernatural Powers" (12.44), "To Distinguish, To Evaluate, To Judge" (30.122), "Control, Restrain" (37.13), "Exercise Authority" (37.35-37.38), "Rule, Govern" (37.48), and "Power, Force" (76.12). Under "Supernatural Powers" ἐξουσία is grouped with ἀρχή, κοσμοκράτωρ, δύναμις, κυριότης, and θρόνος; cf. a similar grouping by Betz, 2:601, and Wink, Naming the Powers, 13-15. See also Waldemar Molinski, "Authority," Encyclopedia of Theology: The Concise Sacramentum Mundi, ed. Karl Rahner (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 61-65; here

points out that "authority must be distinguished from power and coercion" and that "authority begins where it is freely recognized and ends where it becomes power."<sup>1</sup> These works generally do not refer to Revelation. The Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents and Greek synonyms are only supported in one dictionary.<sup>2</sup>

The dictionary entry by Zsigmond J. Varga,<sup>3</sup> however, does refer to Revelation. Varga provides the following

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the term is derived from the Latin auctor (cause, sponsor, promoter, surety), which in turn comes from the verb augere (to increase [transitive and intransitive], to enrich); cf. similar etymology in Webster's New World Dictionary of American English, 3d college ed., ed. Victoria Neufeldt and David B. Guralnik, 4th printing with cor. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), s.v. "Authority." See also William D. Mounce, The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; here a long list of shades of meaning is given for the term: "power, ability, faculty; efficiency, energy; liberty, license; authority, rule, dominion, jurisdiction; pl. authorities, potentates, powers; right, authority, full power; privilege, prerogative."

<sup>1</sup>Molinski, 62. His article ends with the following sober statement: "An earthly authority which does not point beyond itself becomes demonic and will show itself as arbitrary naked power" (65).

<sup>2</sup>Thoralf Gilbrant et al., eds. The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary, The Complete Biblical Library, vol. 12 (Springfield, MO: The Complete Biblical Library, 1990), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; the Greek δύναμις, ἰσχύς, κράτος, κυριότης, the Hebrew הַשְׁלָטָה, שֹׁלְטָן, שְׁלֵטָה, and the Aramaic שְׁלֵטָה and שְׁלֵטָה are listed.

<sup>3</sup>Zsigmond J. Varga, Görög-Magyar Szótár az Újszövetség Írataihoz [A Greek-Hungarian Dictionary of the New Testament Writings] (Budapest: Református Zsinati Iroda Sajtóosztálya, 1992), s.v. "ἐξουσία."

shades of meaning of the term: "(1) *possibility, authority* (Rev 13:5; 22:14), (2) *ability, might, power* (Rev 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6; 13:2, 4, 12; 16:9; 18:1; 20:6), (3) *authorization, full authority, assignment, commission* (Rev 2:26; 6:8; 11:6b; 13:7; 14:18), and (4) (political) *power, ruling or official power* (Rev 17:12-13)."<sup>1</sup>

The study Power: Focus for a Biblical Theology by Hans-Ruedi Weber<sup>2</sup> concentrates on the term "power" rather than on "authority." In his 170-page book Weber mentions "authority" only five times on four pages.<sup>3</sup>

The last volume of Walter Wink's trilogy<sup>4</sup> focuses on the term "powers" but hardly mentions "authority."<sup>5</sup> Two chapters of the book, "Unmasking the Domination System" and "Celebrating the Victory of God," however, discuss Revelation at length. Wink uses the expression "the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 334-335.

<sup>2</sup>Hans-Ruedi Weber, Power: Focus for a Biblical Theology (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1989).

<sup>3</sup>On pp. 44, 82 Weber comments on Jesus' authority, and on pp. 62, 163, he discusses Rom 13 and Rev 13. He states that in Revelation "the *exodus tradition* reappears with its cosmic dimension," the Roman emperor "stands for all rebellious and self-idolizing power," and the Roman empire "appears as a satanic power with amazing and miraculous authority over all the nations" (163).

<sup>4</sup>Walter Wink, The Powers, vol. 3, Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).

<sup>5</sup>The index of subjects (419-423) lists the terms "power" and "powers" but not "authority."

Domination System"<sup>1</sup> which he interprets as "what happens when an entire network of Powers becomes integrated around idolatrous values."<sup>2</sup>

Later in his book, Wink uses another phrase, "the Delusional Apparatus" or system, to describe the "game being played on us by the Powers That Be."<sup>3</sup> He argues that "that game is nowhere more trenchantly exposed than in the surrealistic images of Revelation 12-13."<sup>4</sup> Wink devotes seven pages to these chapters under two subheadings.<sup>5</sup> He believes that the "new insight here [Rev 12] is that order is not the opposite of chaos, but rather the means by which a system of chaos among the nations is maintained."<sup>6</sup> Wink

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<sup>1</sup>"The Domination System" is the "outcome of the systematic repudiation by institutions of their divine vocations in order to pursue self-aggrandizement and greed" (ibid., 107). Wink also refers to "Satan" as the "world-encompassing spirit of the Domination System" (ibid., 9).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 89.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. It may be noted here that out of the total of its 21 occurrences in Revelation, ἐξουσία appears 6 times in these chapters (12:10; 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12).

<sup>5</sup>"The Delusional Apparatus according to Revelation 12-13" (ibid., 89-93) and "The Manufacture of Idolatry according to Revelation 13" (ibid., 93-95). Wink makes it clear: "I do not attempt a thorough exegesis of these two chapters [Rev 12-13], but focus only on the issues relevant to the theme of the Powers" (ibid., 351, n. 4).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 90.

concludes that this is an "element of power-worship . . . stressed over and over by John."<sup>1</sup>

Wink's study ends with a positive picture for the future: "The Book of Revelation contemplates a transformation of power relations"<sup>2</sup>; therefore, its message is a clear revelation of God's final victory over every evil:

The Book of Revelation may be gory, surrealistic, unnerving, even terrifying. But it contains not a single note of despair. . . . The struggle continues, but the issue is no longer in doubt. The far-off strains of a victory song already reach our ears, and we are invited to join the chorus.<sup>3</sup>

The Theology of the Book of Revelation by Richard J. Bauckham<sup>4</sup> does not deal explicitly with the theme of "power" or "authority,"<sup>5</sup> but focuses on the *theocentric* aspects of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 93. Wink also notes that the phrase "was allowed" (Greek ἐδόθη) is a "refrain all through Revelation 13," and is an expression of the fact that people "suppressed the truth about God and worshiped created things; therefore, God 'gave them up' to darkened minds and folly (Rom 1:18-32)." He concludes: "I am not aware of such a concatenation of permissions stated so repetitively anywhere else in Scripture. . . . The human race 'allowed' these things--all of them associated here with the centralization of state power under a satanic Domination System" (ibid., 92).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 99.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 321.

<sup>4</sup>Richard J. Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>5</sup>Only the expression "power, absolutizing of" appears in the index (ibid., 168).

the Apocalypse.<sup>1</sup> According to Bauckham, "Revelation portrays the Roman Empire as a system of violent oppression, founded on conquest, maintained by violence and oppression."<sup>2</sup> He concludes that Revelation's relevance today is that "it resists any absolutizing of power or structures or ideals within this world" and "it unmasks this dominant construction of the world as an ideology of the powerful which serves to maintain their power."<sup>3</sup> Bauckham, as Wink did earlier,<sup>4</sup> ends his book by pointing to God's ultimate victory when His kingdom comes.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bauckham states: "The theology of Revelation is highly theocentric. This, along with its distinctive doctrine of God, is its greatest contribution to New Testament theology" (23). He adds: "The throne itself, on which God sits in heaven, is mentioned very frequently. It is one of the central symbols of the whole book" (31). He further argues that "we need to understand the correlation between the understanding of God in Revelation and Revelation's critique of Roman power if we are fully to understand both" (35).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 35; cf. also 89-90. Bauckham asserts that the two aspects of Roman ideology are "deceitful illusion" and "the worship of power" (36-37); cf. Wink, Engaging the Powers, 89, 93. Bauckham concludes that "Rome's evil" is "absolutizing her own power and prosperity," in other words, it is a "deified political and military power" (38).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 159.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Wink, Engaging the Powers, 321.

<sup>5</sup>Bauckham asserts: "God's rule does not contradict human freedom, as the coercive tyranny of the beast does, but finds its fulfilment in the participation of people in God's rule" (164).

### Summary

This review of the representative studies dealing with ἐξουσία or authority as it is used in the NT reveals the following characteristics:

1. There is a shift in the rendering of ἐξουσία. Whereas earlier dictionary articles usually emphasize the notion of *power*, later works represent a more balanced understanding by providing the meanings of *authority* and *power*. Recent works point to *liberty* and *right* as the primary meaning of ἐξουσία.
2. The term is derived from ἐξουσιάζω and the corresponding Hebrew and Aramaic words are מְשָׁלָה and שָׁלַט. The Latin equivalents potestas or auctoritas are usually provided as reference especially in earlier works.
3. More recent dictionary articles generally limit their Bible references to the point where those from Revelation are becoming marginal or nonexistent. There is an emphasis on the difference between *power* and *authority*, which is based on philosophical or socio-ethical considerations, but without the necessary etymological study.
4. W. Foerster's article in TWNT/TDNT is still the most comprehensive exposition of the term that notes and discusses the importance of ἐξουσία in Revelation.



5. O. Betz's article in TBNT/NIDNTT has the unique features of grouping ἐξουσία, δύναμις, and θρόνος, observing the importance of Daniel as a background material, and pointing out the frequency of the term in Revelation.

6. Journal articles limit their ἐξουσία studies to the Gospels and the Pauline corpus, with the exception of R. Farmer's recent article dealing with the notion of *power* in Revelation.

This review makes it evident that no comprehensive study has ever been written for the purpose of examining the Greek term ἐξουσία as it occurs and plays a special role in Revelation. Perhaps a study of the term as it appears in the entire NT can also be a future task.

Since the philosophical arguments of the theological dictionaries are determinative for interpreting authority/power in the Bible, it is imperative to investigate and explore the biblical meaning of ἐξουσία. A particular problem, which needs to be addressed, is the use and misuse of delegated authority in human and supernatural relationships.

During the course of this investigation first the nonbiblical and biblical backgrounds of ἐξουσία are considered then an examination of the term in the Greek text and literary structure of the Apocalypse follows.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BACKGROUND TO THE USE OF ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The purpose of this chapter is to survey the usage of ἐξουσία in nonbiblical<sup>1</sup> and biblical sources. Such a study will serve to show the linguistic backgrounds to the meaning of the term. The survey is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to demonstrate a trend in the development of the meaning of ἐξουσία and its Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents.

#### **Nonbiblical Works**

The two main categories of nonbiblical works which provide evidence regarding the use of ἐξουσία and its Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents are Greco-Roman and Jewish writings. These are presented in chronological order, following dates provided by the Loeb Classical Library.

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<sup>1</sup>The discussion of early patristic works is left out because it would go beyond the scope of this study requiring another dissertation in itself. For reference, see G. W. H. Lampe, ed., A Patristic Greek Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961-1968), s.v. "ἐξουσία."

## Greco-Roman Writings

These sources furnish us with a general background to the rich meaning of ἐξουσία. First classical Greek authors then some papyri and inscriptions are studied.

**Classical Greek Authors**

Perhaps the first attestation for ἐξουσία is in the writings of the orator Antiphon (ca. 480-411 B.C.).<sup>1</sup> Here ἐξουσία means *chance, opportunity, possibility*.<sup>2</sup> Foerster, and Liddell and Scott translate it "ability" or "power to do."<sup>3</sup> Interestingly the first occurrence of δύναμις is also found in Antiphon's works.<sup>4</sup>

Thucydides the historian (ca. 472-396 B.C.), a contemporary of Antiphon, in his eight-volume History of the Peloponnesian War, used ἐξουσία together with ἀρχων<sup>5</sup> and δύναμαι.<sup>6</sup> In the first instance ἀρχων is a reference to the

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<sup>1</sup>Antiphon Prosecution for Poisoning 6, Minor Attic Orators I, LCL, 16.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek text reads: μὲν γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐξουσία ἦν.

<sup>3</sup>Foerster, 2:562; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>4</sup>Antiphon First Tetralogy 1.6, Minor Attic Orators I, LCL, 56; here τῆς δυνάμεως is a genitive of description.

<sup>5</sup>Thucydides History of the Peloponnesian War 4.39.2, Thucydides II, LCL, 280.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 7.12.5, Thucydides IV, LCL, 20.

commander Ἐπιτάδας, and the phrase πρὸς τὴν ἐξουσίαν is an accusative of comparison. Thucydides reported that the commander gave fewer rations to his soldiers "than his supplies would have *allowed* it." In the second place μάλλον ἐξουσία means "a better opportunity," which is given to the enemy in a sea battle. The subjunctive ἦν δύνηται expresses a prospective "capability."

The orator Isocrates (436-338 B.C.), a younger contemporary of Antiphon and Thucydides, employed an accusative cum infinitivo clause<sup>1</sup> to express "gaining the power (ἐξουσία) to do." Liddell and Scott translate this expression as "permission to do."<sup>2</sup> The above construction is also used by Isocrates to express the potential danger when "one does what he likes" for his own happiness.<sup>3</sup>

Xenophon the historian (ca. 429-357 B.C.), an even younger contemporary of the foregoing writers, also mentioned ἐξουσία in at least two of his works. In

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<sup>1</sup>Isocrates 3.45, Isocrates I, LCL, 102: λαβῶν δ' ἐξουσίαν ὥστε ποιεῖν.

<sup>2</sup>LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>3</sup>Isocrates 12.131, Isocrates II, LCL, 452: τὴν δ' ἐξουσίαν ὃ τι βούλεται τις ποιεῖν εὐδαιμονίαν.

Memorabilia we find the word two times<sup>1</sup> and in Hiero once.<sup>2</sup> The construction can be rendered in two slightly different ways<sup>3</sup> to describe the danger of violence and injustice when some want "to rule" (ἄρχειν). In the second instance in Memorabilia the conditional clause expresses a possibility.<sup>4</sup> Finally, in Hiero ἐξουσία denotes an apparent contradiction in the attitude of the tyrants (οἱ τύραννοι), when they "enjoy freedom" but fail to provide it for others.<sup>5</sup>

The philosopher Plato (427-346 B.C.), a contemporary of Isocrates and Xenophon, employed ἐξουσία several times. In Alcibiades the term denotes the *liberty or freedom* to do

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<sup>1</sup>Xenophon Memorabilia 2.6.24, LCL, 138; *ibid.*, 2.6.35, LCL, 142.

<sup>2</sup>Xenophon Hiero 5.2, Xenophon Scripta Minora, LCL, 30.

<sup>3</sup>"That they may have power to do . . ." (Robinson, 262), or "that they may have *permission* to do . . ." (LSJ, 1973 ed., 599) (emphasis mine).

<sup>4</sup>2.6.35. The Greek text reads: ἐὰν δέ μοι ἔτι ἐξουσίαν δῶς λέγειν. BAG, 278 translates the phrase: "authority over somebody."

<sup>5</sup>5.2. The Greek text reads: τῆς εἰς τὸ παρὸν ἐξουσίας ἔνεκα. Lightfoot interprets ἐξουσία here as "unrestrained or arbitrary power" (141).

what a person thinks (δοκέω),<sup>1</sup> or desires (βούλομαι),<sup>2</sup> expressed as a conditional clause. The pair ἐξουσία and ἀρχή, is also used by Plato to denote "freedom" and "authority."<sup>3</sup> Further, he is probably the first one to use the plural form (πάσαις ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις)<sup>4</sup> of the pair to describe "rulers" or "magistracy."<sup>5</sup>

In a number of cases Plato employed ἐξουσία to describe "freedom" that is provided by society.<sup>6</sup> In these instances the term is translated in a variety of ways: "possibility,"<sup>7</sup> "permission to do," "license," and "power

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<sup>1</sup>Plato *Alcibiades* 1.135A, LCL, 218. The Greek text reads: εἰ τῷ ἐξουσία εἶη ποιεῖν ὃ δοκεῖ .

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1.134E, LCL, 218. The Greek text reads: ἐξουσία μὲν ἢ ποιεῖν ὃ βούλεται.

<sup>3</sup>Plato *Alcibiades* 1.134C, LCL, 216: οὐκ ἄρα ἐξουσίαν σοι οὐδ' ἀρχὴν παρασκευαστέον σαντῶ ποιεῖν ὃ τι ἂν βούλη.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 1.135A, LCL, 218.

<sup>5</sup>BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:253; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599. Wink believes that the pair refers to "the civil government," *Naming the Powers*, 8, n. 5. He adds: "Plato was in no sense using a technical phrase" but "it was merely a chance pairing of two of the terms for 'power'" (ibid).

<sup>6</sup>Plato *Symposium* 182E, LCL, 114: ἐξουσίαν ὁ νόμος δέδωκε; idem, *Gorgias* 461E, LCL, 308, a reference is made to the "freedom of speech" (ἐξουσία τοῦ λέγειν); ibid., 525D, 526A, LCL, 526, the expressions describe an abuse of freedom: διὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν μέγιστα ... ἁμαρτήματα ἁμαρτάνουσι, and ἐν μεγάλῃ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ ἀδικεῖν.

<sup>7</sup>Foerster, 2:562.

over."<sup>1</sup> Plato, as Isocrates had earlier,<sup>2</sup> observed the problem of misusing "many opportunities" to do "injustice."<sup>3</sup> At least in three places Plato referred to the above danger as one that threatens or "enslaves democracy" (καταδουλοῦται δημοκρατίαν).<sup>4</sup>

The orator Demosthenes (ca. 384-322 B.C.), a younger contemporary of Plato, also used ἐξουσία to denote "freedom."<sup>5</sup> Robinson interprets the term as "license, liberty, right."<sup>6</sup> "Freedom of peace" (τῆς εἰρήνης ἐξουσία)<sup>7</sup> is probably a unique expression of Demosthenes, which is translated by Liddell and Scott as "freedom permitted by peace."<sup>8</sup> Finally, Demosthenes twice employed ἐξουσία<sup>9</sup> in a

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<sup>1</sup>LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Isocrates 12.131.

<sup>3</sup>Plato Respublica 554C, Republic II, LCL, 274, reads: ὥστε πολλῆς ἐξουσίαις λαβέσθαι τοῦ ἀδικεῖν; cf. LSJ, 1973 ed., 599, ἐξουσία is rendered "license."

<sup>4</sup>Plato Respublica 557B, Republic II, LCL, 284; ibid., 563E, LCL, 310; ibid., 564D, LCL, 314.

<sup>5</sup>Demosthenes Epistulae 3.12, LCL, 232.

<sup>6</sup>Robinson, 263.

<sup>7</sup>Demosthenes De Corona 44, LCL, 46.

<sup>8</sup>LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>9</sup>Demosthenes De Falsa Legatione 200, LCL, 372; ibid., 272, LCL, 424.

negative sense denoting an "abuse of authority"<sup>1</sup> or "arbitrary power."<sup>2</sup>

Aristotle, a student of Plato (384-321 B.C.), who devoted much time to ethics, used both the verb ἐξουσίαζω (to have power/authority)<sup>3</sup> and the plural form of the noun ἐξουσία (authority, right, power).<sup>4</sup> In the first case the verb is used with a genitive of comparison,<sup>5</sup> in which the Apis ox in Egypt had "more authority than many monarchs."<sup>6</sup> In the second place ἐξουσίαι can mean persons in "authoritative position"<sup>7</sup> or "magistracy."<sup>8</sup>

Diodorus Siculus the historian (ca. 80-25 B.C.) mentions both the singular and the plural forms of ἐξουσία in his Library of History. The term describes "rulers,"<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>2</sup>Lightfoot, 141.

<sup>3</sup>Aristotle Ethica Eudemia 1.5.6, LCL, 210.

<sup>4</sup>Aristotle Ethica Nicomachea 1.5.3, LCL, 14.

<sup>5</sup>The Greek text reads: ἐν πλείοσι τῶν τοιούτων ἐξουσιάζει πολλῶν μονάρχων.

<sup>6</sup>Thayer, 225, we find "to have power or authority"; cf. BAG, 278, and LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>7</sup>Foerster, 2:563.

<sup>8</sup>LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>9</sup>Diodorus Siculus 1.58.3, Diodorus Siculus I, LCL, 202, here ἐξουσίαι probably refers to former kings in Egypt; cf. Robinson, 263.



"supreme authority,"<sup>1</sup> "authority,"<sup>2</sup> "consular power,"<sup>3</sup> and "full power."<sup>4</sup> In all these instances ἐξουσία has to do with the power/authority of an office or position. The term always denotes delegated power when it is used in the singular.

One can observe a similar usage of ἐξουσία in the Roman Antiquities by the historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus (ca. 62-6 B.C.). The noun ἐξουσία describes the "office of the magistrate"<sup>5</sup> and the verb ἐξουσιάζω denotes the "ruling power of the magistrate."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Diodorus Siculus 13.36.2, Diodorus Siculus V, LCL, 218, reads: ἔδωκαν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἀντοκράτορα διοικεῖν, an acc. cum inf. construction; cf. Betz, 2:607.

<sup>2</sup>Diodorus Siculus 14.81.6, Diodorus Siculus VI, LCL, 232, reads: τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ λαβεῖν, again an acc. cum inf. construction; cf. Betz, 2:607.

<sup>3</sup>Diodorus Siculus 14.113.6, Diodorus Siculus VI, LCL, 304, reads: τῶν τὴν ὑπατικὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐχόντων; cf. BAG, 278; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>4</sup>Diodorus Siculus 17.54.6, Diodorus Siculus VIII, LCL, 274, reads: συγχωρουμένης αὐτῷ τῆς ἐξουσίας; cf. Robinson, 263, here ἐξουσία is rendered "commission, full-power, authority."

<sup>5</sup>Dionysius of Halicarnassus Antiquitates Romanae 8.44.4, Roman Antiquities V, LCL, 130; *ibid.*, 8.77.1, Roman Antiquities V, LCL, 232; *ibid.*, 11.32.1, Roman Antiquities VII, LCL, 106; cf. BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:563; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

<sup>6</sup>Dionysius of Halicarnassus Antiquitates Romanae 9.44.6, Roman Antiquities VI, LCL, 68; cf. BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:574; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

Plutarch (ca. A.D. 50-120) employed ἐξουσία in three different areas: (1) personal, moral power, (2) arbitrary power, and (3) authority or power of an office. In a number of instances the term is paired with δύναμις. As a personal characteristic, ἐξουσία denotes the "power of the soul."<sup>1</sup> In a negative sense, it can mean "arbitrary power."<sup>2</sup> In most of the cases, however, the term signifies the authority of an "office" or "position," used in the singular<sup>3</sup> as well as in the plural<sup>4</sup> form.

These two features (positive and negative uses of ἐξουσία) can be observed also in the works of Herodian the historian (ca. A.D. 180-250), who employed ἐξουσία both to

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<sup>1</sup>Plutarch Dion 11.1, Plutarch's Lives VI, LCL, 22: νέας ψυχῆς ἐξουσία μεγάλη καὶ δυνάμει; cf. Foerster, 2:563.

<sup>2</sup>Plutarch Alexander 33.6, Plutarch's Lives VII, LCL, 326: τὴν ἐξουσίαν καὶ τὸν ὄγκον τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου δυνάμεως; cf. Lightfoot, 141. Plutarch Eumenes 13.4, Plutarch's Lives VIII, LCL, 118, reads: αὐτοὶ δὲ ἀνάγωγοι ταῖς ἐξουσίαις φρονήματα τυραννικά. cf. Lightfoot, 141.

<sup>3</sup>Plutarch Camillus 1.2, Plutarch's Lives II, LCL, 94: ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως ὑπατικῆς; cf. Robinson, 263.

<sup>4</sup>Plutarch Caesar 58.1, Plutarch's Lives VII, LCL, 576: ἄλλαις ἐξουσίαις καὶ τιμαῖς; *ibid.*, Caius Marius 2.1, Plutarch's Lives IX, LCL, 466: ταῖς ἐξουσίαις; *ibid.*, Philopoemen 17.4, Plutarch's Lives X, LCL, 306: τὰς ἐξουσίας; cf. BAG, 278; LSJ, 1973 ed., 599.

denote the authority of an "office,"<sup>1</sup> and to describe a "capricious rule"<sup>2</sup> or "tyranny."<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the surveyed classical Greek authors have used ἐξουσία with different meanings: (1) authority/power of an office, (2) misuse of authority (tyranny), (3) ability or possibility to do, and (4) personal freedom, liberty, right. The majority of the occurrences fall under the first two categories.

As a general observation, the ἐξουσία occurrences in these works have to do with human arrangements of power: personal or moral freedom, authority, permission or right provided by state law, or in a more general sense, simply the ability and possibility of performing an action.<sup>4</sup>

### **Papyri and Inscriptions**

These documents usually describe legal procedures, and ἐξουσία is generally used in a secular context. The

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<sup>1</sup>Herodian 3.7.8; *ibid.*, 3.8.2, Herodian I, LCL, 304, where references are made to the office of the Caesar (Καίσαρος ἐξουσία), and to governorship (ἔθνους ἐξουσία).

<sup>2</sup>Herodian 2.4.4, Herodian I, LCL, 158; cf. Lightfoot, 141.

<sup>3</sup>Herodian 7.10.4, Herodian II, LCL, 224: ὡς μὴ παρ' ἐνὶ οὐσα ἡ ἐξουσία ἐς τυραννίδα πάλιν ἀξοκείλη meaning, "lest by someone authority is yet being reverted to a tyranny."

<sup>4</sup>Cf. BAG, 277; Betz, 2:607; Cremer, 236; Foerster, 2:562; NTGED, 483; Wink, Naming the Powers, 15.

surveyed papyri deal with human rights,<sup>1</sup> civil magistracy,<sup>2</sup> and authority/control.<sup>3</sup>

In two instances ἐξουσία denotes the right of a father over his child, as granted by law.<sup>4</sup> In one place the term refers to the right of a property owner expressed in his will,<sup>5</sup> and still in another context ἐξουσία describes the right of a trade partner.<sup>6</sup>

In two passages, the term designates the tribunicia potestas (tribunician power) of the Roman emperors.<sup>7</sup> In one

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<sup>1</sup>Oxyrhynchus Papyri (POxy.) 237.27; 237.28-29; POxy. 494.4; and Amherst Papyri (PAmh.) 92.23.

<sup>2</sup>London Papyri (PLond.) 1912.15; Fayûm Papyri (PFay.) 20.3-4; and POxy. 261.15.

<sup>3</sup>Giessen Papyri (PGiess.) 11.18.

<sup>4</sup>POxy. 237.27, reads: κατὰ τοὺς νόμους συγκεχωρημένη ἐξουσία; cf. Select Papyri II, LCL, 198; Betz, 2:607; Foerster 2:562; and POxy. 237.28-29, reads: τὸν πατέρα μήτε ... τῆς παιδὸς τῆς ἐκδεδομένης ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν; cf. Select Papyri II, LCL, 198-200.

<sup>5</sup>POxy. 494.4, reads: ἔχειν με τὴν τῶν ἰδίων ἐξουσίαν; cf. Select Papyri I, LCL, 244.

<sup>6</sup>PAmh. 92.23, the phrase is: "ἐξουσίας σοι"; cf. Select Papyri II, LCL, 420; Foerster, 2:562.

<sup>7</sup>PLond. 1912.15, and PFay. 20.3-4, here the phrase, "δημαρχικῆς ἐξουσίας," refers to the tribunician power of the Roman emperors, Claudius and Marcus Aurelius Alexander respectively; cf. Select Papyri II, LCL, 78. Cf. also, MM, 225.

place, ἐξουσία defines one aspect of the legal responsibility of a representative.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, in one instance, the term refers to the personal authority/control (or command) of a merchant-seaman.<sup>2</sup>

The study of G. H. R. Horsley provides further insights into, and comments on, the use of ἐξουσία in some papyri and inscriptions.<sup>3</sup> His analysis of a "Love Charm"<sup>4</sup> affirms that the lead tablet inscription is a magical text that contains various permutations of vowels (nomina barbara), followed by an invocation<sup>5</sup> built on verbal and

<sup>1</sup>POxy. 261.15, reads: ἐπί τε πάσης ἐξουσίας καὶ παντὸς κριτηρίου; cf. Select Papyri I, LCL, 180; BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:253, translates "authorities."

<sup>2</sup>PGiess. 11.18, reads: ὅτι ἄλλας ὀκτὸ μυριάδες ἔχω πλοίων ὧν ἐξουσίαν ἔχω; cf. Select Papyri II, LCL, 576, here the Greek is rendered: "I have room for other eighty thousand artabae on the boats at my command." Cf. also MM, 225, who translate "power of rule, authority."

<sup>3</sup>G. H. R. Horsley, New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published in 1977, vol. 2 (Sydney: Macquarie University, 1981-82).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 45.

<sup>5</sup>The text includes a plarindome (ιαω ωαι), containing one of the divine names frequently used in magical texts. The Greek reads: ἀξιῶ καὶ παρακαλῶ τὴν δοίναμήν σου καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν σου, which translates "I ask for and request your power and authority."

substantival doublets including ἐξουσία and δύναμις,<sup>1</sup> perhaps expressing the "power of words."

Horsley lists three inscriptions and a papyrus fragment under ἐξουσία.<sup>2</sup> The inscriptions all refer to civil authorities<sup>3</sup> or magistracies,<sup>4</sup> whereas the papyrus fragment<sup>5</sup> describes delegated authority.

Perhaps one of the most important ancient documents is Monumentum Ancyranum, or Res Gestae Divi Augusti,<sup>6</sup> first published by Buysbecche, a Dutch scholar, in 1555.<sup>7</sup> The inscription is preserved both in Latin and in Greek.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The pairing of δύναμις and ἐξουσία might carry a magical overtone or it is simply an expression of emphasis; cf. Wink, Naming the Powers, 7, for his list of "paired expressions for power" in the NT.

<sup>2</sup>Horsley, 83-84.

<sup>3</sup>Inscription 4441 reads: καὶ λόγον ὑφέξεται τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ; inscription 97 reads: Βρόμιος Βασίλου ὁ μέγας ἀνὴρ . . . βουλῆ εὐχαριστεῖ . . . καὶ ταῖς ἐξουσίαις.

<sup>4</sup>Inscription 384 reads: [ἐγὼ δὲ] πολλὰ περὶ πλεῦ[σας κέ] πολλῆς ἐξουσιᾶς [ὑπ]ηρετήσας.

<sup>5</sup>Laurenziana Papyri (PLaur.) 23, reads: ἐξουσι[ί]αν ἔδωκεν ὑ[ί]ω ἀδελφ. Horsley compares the wording to John 1:12, which reads: ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν.

<sup>6</sup>Res Gestae Divi Augusti, LCL, 333, 344-405.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 335.

<sup>8</sup>The Latin version reads: *Post id tem(pus praestiti omnibus dignitate, potest)atis au(tem n)ihilo ampliu(s habui quam qui fuerunt m)ihi quoque in ma(gis)tra(t)u conlegae;* the Greek version reads: Ἀξιώμ(α)τι πάντων διήνεγκα, ἐξουσίας

According to the document, Emperor Augustus distinguished between *dignity* (Latin dignitas, Greek ἀξίωμα) and *authority* (Latin potestas, Greek ἐξουσία).

E. G. Hardy,<sup>1</sup> commenting on Augustus' statement, argues that after 23 B.C.

Augustus cut himself adrift from any regular magistracy, and the real bases of his power stood wholly outside the collegiate system. As a matter of fact, the various elements which made up the position of *princeps* made him not only first in dignity, but master of the empire.<sup>2</sup>

C. K. Barrett, who also comments on Augustus' statement, focuses on the term "dignity" and derives it from the Latin auctoritas.<sup>3</sup> Then, he adds that "auctoritas is moral authority, almost '(power of) leadership.' The *auctoritas* of Augustus, backed by his tribunician<sup>4</sup> and proconsular rights, in fact gave him all the *potestas*, or actual power, he needed."<sup>5</sup> Barrett's interpretation was

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δὲ οὐδέν τι πλείον ἔσχον τῶν συναρξάντων μοι; cf. Res Gestae Divi Augusti 6.34, LCL, 400.

<sup>1</sup>E. G. Hardy, ed., The Monumentum Ancyranum (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 161.

<sup>3</sup>C. K. Barrett, ed., The New Testament Background: Selected Documents (London: S. P. C. K., 1957; reprint), 5.

<sup>4</sup>The phrase "tribunician power/right" (tribunicia potestas or δημαρχική ἐξουσία) occurs 5 times (1.4; 1.6; 2.10; and 3.15) in the document.

<sup>5</sup>Barrett, 5; cf. Res Gestae Divi Augusti, LCL, 399, n. b, where Shipley makes the following comment: "In form he [Augustus] restored the republic; in substance the real

later followed by Gunneweg and Schmithals, who asserted that "where only one concept (e.g., authority) is available for us, the tension between authority and power of office resides within this concept."<sup>1</sup> They also concluded that "potestas without auctoritas cannot endure."<sup>2</sup>

Summarizing, the surveyed papyri and inscriptions use ἐξουσία in a secular (legal) sense, predominantly denoting human rights that are granted by state law. The term, used in the plural, usually defines a group of state officials (authorities or magistracies).

#### Jewish Writings

In this second main category of nonbiblical works some pieces of the OT Pseudepigrapha (especially apocalyptic writings), Qumran writings, two Hellenistic Jewish writers (Philo and Josephus), and rabbinical works are studied. Where appropriate, the similarities between the Jewish writings and the biblical works are pointed out.

#### **The OT Pseudepigrapha**

D. S. Russell's study on the inter-testamental period and the Jewish apocalyptic writings, produced between

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power rested with him, perhaps, in view of the circumstances, unavoidably."

<sup>1</sup>Gunneweg and Schmithals, 22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 57.



200 B.C. and A.D. 100, points out that an important feature of these works is the notion that "the angels to whom God had given authority over the nations and over the physical universe itself, had outstripped their rightful authority and had taken the power into their own hands."<sup>1</sup>

Later in the same chapter, "Angels and Demons," Russell notes how the problem of human suffering was explained by these apocalyptic writings.<sup>2</sup> Further, he refers to "the world of spirits,"<sup>3</sup> then points to the final outcome of the complex problem of evil<sup>4</sup> addressed by Jewish

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<sup>1</sup>D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 B.C.-A.D. 100, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 237-238.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 238, Russell observes: "The problem of human suffering was seen to be part of the greater problem of cosmic evil. Every part of the created universe was affected by it, and human life had to be lived out under its shadow. The same force of evil could be seen in microcosm in human history and in macrocosm in cosmic history."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Russell states: "Thus the world of spirits is divided into two. On the one side are the angels who remain true to God, who execute his will and direct men in the way they ought to go; on the other side are the fallen angels and demons who obey the chief of the demons and commit all kinds of wickedness upon the earth. This present world is now in the hands of these 'principalities and powers'; men's lives are in the power of Satan and his angels."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 240, Russell summarizes: "No matter what their own intentions might be, the angels were agents of the divine will. It was God who gave them power to administer the universe and even to lead the nations astray. Even the demons are subordinated to God and cannot act without his permission. It is by the permissive will of God that the Prince of Darkness himself continues his way until now. There will come a day of reckoning when God's authority will

apocalyptic. These important characteristics will be noted as the survey proceeds.

As part of the OT Pseudepigrapha,<sup>1</sup> a group of five Jewish apocalyptic writings<sup>2</sup> are studied here. These works are "writings falsely attributed to ideal figures featured in the Old Testament."<sup>3</sup> The purpose of selecting only these five writings is to demonstrate their usage of ἐξουσία, as it illuminates the relationship between Jewish and Christian apocalypses.

The Testament of Levi (T. Levi), one of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,<sup>4</sup> originated in the second century B.C.<sup>5</sup> Here ἐξουσία occurs twice.<sup>6</sup> According

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be acknowledged by all."

<sup>1</sup>See James H. Charlesworth, ed., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983).

<sup>2</sup>Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, 3 Baruch, and Testament of Solomon.

<sup>3</sup>Charlesworth, 1:xxv.

<sup>4</sup>For the Greek text, see Robert H. Charles, The Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs Edited from Nine MSS Together with the Variants of the Armenian and Slavonic Versions and Some Hebrew Fragments (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1960).

<sup>5</sup>Charlesworth, 1:777-778.

<sup>6</sup>3:8, reads: ἐν δὲ τῷ μετ' αὐτόν [Κύριος] εἰσι θρόνοι καὶ ἐξουσίαι" and 18:12, reads: καὶ δώσει [Κύριος] ἐξουσίαν τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτοῦ πατεῖν ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρὰ πνεύματα; cf. Charles, 34, 64. The closest NT allusion to T. Levi 18:12 is found in Luke 10:19: ἰδοὺ δέδωκα ὑμῖν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πατεῖν ἐπάνω ὄφρων καὶ σκορπίων, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, καὶ οὐδὲν ὑμᾶς οὐ μὴ

to Lightfoot, the phrase *θρόνοι καὶ ἐξουσίαι* in T. Levi 3:8 refers to "celestial hierarchy,"<sup>1</sup> placed in the seventh heaven, in the immediate presence of God. Robinson translates the expression as "powers of the other world."<sup>2</sup> The closest, and only, NT allusion to this phrase is Col 1:16, that reads: *ἔτε θρόνοι ἔτε κυριότητες ἔτε ἀρχαὶ ἔτε ἐξουσίαι*. The grouping of these four nouns is unique. Although *θρόνος* and *ἐξουσία* are both very important terms in Revelation, they never appear there in pair.

One of the most important among Jewish apocalyptic writings, is 1 (Ethiopic) Enoch. This composite work was probably written between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100,<sup>3</sup> and in its Greek fragments *ἐξουσία* appears three times.<sup>4</sup>

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ἀδικήση.

<sup>1</sup>Lightfoot, 153.

<sup>2</sup>Robinson, 263; cf. BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:571.

<sup>3</sup>Charlesworth, 1:7.

<sup>4</sup>9:5, 7; 25:4. For the fragments discussed below, see Robert H. Charles, The Ethiopic Version of the Book of Enoch Edited from Twenty-three MSS Together with the Fragmentary Greek and Latin Versions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906).

In 1 Enoch 9:5<sup>1</sup> one reads about God's *sovereignty* based on His creative activity, whereas 1 Enoch 9:7<sup>2</sup> and 25:4<sup>3</sup> refer to *delegated authority* to humans. Though the Greek fragment of 1 Enoch 17:1<sup>4</sup> does not contain ἐξουσία, it is discussed by Foerster as denoting "different powers which rule nature."<sup>5</sup> Perhaps Rev 14:18<sup>6</sup> could be considered as a remote allusion to 1 Enoch 17:1.

Although the exact date of the composition of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch is yet unknown and the text now exists only in Slavonic,<sup>7</sup> Foerster considers it a description of the seventh heaven, similar to that of T. Levi 3:8.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>It reads in Greek: Σὺ [Κύριος] γὰρ ἐποίησας τὰ πάντα, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχων; cf. Charles, Ethiopic Version, 23.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: Σεμιαζᾶς, ᾧ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκας ἀρχεῖν τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ; cf. *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>It reads in Greek: οὐδεμία σὰρξ ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ἄψασται αὐτοῦ; cf. *ibid.*, 63.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: οἱ ὄντες ἐκεῖ γίνονται ὡς πῦρ φλέγον; cf. *ibid.*, 47.

<sup>5</sup>Foerster, 2:573.

<sup>6</sup>It reads in Greek: καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος [ἐξῆλθεν] ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου [ὁ] ἔχων ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός.

<sup>7</sup>Charlesworth, 1:94-97.

<sup>8</sup>Foerster understands 2 Enoch 20:1 (the longer recension) as denoting "supernatural powers" (2:571). In the Greek language ἐξουσίαι would appear together with δυνάμεις, ἀρχαὶ, and κυριότητες.

The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch (3 Baruch)<sup>1</sup> is probably from the first to third century A.D.<sup>2</sup> The plural form of ἐξουσία occurs only once in 3 Baruch 12:3,<sup>3</sup> denoting "principalities" or "authorities" with angels who rule over them. A similar expression with δύναμις also appears in this work,<sup>4</sup> perhaps referring to angels in charge of heavenly beings. Another important construction in 3 Baruch is Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ (the Lord God, the Almighty),<sup>5</sup> which appears in the NT, especially in the Book of Revelation,<sup>6</sup> that might reflect the common apocalyptic milieu of A.D. 100.

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<sup>1</sup>For the Greek text, see J.-C. Picard, ed., Apocalypsis Baruchi Graece, Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece, Volumen Secundum (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Charlesworth, 1:655-656.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek text reads: οὗτοι εἰσὶν ἄγγελοι ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξουσιῶν; cf. Picard, 94.

<sup>4</sup>3 Baruch 1:8; 2:6, read: ὁ ἄγγελος τῶν δυνάμεων; cf. *ibid.*, 82, 83.

<sup>5</sup>3 Baruch 1:3.

<sup>6</sup>The term παντοκράτωρ is used 10 times in the NT (2 Cor 6:18; Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22). The above construction can be found 6 times in Revelation (4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22).

The last, and most important, item of this pseudepigrapha is the Testament of Solomon (T. Sol.),<sup>1</sup> also from the first to third century A.D.<sup>2</sup> 'Εξουσία occurs a total of nine times<sup>3</sup> in this writing, predominantly in the doxologies<sup>4</sup> where it designates authority over demons granted by God to Solomon.<sup>5</sup> In two passages, however, the term denotes the authority of the Son of God over evil spirits.<sup>6</sup> Finally, in two places<sup>7</sup> the plural form of ἐξουσία

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<sup>1</sup>For the Greek text, see Chester Charlton McCown, The Testament of Solomon Edited from Manuscripts at Mount Athos, Bologna, Holkham Hall, Jerusalem, London, Milan, Paris and Vienna, Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 9 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1922).

<sup>2</sup>Charlesworth, 1:940-943.

<sup>3</sup>Title Rec. A; 1:1; 5:13; 8:1; 13:7; 15:11; 18:3; 20:15; 22:20 Rec. B.

<sup>4</sup>1:1; 5:13; 8:1; 13:7, and 18:3, which is the only exception; cf. McCown, 5, 25, 31, 45, 51, where the Greek clause, ἐδόξασα τὸ θεὸν τὸν δόντα μοι τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην, is repeated three times with little variation.

<sup>5</sup>The verb ἐξουσιάζω also appears in T. Sol. 1:5 and 9:8 Rec. C, with this meaning; cf. *ibid.*, 10, 77.

<sup>6</sup>15:11, reads: καὶ τίς λάβη τοιαύτην ἐξουσίαν κατὰ πνευμάτων εἰ μὴ ἐκεῖνος [ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ]; and 22:20 Rec. B, reads: ὁ μονάρχης θεὸς ὁ ἔχων ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ, ὁ διὰ παρθένου μέλλον γενᾶσθαι; cf. *ibid.*, 47, 69.

<sup>7</sup>Title Rec. A; 20:15.

refers to evil<sup>1</sup> as well as good (heavenly)<sup>2</sup> "authorities," the latter separated from demons.<sup>3</sup> Foerster considers T. Sol. 20:15 as "the clearest and most explicit passage"<sup>4</sup> that describes supernatural powers.<sup>5</sup>

In summary, the surveyed pseudepigrapha employed ἐξουσία/ἐξουσίαι with three shades of meaning: (1) delegated authority over demons, (2) heavenly principalities (angels or demons), and (3) God's sovereignty. The term is used mostly in the Testament of Solomon. An important construction for Revelation is Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ which occurs in 3 Baruch 1:3. The similarities between these works and some NT passages might reflect the common apocalyptic milieu of A.D. 100.

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<sup>1</sup>The Greek reads: καὶ τίνες αἱ ἐξουσίαι [οἱ δαίμονες] αὐτῶν κατὰ ἀνθρώπων; cf. *ibid.*, 98.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: αἱ γὰρ ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι καὶ δυνάμεις; cf. *ibid.*, 62.

<sup>3</sup>This "separation" is attested in Rev 12:7-12, which reads: οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ [δράκοντος] μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐβλήθησαν. This theme might also reflect the common apocalyptic milieu of A.D. 100.

<sup>4</sup>Foerster, 2:571; cf. BAG, 278, here these supernatural powers are designated "rulers of the spirit world."

<sup>5</sup>For similar expressions for these powers, see Eph 1:21 (ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως); 3:10 (ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ ταῖς ἐξουσίαις); Col 1:16 (ἀρχαὶ ἢτε ἐξουσίαι), and 1 Pet 3:22 (ἐξουσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων). Cf. also the phrase οἱ κοσμοκράτορες τοῦ σκότους in T. Sol. 8:2; 18:2; and Eph 6:12.

### Qumran Writings

In this section one of the Hebrew terms for power, מְּשָׁלָה "dominion, kingdom,"<sup>1</sup> is surveyed in two Qumran documents. It occurs that the word is used both positively and negatively.<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew/Aramaic רְשׁוּת "ruling power, government," does not appear in the Qumran Writings.<sup>3</sup>

In the Community Rule (1QS) the term occurs four times,<sup>4</sup> always in a negative sense.<sup>5</sup> In the War Scroll (1QM) מְּשָׁלָה is employed nine times<sup>6</sup> in the following three different contexts: (1) in a positive way (3 times);<sup>7</sup> (2) in

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<sup>1</sup>מְּשָׁלָה is also used in the MT 17 times: Gen 1:16; 1 Kgs 9:19; 2 Kgs 20:13; Isa 22:21; 39:2; Jer 24:1; 51:28; Mic 4:8; Pss 103:22; 114:2; 136:8, 9; 145:13; Dan 11:5; 2 Chr 8:6; 32:9.

<sup>2</sup>When references are made to God or His people the meaning of the term is always positive, in all other cases it has a negative connotation.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>4</sup>1QS 1:18, 23; 2:19; 3:23; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>5</sup>1QS 1:18, 23; 2:19 read: "Dominion of Satan"; cf. Geza Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English, 3d ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1990; reprint), 62-63. 1QS 3:23 reads: "His [Angel of Darkness] dominion"; cf. Vermes, 65.

<sup>6</sup>1QM 13:5; 14:9, 11; 17:5, 6; 18:1, 7; 19:10, 11.

<sup>7</sup>1QM 13:5 reads: "His [Prince of Light] dominion"; 1QM 17:6 says: "Kingdom of Michael"; 1QM 19:11 reads: "Dominion to Israel"; cf. Vermes, 119, 122, 124; Betz, 2:608.



a negative sense (5 times);<sup>1</sup> and (3) with a general meaning (1 time).<sup>2</sup>

Summarizing, it appears that in the two surveyed Qumran documents מְמִשְׁלָה is used in harmony with the community's understanding of the merciless struggle between the forces of light and darkness.<sup>3</sup>

### Hellenistic Jewish Authors

Both Philo and Josephus employed ἐξουσία following the classical Greek usage, but they particularly emphasized the aspect of authoritative, ruling power.<sup>4</sup> Josephus used the term five times more<sup>5</sup> than Philo.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>1QM 14:9 reads: "Dominion of Satan"; 14:11 says: "His [Satan] dominion"; 17:5 reads: "Kingdom of wickedness"; 18:1 says: "His [Satan] kingdom"; 18:7 reads: "dominion of the enemy"; cf. Vermes, 120, 122, 123, 123; Betz, 2:608.

<sup>2</sup>1QM 19:10 says: "kingdom of the nations"; cf. Vermes, 124.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 1QS 1:15, where one of the purposes of the Qumran community is expressed as follows: "That they may love all the sons of light, each according to his lot in God's design, and hate all the sons of darkness, each according to his guilt in God's vengeance"; cf. Vermes, 62.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Betz, 2:607-608; Foerster, 2:563-564.

<sup>5</sup>See Karl Heinrich Rengstorff, ed., A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus, vol. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; 155/156 occurrences of the term are listed.

<sup>6</sup>See Günter Mayer, Index Philoneus (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1974), s.v. "ἐξουσία"; 31 occurrences of the term are listed.

*Philo*

Foerster asserts that Philo (ca. 20 B.C.-A.D. 50) generally followed the "ordinary Greek usage" of ἐξουσία meaning "permission, authority, right, office."<sup>1</sup> Philo also discussed some aspects of the problem of "absolute power."<sup>2</sup> Wink notes that ἐξουσία is used thirty-one times by Philo, but "without reference to spiritual Powers."<sup>3</sup> Betz simply states that Philo followed "the general Greek usage" with emphasis on authoritative, ruling power, which includes the absolute power of the king, the governor, the people, and God.<sup>4</sup> In the NTGED four different shades of the meaning of ἐξουσία in Philo's writings are listed: (1) freedom of action, (2) ruling power of officials, (3) authorities, and (4) absolute sovereignty of God.<sup>5</sup>

My own investigation indicates that Philo's uses of ἐξουσία can be divided into two main groups: (1) authority

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<sup>1</sup>Foerster, 2:564.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., where the notion includes the power of the king, the governor, the people, and God.

<sup>3</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 157.

<sup>4</sup>Betz, 2:608.

<sup>5</sup>NTGED, 483.

in human relationships<sup>1</sup> and (2) authority of supernatural beings.<sup>2</sup>

One of the largest groups of ἐξουσία occurrences with regard to human relationships, has to do with *abusive, despotic power*.<sup>3</sup> The term is used with an adjective to describe power/authority both quantitatively and qualitatively. In Flaccum 44 refers to the "superior power" of the Roman prefect Flaccus,<sup>4</sup> who abused his authority to the extent that a Jewish delegation, headed by Philo, was sent to Rome to see emperor Gaius Caligula.<sup>5</sup> De Iosepho 67 perceives the danger when a group of people becomes despotic.<sup>6</sup> De Iosepho 166 describes Joseph in Egypt as he

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<sup>1</sup>The first main group consists of (1) abuse of power, despotic power (7 times), (2) authority, power, permission, right (7 times), (3) absolute authority, claimed or granted (5 times), and (4) authorities, officials (once).

<sup>2</sup>The second main group contains (1) God's authority/power (10 times), and (2) the power of angels (once).

<sup>3</sup>Flacc. 44; Ios. 67, 166; Legat. 114; Mos. 1.328; Praem. 137; Spec. 3.137.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek phrase reads: ἀπὸ μείζονος ἐξουσίας ἀναρριπίζειν.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Philo, The Works of Philo, new updated 1 vol. ed., trans. C. D. Yonge (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), xii. Hereafter cited as "Yonge" when reference is made to his translation.

<sup>6</sup>The Greek reads: δεσποτικήν ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ δῆμος; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564.

pretended to abuse the "vastness of his authority."<sup>1</sup> In Legatio ad Gaium 114 Philo comments on emperor Gaius' "appetite" for "the greatest power."<sup>2</sup> In De vita Moysis 1.328 Philo reflects on the character of Moses, who did not use his ruling power in an "insolent" manner.<sup>3</sup> De praemiis et poenis (De exsecrationibus) 137 speaks about a person who is so possessed by power that he exhibits injustice through his despotic authority.<sup>4</sup> Finally, in De specialibus legibus 3.137 Philo warns the masters not to use their power violently against their slaves.<sup>5</sup>

The second largest group of ἐξουσία passages deals with the *legal aspects of human power relationships*. The term is used in a variety of ways. It denotes *power in a*

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<sup>1</sup>The phrase reads in the Greek: μεγέθει τῆς ἐξουσίας ἐπαρθείς; cf. Yonge, 449; Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup>The clause reads in Greek: ὅταν προσλάβῃ κενοδοξίαν ὁμοῦ καὶ φιλονεικίαν μετὰ τῆς μεγίστης ἐξουσίας; cf. Yonge, 767.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek says: ἦδεσαν γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐ καταλαξονεύμενον ἀρχῆς ἐξουσία; cf. Yonge, 490.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: τὸ μὲν δύνασθαι ἀδικεῖν ἐκ δεσποτικῆς ἐξουσίας; cf. Yonge, 677.

<sup>5</sup>In the Greek it reads: τοὺς κυρίους μὴ κατακόρως χρῆσθαι ταῖς ἐξουσίαις κατὰ τῶν οἰκετῶν; cf. Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 608.

general sense;<sup>1</sup> *permission* granted to a "free man,"<sup>2</sup> to "gladiators,"<sup>3</sup> to the "populace";<sup>4</sup> and *right*, given to "husbands,"<sup>5</sup> and to "fathers."<sup>6</sup>

The third group of ἐξουσία occurrences defines both claimed and granted *absolute authority*.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the term refers to the claimed authority of "kings or leaders,"<sup>8</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup>Legum allegoriae 2. 91, reads: ἀδείας καὶ ἐξουσίας λαβόμενα; cf. Yonge, 48.

<sup>2</sup>Quod omnis probus liber sit 59, here the accusative cum infinitivo clause reads: ὥστ' ἐξουσίαν σχήσει πάντα δρᾶν καὶ ζῆν ὡς βούλεται; cf. Yonge, 687.

<sup>3</sup>De vita contemplativa 43, says: μετὰ πλείονος ἐξουσίας καταπαλαίουσι; cf. Yonge, 702.

<sup>4</sup>In Flaccum 57, here the genitive absolute construction reads: ἐξουσιῶν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ γενομένων καὶ περισεσυλημένων τὰ ἴδια; cf. Yonge, 730.

<sup>5</sup>De specialibus legibus 2.24, says: ἀνέθηκε τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ τὰ ὁμοσθεντα, and *ibid.*, 3.70, reads: μήτε ἀναδύεσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐχέτω; cf. Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 570, 601.

<sup>6</sup>Legatio ad Gaium 28, reads: ἡ γὰρ υἱοῦ παντελῆς ἐξουσία κατὰ τοὺς τῶν Ῥωμαίων νόμους ἀνάκειται πατρί; cf. Yonge, 759; Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3.

<sup>7</sup>The noun ἐξουσία usually occurs with the adjective *αὐτοκρατής* (ruling/acting by one's own authority; absolute power).

<sup>8</sup>De opificio mundi 17, reads: πολλὴν φιλοτιμίαν βασιλέως ἢ τινος ἡγεμόνος αὐτοκρατοῦς ἐξουσίας μεταποιουμένου; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3; Yonge, 4.

emperors.<sup>1</sup> In two instances, ἐξουσία denotes granted authority: (1) by God to the godly<sup>2</sup> and (2) by parents to their child.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the plural phrase, ἐξουσίαις καὶ ἀρχαῖς, is used once to signify those who are *in high positions*.<sup>4</sup>

In the second main group of ἐξουσία occurrences the majority of the passages deal with *God's absolute power*. This power or authority is manifested in three ways: (1) God's ruling power in history,<sup>5</sup> (2) His power that changes

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<sup>1</sup>Legatio ad Gaium 26, reads: κοινοπραγεῖν τῆς αὐτοκρατοῦς ἐξουσίας; ibid., 54, says: αὐτοκρατεῖς ἐξουσίας περιποιησάμενοι; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3; Yonge, 759, 762.

<sup>2</sup>De virtutibus 218, says: τοὺς εὐσεβείας ἐραστὰς αὐτοκρατέσιν ἐξουσίαις γεραίροντος; cf. Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3; Yonge, 662.

<sup>3</sup>Legatio ad Gaium 190, reads: νεότης δὲ μετ' ἐξουσίας αὐτοκρατοῦς; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 774, translates: "And youth, when combined with absolute power . . . is an invincible evil."

<sup>4</sup>Legatio ad Gaium 71, reads: γενομένων ἐν ἀρχαῖς μεγάλαις καὶ ἐξουσίαις; cf. Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 763.

<sup>5</sup>De Abrahamo 129, says: τὴν ἡγεμονικὴν καὶ δεσποτικὴν ἴλασκόμενον ἐξουσίαν; cf. Yonge, 422; De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini 59, reads: ἡ δὲ ἐξουσία μέτρον ὑπηκόων; cf. Yonge, 101; De praemiis et poensis 124, reads: διὰ τὴν τοῦ προασπίζοντος ἐξουσίαν; cf. Yonge, 676.

individual human lives,<sup>1</sup> and (3) God's creative activity and sustaining power.<sup>2</sup> In one instance only, ἐξουσία refers to the limits of the power of angels.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, it is clear that Philo employed the term for both human and supernatural (spiritual) powers.<sup>4</sup> He obviously had some concerns about *abusive authority*, probably motivated by his own personal experience with Roman authorities.<sup>5</sup> Philo also emphasized the *legal aspects* of ἐξουσία without any reference to delegated authority.

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<sup>1</sup>Legum allegoriae 1.95, reads: [κυρίως] ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντος; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 35; De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini 60, says: δέξεται χαρακτήρας ἐξουσίας... αὐτοῦ; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 101; De somniis 2.294, reads: τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἐξουσίας [θεοῦ]; cf. Yonge, 409.

<sup>2</sup>Legum allegoriae 3.73, reads: οὐκ ἐξουσία πεποίηκεν ἀλλ' ἀγαθότητι; cf. Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3; Yonge, 58; De Cherubim 27, says: πρώτας δυνάμεις ἀγαθότητα καὶ ἐξουσίαν... ἐξουσία δὲ τοῦ γεννηθέντος ἀρχεῖν; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Yonge, 83; De specialibus legibus 1.294, reads: οὐ πρὸς τὰς ὑπερβολὰς τοῦ κράτους αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ἀπιδῶν; cf. Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, n. 3; Yonge, 562.

<sup>3</sup>De confusione linguarum 181, reads: οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις [ἀγγέλοις] ἔχουσι τὴν τοῦ κολάζειν αὐτοκράτορα ἐξουσίαν; cf. Yonge, 250.

<sup>4</sup>Contrary to the argument of Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, that ἐξουσία is never used by Philo for "spiritual Powers."

<sup>5</sup>Eight out of 31 times Philo's total ἐξουσία usages are concentrated in 2 of his writings: In Flaccum (2 times) and Legatio ad Gaium (6 times).

Almost one-third (10 times) of his total ἐξουσία passages deal with God's absolute power/authority.

### *Josephus*

A general observation of Josephus' (Joseph ben Matthias, A.D. 37-ca. 100) usage of the term reveals that he employed ἐξουσία with a much wider scope of meaning than Philo did. However, his focus was on human arrangements of power, including the idea of *delegated* authority, and not so much on power in the supernatural realm.

Foerster makes the valid statement that Josephus' usage of ἐξουσία parallels the "Classical Greek" use.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it generally denotes human relationships,<sup>2</sup> rather than the absolute monarchical power of God.<sup>3</sup> Foerster also points out that in a few instances ἐξουσία is employed by

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<sup>1</sup>Foerster, 2:564; cf. Betz, 2:607-608, here the following categories are provided: (1) permission, freedom of action, (2) power of kings, (3) delegated power of rulers/officials, (4) authorities, (5) authority of civil governments, granted by God, and (6) God's power. See also NTGED, 483, with the following shades of meaning: (1) absolute sovereignty of God, (2) freedom of action, (3) ruling power of officials, and (4) authorities.

<sup>2</sup>Foerster, 2:564, lists: (1) authority, permission, right, power of disposal, (2) authorities, (3) power of the king, and (4) influence.

<sup>3</sup>There are only 3 occasions when the term is used in that way. See Antiquitates Judaicae (AJ) 5.109; 18.214; and 18.281.



Josephus to mean an "antithesis to law" in human relationships.<sup>1</sup>

Wink asserts that the term is used 151 times in the writings of Josephus, which includes the notion of liberty.<sup>2</sup> Wink also notices that ἐξουσία is often paired with "other power language."<sup>3</sup>

According to Rengstorf's concordance, ἐξουσία is employed 155 times by Josephus, especially for the purpose of describing authority/power in human, *legal relationships*.<sup>4</sup> The term appears 79 times in Antiquitates Judaicae and 76 times in Josephus' other works.<sup>5</sup> The most frequent meaning of ἐξουσία is authority/power in the political or religious sphere of human relationships.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Foerster, 2:563, parallels ἐξουσία to ὕβρις, meaning self-asserted freedom or caprice.

<sup>2</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 157-158; the correct number is 155.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 158, here AJ 17.231; 18.214, 345; 20.11; and Vit. 190 are mentioned. The terms used with ἐξουσία are: δύναμις and ἀρχή.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Rengstorf, 126-127.

<sup>5</sup>Bellum Judaicum (58 times), Vita (11 times), and Contra Apionem (7 times).

<sup>6</sup>Out of its 155 occurrences, the term 114 times mean opportunity, permission, liberty, right, or simply power/authority.

Considering the overlap between meanings and the elusiveness in the meaning of the term,<sup>1</sup> 114 ἐξουσία passages can be divided as follows: (1) general usage, which denotes *authority/power* 32 times,<sup>2</sup> *authority/permission, authorization* 17 times,<sup>3</sup> *liberty/freedom* 6 times,<sup>4</sup> *right/privilege* 6 times,<sup>5</sup> and *opportunity* once;<sup>6</sup> (2) *characteristics of authority* 4 times;<sup>7</sup> (3) *authority/power*

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<sup>1</sup>Especially, when ἐξουσία denotes kingly/imperial power, political power, or delegated authority.

<sup>2</sup>AJ 1.156; 1.256; 2.12; 2.52; 2.153; 2.198; 4.32; 4.186; 5.299; 6.264; 6.265; 6.279; 7.38; 7.195; 7.264; 7.270; 8.156; 13.354; 14.367; 15.43; 15.76; 15.203; 15.205; 15.246; 15.260; 16.359; 18.163; 18.239; 18.342; Vit. 348; Ap. 2.225.

<sup>3</sup>AJ 2.227; 3.104; 3.263; 3.266; 4.88; 4.172; 6.137; 8.17; 13.63; 14.167; 15.407; 20.193; Vit. 71; 75; 106; 419; Ap. 1.229.

<sup>4</sup>AJ 4.253; 12.325; 16.271; 20.180; Ap. 1.20; 2.252.

<sup>5</sup>AJ 4.247; 4.259; 12.303; 12.324; 18.90; 18.91.

<sup>6</sup>AJ 13.19.

<sup>7</sup>These expressions are unique phrases to Josephus, usually in the form of subjective genitive (subj. gen.): (1) AJ 17.33, reads: ἰσχύι τῆς ἐξουσίας; cf. Josephus, The Works of Josephus, new updated 1 vol. ed., trans. William Whiston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), 453, translates: "the power of authority" (Hereafter cited as "Whiston" when reference is made to his translation), and Josephus VIII, LCL, 387, renders: "powerful authority"; (2) AJ 17.96, reads: δυνάμει ἐξουσίας; cf. Whiston, 457, renders: "power or authority," and Josephus VIII, LCL, 417, translates: "extent of authority"; (3) AJ 17.115, reads: ἡδονὴν τῆς ἐξουσίας; cf. Whiston, 458, translates: "sweetness of authority," and Josephus VIII, LCL, 425, renders: "the pleasure of authority"; (4) AJ 19.245, reads: τῷ ἀξιώματι τῆς

of the *king/Caesar* 26 times;<sup>1</sup> and (4) *religious or political power* 22 times.<sup>2</sup>

The majority<sup>3</sup> of the remaining 41 occurrences of *ἐξουσία* have to do with authority delegated by earthly rulers. In most of the cases this ruler is Caesar,<sup>4</sup> then

*ἐξουσίας χρώμενον*; cf. Whiston, 517, renders: "one invested with dignity and authority," and *Josephus IX*, LCL, 327, translates: "speaking with dignity of one in authority."

<sup>1</sup>*BJ* 1.71; 1.85; 1.209; 1.494; 1.536; 1.625; 2.2; 2.36; *AJ* 7.391; 8.356; 11.44; 11.216; 16.106; 16.129; 16.162; 16.367; 17.240; 18.240; 18.297; 19.210; 19.280; 19.287; 20.11; *Vit.* 112; 343; *Ap.* 1.98.

<sup>2</sup>*BJ* 1.110; 4.222; 4.336; *AJ* 2.68; 13.88; 14.302; 15.295; 15.405; 17.32; 17.210; 17.231; 17.239; 20.6; 20.7; 20.12; *Vit.* 80; 89; 190; *Ap.* 2.159; 2.164.

<sup>3</sup>21 passages.

<sup>4</sup>*BJ* 1.474, reads: οὐδενὶ γὰρ βασιλέων Καίσαρ τοσαύτην ἔδωκεν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 581, translates: "privilege"; *BJ* 2.117, reads: λαβὼν παρὰ Καίσαρος ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 604, renders: "having the power of [life and] death"; *BJ* 7.225, reads: λαβὼν ἐξουσίαν πράττειν ἃ δοκεῖ συμφέρειν; cf. Whiston, 761; *AJ* 14.124, reads: τῆς παρὰ Καίσαρος ἐξουσίας; cf. Whiston, 373; *AJ* 16.92, reads: παρὰ Καίσαρος ἐξουσίαν ἔχει; cf. Whiston, 432; *AJ* 16.356, reads: αὐτῷ γὰρ ἐφεῖναι ταύτην τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 447; *AJ* 16.365, reads: τὴν ἐξουσίαν αὐτὸς ἔχει; cf. Whiston, 448; *AJ* 17.183, reads: ἐξουσία τῆς ἐπὶ τῷ παιδὶ τιμωρίας; cf. Whiston, 463; *AJ* 17.231, reads: τὴν τιμωρίαν εἰς τοὺς ἐξουσία; cf. Whiston, 467; *AJ* 17.312, reads: ἐπὶ Καίσαρι δοῦναι καὶ μὴ τὴν ἐξουσίαν εἶναι; cf. Whiston, 472; *AJ* 18.2, reads: Κωπώνιος τε . . . ἡγησόμενος Ἰουδαίων τῇ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἐξουσία; cf. *Josephus IX*, LCL, 5, translates: "full authority," and Whiston, 476, renders: "supreme authority"; *AJ* 20.15, reads: ἠτήσατο . . . Ἡρώδης . . . τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ νεῶ καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν χρημάτων; cf. Whiston, 526.

the Pharaoh,<sup>1</sup> kings,<sup>2</sup> and a queen.<sup>3</sup> In one instance, authority is delegated by the city officials of Jerusalem to Josephus,<sup>4</sup> and by Josephus himself to his countrymen.<sup>5</sup> Finally, in one place, soldiers who grew old delegated their power/authority to others.<sup>6</sup>

In two instances authority is delegated by God to human beings. First, to the king of Israel<sup>7</sup> and then, to Anileus.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AJ 2.90, reads: ταύτης αὐτῶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως δοθείσης; cf. Whiston, 58.

<sup>2</sup>BJ 4.342, reads: τῆς δοθείσης αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίας; cf. Whiston, 681; AJ 11.169, reads: παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως λαβεῖν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 297; AJ 11.278, reads: τὸν αἴτιον αὐτῶ τῆς ἐξουσίας; cf. Whiston, 303; AJ 20.16, reads: πᾶσι τοῖς ἀπογόνοις αὐτοῦ παρέμεινεν ἡ ἐξουσία; cf. Whiston, 526.

<sup>3</sup>AJ 13.401, reads: τοῖς Φαρισαίοις ἐξουσίαν τινα παρασχεῖν; cf. Whiston, 362.

<sup>4</sup>Vit. 72, reads: τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῶν ἐκεῖ πραγμάτων... πεπιστεῦσθαι; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Whiston, 5.

<sup>5</sup>BJ 2.570, reads: μεταδιδούς τῆς ἐξουσίας αὐτοῖς; cf. Whiston, 633, translates "he communicated part of his power."

<sup>6</sup>BJ 4.593, reads: ἑτέροις χαρίζονται τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 692, translates "give leave to others to use such a power."

<sup>7</sup>AJ 7.277, reads: ἐξουσίαν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ λαβὼν.

<sup>8</sup>AJ 18.345, reads: ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου προελθοῦσαν ἐξουσίαν.

Josephus devoted fourteen passages<sup>1</sup> to the problem of abusive authority. In five places his references were positive, affirming that certain persons decided not to abuse their authority.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, in nine passages one can read about the abusive authority of an Israelite king;<sup>3</sup> of Archelaus, son of Herod the Great;<sup>4</sup> of Gessius Florus, Roman procurator;<sup>5</sup> of Caius (Caligula), Roman

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<sup>1</sup>BJ 1.206; 2.140; AJ 6.61; 6.150; 10.103; 14.161; 15.321; 16.98; 17.233; 18.25; 18.280; 19.65; 19.201; 20.253.

<sup>2</sup>BJ 1.206, reads: μηδέν δὲ ἀπειροκάλως εἰς τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐξυβρίζων; cf. Whiston, 559, translates: "[Phasaël] did not abuse his power in any disagreeable manner"; AJ 14.161, reads: οὐτ' ἐξυβρίζων εἰς τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 376, renders: "[Phasaël] did not abuse his authority"; BJ 2.140, reads: μηδέποτε ἐξυβρίζειν εἰς τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 606, translates: "he [an Essene] will at no time whatever abuse his authority"; AJ 15.231, reads: τὸ μὲν ἀπ' ἐξουσίας χρώμενον διατελεῖν ἅπαν ἀπεδοκίμαζεν; cf. Whiston, 418, renders: "he [Herod] entirely rejected the thoughts of using his authority (to abuse her)"; AJ 16.98, reads: οὐδ' . . . ἦν εἶχεν ἐξουσίαν ταύτη κατ' αὐτῶν χρησάμενος; cf. Whiston, 432, translates: "he [Herod] had authority . . . yet he had not made use of it against them [his sons]."

<sup>3</sup>AJ 6.61, reads: τῆς ἐξουσίας ἀφειδῶς ἐμφορούμενος; cf. Whiston, 156, renders: "[the king] wholly carried away with the lust of power"; AJ 6.150, reads: ἀγαιρεθησόμενος καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 163, translates: "that authority which thou [king Saul] hast abused."

<sup>4</sup>AJ 17.233, reads: φιλοτιμῖα τοῦ ἀρχεῖν προλαμβανόντων τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. Whiston, 467, translates: "out of a desire of ruling, seize upon the government."

<sup>5</sup>AJ 18.25, reads: τῆ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ ὑβρίζειν; cf. Whiston, 478, renders: "abuse of his authority"; AJ 20.253, reads: περὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐγένετο κακὸς καὶ βίαιος; cf. Whiston, 541, translates: "so wicked, and so violent in the use of his

emperor;<sup>1</sup> and of Callistus, a freedman of Caius.<sup>2</sup> In a general sense, imperial authority itself can be abusive,<sup>3</sup> and a whole multitude can show characteristics of an abusive authority.<sup>4</sup>

In three passages Josephus employed ἐξουσία to denote God's power/authority.<sup>5</sup> Finally, in one place, the  


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 authority."

<sup>1</sup>AJ 19.201, reads: τῆς τε ἐξουσίας ἐφ' ἐνὶ μόνῳ πιμπλάμενος τῷ ὑβρίζειν; cf. Josephus IX, LCL, 309, translates: "He was greedy of power with one object only, to treat abusively."

<sup>2</sup>AJ 19.65, reads: ἐξουσία χρησάμενος παρὰ τὸ εἰκός; cf. Josephus IX, LCL, 247, renders: "His authority had been exercised beyond all reason."

<sup>3</sup>AJ 18.280, reads: ὑβρεῖν πεσεῖν τῆς τῶν ἡγεμονευόντων ἐξουσίας, which translates: "to fall into abuse of the imperial authority."

<sup>4</sup>AJ 10.103, reads: ὁ πᾶς ὄχλος ἐπ' ἐξουσίας ὑβρίζεν ἃ ἠθέλεν; cf. Josephus VI, LCL, 215, translates: "The entire multitude had licence to act as outrageously as it pleased," literally: "the whole multitude abused their authority as they pleased." Cf. also Foerster, 2:563, translates "self-asserted freedom, caprice."

<sup>5</sup>AJ 5.109, reads: ἀποδρᾶναι τὴν ἐξουσίαν αὐτοῦ... [τοῦ θεοῦ] ἀδύνατον; cf. Betz, 2:608; AJ 18.214, reads: ἐπίνοιαν [Τιβέριος]... τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς ἐξουσίας, literally: "he reflected on the divine power"; cf. BAG, 277; Foerster, 2:564; AJ 18.281, reads: ἀνθρωπίνης μηχανῆς καὶ δυνάμεως ἢ κατ' ἐκείνῳ [τὸν θεόν] ἐξουσία, literally: "His authority is beyond all human ingenuity and power"; cf. Whiston, 495.

plural form of ἐξουσία signifies the authority of Roman procurators.<sup>1</sup>

In summary, Josephus used ἐξουσία far more intensively than Philo did in his works. The great majority of Josephus' usages, however, have to do with human power relationships. Thus, some thoughts are devoted to the question of delegated human power/authority, and to the problem of abusive authority, manifested in the actions of the rulers of the first-century Roman empire. Josephus makes relatively few references to supernatural powers.

#### **Rabbinic Works**

It appears that the majority of the מושׁל (ruling power, government) occurrences in the Mishnah have to do with personal, legal rights or (especially in the plural form of the term) civil establishments. On the other hand, the term generally denotes supernatural powers in the Talmud and in other Rabbinic works.

In the Mishnah, one finds at least four different usages<sup>2</sup> of מושׁל, most commonly prescribing *personal rights*.

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<sup>1</sup>BJ 2.350, reads: θεραπεύειν γάρ, οὐκ ἐρεθίζειν χρὴ τὰς ἐξουσίας, literally: "but to be submissive not to irritate those in authority"; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:564; Whiston, 621, renders "to be submissive to those in authority, and not give them any provocation."

<sup>2</sup>(1) personal rights (7 times); (2) freedom of choice (twice); (3) civil authorities (twice); and (4)

Thus, the term defines the rights of someone, in a general sense;<sup>1</sup> the rights of a house owner over livestock that wanders onto his property;<sup>2</sup> the rights of an attorney, in the case of a betrothal;<sup>3</sup> the regulations, dealing with Levirate marriage;<sup>4</sup> the rights of a widow to inherit;<sup>5</sup> the rights of a divorced woman;<sup>6</sup> and the rights of a married woman.<sup>7</sup>

In two instances, אָשׁוּׁר expresses the human *freedom of choice*.<sup>8</sup> In Aboth 3:16 God's omniscience and human freedom are compared.<sup>9</sup> In Shebuoth 3:6 oaths are compared in relation to free choice.<sup>10</sup>

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supernatural powers (once).

<sup>1</sup>Mishnah Baba Kamma 3:5; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>2</sup>Mishnah Baba Kamma 5:3; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>3</sup>Mishnah Kiddushin 4:9; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>4</sup>Mishnah Yebamoth 4:11; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>5</sup>Mishnah Ketuboth 9:5; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:565.

<sup>6</sup>Mishnah Nedarim 10:3; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:565.

<sup>7</sup>Mishnah Nedarim 10:4; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:565.

<sup>8</sup>Mishnah Aboth 3:16; Shebuoth 3:6; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:565.

<sup>9</sup>The statement reads: "All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given."

<sup>10</sup>The text reads: "An oath that concerns a matter of free choice . . . an oath that concerns a commandment."



The plural form, רְשׁוּתָּ (powers, authorities), signifies *human authorities* in a pejorative sense.<sup>1</sup> Finally, רְשׁוּתָּ appears once in a polemical context, defending monotheism and referring to *supernatural powers*.<sup>2</sup>

In the Babylonian Talmud (B. Talmud) רְשׁוּתָּ is also employed in four different contexts,<sup>3</sup> predominantly describing the activities of *supernatural powers*. Thus, in Hagigah 12b,<sup>4</sup> it is stated that the heaven is the dwelling

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<sup>1</sup>Mishnah Aboth 1:10, reads: "Shemaiah said: Love labour and hate mastery and seek not acquaintance with the ruling power"; cf. Edwin A. Abbott, Johannine Vocabulary: A Comparison of the Words of the Fourth Gospel with Those of the Three (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1905), 88, n. 1, translates: "Love work; and hate lordship [Rabbanuth]; and make not thyself known to the government"; and Betz, 2:608. Mishnah Aboth 2:3, reads: "Be heedful of the ruling power for they bring no man nigh to them save for their own need: they seem to be friends such time as it is to their gain, but they stand not with a man in his time of stress"; cf. Abbott, 88, n. 1, renders: "Be cautious with those in authority, for they let not a man approach them but for their own purposes"; and Betz, 2:608.

<sup>2</sup>Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5, reads: "The heretics [*Minim*] should not say, 'There are many ruling powers in heaven'"; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:572.

<sup>3</sup>(1) supernatural powers (twice); (2) freedom or permission (twice); (3) authorization or right (once); and (4) delegated power to angels (once).

<sup>4</sup>The text reads: "Ma'on [dwelling habitation] is that in which there are companies of Ministering Angels"; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:573.

place of angelic beings. In Sanhedrin 38a,<sup>1</sup> the term is used in an apology defending monotheism.<sup>2</sup>

In two instances, שׁוּן denotes *freedom* or *permission*. First, it refers to Sabbath regulations<sup>3</sup> then, to Levitical purity.<sup>4</sup>

Once the term means *right* or *authorization* to teach.<sup>5</sup> Finally, שׁוּן somewhat similarly conveys the idea of *permission* granted to angels for destruction.<sup>6</sup>

In the Jerusalem Talmud (J. Talmud) שׁוּן describes the *absolute power* or *authority* of God,<sup>7</sup> whereas the plural form of the word denotes *supernatural powers* in a polemic

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<sup>1</sup>It reads: "That the Sadducees [*Minim*] might not say: There are many ruling powers in Heaven"; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:572.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5, with a similar statement.

<sup>3</sup>B. Talmud Berakhoth 27b; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>4</sup>B. Talmud Hullin 106a; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>5</sup>B. Talmud Sanhedrin 5a, reads: "If he has not obtained authorisation, his judgment is invalid." This statement is repeated about 12 times within one paragraph; cf. Betz, 2:608.

<sup>6</sup>B. Talmud Pesahim 112b, reads: "She [*Igrath*] and 180,000 destroying angels go forth, and each has permission to wreak destruction independently"; cf. Betz, 2:608, translates "authority given to the destroying angels."

<sup>7</sup>J. Talmud Sanhedrin 6:23; cf. Betz, 2:608; Foerster, 2:566.

context.<sup>1</sup> A similar statement can also be found in Genesis Rabbah,<sup>2</sup> clearly indicating a monotheistic overtone.

In summary, in the Mishnah the singular form, רְשׁוּת is more common, and it usually stands for personal, human rights. The plural form, רְשׁוּתוֹת, generally denotes human or supernatural powers.

The Babylonian Talmud, similarly, employs the singular form for permission or authorization, whereas the plural form exclusively stands for supernatural powers, always in an apologetic context. The Jerusalem Talmud and the Midrash Rabbah follow the above pattern.

#### **Summary**

The earliest ἐξουσία occurrences had to do with the ability and possibility of someone who performs an action. Later the Greco-Roman works predominantly employed ἐξουσία to denote the power/authority of an office and the misuse of such authority. Inscriptions generally described personal human rights granted by state law.

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<sup>1</sup>J. Talmud Megillah 4:10; cf. Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5, and B. Talmud Sanhedrin 38a.

<sup>2</sup>Genesis Rabbah 1:7 on Gen 1:1, Jacob Neusner, Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985), 7, reads: "So that no creature may differ, saying, 'Two powers gave the Torah, two powers created the world.'"

Among Jewish writings the pseudepigrapha used ἔξουσία to refer to delegated authority either in the human or in the supernatural realm. Both Philo and Josephus followed the classical Greek usage of ἔξουσία and had some concerns about abusive authority. While almost one-third of Philo's ἔξουσία passages dealt with God's authority, Josephus' focus was on human arrangements of power.

### Biblical Writings

The two main categories of biblical writings are the LXX and the NT. The Theodotion (Θ) translation of Daniel is noted when it differs from the LXX. The Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents of ἔξουσία in the MT are pointed out as this study progresses.

#### Ἐξουσία/ἐξουσιάζειν in the LXX

This survey of the ἔξουσία/ἐξουσιάζειν word-group is based on the critical edition of the LXX text by Alfred Rahlfs.<sup>1</sup> The Hatch and Redpath concordance<sup>2</sup> lists seventy-

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<sup>1</sup>Alfred Rahlfs, ed., Septuaginta, Editio minor, Duo volumina in uno (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

<sup>2</sup>Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, eds., A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books), 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), s.v. "ἔξουσία."

two occurrences of ἐξουσία (including 13 in Theodotion's Daniel) and eighteen uses of ἐξουσιάζειν in the LXX.<sup>1</sup>

Foerster, in the TDNT, does not provide an exact number of ἐξουσία in the LXX.<sup>2</sup> Betz, in the NIDNTT, gives fifty occurrences of the term.<sup>3</sup> In the NTGED one finds the approximation, "ca. 50 times,"<sup>4</sup> while Wink supports fifty-nine ἐξουσία uses in the LXX.<sup>5</sup>

My own computer analysis of the LXX text<sup>6</sup> furnishes 65 references for ἐξουσία, and 16 for ἐξουσιάζειν. In the Theodotion text of Daniel and Bel ἐξουσία appears 12 times.<sup>7</sup>

In the TDNT we find the following shades of meaning of ἐξουσία in the LXX: (1) right, authority, permission/freedom (in a legal or political sense); (2) permission

<sup>1</sup>Some references are also made to the translations of Aquila and Symmachus.

<sup>2</sup>Foerster, 2:564.

<sup>3</sup>Betz, 2:607.

<sup>4</sup>NTGED, 483.

<sup>5</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 157. His number is based on the CS figure.

<sup>6</sup>All references to my computer analysis are based on Bible Windows 4.0 CD (Cedar Hill, TX: Silver Mountain Software, 1995).

<sup>7</sup>See appendices A, B, and C for the lists of these references including the Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents in the MT.

granted/withheld by the Jewish law; (3) right or permission given by God; (4) power of the king or God; and (5) authorities.<sup>1</sup> The NIDNTT shows a similar grouping of the term: (1) permission to do (by law); (2) dominion, power granted by God; (3) dominion, kingdom; and (4) God's rule.<sup>2</sup> The NTGED also provides a somewhat similar list: (1) freedom of action; (2) territory of one's dominion; (3) ruling power/dominion delegated by God; (4) God's power (absolute sovereignty); and (5) authorities.<sup>3</sup> W. Wink remarks in the first volume of his trilogy that when ἐξουσία is used in the LXX, it is "usually in reference to humans, occasionally to God, but never to angels or demons or other spiritual powers."<sup>4</sup>

My own investigation indicates that the noun ἐξουσία is employed in the LXX in five different ways.<sup>5</sup> The verb

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<sup>1</sup>Foerster, 2:564.

<sup>2</sup>Betz, 2:607.

<sup>3</sup>NTGED, 483.

<sup>4</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 157, mentions 2 Macc 3:24 as a possible exception.

<sup>5</sup>Out of the total of 65 occurrences, the noun means: (1) might, power, permission (delegated authority) (30 times); (2) dominion, kingdom (16 times); (3) God's power or dominion (10 times); (4) an office of authority, magistracy (including the plural form of ἐξουσία) (6 times); and (5) angelic powers (once). The remaining 2 occurrences are unique: 3 Macc 7:12 refers to *royal permissions* (πάσης βασιλικῆς ἐξουσίας) and 4 Macc 6:33 describes an *authority of*

ἐξουσιάζειν also has five shades of meaning, but different from the above.<sup>2</sup>

### 'Εξουσία

The largest group of ἐξουσία occurrences (30) in the LXX has to do with *might, power, permission, or delegated authority*.<sup>2</sup> The earliest attestations of ἐξουσία in this sense are 1 Esdr 4:28, 40, where references are made to the king's power (ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ),<sup>3</sup> and to a woman's authority (αὐτῆ ἡ ἐξουσία). Esth 3:13b contains a statement by King Artaxerxes regarding arrogance which could characterize kingly power (μὴ τω θράσει τῆς ἐξουσίας ἐπαιρόμενος). Eight passages in the books of Maccabees<sup>4</sup>

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*rulership* (τὴν τῆς ἡγεμονίας ἐξουσίαν).

<sup>2</sup>Out of the total of 16 occurrences, the verb denotes: (1) tyrannical rulership (5 times); (2) official rulers (4 times); (3) power, control, authority (4 times); (4) to empower (twice); and (5) kingly power/authority (once).

<sup>2</sup>1 Esdr 4:28, 40; Esth 3:13b; 1 Macc 1:13; 10:6, 8, 32, 35; 11:58; 2 Macc 4:9, 24; 7:16; 3 Macc 7:21; 4 Macc 4:5; 5:15; Prov 17:14; Eccl 8:8; Wis 10:14; Sir 9:13; 17:2; 30:11; 33:20; 47:17; Pss. Sol. 9:4; Dan 3:97; 5:7, 16, 29; 6:4; Bel 25.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. BAG, 277.

<sup>4</sup>1 Macc 1:13; 10:6, 8, 32; 11:58; 2 Macc 4:9; 4 Macc 4:5; 5:15; cf. BAG, 277-278; Foerster, 2:566; Robinson, 263.

clearly indicate delegated authority,<sup>1</sup> whereas four passages<sup>2</sup> state the fact that one *has* (or does not have) authority (ἔχω ἐξουσίαν). In two instances ἐξουσία simply denotes "power."<sup>3</sup> In Prov 17:14, ἐξουσία and ἀρχή are juxtaposed, perhaps as synonyms (ἐξουσίαν δίδωσιν λόγοις ἀρχὴ δικαιοσύνης). Wis 10:14 describes how wisdom helps to gain power over those who tyrannize others (ἕως ἠνεγκεν αὐτῶ... ἐξουσίαν τυραννούντων αὐτοῦ).<sup>4</sup> In Sirach ἐξουσία means "power to do," in an accusative cum infinitivo construction (ὃς ἔχει ἐξουσίαν τοῦ φονεύειν);<sup>5</sup> "authority" delegated by God to humans (ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν);<sup>6</sup> and "freedom" or "authority" expressed as a wish by an aorist subjunctive (μὴ δῶς ἐξουσίαν).<sup>7</sup> In Daniel ἐξουσία denotes "delegated

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<sup>1</sup>Expressed by the Greek verbs δίδωμι and λαμβάνω in acc. cum inf. constructions.

<sup>2</sup>1 Macc 10:35; 2 Macc 4:24; 7:16; 3 Macc 7:21; cf. BAG, 277-278; Foerster, 2:566.

<sup>3</sup>Eccl 8:8 (it translates the Hebrew יָחַזַק, meaning "to have power"), and Pss. Sol. 9:4.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. AS, 161; BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:564.

<sup>5</sup>Sir 9:13; cf. AS, 161; Foerster, 2:564.

<sup>6</sup>Sir 17:2; 45:17; cf. BAG, 278.

<sup>7</sup>Sir 30:11; cf. BAG, 277; The Apocrypha, trans. Edgar J. Goodspeed (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 280, renders "liberty." Hereafter cited as "Goodspeed" when



authority,"<sup>1</sup> or "having power."<sup>2</sup> In Bel 25 the term means "permission" granted by Nebuchadnezzar (δός μοι τὴν ἐξουσίαν).

The second group of ἐξουσία passages (16) in the LXX defines *dominion* or *kingdom*.<sup>3</sup> First, that of a king,<sup>4</sup> then, in a figurative sense, that of the sun and moon,<sup>5</sup> and wisdom.<sup>6</sup> In Dan 4:31, 37a, 37b the term appears five times, and in four instances it signifies the dominion of Nebuchadnezzar. In Dan 7:12, 14, 26, 27 ἐξουσία is the rendering of the Aramaic ܢܘܠܫܐ (dominion, power), and

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reference is made to his translation. Sir 33:20; cf. BAG, 278.

<sup>1</sup>Dan 3:97; 5:7, 29 expressed by the Greek δίδωμι. The MT has the Aramaic ܢܘܠܫܐ (to rule/have dominion or power over) or ܢܘܠܫܐ (to rule/have power), whereas θ renders ἀρχω; cf. BAG, 278; Foerster, 2:566.

<sup>2</sup>Dan 5:16; the MT reads the Aramaic ܢܘܠܫܐ (to rule/have dominion or power over), while θ renders ἀρχω; and Dan 6:4.

<sup>3</sup>4 Kgdm 20:13; 1 Macc 6:11; 2 Macc 3:6; Ps 135:8-9; Sir 24:11; Dan 4:31, 37; 7:12, 14, 26, 27.

<sup>4</sup>4 Kgdm 20:13 (it stands for the Hebrew ܠܫܘܢܐ, meaning "dominion, kingdom"); 1 Macc 6:11; 2 Macc 3:6.

<sup>5</sup>Ps 135:8-9, translates the Hebrew ܠܫܘܢܐ; cf. AS, 161; BAG, 278; Marsh, 319; Robinson, 263. The passage is an allusion to Gen 1:16, where ܠܫܘܢܐ is used. Here Theodotion renders ἐξουσία, while the LXX translates ἀρχή.

<sup>6</sup>The Greek text of Sir 24:11 refers to wisdom that had dominion over Jerusalem: καὶ ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ ἡ ἐξουσία μου; cf. Foerster, 2:564, translates ἐξουσία as "kingdom," Goodspeed, 269, renders it "authority over".

designates the dominions of the beasts,<sup>1</sup> of υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,<sup>2</sup> and of λαὸς ἅγιος ὑψίστου.<sup>3</sup>

The third group of ἐξουσία occurrences (10) clearly denotes God's authority or dominion.<sup>4</sup> In Esth 4:17b the term is rendered "control over."<sup>5</sup> In Jdt 8:15 ἐξουσία defines "authority."<sup>6</sup> In Ps 113:2 ἐξουσία translates the Hebrew הַשְׁמָדָה meaning "dominion."<sup>7</sup> In Wis 16:13 God has "power" over life and death. In Sir 10:4 and Dan 4:27 God has rulership over the whole earth (ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ [Κύριος] ἐπὶ πάση τῇ γῆ). In Dan 4:17, 31 God is exalted as "the Lord/God of Heaven" who has "all authority" in Heaven and on the earth,<sup>8</sup> in general, and over human dominions,<sup>9</sup> in

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<sup>1</sup>Dan 7:12, 26, here θ translates ἡ ἀρχή; cf. NTGED, 483.

<sup>2</sup>Dan 7:14, here θ renders both ἐξουσία and ἀρχή; cf. Grundmann, 57; NTGED, 483.

<sup>3</sup>In Dan 7:27 θ also translates ἐξουσία.

<sup>4</sup>Esth 4:17b; Jdt 8:15; Ps 113:2; Wis 16:13; Sir 10:4; Dan 4:17, 27, 31, 37; 5:4.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. BAG, 277.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. BAG, 278.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. BAG, 278; Marsh, 319; NTGED, 483; Robinson, 263.

<sup>8</sup>Dan 4:17 reads: τὸν κύριον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν πάντων τῶν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. The MT text has the

particular. The NT attributes this authority to Christ in Matt 28:18, which reads: "ἔδωκε μοι πάντα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς." Finally, God's authority is expressed in Dan 4:37 by a subjective genitive (ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ) and in Dan 5:4 by a present participle (τὸν θεὸν... τὸν ἔχοντα τὴν ἐξουσίαν).

The fourth group of ἐξουσία meanings (6) refers to an *office of authority or magistracy*.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that the first three occurrences are related to the priestly or high priestly office. In Dan 3:2 the plural form of ἐξουσία refers to magistracies in the Babylonian empire,<sup>2</sup> while in Dan 7:27 the term denotes world dominions.<sup>3</sup>

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Aramaic ܘܢܘܫܐ (to rule); cf. BAG, 277; Foerster, 2:565, understands here the "unrestricted sovereignty of God."

<sup>1</sup>Dan 4:31 reads: ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ θεὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

<sup>2</sup>1 Esdr 8:22; 1 Macc 10:38; 14:4; 2 Macc 10:13; Dan 3:2; 7:27.

<sup>3</sup>It reads: τοὺς ἐπ' ἐξουσιῶν κατὰ χώραν; cf. LS, 599.

<sup>4</sup>It reads: πάντα [αἱ] ἐξουσίαι αὐτῷ ὑποταγήσονται. The MT has the Aramaic ܘܢܘܫܐ (dominion, power). θ translates αἱ ἀρχαί.

In the fifth group there is only one ἐξουσία passage,<sup>1</sup> which probably designates angelic beings.<sup>2</sup> Eph 6:12 (πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας . . . πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ ) is perhaps its closest NT parallel.

### Ἐξουσιάζειν

The largest group of ἐξουσιάζειν occurrences (5) in the LXX has to do with *tyrannical* or *abusive rulership*.<sup>3</sup> In 2 Esdr 7:24 ἐξουσιάζειν is the rendering of the Aramaic ܘܢܘܫܘܬܐ (to rule)<sup>4</sup> to describe a leadership that enslaves people. In 2 Esdr 19:37 the term translates the Hebrew ܠܫܘܒܐ (to rule)<sup>5</sup> to express the harshness of a kingship over Israel. In 1 Macc 10:70 ἐξουσιάζειν occurs in the question of Apollonius to Jonathan the high priest regarding his claim for ruling authority.<sup>6</sup> In Eccl 8:9 ἐξουσιάζειν translates

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<sup>1</sup>2 Macc 3:24 reads: παρόντος ὁ τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης ἐξουσίας.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Foerster, 2:565; Wink, Naming the Powers, 157.

<sup>3</sup>2 Esdr 7:24; 19:37; 1 Macc 10:70; Eccl 8:9; Sir 20:8.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: οὐκ ἐξουσιάζεις καταδουλοῦσθαι αὐτούς.

<sup>5</sup>It reads in Greek: ἐπὶ τὰ σώματα ἡμῶν ἐξουσιάζουσιν; cf. Robinson, 263, translates "oppressive authority."

<sup>6</sup>The Greek reads: τί σὺ ἐξουσιάζῃ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς.

the Hebrew מְלִיץ (to rule over)<sup>1</sup> to indicate the result of an abusive rulership. Finally, ἐξουσιάζειν appears in Sir 20:8 describing hatred against abusive rulers.<sup>2</sup>

The second group of ἐξουσιάζειν passages (4) simply describes the *position or office of rulers*, usually in the form of a participle.<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew/Aramaic verbs translated by ἐξουσιάζειν are: מְלִיץ (to rule over) in 2 Esdr 15:15; מְלִיץ (to rule) in Eccl 7:19; and לְשֹׁמֵר (to rule) in Eccl 10:4, 5.

In the third group of ἐξουσιάζειν passages (4) the term has special meanings.<sup>4</sup> It denotes "control,"<sup>5</sup> "power,"<sup>6</sup> and "rule."<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, the term also indicates a

<sup>1</sup>It reads in Greek: τὰ ὄσα ἐξουσιάσατο ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ τοῦ κακῶσαι αὐτόν.

<sup>2</sup>More precisely ἐνεξουσιάζω (to exercise authority in any palace/occasion; to abuse power). The Greek reads: ὁ ἐνεξουσιαζόμενος μισηθήσεται.

<sup>3</sup>2 Esdr 15:15; Eccl 7:19; 10:4, 5. The form ἐξουσιάζοντας occurs in Eccl 7:19, while ἐξουσιάζοντος appears in Eccl 10:4, 5; cf. BAG, 278; Robinson, 263.

<sup>4</sup>Eccl 2:19; 8:8; 9:17; Sir 47:19.

<sup>5</sup>Eccl 2:19 reads: ἐξουσιάζεται ἐν παντὶ μόχθῳ μου. The MT has מְלִיץ (to rule over).

<sup>6</sup>Eccl 8:8 reads: οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος ἐξουσιάζων. The MT reads ׀מְלִיץ (to have power).

<sup>7</sup>Eccl 9:17 reads: κραυγὴν ἐξουσιαζόντων ἐν ἀφροσύναις. The MT has לְשֹׁמֵר (to rule); cf. Foerster, 2:564; Robinson, 262.

certain abuse or disorder (addiction), which controls the behavior of a person.<sup>1</sup>

In the fourth group of ἐξουσιάζειν occurrences, two passages<sup>2</sup> render the Hiphil form of the Hebrew מְלִץ (to empower), referring to God's action, both in a positive (ὁ θεὸς ἐξουσίασεν αὐτόν) and in a negative sense (οὐκ ἐξουσίασει αὐτῷ ὁ θεός).

In the fifth group there is again only one ἐξουσιάζειν passage. It describes the authoritative word of a king.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the ἐξουσία/ἐξουσιάζειν word-group in the LXX predominantly denotes delegated authority and its misuse in human relationships. Occasionally ἐξουσία describes God's dominion over the covenant people. Once (2 Macc 3:24) the term probably refers to angelic beings.

Ἐξουσία generally translates the Hebrew מְלִץ (dominion, kingdom) and the Aramaic מְלִץ (dominion, power).

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<sup>1</sup>Sir 47:19 reads: ἐνεξουσιάσθης ἐν τῷ σώματί σου; cf. Goodspeed, 318, translates: "You were brought into subjection by your body."

<sup>2</sup>Eccl 5:18; 6:2.

<sup>3</sup>Eccl 8:4 reads: λαλεῖ βασιλεὺς ἐξουσιάζων. The MT has מְלִץ (to have power); cf. Marsh, 319, translates "absolute authority exercised by the king."

'Εξουσιάζειν usually stands for the Hebrew  $\text{טלש}$  (to rule over) and  $\text{לשז}$  (to rule, have dominion).

### 'Εξουσία/ἐξουσιάζειν in the NT

The term ἐξουσία appears 102 times<sup>1</sup> both in the GNT3 and in the NTG26. In the book of Revelation itself, one finds ἐξουσία 21 times, 51 are in the Gospels and Acts, with 30 in the Pauline corpus and the Catholic letters. The following survey does not include the Apocalypse, for it is dealt with in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Even the most detailed NT theological dictionaries fail to provide a comprehensive study of the 102 ἐξουσία passages of the Greek NT. Thus, in the TDNT, Foerster considers only three basic categories of the term: (1) the invisible power of God, (2) the lordship of God/Jesus, and (3) the freedom granted to the Christian community.<sup>2</sup> These

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<sup>1</sup>Concordance to the Novum Testamentum Graece, 3d ed. (Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), s.v. "ἐξουσία." The critical apparatus of the NTG26, however, notes (1) on Rom 8:38, that the Claromontanus text adds ἐξουσία, whereas the Ephraemi Rescriptus along with some Minuscules, Syriac, and Bihairic MSS support ἐξουσία; and (2) on Rom 13:1, that ἐξουσία appears one more time in the Claromontanus, and Athos MSS, the Majority, and the Syriac text, which adds up to a total of 104 ἐξουσία(ι) occurrences in the available Greek MSS. This survey considers 102 NT passages.

<sup>2</sup>Foerster, 2:566-571. At the end of his article, however, Foerster briefly discusses a special use of ἐξουσία in the NT for supernatural powers (2:571).

categories are generally followed by the NIDNTT<sup>1</sup> and the NTGED.<sup>2</sup>

Wink, on the other hand, while counting 102 occurrences of ἐξουσία in the NT, argues that "87 of them [are used] for the impersonal capacity for action which is bestowed by an office."<sup>3</sup> He then adds that "the single most significant fact about *exousia* as a term for power is that 85 percent of its uses refer to a *structural dimension of existence*, that permission or authorization provided by some legitimate authorizing person or body."<sup>4</sup> Wink finally concludes that "the *exousiai* in the New Testament are, in the vast majority of cases, not spiritual beings but ideological justifications, political or religious legitimations, and delegated permissions."<sup>5</sup> It appears that Wink considers only the everyday exercise of power as the

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<sup>1</sup>Betz, 2:609-611, lists: (1) God's ἐξουσία, (2) the ἐξουσία of Jesus, and (3) the ἐξουσία of believers.

<sup>2</sup>NTGED, 483-484, lists: (1) God's power, (2) Jesus' ἐξουσία, and (3) authority delegated to the believers.

<sup>3</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 15.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 15-16.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 16. Here it is also stated that "the spiritual Powers comprise only 15 percent of the uses of the term."



main use of ἐξουσία in the NT.<sup>1</sup> The following survey is intended to challenge this view.

Before doing so, let us briefly consider three important aspects of authority/power in the NT. First, Edwin A. Abbott points out that in the Gospels ἐξουσία is "very commonly found with 'give,' and it generally means 'power that is delegated,' that is to say, not tyranny that is seized, but a right lawfully given, or an office or magistracy duly and lawfully appointed."<sup>2</sup> Second, Paul Löffler examines the other side of the question and concludes that the suffering of Christ not only points to the fact that the reign of God has actually begun, but also to "a permanent struggle for the implementation of its goals, which are rejected by the established powers."<sup>3</sup> Third, Elizabeth A. Castelli considering the entire NT, remarks that "it imagines a world, indeed a universe, in which power infuses every sort of relationship, social and

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Varga, 334-335, who seems to follow similar direction by supporting 4 shades of meaning of ἐξουσία in the NT, and emphasizing the legal aspect of the term: (1) possibility, authority; (2) ability, might, power; (3) authorization, full authority, assignment, commission; and (4) (political) power, ruling or official power.

<sup>2</sup>Abbott, Johannine Vocabulary: A Comparison of the Words of the Fourth Gospel with Those of the Three, 81.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Löffler, "The Reign of God Has Come in the Suffering Christ: An Exploration of the Power of the Powerless," International Review of Mission 68 (1979): 112.

supernatural."<sup>1</sup> These three factors (lawfully delegated power; sometimes violent power struggle; and power-infused human and supernatural relationships) provide an important and complex background against which the various NT ἐξουσία passages can be understood in a balanced way.

### 'Εξουσία

The term ἐξουσία appears in the Gospels and Acts 51 times, exactly half of its NT occurrences. At least eight different fields of meaning, depending on the context, may be observed.<sup>2</sup>

#### *The Gospels and Acts*

In the majority of cases (33) the term denotes *authority*.<sup>3</sup> In the triple tradition of the Synoptics, one

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth A. Castelli, "Interpretations of Power in 1 Corinthians," *Semeia* 54 (1991): 197.

<sup>2</sup>(1) authority (33 times); (2) authorization (3 times); (3) commission (once); (4) authority/power (8 times); (5) power of darkness/Satan (twice); (6) jurisdiction (twice); (7) authorities (once); and (8) control (once).

<sup>3</sup>Matt 7:29; 8:9; 9:6; 9:8; 10:1; 21:23; 21:24; 21:27; 28:18; Mark 1:22; 1:27; 2:10; 3:15; 6:7; 11:28a; 11:28b; 11:29; 11:33; Luke 4:6; 4:32; 4:36; 5:24; 7:8; 10:19; 19:17; 20:2a; 20:2b; John 5:27; Acts 1:7; 8:19; 20:8. Abbott, 81, argues that "in most cases if not in all, 'authority' is the best translation" of ἐξουσία.

finds four references to Jesus' ἐξουσία,<sup>1</sup> and only one reference to the delegated authority<sup>2</sup> of the disciples. Similarly, in the double tradition the focus is once again on Jesus' authority,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless, there is also an important reference to the statement made by the Roman centurion about delegated authority.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>(1) In regard to forgiveness of sins: Matt 9:6; Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24, here the Greek reads: ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς; cf. Abbott, 102, n. 5; Budesheim, 198; (2) Questioning Jesus' authority to heal and teach: Matt 21:23; Mark 11:28a; Luke 20:2a, here it reads: ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιεῖς; (3) Questioning the source of Jesus' authority: Matt 21:23; Mark 11:28b; Luke 20:2b, here the Greek reads: τίς σοι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην; and (4) Jesus' reply to the inquiries: Matt 21:27; Mark 11:33; Luke 20:8, here it reads: οὐδὲ ἐγὼ λέγω ὑμῖν ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιῶ .

<sup>2</sup>Matt 10:1; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1, here the Greek reads: ἔδωκεν/ἔδίδου αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων; cf. Luke's text that differs: ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς δύναμιν καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ δαιμόνια; cf. Packer, 108.

<sup>3</sup>(1) Regarding the teaching ministry of Jesus: Matt 7:29; Mark 1:22, here it reads: ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων; cf. Argyle, 343; Flowers, 254; Hudson, 17; Powell, 102; Hans Windisch, "Jesus und der Geist nach Synoptischer Überlieferung," in Studies in Early Christianity, 209-236, ed. Shirley Jackson Case (New York - London: The Century Co., 1928), 225; (2) Jesus' reply to the inquiries: Matt 21:24; Mark 11:29, here the Greek reads: καὶ ἐρῶ ὑμῖν ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιῶ ; (3) Jesus' power over unclean spirits: Mark 1:27; Luke 4:36, here it reads: κατ' ἐξουσίαν καὶ τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ἐπιτάσσει ; cf. Luke, who adds δυνάμει.

<sup>4</sup>Matt 8:9; Luke 7:8, here it reads: καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν; cf. Josephus, BJ 2.195, who uses ἐπιτάσσομαι; cf. also Hugh J. Schonfield, ed., The Authentic

In the unique materials of Matthew,<sup>1</sup> Luke,<sup>2</sup> and the Gospel of John,<sup>3</sup> one finds an additional four references to Jesus' authority, in three cases, as delegated by the Father. With regard to the Father's own authority, there is only one passage in Acts.<sup>4</sup>

In two instances one finds ἐξουσία as delegated to the disciples.<sup>5</sup> In one passage the reference to authority is made in general.<sup>6</sup>

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New Testament (London: Dennis Dobson, 1955), 139, n. 5; Powell, 102, n. 10.

<sup>1</sup>Matt 9:8 reads: ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεὸν τὸν δόντα ἐξουσίαν τοιαύτην τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, and Matt 28:18 reads: ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς; cf. Grundmann, 57, remarks: "That is Matthew's Kerygma. This Kerygma immediately moves Matthew close to the words of Daniel: ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος... (7:14, LXX)"; Wink, Naming the Powers, 16, notes: "The risen Jesus used the pluralistic singular of his own authority."

<sup>2</sup>Luke 4:32 reads: ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ ἦν ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ; cf. the double tradition text of Matt 7:29 and Mark 1:22, mentioned above.

<sup>3</sup>John 5:27 reads: ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν.

<sup>4</sup>Acts 1:7 reads: χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ.

<sup>5</sup>Mark 3:15 reads: καὶ ἔχειν ἐξουσίαν ἐκβάλλειν τὰ δαιμόνια; Luke 10:19 reads: δέδωκα ὑμῖν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πατεῖν ἐπάνω ὄφεων καὶ σκορπίων, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ; cf. Abbott, 94, n. 1, comments: "'tread upon serpents,' probably denotes powers of evil"; Wink, Naming the Powers, 10; cf. also Mark 16:17-18, longer ending.

<sup>6</sup>Luke 19:17 reads: ἴσθι ἐξουσίαν ἔχων ἐπάνω δέκα πόλεων.

In Luke's temptation story,<sup>1</sup> Satan claims to have the ability to delegate authority. Finally, in Acts 8:19,<sup>2</sup> Simon requests the apostles to give him the authority to bestow the power of the Holy Spirit.

The second area where ἐξουσία is employed has to do with *authorization* (3) and in that sense it is used only in Acts with regard to Paul.<sup>3</sup> A similar usage (third meaning) can be detected in Mark 13:34,<sup>4</sup> where the term probably means *commission*.<sup>5</sup>

The eight passages in the fourth group denote both *power* and *authority*.<sup>6</sup> In four places in John,<sup>7</sup> the term is

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 4:6 reads: σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἅπασαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν, which is an ironic statement about the devil's ability to delegate the authority and glory of all the kingdoms of this world; cf. George Bradford Caird, Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 70, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: δότε κάμοι τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 9:14 reads: ὧδε ἔχει ἐξουσίαν παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων; Acts 26:10 reads: τὴν παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων ἐξουσίαν λαβών; Acts 26:12 reads: μετ' ἐξουσίας καὶ ἐπιτροπῆς τῆς τῶν ἀρχιερέων.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: ὡς ἄνθρωπος . . . δοὺς τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξουσίαν.

<sup>5</sup>The RSV and the NASB render "in charge."

<sup>6</sup>Luke 12:5; John 1:12; 10:18; 17:2; 19:10-11.

<sup>7</sup>(1-2) John 10:18, reads: ἐξουσίαν ἔχω θεῖναι αὐτήν [τὴν ψυχὴν], καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω πάλιν λαβεῖν αὐτήν; cf. Abbott, 101, asserts that it happened "out of love for others"; Powell, 104, n. 14, states that John wanted "to show that heavenly

used in connection with Jesus' soteriological activity, whereas in three passages<sup>1</sup> it refers to Pilate's legal activity. In Luke 12:5,<sup>2</sup> one finds an indirect reference to the devil's destroying power/authority.

The fifth group of ἐξουσία passages (2) combines the ideas of *power/authority* and *darkness*.<sup>3</sup> In these verses

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power is far above 'might' and deserves a higher name. Accordingly he [John] calls it by the term 'authority' (ἐξουσία)"; (3) John 17:2, reads: ἔδωκας [πάτερ] αὐτῷ [υἱός] ἐξουσίαν τάσης σαρκός; cf. Matt 28:18; Abbott, 101; Powell, 103; (4) John 1:12, reads: ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι; cf. Mark 10:15; Matt 18:3; Abbott, 93, remarks the phrase means "adoption into the whole family of the Father."

<sup>1</sup>John 19:10-11 reads: ἐξουσίαν ἔχω [Πιλᾶτος] ἀπολύσαι σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε . . . οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ [Ἰησοῦς] οὐδεμίαν εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν; cf. Matt 8:9; Luke 7:8; Gunneweg and Schmithals, 126, compare the scene with that of John 18:33, 36-38, commenting that the lordship of the "Lord Jesus Christ is shown, not as *potestas*, but as *auctoritas*." Cf. also Powell, 177-178, states that "Pilate uses the word [ἐξουσία] quite 'untheologically'. . . . Jesus uses the word 'in a theological sense'"; H-R. Weber, 61-62.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: φοβήθητε τὸν μετὰ τὸ ἀποκτεῖναι ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν γέενναν; cf. Wink, Naming the Powers, 9.

<sup>3</sup>Luke 22:53 reads: ἀλλ' αὕτη ἐστὶν ὑμῶν ἡ ὥρα καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ σκότους; cf. Col 1:13; Eph 6:12; Abbott, 86, n. 4, comments that "authority" is used here "in the sense of temporary power delegated and misused"; Caird, 70, argues that in the above phrase Luke wanted to show the authority of Satan "in the Cross"; Acts 26:18 reads: τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι ἀπὸ σκότους εἰς φῶς καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν. RSV translates "power of Satan"; NASB renders "dominion of Satan."

Luke expresses that power/authority is misused by Satan and by the Jewish authorities.

The sixth and seventh groups of verses (3) denote *jurisdiction*<sup>1</sup> and *authorities*,<sup>2</sup> respectively.

In the last (eighth) group of ἐξουσία passages there is only one verse in Acts 5:4.<sup>3</sup> Here *control*<sup>4</sup> is the most likely meaning of the term.

Summarizing, in the Gospels and Acts (with 51 occurrences of ἐξουσία) there are only fourteen instances (mainly in Luke and Acts)<sup>5</sup> where the term denotes legal permission or authorization in human relationships.<sup>6</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 20:20 reads: ὥστε παραδοῦναι αὐτὸν τῇ ἀρχῇ καὶ τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος; cf. Wink, Naming the Powers, 10. RSV renders "authority and jurisdiction"; NASB translates "rule and authority." Luke 23:7 reads: ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας Ἡρώδου ἐστίν; cf. Newman, 65.

<sup>2</sup>Luke 12:11 reads: ὅταν δὲ εἰσφέρωσιν ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ τὰς συναγωγὰς καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας; cf. Souter, 88; Wink, Naming the Powers, 9.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: πραθὲν ἐν τῇ σῆ ἐξουσίᾳ ὑπῆρχεν; cf. Newman, 65.

<sup>4</sup>NASB translates "under your control;" RSV renders "at your disposal."

<sup>5</sup>See Matt 8:9; Mark 13:34; Luke 7:8; 12:11; 19:17; 20:20; 23:7; John 19:10-11; Acts 5:4; 9:14; 26:10, 12. Counting the entire NT, this number (14) indicates only 13.7 percent of the total of 102 ἐξουσία passages. Further conclusions follow as the survey of NT epistles proceeds.

<sup>6</sup>Contrary to Wink, who argues that 85 percent of the total ἐξουσία uses in the NT belong to this category (Naming

majority of the passages (37) have to do with the supernatural use<sup>1</sup> of authority.

*The Pauline corpus and the Catholic letters*

The thirty ἐξουσία passages in the Pauline corpus and the Catholic letters can be divided into five groups.<sup>2</sup>

In the majority of cases (9) the term denotes *right*,<sup>3</sup> especially in 1 Corinthians. In Rom 9:21,<sup>4</sup> Paul uses ἐξουσία in a metaphorical context that has both canonical (Jer 18:1-6) and apocryphal (Wis 15:7-8) allusions. In 1 Cor 9, the term is clustered in five verses. Here Paul employed ἐξουσία six times to define<sup>5</sup> or the Powers, 15-16).

<sup>1</sup>Jesus' authority (25 times), delegated authority to the disciples/Christians (6 times), Satan's authority (4 times), the Father's authority (once), and authority to bestow the Holy Spirit (once).

<sup>2</sup>(1) right (9 times); (2) special use with other power language (8 times); (3) authority/power (7 times); (4) authorities (5 times); and (5) liberty (once).

<sup>3</sup>Rom 9:21; 1 Cor 9:4, 5, 6, 12, 18; 2 Thess 3:9; Heb 13:10.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὁ κεραμεὺς τοῦ πηλοῦ; cf. Abbott, 96, n. 1, remarks that "the parallel is between the 'potter' and the all-wise Creator rather than between 'man' and 'clay'."

<sup>5</sup>Paul uses the term 3 times in rhetorical questions: 1 Cor 9:4 reads: μὴ οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν φαγεῖν καὶ πίνειν; 1 Cor 9:5 reads: μὴ οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα περιάγειν; 1 Cor 9:6 reads: ἢ μόνος ἐγὼ καὶ Βαρναβᾶς οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν μὴ ἐργάζεσθαι; cf. Abbott, 102, n. 5, argues that "Paul refuses



defend<sup>1</sup> apostolic rights. In 2 Thess 3:9,<sup>2</sup> ἐξουσία is once again used by Paul for the same purpose as in 1 Cor 9. The last item of this group is Heb 13:10,<sup>3</sup> where a reference is made to the OT burnt offering,<sup>4</sup> as a type of Jesus' suffering outside of the gate of Jerusalem.

The second group of ἐξουσία occurrences (8) designates a special use of the term for both *human* and *supernatural powers*.<sup>5</sup> Wink thinks that the phrase ἀρχαί καὶ ἐξουσίαι was launched by Paul "on its peculiarly Christian voyage as denoting spiritual entities."<sup>6</sup> A closer examination of the following eight passages, however, 

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 to use certain apostolic privileges."

<sup>1</sup>Paul uses the term 3 times again to make affirmative statements regarding apostolic rights: 1 Cor 9:12 reads: εἰ ἄλλοι τῆς ὑμῶν ἐξουσίας μετέχουσιν, οὐ μαλλον ἡμεῖς; ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐχρησάμεθα τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ ταύτῃ; 1 Cor 9:18 reads: μὴ καταχρήσασθαι τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: ἔχομεν θυσιαστήριον ἐξ οὗ φαγεῖν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν οἱ τῇ σκηνῇ λατρεύοντες.

<sup>4</sup>Exod 29:14; Lev 4:12, 21.

<sup>5</sup>1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:10, 15; 1 Pet 3:22. Usually together with ἀρχαί, δυνάμεις, κυριότητες; cf. Foerster, 2:571.

<sup>6</sup>Wink, Naming the Powers, 17.

reveals that the above phrase defines not only spiritual but secular entities as well, or perhaps both.

Scholars usually classify these Pauline passages as referring to (1) "good" angels,<sup>1</sup> (2) "bad" angels,<sup>2</sup> or (3) both.<sup>3</sup> My view, however, is that some of these passages<sup>4</sup> refer not only to a spiritual realm, but to human dignitaries as well. The context of these verses shows that Jesus' activity is universal encompassing both heavenly and human beings. Outside of the Pauline corpus, there is only one more place<sup>5</sup> where a similar expression occurs.

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<sup>1</sup>Eph 3:10 reads: ἵνα γνωρισθῆ ἡ νῦν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ ταῖς ἐξουσίαις ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις; Col 1:16 reads: εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι; Col 2:10 reads: ὃς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλὴ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας; cf. Abbott, 87, n. 2; Lightfoot, 154.

<sup>2</sup>Eph 6:12 reads: πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς, πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου; Col 2:15 reads: ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχάς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας; cf. Abbott, 87, n. 2; Caird, 101; Lightfoot, 154.

<sup>3</sup>1 Cor 15:24 reads: ὅταν καταργήσῃ πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δυνάμιν; Eph 1:21 reads: ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος; cf. Abbott, 87, n. 2; Lightfoot, 154; Powell, 161-162.

<sup>4</sup>Especially 1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; Col 1:16; 2:10, 15; cf. Caird, 17, 78; Lightfoot, 154.

<sup>5</sup>1 Pet 3:22 reads: ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ ἀγγέλων καὶ ἐξουσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων; cf. Lightfoot, 154; Powell, 161-162; Souter, 88.

The third group of passages (7) denotes human and supernatural *authority/power* in different circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the term stands for (a) human authority (or control) over the will/desire;<sup>2</sup> (b) authority/freedom (or a symbol of it) on the woman's head;<sup>3</sup> (c) Paul's apostolic authority/dignity, which is delegated by the Lord;<sup>4</sup> (d) the authority/power of Satan described as the power of the air/darkness;<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>1 Cor 7:37; 10:11; 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10; Eph 2:2; Col 1:13; Jude 25.

<sup>2</sup>1 Cor 7:37 reads: ἐξουσίαν δὲ ἔχει περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου θελήματος; cf. RSV renders "having his desire under control."

<sup>3</sup>1 Cor 10:11 reads: διὰ τοῦτο ὀφείλει ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους; cf. some of the various expositions of this controversial topic: Caird, 18, 22; Fitzmayer, 57; Foerster, 2:573-574; Hall, 41-42; Jaubert, 430; Schwarz, 249; Varga, 335-336; Vine, 89.

<sup>4</sup>2 Cor 10:8 reads: καυχῆσωμαι περὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ἡμῶν ἣς ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος; 2 Cor 13:10 reads: χρήσωμαι κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἣν ὁ κύριος ἔδωκέν μοι.

<sup>5</sup>Eph 2:2 reads: κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος; Col 1:13 reads: ὃς ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκοτους καὶ μετέστησεν εἰς τὴν βεσιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ ἧς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ; cf. Luke 22:53 for a similar phrase; RSV renders "dominion of darkness"; Abbott, 86, comments on Col 1:13: "The antithesis between 'authority' and 'kingdom' suggests that the writer uses the former in the sense of temporary power, delegated and misused. In this sense, and hence in the sense of blind 'despotism' ('doing and saying what one likes') it is used sometimes by the later Greek writers, as also in English poetry [e.g., by Cowper, Milton, Pope, Shakespeare, Shelly, Tennyson, and Wordsworth]"; Lightfoot, 141, provides the following interpretation of Col 1:13: "The transference from darkness to light is here presented as a transference from an arbitrary tyranny, an ἐξουσία, to a well-ordered

and (e) the authority (κράτος καὶ ἐξουσία) of God/Christ<sup>1</sup> in a doxology.

In the fourth group one finds five ἐξουσία occurrences either in the plural or in the singular, with a plural meaning, denoting earthly *authorities*.<sup>2</sup> The first four occurrences are clustered in Rom 13:1-3.<sup>3</sup> The fifth passage, in Titus 3:1,<sup>4</sup> contains a similar exhortation to that of Rom 13:1.

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sovereignty, a βασιλεία." Perhaps Acts 26:18 can be added to this discussion, which reads: τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι ἀπὸ σκότους εἰς φῶς καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν.

<sup>1</sup>Jude 25 reads: μόνῳ θεῷ σωτῆρι ἡμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν δόξα μεγαλωσύνη κράτος καὶ ἐξουσία; cf. similar doxology in Rev 5:13: καὶ τῷ ἄρνιῳ ἡ εὐλογία καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος.

<sup>2</sup>Rom 13:1-3; Titus 3:1.

<sup>3</sup>In Rom 13:1-2 the term appears 3 times: Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ . . . ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκε. Rom 13:3 reads: θέλεις δὲ μὴ φοβείσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν; cf. some of the representative studies that made attempts to interpret this passage in view of the Roman empire: Abbott, 87, n. 2; Barraclough, 17, 20; Bruce, 88; Cullmann, 336; Gunneweg and Schmithals, 174; Käsemann, 376; Powell, 174; Stein, 328; Strobel, 93; Vonk, 339, 341-343; H-R. Weber, 62-63; Wink, Naming the Powers, 10. Cf. also Caird, 23-24, commenting on Rom 13:1-5, remarks: "Any derivative authority which sets itself up as an absolute authority, demanding absolute obedience, takes on a demonic character."

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: Ὑπομίμησκε αὐτοῦς ἀρχαῖς ἐξουσίαις ὑποτάσσεσθαι.

In the fifth category there is only one verse in 1 Cor 8:9,<sup>1</sup> where Paul warns the community to use their Christian *liberty* (or right) in a responsible way.

Summarizing, in the Pauline corpus and the Catholic letters (with 30 occurrences of ἐξουσία) there are 17 instances (mainly in Romans and 1 Corinthians)<sup>2</sup> where the term denotes personal rights or legal authorities in human relationships.<sup>3</sup> The remaining 13 passages have to do with the supernatural use<sup>4</sup> of authority.

Before concluding this chapter let us briefly consider two verb forms of the ἐξουσία word-group as they are employed in the NT. Interestingly ἐξουσιάζειν and κατεξουσιάζειν appear only six times in the NT, and almost all occurrences have a pejorative meaning.

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<sup>1</sup>The Greek reads: Βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν ἀντὶ τοῦ πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν.

<sup>2</sup>Rom 9:21; 13:1-3; 1 Cor 7:37; 8:9; 9:4-6, 12, 18; 11:10; 2 Thess 3:9; Titus 3:1; Heb 13:10. Adding this number (17) to the previous 14 (counted on the Gospels and Acts) represents only 30.4 percent of the total of 102 ἐξουσία passages in the entire NT. A final conclusion on this question follows in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

<sup>3</sup>Contrary to Wink, Naming the Powers, 15-16, where he claims that 85 percent of the total ἐξουσία uses in the NT belong to this category.

<sup>4</sup>A special use for supernatural powers (8 times), apostolic authority delegated by God (twice), Satan's authority (twice), and the authority of God/Christ (once).

## Ἐξουσιάζειν

The verb ἐξουσιάζειν (to have power/authority; to rule over) appears four times<sup>1</sup> in the Greek NT. In Luke 22:25,<sup>2</sup> it describes the leadership style of Gentile rulers. In 1 Cor 6:12,<sup>3</sup> the future passive form of the verb is put in a wordplay with ἔξεστιν (it is allowed/permitted/lawful) to express the personal responsibility of the Christians. Finally, in 1 Cor 7:4,<sup>4</sup> the term occurs twice in a balanced statement about mutual agreement between married couples with regard to sexual autonomy.

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 22:25; 1 Cor 6:12; 7:4.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες αὐτῶν εὐεργεταὶ καλοῦνται; cf. the different double tradition texts in Matt 20:25 and Mark 10:42, where κατεξουσιάζειν is used. Cf. also Abbott, 89-90, where, commenting on Luke 22:25, argues that "Luke's divergences from Mark and Matthew indicate a disposition in his Gospel to interpret *official* 'authority' in a bad sense."

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπὸ τινος.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: ἡ γυνὴ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει ἀλλὰ ὁ ἀνὴρ, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει ἀλλὰ ἡ γυνή; cf. Castelli, 211-212, points out that Paul's position is a "combined refusal to sanction renunciation within marriage," and further, "Paul's notion of the body is not hierarchical but complementary."

## ' Κατεξουσιάζειν

The verb κατεξουσιάζειν (to rule over; to exercise power/authority over) appears only twice<sup>1</sup> in the Greek NT. This double tradition<sup>2</sup> is again a description of the leadership style of Gentile rulers, perhaps more dramatic than Luke's statement.<sup>3</sup>

### Summary

This background study of the nonbiblical and biblical occurrences of ἐξουσία (and the corresponding Hebrew and Aramaic הַלְשִׁמָּה, הַלְשָׁה, הַלְשָׁה, הַלְשָׁה, and הַלְשָׁה) reveals the following characteristics:

1. Within the category of nonbiblical works the Greco-Roman writings used ἐξουσία to describe human arrangements of power. The main concerns were personal human rights, the power of an office or position, and the misuse of authority (tyranny).

2. Among Jewish writings the OT Pseudepigrapha focused on the supernatural aspect of ἐξουσία. In the Qumran writings הַלְשִׁמָּה is used to denote both human and

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<sup>1</sup>Matt 20:25 and Mark 10:42.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν.

<sup>3</sup>See the above comment on Luke 22:25.

supernatural dominions or beings. Philo and Josephus were addressing the practical questions of an authoritative, ruling power. They also discussed some problems related to delegated human power and described abusive authority. The Rabbinic works employed  $\text{רְשׁוּת}$  to denote human rights or permission, while the plural form of the term designated supernatural powers or beings.

3. Within the category of biblical writings the  $\text{ἐξουσία/ἐξουσιάζειν}$  word-group is predominantly used in the LXX to denote delegated authority and its misuse in human relationships. 'Εξουσία generally translated the Hebrew  $\text{מְּשָׁלָה}$  (dominion, kingdom) and the Aramaic  $\text{מְּשָׁלָה}$  (dominion, power). 'Εξουσιάζειν usually stood for the Hebrew  $\text{שָׁלַט}$  (to rule over) and  $\text{שָׁלַט$  (to rule, have dominion).

4. In the NT the majority of the  $\text{ἐξουσία}$  passages had to do with the supernatural use of authority, while the term also denoted legal permission or personal rights. In some instances, especially in the Pauline corpus,  $\text{ἐξουσία}$  designated supernatural beings, perhaps under the influence of Jewish apocalyptic traditions.



In summary, this background study makes it clear that the majority of the NT use of ἐξουσία/ἐξουσιάζειν closely follow the LXX and the Jewish apocalyptic usage particularly in the area of delegated authority/power in human and supernatural relationships. Nevertheless, NT writers put more emphasis on the supernatural aspect of the term.

### CHAPTER III

#### AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ PASSAGES IN REVELATION

This chapter builds on the conclusions of the previous two: the first dealt with the pertinent literature about *ἐξουσία* and the second considered the linguistic backgrounds to the term. It is clear that no comprehensive study of the *ἐξουσία* passages in the NT in general, and in Revelation in particular, has ever been written.

Chapter 2 of this dissertation provided a background study of the term, including the NT, whereas this chapter focuses on the Book of Revelation. First, following the methodology of chapter 2, the specifics of the twenty-one *ἐξουσία* occurrences in the Apocalypse<sup>1</sup> are studied. Second, the *ἐξουσία* passages are investigated within the literary structure and context of Revelation.

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 2:26; 6:8; 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6; 12:10; 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12; 14:8; 16:9; 17:12, 13; 18:1; 20:6; 22:14.

### 'Εξουσία Occurrences in the Apocalypse

A simple numerical comparison of the ἐξουσία occurrences in the NT books reveals that the term appears more often in Revelation than in any other NT writing.<sup>1</sup> The ἐξουσία passages in the Apocalypse may be divided into six groups.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of the occurrences (8) have to do with *authority/power*.<sup>3</sup> Thus, ἐξουσία denotes the power *delegated* by God to destroy,<sup>4</sup> to hurt,<sup>5</sup> and to perform miracles.<sup>6</sup> In

<sup>1</sup>The top 5 NT writings where the term occurs a minimum of 10 times: Revelation (21 times); Luke (16 times); Matthew (10 times); Mark (10 times); and 1 Corinthians (10 times).

<sup>2</sup>Authority/power (8 times); delegated authority (7 times); supernatural power (3 times); Christ's authority (once); eschatological authority (once); and eschatological right (once).

<sup>3</sup>Rev 6:8; 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6; 20:6.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 6:8 reads: καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς [ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ἄδης] ἐξουσία ἐπὶ τὸ τέταρτον τῆς γῆς; cf. Rev 20:13, 14.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 9:3 reads: καὶ ἐκ τοῦ καπνοῦ ἐξῆλθον ἀκρίδες εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐταῖς ἐξουσία ὡς ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν οἱ σκορπίοι τῆς γῆς; Rev 9:10 reads: καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν [ἀκρίδες] ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἀδικῆσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους μῆνας πέντε; Rev 9:19 reads: ἡ γὰρ ἐξουσία τῶν ἵππων ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν.

<sup>6</sup>Rev 11:6 reads: οὗτοι [δύο μάρτυρες] ἔχουσιν τὴν ἐξουσίαν κλεῖσαι τὸν οὐρανόν . . . καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσιν ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων στρέφειν αὐτὰ εἰς αἷμα.

one instance the term is related to the "second death,"<sup>1</sup> which is a unique expression<sup>2</sup> of the Apocalypse.

The second group of ἐξουσία passages (7) describes *delegated human and supernatural authority* that is exercised in the form of rulership, which is usually abusive.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is given by the Dragon<sup>4</sup> and by God<sup>5</sup> to the first (Sea) Beast of Rev 13. Perhaps the most enigmatic use of authority in Revelation is found in 17:12-13, where it is delegated to the "ten horns"<sup>6</sup> of the scarlet Beast, only to be returned to him<sup>7</sup> after "one hour." Finally, ἐξουσία is

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 20:6 reads: μακάριος καὶ ἅγιος ὁ ἔχων μέρος ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τῇ πρώτῃ: ἐπὶ τούτων ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν.

<sup>2</sup>The phrase is found only in Rev 2:11; 20:6, 14.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12; 17:12, 13.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 13:2 reads: καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ [τὸ θηρίον] ὁ δράκων τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην; cf. Eph 1:21, where ἐξουσία and δύναμις, and Col 1:16, where ἐξουσίαι and θρόνοι are part of the power language. Rev 13:4 reads: καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ δράκοντι, ὅτι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῷ θηρίῳ.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 13:5 reads: καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ [θηρίον] ἐξουσία ποιῆσαι μῆνας τεσσεράκοντα [καὶ] δύο, and Rev 13:7 reads: καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ [θηρίον] ἐξουσία ἐπὶ πᾶσαν φυλὴν καὶ λαὸν καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ ἔθνος. Note the repetition of the divine passive ἐδόθη.

<sup>6</sup>Rev 17:12 reads: οἵτινες [δέκα κέρατα] βασιλείαν οὐπω ἔλαβον, ἀλλὰ ἐξουσίαν ὡς βασιλεῖς μίαν ὥραν λαμβάνουσιν μετὰ τοῦ θηρίου.

<sup>7</sup>Rev 17:13 reads: οὗτοι [δέκα κέρατα] μίαν γνώμην ἔχουσιν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ ἐξουσίαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ διδόνασιν; cf. Eph 1:21, where ἐξουσία and δύναμις are part of the power

exercised by the second (Land) Beast of Rev 13<sup>1</sup> in the presence of the first Beast.

In the third group of passages (3)<sup>2</sup> one finds two instances where the term denotes the *supernatural power of the angels* over fire<sup>3</sup> and the earth.<sup>4</sup> In one place ἐξουσία refers to the *power of God* over the plagues.<sup>5</sup>

In the fourth group there is one passage that emphatically proclaims the beginning of God's βασιλεία and Christ's ἐξουσία.<sup>6</sup> This verse is also a unique combination of power language (δύναμις, βασιλεία, ἐξουσία) used in the Apocalypse.

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language.

<sup>1</sup>Rev 13:12 reads: καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πρώτου θηρίου πᾶσαν ποιεῖ [ἄλλο θηρίον] ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 14:18; 18:1; 16:9.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 14:18 reads: καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος [ἐξῆλθεν] ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου [ὁ] ἔχων ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 18:1 reads: μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 16:9 reads: καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν [οἱ ἄνθρωποι] τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἔχοντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας.

<sup>6</sup>Rev 12:10 reads: ἄρτι ἐγένετο ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ.

In the fifth category we also find one passage: it announces the reward of the overcomers in Thyatira, which is sharing with Christ in His eschatological *ruling power*.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, in the sixth category there is only a single passage--the last of the seven macarisms<sup>2</sup> in Revelation. It heralds the eschatological *right*<sup>3</sup> of the redeemed.

Summarizing, in the Apocalypse (with 21 occurrences of ἐξουσία) the majority (18) of the passages have to do with supernatural use<sup>4</sup> of authority/power. In chapter 2 of this dissertation, a similar conclusion was drawn with regard to the Gospels, Acts, Pauline corpus, and Catholic

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 2:26 reads: καὶ ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τηρῶν ἄχρι τέλους τὰ ἔργα μου, δώσω αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν... ὡς κάγω; cf. Rev 3:21, especially for the constuction: "καὶ ὁ νικῶν... δώσω αὐτῷ... ὡς κάγω. This comparison appears only in these two verses. It is worthy to note here the following allusions to this passage: Rev 12:5; 19:15; and Ps 2:8-9(LXX).

<sup>2</sup>See Rev 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 22:14 reads: μακάριοι οἱ πλύνοντες τὰς στολάς αὐτῶν, ἵνα ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς; cf. Rev 2:7, where similar promise is given to the overcomers in Ephesus.

<sup>4</sup>Authority/power delegated by God or Satan (12 times); the transcendent authority/power of God and the angels (3 times); Christ's authority (once); the eschatological ruling power of the overcomers (once); and the eschatological right of the redeemed (once).

letters.<sup>2</sup> There are only three instances in Revelation<sup>2</sup> where the term clearly describe human arrangements of power.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is safe to conclude here that the main thrust of the power language employed in the entire NT directs one's attention to the use (and abuse) of supernatural delegated power in human relationships.

Looking back to the summary of chapter 2, it is evident that the use of ἐξουσία in Revelation shows the closest linguistic connection to the LXX and Jewish apocalyptic usage, which is in harmony with the general NT use. In other words, all these writings do have a tendency to address the question of delegated authority/power in the human as well as in the supernatural sphere,<sup>4</sup> which are sometimes intermingled.

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<sup>1</sup>Where 50 out of the 81 instances evidently denote supernatural use of authority/power.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 13:12; 17:12, 13. All 3 passages refer to a religio-political power structure, which abuses delegated authority. Adding this number (3) to the previous 31 (counted above on the rest of the NT) represents only 33.3 percent of the total of 102 ἐξουσία passages in the entire NT.

<sup>3</sup>Contrary to Wink, Naming the Powers, 15-16, who argues that 85 percent of the total ἐξουσία uses in the NT belong to this category.

<sup>4</sup>To be true to the Hellenistic Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, we may want to note here that they too dealt with the problems of delegated (and abused) authority, but their emphasis was not the supernatural aspect.

Let us consider next the pattern of the distribution of ἐξουσία in the entire Greek text of Revelation.

### 'Εξουσία Clustering in the Apocalypse

Even a casual reading of the Greek text of Revelation should direct one's attention to the clustering of ἐξουσία in chapters 9 (4 times) and 13 (5 times).<sup>1</sup> This clustering appears to be significant when one considers the overall context of the Apocalypse. Although the term occurs in twelve (2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22) of the total of twenty-two chapters, nevertheless, the clustering points to the textual center of Revelation.

This center can tentatively be located to chapters 11-13 if the entire Greek text (405 verses) of the Apocalypse is equally divided into two halves. Calculating only the number of verses, not their length, the very center would be Rev 12:7-12. This *inclusio* or *hymn* contains at its center ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ that might be considered as a pointing device emphasizing or affirming Christ's eschatological authority.<sup>2</sup> Jesus' authority appears to be

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 9:3, 10, 19; 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Roy C. Naden, The Lamb among the Beasts: A Christological Commentary on the Revelation of John That Unlocks the Meaning of Its Many Numbers (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1996), 21, here Rev 12:10-11 is designated as "The Central Words" of the Apocalypse, heralding "Victory Through the Lamb."



equal with God's eschatological kingdom (βασιλεία) and power (δύναμις). In turn this power language points to the gift of salvation (σωτηρία).

Chapters																					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<hr/>																					
1					1			4		2	1	5	1		1	2	1		1		1
→					6			←	→	8	←	→						7			←
Occurrences																					

Fig. 1. 'Εξουσία clustering in Revelation. Numbers above line indicate chapters, below line refer to ἐξουσία occurrences. Arrows point to clustering.

Figure 1 clearly reveals three basic features:

1. The most important ἐξουσία clustering in the three central chapters (11-13),
2. A significant increase of occurrences in the center, especially in one of the frame chapters (13),
3. Some further important clusters in chapters 9 and 16-18.

The foregoing study naturally raises the question whether this "macro-analysis" is sufficient to determine the

structural/theological center of Revelation<sup>1</sup>. In other words, can pure text-analysis provide definitive evidence with regard to the theological (or linguistic) focus of the book?

### **Chiasm As a Structuring Device**

It appears that chiasm (or chiasmus) is the linguistic and literary phenomenon which satisfies the above criterion of a structural center or "climactic centrality"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Some recent works that propose Rev 12 as the center of/key to Revelation: Adela Yarbro Collins, The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation, HDR, 9 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 231; Desmond Ford, Crisis! A Commentary on the Book of Revelation, vol. 1, A Hermeneutic for Revelation (Newcastle, CA: Desmond Ford, 1982), 62, 71, 73; idem, Crisis! A Commentary on the Book of Revelation, vol. 2, A Verse by Verse Commentary (Newcastle, CA: Desmond Ford Publications, 1982), 504; Hildegard Gollinger, Das "grosse Zeichen" von Apokalypse 12, SBM, 11 (Würzburg: Echter KBW Verlag, 1971), 119; William G. Johnsson, "The Saints' End-Time Victory Over the Forces of Evil," in Symposium on Revelation-Book II: Exegetical and General Studies, 3-40, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 7 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 4-5, 11; Pierre Prigent, Apocalypse 12. Histoire de l'exégèse, Beitrage zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese, 2 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1959), 1; James Valentine, "Theological Aspects of the Temple Motif in the Old Testament and Revelation" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1985), 320; John W. Welch, "Chiasmus in the New Testament," in Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis, 211-249, ed. John W. Welch (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), 244-245, 248.

<sup>2</sup>David Noel Freedman, preface to Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis, ed. John W. Welch (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), 7. "Inversion and balance" are also mentioned here beside "climactic centrality," thus providing two sets of criteria for recognizing a chiastic construction.

by focusing the interest of the reader or hearer of a Bible passage on its central expression. "The basic figure of chiasm simply involves the reversal of the order of words in balancing clauses and phrases."<sup>1</sup>

A brief survey of some representative structural studies convincingly shows that the literary arrangement or composition of chiasmus is not unique to religious or canonical writings. Chiasm can be observed both in ancient Near Eastern, Greek, or Latin sources,<sup>2</sup> and in the Qumran writings.<sup>3</sup> The intention of the following investigation, however, is to consider only biblical writings.

#### Chiasm in the OT

Yehuda T. Radday makes the following general observation regarding the literary structure of Hebrew biblical narrative: "Chiastic structure is more than an artificial or artistic device. It is rather, and most

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>John L. Myres, Herodotus, Father of History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 81-82, 120-124; Welch, Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis, 17-49, 169-197, 250-268.

<sup>3</sup>Carol Newsom, Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition, Harvard Semitic Studies, vol. 27 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985), 13, 16-17; William H. Shea, "Sabbath Hymns for the Heavenly Sanctuary (Qumran)," in Symposium on Revelation-Book II: Exegetical and General Studies, 391-407, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 7 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 395, 406.

remarkably so, a key to meaning. Not paying sufficient attention to it may result in failure to grasp the true theme."<sup>1</sup> A similar conclusion can be drawn from a study of biblical Hebrew poetry.<sup>2</sup>

Although the literary structures of the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings are studied in detail, particular scholarly interest has been shown in the analysis of certain literary units of the following books: Genesis,<sup>3</sup> Leviticus,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Yehuda T. Radday, "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," in Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis, 50-117, ed. John W. Welch (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), 51.

<sup>2</sup>Wilfred G. E. Watson, "Chiastic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry," in Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis, 118-168, ed. John W. Welch (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981).

<sup>3</sup>Jacques B. Doukhan, "The Center of the Aqedah: A Study of the Literary Structure of Genesis 22:1-19," Andrews University Seminary Studies 31 (1993): 17-28; Nils Wilhelm Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament: A Study in Formgeschichte (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), 60-61; idem, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures 46 (1929-1930): 107, 125.

<sup>4</sup>Richard M. Davidson, "The Good News of Yom Kippur," Journal of the Adventist Theological Society 2 (Autumn 1991): 4-27; Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 51-58; idem, "The Presence of Chiasmus," 114-120; William H. Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," in The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy, 131-168, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986); G. J. Wenham, The Book of Leviticus, NICOT, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1979), 137, 276, 311-312.

Isaiah,<sup>1</sup> Psalms,<sup>2</sup> and Daniel.<sup>3</sup> These analyses detect both "chiastic tetracolon" (ABBA pattern) and "concentric pentacolon"<sup>4</sup> (ABCBA pattern) in these OT writings. Sometimes the patterns are part of longer chiastic

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<sup>1</sup>T. H. Horne, An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, vol. 2 (London: Paternoster-Row, 1846), 503-504; Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 64-85; idem, "The Presence of Chiasmus," 109-113.

<sup>2</sup>Horne, 2:503-504; Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 94-126; Jean Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme dans le texte hébreu du Psaume 151?" Revue de Qumran 8 (1972-1975): 508-545; J. Bjørnar Storfjell, "The Chiastic Structure of Psalm 151," AUSS 25 (Spring 1987): 97-106.

<sup>3</sup>Jacques B. Doukhan, "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9: An Exegetical Study," AUSS 17 (1979): 1-22; Arthur J. Ferch, "Authorship, Theology, and the Purpose of Daniel," in Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 3-83, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 43-47; idem, The Son of Man in Daniel Seven, AUSDDS, 6 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983), 136-137, 142-143; Ad. Lenglet, "La structure littéraire de Daniel 2-7," Biblica 53 (1972): 169-190; William H. Shea, "The Prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27," in The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy, 75-118, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 108-115; idem, Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation, DARCOMS, vol. 1 (Lincoln, NE: College View Printers, 1982), 96-97; idem, "Spatial Dimensions in the Vision of Daniel 8," in Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 497-526, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 519; idem, "Unity of Daniel," in Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 165-255, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 176-177, 195, 199, 241-244, 248-251.

<sup>4</sup>These definitions are from Watson, 127, 130, respectively.

structures. This feature is especially evident when the text of an entire biblical book is analyzed.

#### Chiasm in the NT

J. A. Bengel's study from the mid-eighteenth century is probably the first scholarly work using the Greek term *χιασμός* and the Latin "chiasmus" as *termini technici* to describe this Hebrew literary style.<sup>1</sup> According to his index, Bengel identified and analyzed passages from the following twelve NT books: Matthew, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Timothy, Philemon, and Hebrews.<sup>2</sup>

T. H. Horne detects *introverted parallelism* in only two NT passages (Matt 7:6; 2 Cor 2:15, 16).<sup>3</sup> It seems that Horne tends to emphasize the importance of parallelism over against the focusing function of a chiasmus.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>J. A. Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (Stuttgart: J. F. Steinkopf, 1860; based on the 3d ed., Tübingen, 1773), xxxii, 1160-1161.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1145.

<sup>3</sup>Horne, 2:513.

<sup>4</sup>He also uses the term *epanodos* ("going back"), which refers to a parallelism that is "commencing and concluding, with the notion to which prominence is to be given; and . . . placing in the centre the less important notion" (ibid., 2:513). This concept appears to be contradictory to the basic idea of a chiasm.

N. W. Lund states in passing that there are many chiastic structures in the NT.<sup>1</sup> Later, however, in his book he analyzes both OT and NT passages,<sup>2</sup> including most of Revelation.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the most notable achievement of Lund is the establishment of his "fundamental laws of chiastic structure." His seven laws can be summarized as follows: (1) The center is always the turning point; (2) There is a shift in the trend at the center; (3) Identical ideas occur in the extremes and at the center; (4) Sometimes there is a shift from the center to the extremes; (5) Certain terms in a passage tend to gravitate toward certain positions; (6) Chiastic units are introduced and concluded by frame-passages; and (7) Frequently a mixture of chiastic and alternating lines can be found within a unit.<sup>4</sup>

Building on Lund's work, John W. Welch's essay considers chiasmus to be particularly influential in the following NT books: James, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 Timothy,

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<sup>1</sup>Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus," 110, 126.

<sup>2</sup>Idem, Chiasmus in the New Testament. In chaps. 7-10, he discusses 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Romans (145-225), whereas in chaps. 11-16, the Synoptics are studied (229-319).

<sup>3</sup>Lund devotes 89 pages (ibid., 323-411) to Revelation alone.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 40-41.

following NT books: James, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Jude, Revelation, and in certain respects the four Gospels. Welch concludes: "Where chiasmus is present, it has been found to hold a key to the perception of the central message of the book in questions."<sup>1</sup>

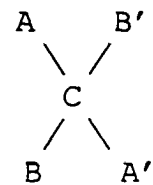
J. Breck's article raises the question whether a differentiation should be made between inverted parallelism and chiasmus. He thinks the ABB'A' pattern to be considered an "inverted parallelism rather than chiasmus."<sup>2</sup> Breck further states that "the uniqueness of the chiastic structure lies in its focus upon a *pivotal theme*, about which the other propositions of the literary unit are developed. It therefore presupposes a center, a 'crossing point,' illustrated by the Greek letter *chi* ( $\chi$ )."<sup>3</sup> Breck detects "authentic chiasmus" with "a central doctrinal affirmation" in the following passages: 1 John 1:6-7; Phil

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<sup>1</sup>Welch, "Chiasmus in the New Testament," 248.

<sup>2</sup>J. Breck, "Biblical Chiasmus: Exploring Structure for Meaning," Biblical Theology Bulletin 17 (1987): 71.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., where Breck supports the figure on the right and adds: "The image of concentric circles, rather than that of parallel lines, illustrates this characteristic most clearly. Because of this central focus, genuine chiasmus is able to set in relief the central idea or theme the writer tries to express."





2:5-11; 1 Cor 12-14; Rom 8:9-11; and the entire Gospel of John.<sup>1</sup>

Beside these general works that cover several NT books, special attention was paid to the structure of the Letter to the Hebrews,<sup>2</sup> of the Book of Revelation,<sup>3</sup> and most recently, of the Pauline letters.<sup>4</sup> Thomson believes that in the OT and other Semitic texts chiasmus is seen as "a literary feature," while in the Pauline letters it is more of "a rhetorical device," because the letters are "rhetorical" rather than "literary" in nature.<sup>5</sup> Thomson distinguishes between "macro-chiasmus," when it covers

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 72-73.

<sup>2</sup>John Bligh, Chiastic Analysis of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heythrop, England: Athenaem Press, 1966); Richard M. Davidson, "Typology in the Book of Hebrews," in Issues in the Book of Hebrews, 121-186, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 4 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989), 180; George H. Guthrie, The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis, SupNovT, vol. 73 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 136, 146; George E. Rice, "The Chiastic Structure of the Central Section of the Epistle to the Hebrews," AUSS 19 (1981): 243-246; Albert Vanhoye, La structure littéraire de l'épître aux Hébreux, 2d ed. (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1976); idem, Structure and Message of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Rome: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1989).

<sup>3</sup>Works dealing with Revelation are discussed in the next section of this dissertation.

<sup>4</sup>Ian H. Thomson, Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters, JSNTSS, 111 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). The following passages are analyzed: Eph 1:3-14; 2:11-22; Gal 5:13-6:2; Col 2:6-19; and Rom 5:12-21.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 17, n. 23.

"whole sections of a book, or even a whole book,"<sup>1</sup> and "micro-chiasmus," when it shows a "four-member pattern," e.g., ABB'A'.<sup>2</sup> Thomson rules out the ABA pattern as chiasmatic, because "in principle, a chiasmus must have a minimum of four elements to make inversion of order possible."<sup>3</sup> Thomson's working definition of a chiasmus points to symmetry (or balance) and a central axis, as basic characteristics of this literary phenomenon.

Chiasmus may be said to be present in a passage if the text exhibits bilateral symmetry of four or more elements about a central axis, which may itself lie between two elements, or be a unique central element, the symmetry consisting of any combination of verbal, grammatical or syntactical elements, or, indeed, of ideas and concepts in a given pattern.<sup>4</sup>

While emphasizing symmetry and balance, Thomson also observes the paradox of asymmetry or imbalance in certain chiasms as a driving force for the argument.<sup>5</sup> This feature makes the whole chiasmatic pattern "dynamic" and "fluid."<sup>6</sup>

In his conclusion, Thomson uses the terms "odd" and "even chiasmus" to designate the two types of compositions

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 23.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 25-26.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 40. Here Thomson proposes that "asymmetry or imbalance may have been deliberately used as an emphasizing device."

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 38.

of the central element. A chiasm is "odd" if its central section (or element) is "unique" consisting of one element (ABCBA pattern). A chiasm is "even" if its central section has "a pair of balanced parallels" (ABBA pattern).<sup>1</sup> Thomson also reworks Lund's seven laws discussed earlier in this chapter.<sup>2</sup>

Thomson's study shows a more careful and detailed approach to the complex phenomenon of chiasmus. A chiastic pattern is not the outcome of pure mathematical or geometric calculations and construction of words or sentences. It is an artful device used by biblical writers to point to the focus of a particular literary unit.

#### Chiasm in Revelation

This section attempts to demonstrate the complexity of chiasmus with a particular focus on the Book of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 217, n. 25; cf. Watson, 127, 130, who describes "concentric pentacolon" and "chiastic tetracolon," essentially meaning "odd" and "even."

<sup>2</sup>Thomson, 26-27, where one finds 6 more carefully drafted observations that can be summarized in the following: (1) Chiasms frequently exhibit a shift at, or near, their center. (2) Chiasms are sometimes introduced or concluded by a frame passage which serves as a spring-board or a tail-piece. (3) Passages that are chiastically patterned sometimes also contain directly parallel elements; (4) Identical ideas may occasionally occur in the extremes and at the center of a given system. (5) Balancing elements are normally of approximately the same length. (6) The center often contains the focus of the author's thought which is a particularly powerful feature with obvious implications for exegesis.

Revelation. The intention is not to provide an exhaustive structural study as such,<sup>1</sup> but rather to show the role ἐξουσία plays within the overall chiastic pattern and context of the Apocalypse.

While it is evident that "no broad consensus exists" among scholars regarding the structure of Revelation,<sup>2</sup> and "there are as many different outlines as there are interpreters,"<sup>3</sup> it is also true that "the literary structure [of Revelation] is the key for constructing the theological structure."<sup>4</sup>

#### **The Central Theme of Revelation**

It seems odd that some scholars emphasize different themes or symbols in the Apocalypse as the main theological concern of John, without providing a supporting literary analysis. Thus, a great variety of themes--*worship*,<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For the most up-to-date literature review on the structure of Revelation, see Ekkehardt Müller, Microstructural Analysis of Revelation 4-11, AUSDDS, 21 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1996), 11-43.

<sup>2</sup>Kempson, 38-39, n. 1-7.

<sup>3</sup>J. Ramsey Michaels, Interpreting the Book of Revelation, GNTE 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 69. See also n. 9 on the same page listing 9 different structural approaches.

<sup>4</sup>Kempson, 37.

<sup>5</sup>Paul Barnett, "Polemical Parallelism: Some Further Reflections on the Apocalypse," Journal for the Study of New Testament 35 (1989): 111-120; idem, "Polemical Parallelism:

*cyclical worship*,<sup>1</sup> *Second Advent*,<sup>2</sup> oscillating oppositions of *victory/hope* and *oppression/despair*,<sup>3</sup> *heavenly throne* (divine sovereignty or power),<sup>4</sup> *martyrdom*,<sup>5</sup> *divine victory over evil* (through sacrifice),<sup>6</sup> and *faithfulness*<sup>7</sup>--have been proposed recently (to mention only the prominent ones) to

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Some Further Reflections on the Apocalypse," in The Johannine Writings, 223-231, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, The Biblical Seminar 32 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); Richard J. Bauckham, "The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic Christianity," NTS 27 (1981): 322-341; idem, Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), 118-149.

<sup>1</sup>Michael D. Goulder, "The Apocalypse as an Annual Cycle of Prophecies," NTS 27 (1981): 342-367.

<sup>2</sup>Wilber B. Wallis, "The Coming of the Kingdom: A Survey of the Book of Revelation," Presbyterion 8 (1982): 13-70.

<sup>3</sup>John G. Gager, "The Attainment of Millennial Bliss through Myth: The Book of Revelation," in Visionaries and Their Apocalypses, 146-155, ed. Paul D. Hanson, IRT, 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983).

<sup>4</sup>M. Eugene Boring, "The Theology of Revelation: 'The Lord Our God the Almighty Reigns'," Interpretation 40 (1986): 257-269; Farmer, 91-92.

<sup>5</sup>Mitchell G. Reddish, "Martyr Christology in the Apocalypse," JSNT 33 (1988): 85-95.

<sup>6</sup>Herbert Kiesler, "Christ: Son of Man: Lamb," in Symposium on Revelation-Book II: Exegetical and General Studies, 409-429, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 7 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 409; Paul S. Minear, I Saw a New Earth: An Introduction to the Visions of the Apocalypse (Washington, DC: Corpus Books, 1968), xvii, where 6 visions of victory are listed covering Rev 1:9-22:7; Wink, Engaging the Powers, 321.

<sup>7</sup>Scott Gambrill Sinclair, Revelation: A Book for the Rest of Us? (Berkeley, CA: Bibal Press, 1992), 76.

convey the central message or purpose of Revelation. These studies leave the impression of subjectivity (or complexity), which can result in the rejection of a definite structure in the book.<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly a broader scholarly consensus can be detected if one considers the theme of *conflict, war, or combat*<sup>2</sup> as the conceptual backdrop to Revelation. Adela Yarbro Collins, who developed Gunkel's hypothesis, asserts that "the combat myth is the conceptual framework which underlies the book [Revelation] as a whole."<sup>3</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza suggests that "the main concern of the author [of Revelation] is not the course of history but the particular power struggle between the divine and antidivine forces which are represented on earth by the Christian community and the ROMAN EMPIRE."<sup>4</sup> Richard Robert Creech believes that "the theme of conflict dominates the entire

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur William Wainwright, Mysterious Apocalypse: Interpreting the Book of Revelation (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 149, argues that Revelation is "far more orderly than most apocalypses. . . . Yet its precise outline, if it has one, is elusive."

<sup>2</sup>Hermann Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen 1 und Ap Joh 12 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895), is probably the first attempt to concentrate on the theme of combat myth as a prominent feature of Rev 12.

<sup>3</sup>Collins, 231.

<sup>4</sup>Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Revelation, Book of," IDBSup, 744-746, ed. Keith Crim (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1976), 745.

Apocalypse. The Lamb is the chief agent of God in that struggle."<sup>1</sup> Richard J. Bauckham<sup>2</sup> argues that, in Rev 12:1-14:5, "John portrays the combatants in the eschatological war." Later he adds that the distinctive feature of Revelation is that it "makes lavish use of holy war language while transferring its *meaning* to non-military means of triumph over evil."<sup>3</sup> It has recently been re-emphasized by Barbara Wootten Snyder that the mythological framework found in the ancient combat myth "provides both literary coherence for the structure of Revelation as a whole" and also serves "to aid in the interpretation of the apocalyptic imagery and symbols."<sup>4</sup> Charles Homer Giblin, on the other hand, has also argued recently that "a consistent thematic, that of God's Holy War, pervades John's entire composition." Further he states that "this thematic serves to confirm the

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Robert Creech, "Christology and Conflict: A Comparative Study of Two Central Themes in the Johannine Literature and the Apocalypse" (Ph.D. dissertation, Baylor University, 1984), 175.

<sup>2</sup>Richard J. Bauckham, "The Book of Revelation as a Christian War Scroll," Neotestamentica 22 (1988): 17-40; idem, Climax of Prophecy, 210-237.

<sup>3</sup>Bauckham, "The Book of Revelation," 28, 30.

<sup>4</sup>Barbara Wootten Snyder, "Combat Myth in the Apocalypse: The Liturgy of the Day of the Lord and the Dedication of the Heavenly Temple" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1991), 1.

structural unity and coherence of Revelation and to impart to it a distinctive and dominant theological emphasis."<sup>1</sup>

### **Thematic Division between Rev 11 and 12**

Another important characteristic of the Apocalypse is the thematic division between chapters 11 and 12. This division has been recognized by a great number of scholars who generally do not elaborate on the literary structure of the book or detect its overall chiastic pattern.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Homer Giblin, The Book of Revelation: The Open Book of Prophecy, GNS, 34 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 224.

<sup>2</sup>E.-B. Allo, Saint Jean: L'Apocalypse (Paris: Libraire Lecoffre, 1933), LXXXIII; David L. Barr, "The Apocalypse as a Symbolic Transformation of the World: A Literary Analysis," Int 38 (1984): 39-50; Gregory K. Beale, "The Influence of Daniel upon the Structure and Theology of John's Apocalypse," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 27 (1984): 413-423; John Wick Bowman, The Drama of the Book of Revelation: An Account of the Book with a New Translation in the Language of Today (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1955), 77; idem, "Revelation, Book of," IDB, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), 4:58-71; idem, "The Revelation to John: Its Dramatic Structure and Message," Int 9 (1955): 436-453; Adela Yarbro Collins, Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1984), 111-116; André Feuillet, L'Apocalypse: État de la question, StudNeot, Subsidia III (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1963), 30; idem, The Apocalypse, trans. Thomas E. Crane (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1965), 36; J. Massyngberde Ford, Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary, AB, vol. 38 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1975), 50-56; Charles Homer Giblin, "Revelation 11:1-13: Its Form, Function, and Contextual Integration," NTS 30 (1984): 433-459; idem, "Structural and Thematic Correlations in the Theology of Revelation 16-22," Bib 55 (1974): 487-504; Donald Guthrie, "The Lamb in the Structure of the Book of Revelation," Vox Evangelica 12 (1981): 64-71; Jan Lambrecht, "A Structuration of Revelation 4,1-22,5," in L'Apocalypse



Similarly, the significance of the central vision/section/scene of Revelation is attested by at least eight scholars who do not explicitly discuss the question of chiastic structures in the Apocalypse.<sup>1</sup> Six of these scholars consider virtually the same passage--Rev 11:19-15:4--as the center part of Revelation.<sup>2</sup>

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Johannique et l'Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament, 77-104, BETL, vol. 53, ed. J. Lambrecht (Gembloux: Leuven University Press, 1980); S. Läubli, "Eine Gottesdienst-Struktur in der Johannes Offenbarung," TZ 16 (1960): 359-378; Minear, 115-116; Domingo Muñoz León, "La estructura del Apocalipsis de Juan. Una aproximación a la luz de la composición del 4.º de Esdras y del 2.º de Baruc," Estudios bíblicos 43 (1985): 125-172; Leroy C. Spinks, "Critical Examination of J. W. Bowman's Proposed Structure of the Revelation," Evangelical Quarterly 50 (1978): 211-222; Henry Barclay Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indices, 1st publ. 1906 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968), xxxix-xli; Vester Eugene Wolber, "A Study of the Literary Structure of Revelation as an Aid to Interpretation" (Th.D. thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1950), 69-70.

<sup>1</sup>Alan James Beagley, The "Sitz im Leben" of the Apocalypse with Particular Reference to the Role of the Church's Enemies, BZNW, 50 (New York: W. de Gruyter, 1987), 81-82; John Eric Hurtgen, "Anti-Language in the Apocalypse of John" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 137-225; Kempson, 131; Robert Michael Kuykendall, "The Literary Genre of the Book of Revelation: A Study of the History of Apocalyptic Research and Its Relationship to John's Apocalypse" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1986), 192-193; Michaels, 64, 69-71; Minear, 105-129; M. Robert Mulholland, Revelation: Holy Living in an Unholy World (Grand Rapids, MI: F. Asbury Press, 1990), 54-59, 214-260; Michael Wilcock, I Saw Heaven Opened: The Message of Revelation, BST, ed. John R. W. Stott (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 110-141.

<sup>2</sup>Beagley, 81, where Rev 11:19-16:1 is entitled "The Salvation of the Saints"; Hurtgen, 139, where Rev 11:19-15:4 is considered as a "pivotal section" of the "climactic

### The Chiastic Structure of Revelation

The chiastic structure of the Apocalypse itself was probably first studied in detail by Nils Wilhelm Lund who detected an overall "even chiasmus" of the book.<sup>1</sup>

Independently from him Kenneth A. Strand has gradually developed his literary analysis of Revelation in general,<sup>2</sup>

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center"; Michaels, 64, where Rev 12:1-15:4 is entitled "A Vision of Signs" serving "as the bridge" between the seven trumpets and bowls; Minear, 105, where Rev 11:19-15:4 is labeled "The Faithful as Victors"; Mulholland, 214, where Rev 11:19-15:5 is entitled "The Big Picture"; Wilcock, 110, where Rev 11:19-15:4 is designated "The Drama of History: Seven Visions of Cosmic Conflict"; cf. also some earlier works drawing similar conclusions: Bowman, The Drama of the Book of Revelation, 75-95; idem, "Revelation, Book of," IDB, 64-65; Austin Farrer, A Rebirth of Images: The Making of St. John's Apocalypse, 1st publ. 1949 (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1986), 36, 45; idem, The Revelation of St. John the Divine (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), vii-viii; R. J. Loenertz, The Apocalypse of Saint John, trans. Hilary J. Carpenter (London: Sheed and Ward, 1947), xiii-xix; Spinks, 216-217, 219.

<sup>1</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 325-326; idem, Studies in the Book of Revelation (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1955), 27. The balanced parallelism of the central section of Lund's chiasmus contains Rev 11:1-13 (Church's Testimony in Judaism) and 12:1-17 (Church Persecuted by Judaism). Lund also provides insightful "micro-chiasms" for Rev 10-13, but, interestingly, these tend to be "odd" chiasms (Chiasmus in the New Testament, 391, 395, 398-400, 403-404), which are discussed below.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth A. Strand, The Open Gates of Heaven: A Brief Introduction to the Literary Analysis of the Book of Revelation (Ann Arbor, MI: Braun-Brumfield, 1970), 43-45, where the term "chiasmus" or "chiasm" does not occur, but "reverse sequence" and "reverse order" of parallelisms are used instead. Strand concludes: "It seems more than coincidental that such parallelisms in theme should occur--and that they should occur in a generally reverse order!" (45); idem, "Chiastic Structure and Some Motifs in the Book of Revelation," AUSS 16 (1978): 401-408, where for the first

and of chapter 18 in particular, depicting a chiasmus within the overall chiastic arrangement of the Apocalypse.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that while Strand proposes an "even"

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time Strand defines "a broad chiastic pattern" for Revelation. It is also interesting that, in comparison with the concentric-symmetry model of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (discussed below), Strand proposes an alternative structure of ABCDaDbEDa'Db'C'B'A', where the centerpiece (E) is Rev 15:2-4 (Song of Moses and the Lamb). Later in his article, however, Strand opts for his original chiastic pattern of ABCDaDbDa'Db'C'B'A', which does not have the centerpiece (E) or focus any more (406). For more detailed analyses of this chiasmus, see Kenneth A. Strand, Interpreting the Book of Revelation: Hermeneutical Guidelines, with Brief Introduction to Literary Analysis, 2d ed. (Naples, FL: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1979), 52; idem, "The Eight Basic Visions in the Book of Revelation," AUSS 25 (1987): 107-121; idem, "The Eight Basic Visions," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 35-49, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992); idem, "The 'Victorious-Introduction' Scenes in the Visions in the Book of Revelation," AUSS 25 (1987): 267-288; idem, "'Victorious-Introduction' Scenes," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 51-72, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992); idem, "The Spotlight-on-Last-Events Sections in the Book of Revelation," AUSS 27 (1989): 201-221; idem, "'Overcomer': A Study in the Macrodynamics of Theme Development in the Book of Revelation," AUSS 28 (1990): 237-254; idem, "Foundational Principles of Interpretation," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 3-34, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992). For a slightly modified adaptation of Strand's chiastic structure, see C. Mervyn Maxwell, God Cares, vol. 2 (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1985), 54-62, where the above pattern is called "mirrorlike organization."

<sup>1</sup>Kenneth A. Strand, "Two Aspects of Babylon's Judgment Portrayed in Revelation 18," AUSS 20 (1982): 53-60, where an ABCB'A' pattern is designated "a sort of chiasm" or "concentric symmetry" (53, n. 2); idem, "Some Modalities of Symbolic Usage in Revelation 18," AUSS 24 (1986): 37-46, where the above ABCB'A' pattern is called "a well-balanced chiasm" (38).

macro-chiasm for the entire book of Revelation, he defines an "odd" micro-chiasm for Rev 18.

Building on Lund's pioneer work, John W. Welch advocates an "odd" macro-chiasm for the Apocalypse as a whole and thus provides a single/unique central section (or it might be called "imbalanced parallelism") for the book.<sup>1</sup> Following Welch's study, Michel Gourgues,<sup>2</sup> Jean-Pierre Prévost,<sup>3</sup> and Roberto Badenas<sup>4</sup> depict similar structures, with the only exception that they consider Rev 14 to be the center of the Apocalypse.

Beside the surface or macrostructural studies, microstructural analyses have concentrated on smaller units

<sup>1</sup>Welch, "Chiasmus in the New Testament," 248, argues that "central to the book [Revelation] is . . . the defeat of Satan and his expulsion from power." This center (marked by "E" in his chiastic pattern) comprises Rev 12:1-17.

<sup>2</sup>Michel Gourgues, "'L'Apocalypse' ou 'Les trois Apocalypses' de Jean?" Science et esprit 35 (1983): 297-323, who describes an ABCB'A' pattern for Rev 12-20, where "C" designates Rev 14:6-19:10, "Babylon active and defeated" (318).

<sup>3</sup>Jean-Pierre Prévost, Pour lire L'Apocalypse (Ottawa: Novalis, 1991), 139, where Gourgues's above pattern is adapted.

<sup>4</sup>Roberto Badenas, "Vraie et fausse adoration selon Apocalypse 14 (lère partie)," Les Cahiers Liturgiques, no. 5 (1994): 16-26, who proposes a "precise chiastic organization" for Rev 4-22 (ABCDC'B'A' pattern), where "D" designates Rev 14, as "the entire earth is called to make a choice between true and false worship" (16-17).

of the book. These works describe both "even"<sup>1</sup> and "odd chiasms"<sup>2</sup> within the overall chiastic arrangement of the Apocalypse. The studies tend to focus on Rev 10-13, 18,<sup>3</sup> and 20.

A number of scholars, therefore, consider the entire content of Revelation to be concentrically structured. Their surface structural analysis comes so close to the parallel arrangement of a chiastic pattern<sup>4</sup> that it can be safely stated that a chiasmus and a concentric structure represent but variations of the same phenomenon.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ford, Revelation, 165, a comment on Rev 10:9-10; William H. Shea, "Chiasm in Theme and by Form in Revelation 18," AUSS 20 (1982): 249-256; idem, "The Mighty Angel and His Message," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 279-325, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), where Rev 10:9-10 is studied (283).

<sup>2</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, especially 391, 395, 398-400, 403-404, where Rev 10-13 is studied and a basic ABCB'A' pattern is outlined for all four chapters, whereas Lund's general outline for Revelation depicts an ABCC'B'A' structure (325-326) discussed above; William H. Shea, "The Parallel Literary Structure of Revelation 12 and 20," AUSS 23 (1985): 37-54, where these two chapters are considered to be "chiastic counterparts" (51) that can be outlined by an ABA' pattern (49), which is, in a strict sense, not a real chiastic arrangement (cf. Thomson, 25).

<sup>3</sup>See the articles by Shea and Strand on Rev 18 discussed above.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. especially the structure of an "odd" chiasmus (ABCBA pattern), which appears to be the same as a concentric literary arrangement.

<sup>5</sup>Frederick David Mazzaferri, The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-critical Perspective, BZNW, 54

Perhaps the first attempt to describe a seven-unit arrangement of Revelation was made by Wilhelm Bousset who considered Rev 12:1-14:20 to be "The Culmination of Apocalyptic Prophecy."<sup>1</sup> Two decades later, Ernst Lohmeyer following a different system of dividing Revelation, focused on Rev 14:1-5 as the peak of the book.<sup>2</sup> After another ten years, Raymond R. Brewer pointed out that the "choruses" play a special role within the structure of the Apocalypse.<sup>3</sup> His contemporary, Günther Bornkamm, emphasized parallelism as the main feature of Revelation without recognizing the importance of inverted parallelisms.<sup>4</sup> Two decades later D.

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(New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 363, rightly argues that the "concentric-symmetric structure" is a "variation of the chiasmic."

<sup>1</sup>Wilhelm Bousset, Die Offenbarung Johannis (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1906), 335. This climactic section of the Apocalypse (12:1-14:20) is both preceded and succeeded by three visions.

<sup>2</sup>Ernst Lohmeyer, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, HNT, 16 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [P. Siebeck], 1926), 116, where Rev 14 is considered to stand both after and before 3x7 visions (6:1-13:18 and 15:1-21:5 respectively).

<sup>3</sup>Raymond R. Brewer, "The Influence of Greek Drama on the Apocalypse of John," Anglican Theological Review 18 (1936): 88, 90, where the importance of "choruses" in Rev 4-22 is emphasized as they form the bond between the lyric and dramatic elements in the plot of Revelation, thus providing concentric circles within the overall structure.

<sup>4</sup>Günther Bornkamm, "Die Komposition der apokalyptischen Visionen in der Offenbarung Johannis," ZNW 36 (1937): 132-149; idem, "Die Komposition der apokalyptischen Visionen in der Offenbarung," in Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum, 204-222, Gesammelte Aufsätze, Band II (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1959). Based on his

F. Montagnini observed parallelism and progress in the three septenaries of the Apocalypse,<sup>1</sup> used the term "concentric circles,"<sup>2</sup> and pointed to the complementary nature of Rev 12-14 and 17-21.<sup>3</sup> Within the next few years Mathias Rissi developed a tripartite structure of Revelation,<sup>4</sup> which was shortly adopted and modified by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.<sup>5</sup> Also within a few years, the study of Jacques

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parallel elements of Revelation (e.g., 8:2-11:19 and 15:1-16:21; 12-13 and 17-18; 14:1-20 and 19:1-21) the concentric structure of the book can be outlined.

<sup>1</sup>D. F. Montagnini, "Apocalisse 4,1-22,5: l'ordine nel caos," Rivista biblica 5 (1957): 191, (1) 7 seals (6:1-8:1), (2) 7 trumpets (8:2-11:19), and (3) 7 plagues (16:1-21).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 186, 196.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 185.

<sup>4</sup>Mathias Rissi, Time and History: A Study on the Revelation, trans. Gordon C. Winsor, orig. ed., 1965 (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1966), 14-15, (1) Messages to the Seven Churches (1:1-3:22), Vision Groups (4:1-19:10), and (3) Visions and Sayings after the Parousia Scene (19:11-22:21).

<sup>5</sup>Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "The Eschatology and Composition of the Apocalypse," CBO 30 (1968): 537-569, where one finds the following three main divisions of the book: (1) The Community under Judgment (1:9-3:22), (2) Judgment of the Cosmos and the Powers Hostile to God (4:1-20:15), and (3) Eschatological Salvation of the Community and the World (21:1-22:5). She also claims that Rev 10:1-15:4 forms "a closed unity and constitute the formal center" (567) of the Apocalypse. Cf. also idem, The Apocalypse, HBB (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976), 38, 41-43, where first she provides "four major contextual units" (I. 1:9-3:22: The Seven Messages to the Churches; II. 4:1-9:21; 11:15-19; 15:1,5-19:10: The Sevenfold Sealed Scroll; III. 10:1-15:4: The Prophetic Scroll; and IV. 19:11-22:5: Judgment and Salvation) of Revelation, which are later

Ellul depicted a symmetrical ordering<sup>1</sup> of the Apocalypse, where everything is organized around its central part, which in turn focused on the crucifixion of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

A symmetrical ordering characterizes the structural study by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza who established a "concentric pattern" of ABCDC'B'A', where "D" (Rev 10:1-15:4) represents the "climactic center" of Revelation,<sup>3</sup> which is "the prophetic interpretation of the political and religious situation of the community."<sup>4</sup> In her most recent work on Revelation Fiorenza maintains the same surface structure (ABCDC'B'A' pattern) discussed above with the

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combined into 3 sections, being 4:1-19:10 "the central apocalyptic section"; idem, "The Revelation to John," in Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, Revelation, 99-120, PC, ed. Gerhard Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 102-111, where her tripartite structure follows precisely Mathias Rissi's above mentioned structural division.

<sup>1</sup>Jacques Ellul, Apocalypse: The Book of Revelation, trans. George W. Schreiner, orig. ed., 1975 (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), 50.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 65-99, where Rev 8-14:1-5, the central part of the structure, is called "The Keystone" of the symmetrical ordering, and chap. 11 is designated as its "central axis" referring to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup>Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Composition and Structure of the Book of Revelation," CBO 39 (1977): 364, 366. Other designations used in her article are the following: "surface structure" (364), "balanced structure" (365), "symmetric pattern" (365), "architectonic pattern" (358, 364, 366), and "macro-form" (366).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 366. See also idem, The Apocalypse, 43; idem, "The Revelation to John," 107; idem, The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 176.



remark that "it is best envisioned as a conic spiral moving from the present to the eschatological future."<sup>1</sup>

The idea that the Apocalypse is a drama,<sup>2</sup> which has seven "Acts" each having seven "Scenes," was revived by James L. Blevins.<sup>3</sup> Although at first he did not explicitly state the concentric structure of Revelation, "Act IV: The Seven Tableaux (Rev 11:19-15:4)" was the obvious center of the book.<sup>4</sup> In his second book, however, Blevins describes seven series of visions in Revelation, which he calls a "structuralist pattern of ABCDC'B'A'."<sup>5</sup> In the center of this pattern "D" designates Rev 11:19-15:4 (Visions of Conflict),<sup>6</sup> which is called the "climactic point"<sup>7</sup> of the Apocalypse. Here the "timeless cyclical nature of Revelation becomes very evident."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Revelation: Vision of a Just World, rev. ed. of Invitation to the Book of Revelation, 1981 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 36.

<sup>2</sup>This hypothesis had been popularized by John Wick Bowman, three decades earlier. See his studies above.

<sup>3</sup>James L. Blevins, Revelation as Drama (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1984), 7-10.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 79-95.

<sup>5</sup>James L. Blevins, Revelation, KPG (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1984), 8.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 57-73.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 58.

More recently Charles Homer Giblin provided insightful macro- and microstructural analyses of the Apocalypse, especially of its central section<sup>1</sup> and second half.<sup>2</sup> It seems that his macro-chiasms tend to be "odd chiasmus,"<sup>3</sup> whereas the micro-chiasms are best called inverted parallelisms.<sup>4</sup>

John Eric Hurtgen in his recent dissertation on the sociolinguistic perspective of the Apocalypse<sup>5</sup> takes Rev 11:19-15:4 as a test case, considering it "a pivotal section because it serves as part of the climactic center of the revelation to John."<sup>6</sup> Hurtgen's study follows the

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<sup>1</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 15, where Rev 11:15-15:8 is entitled "The Seventh Trumpet-blast: A Sevenfold Scenario of Creation-wide Conflict is set forth in concentric order"; *ibid.*, 117-120, where this sevenfold concentric structure (ABCDC'B'A' pattern) is discussed in detail having "D" (Rev 14:1-5) the "focal, major point of the structure."

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 166-172, where Rev 18; *ibid.*, 178-183, where Rev 19:11-21; and *ibid.*, 183-190, where Rev 20:1-10 are analyzed.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the ABCDC'B'A' pattern for Rev 11:15-15:8 and the ABCB'A' pattern for 18:1-21.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. the ABA' patterns for Rev 19:11-21 and 20:1-10. A real chiasmus (ABB'A' pattern) is obviously built on inverted parallelisms, whereas an inverted parallelism (ABA' pattern) is not necessarily a chiasmus.

<sup>5</sup>Hurtgen, 80-84, where the social dimension to language is discussed, and *ibid.*, 126, where one finds the following definition: "The anti-language is the language of one group that sees itself as opposed to another group."

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 139.

concentric structures (ABCDC'B'A' pattern) of Fiorenza and Blevins discussed above.<sup>1</sup>

In her recent dissertation on the plot and liturgical setting of the Apocalypse Barbara Wootten Snyder<sup>2</sup> also proposes a rather long concentric structure of ABCDEFGG'F'E'D'C'B'A',<sup>3</sup> which, based on the foregoing, can be called an "even" chiasm. She further describes the center of this concentricism (FGG'F' sections of the pattern) both as a chiasm and a parallelism.<sup>4</sup> Finally, Snyder recognizes an important aspect of the concentric pattern by showing "the transitions from one temporal and/or spacial setting to another."<sup>5</sup>

Most recently, James H. Sims in his comparative literary analysis of Daniel and Revelation suggests a "menorah" appearance for the entire structure of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 139-146.

<sup>2</sup>Snyder, "Combat Myth in the Apocalypse," 1991.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 84, where the balanced center unit (GG'-Rev 11-12) refers to the contrasting correspondence between "War against the Saints on Earth" and "War against the Dragon in Heaven," respectively. Her understanding of concentric patterns is the following: "Technically, a chiasm refers to an A-B-B'-A' pattern, and concentricism refers to expanded chiastic patterns: A-B-C-etc.-C'-B'-A'. It is common, however, to refer to concentric patterns as chiasms, as well" (ibid., 81, n. 148).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 89-90, where the parallelism is not so convincing.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 99.

Apocalypse, which resembles the concentric pattern of Fiorenza discussed above.<sup>1</sup> For Sims, the "radiating center"<sup>2</sup> of Revelation is 10:1-14:20, entitled "The Open Book and the Seventh Trumpet,"<sup>3</sup> which unnecessarily separates the seventh trumpet from the first six.<sup>4</sup>

Earlier in this chapter a reference was made to Ekkehardt Müller's dissertation on the microstructure of Rev 4-11. His study--including a syntactical display of the entire Greek text<sup>5</sup> and a list of most of the vocabulary<sup>6</sup> of the Apocalypse--is the first comprehensive microstructural analysis of a larger part of Revelation. Based on the syntax of the Greek text Müller identifies seven large units<sup>7</sup> of the Apocalypse, not counting the Prologue (1:1-8) and the Epilogue (22:6-21). He then further analyzes these

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<sup>1</sup>James H. Sims, A Comparative Literary Study of Daniel and Revelation: Shaping the End (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), 118; cf. Bowman, "Revelation, Book of," 69, where the stage setting of Act I (Rev 1:9-3:22) is exhibited by a seven-arm lampstand.

<sup>2</sup>Sims, 118-119.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 75-76.

<sup>4</sup>Fiorenza makes the same separation by focusing on Rev 10:1-15:4, which she calls the "climactic center" of the book. See "Composition and Structure," 366.

<sup>5</sup>Müller, 435-698.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 699-727.

<sup>7</sup>See (1) 1:9-3:22, (2) 4:1-8:1, (3) 8:2-11:18, (4) 11:19-14:20, (5) 15:1-18:24, (6) 19:1-20:15, (7) 21:1-22:5.

units and detects smaller sections or microstructures<sup>1</sup> within the overall, large structure. Interestingly these microstructures all exhibit an "odd" chiasmus (ABCBA pattern) with one exception, Rev 11:11-13, where an "even" chiasm (ABCC'B'A' pattern) is detected.<sup>2</sup>

When Müller summarizes the implications of his study he remarks that the microstructural analysis was able to define the limits of passages thus helping the interpretation of small units. It has also pointed to stylistic features which help to discover the main emphasis, the intensification, and the climax of a paragraph. Finally, the analysis included the connections of passages on different levels up to the level of the entire Apocalypse.<sup>3</sup>

Following Müller's macro- and microstructural analyses of Revelation one can observe a large chiastic structure (ABCDC'B'A' pattern) of the book. Within this pattern D (Rev 11:19-14:20) signifies the literary center where one-third of the 21 occurrences of ἐξουσία are concentrated. If Rev 8:2-11:18 and 15:1-18:24 (C and C') are added to the above center unit as bordering panels, they

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<sup>1</sup>Müller, 240, 318, 319, 347, 350, 375.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 375.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 421-426.

contain more than two-thirds (17 out of 21) of all ἐξουσία passages in Revelation.

If one is to study ἐξουσία in full context, however, the entire content of Revelation should be considered, including the Prologue (1:1-8) and the Epilogue (22:6-21). Thus a total of nine units of the Apocalypse (ABCDEDED'C'B'A' pattern) is shown in Figure 2. This literary structure indicates that 17 ἐξουσία passages are concentrated in the center units (DED') of Revelation, which contain almost eleven chapters (8:2-18:24). The remaining four ἐξουσία occurrences are spread over four units (BCC'A') or four chapters (2, 6, 20, 22).

Figure 2 not only displays all nine literary units of the book but also depicts four pairs of parallel panels and points to the chiastic focus of the Apocalypse (E = 11:19-15:4), which overlaps its textual center (cf. figure 1). This macrostructure exhibits a large "odd" chiasmus. A similar literary arrangement was observed earlier in the majority of the microstructures in Revelation. Therefore, it is safe to conclude here that the Apocalypse shows the same definite chiastic ordering (ABCBA pattern) both on the macro- and the microstructural levels.

Summarizing, it is clear that although there is no scholarly consensus with regard to the structure of the

Apocalypse, the following areas of common interest can be detected:

1. The theme of conflict, war, or combat as the conceptual backdrop to Revelation
2. The thematic division between chapters 11 and 12
3. The importance of the central vision/section/act (Rev 11:19-15:4)
4. The overall chiastic/concentric structure of the Apocalypse.

What role does ἐξουσία play within the overall “imbalanced” or “odd” chiasmus of Revelation? What are the impacts of the ἐξουσία clusters on the chiastic arrangement of the whole book? How does the term function on the microstructural level?

After the following detailed analysis of the ἐξουσία passages within the structural context of the Apocalypse, the answer to this threefold question will be provided in the conclusions of this dissertation.

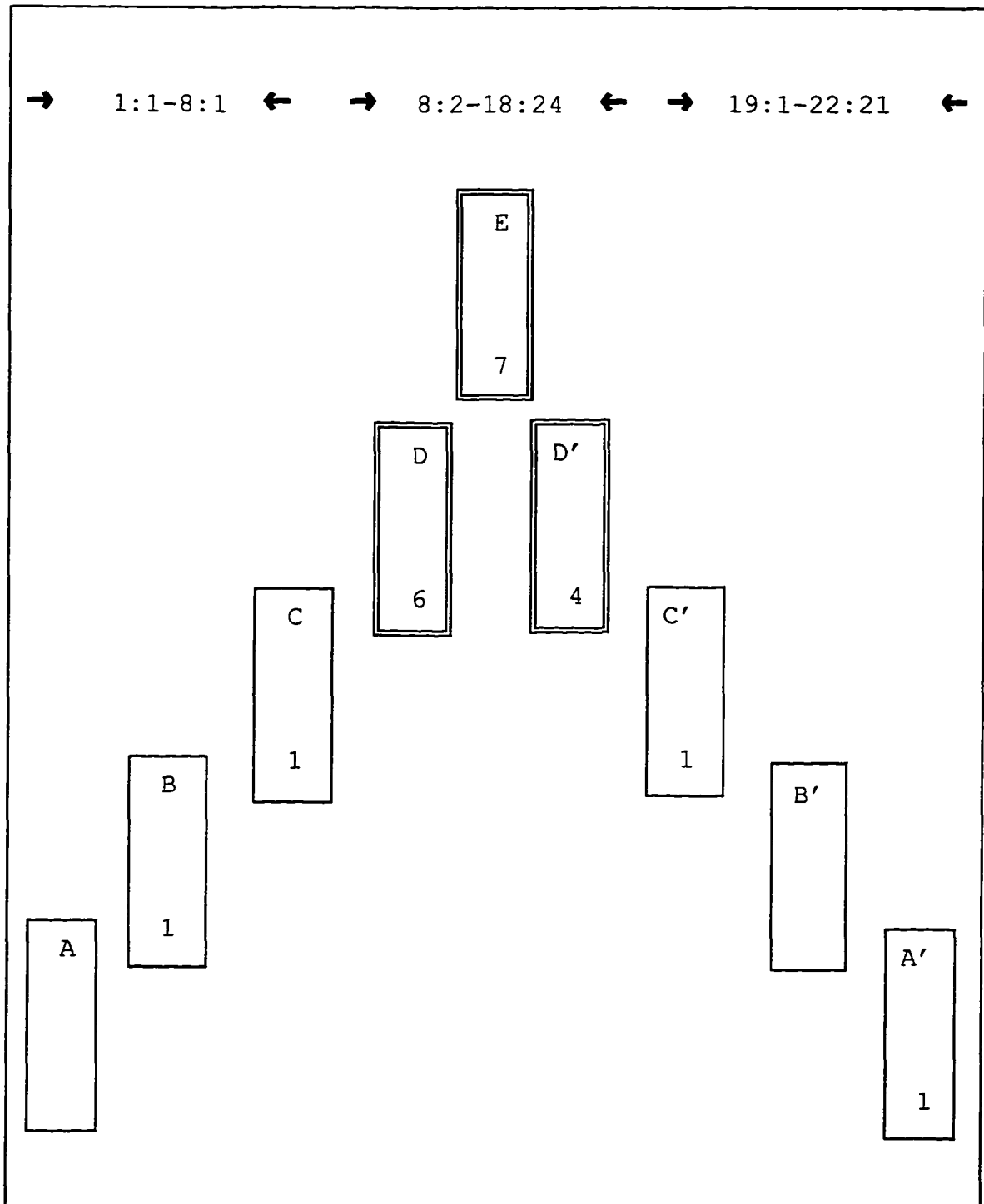


Fig. 2. A literary structure of Revelation. The numbers in the bottom of panels indicate the occurrences of ἐξουσία. The arrows point to the beginning and ending of major sections.



### 'Εξουσία Passages in the Apocalypse

Considering the vocabulary of Revelation, it is clear that ἐξουσία is one of the key terms, beside θρόνος and προσκυνέω,<sup>1</sup> employed by John. In the central units (DED') of the above described chiastic ordering, which cover Rev 8:2-18:24, ἐξουσία and προσκυνέω are clustered, carrying the dynamism of the struggle of antidivine powers hostile to God and His people. Interestingly the third term, θρόνος, is clustered (27 out of the 47 occurrences) in unit C (4:1-8:1) of Revelation.<sup>2</sup> From a structural point of view this

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<sup>1</sup>The terms θρόνος and προσκυνέω appear much more times in Revelation than in any other NT writings (47 times out of 62 and 24 times out of 60, respectively). It is important to note here also that the theme of God's *kingship* or *kingly rule*--expressed by the Greek βασιλεία (Rev 1:6, 9; 5:10; 11:15; 12:10) and βασιλεύω (Rev 5:10; 11:15, 17; 19:6; 20:4, 6; 22:5)--is one of the major concerns of John as it is opposed to antidivine dominion (Rev 16:10; 17:12, 17, 18).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the *heavenly throne* theme in Revelation, listed above. See also Jon Paulien, "The Role of the Hebrew Cultus, Sanctuary, and Temple in the Plot and Structure of the Book of Revelation" *AUSS* 33 (1995): 245-264. He notices that allusions to the Hebrew cultus "appear primarily in the passages which introduce the various visions in the Apocalypse" (247-248). I may add here that all 7 units of Revelation, outlined by Paulien, also have determinative endings. Whereas the "introductions" can be labeled "sanctuary (ὁ ναός) settings," the "conclusions" might be called "throne (ὁ θρόνος) settings" (cf. Rev 3:21; 7:13-17; 11:15-18; 15:2; 20:11-14; 22:1-5). Such structuring of the seven visions clearly conveys John's powerful message: God is παντοκράτωρ, both in a cultic and a legal sense.

perhaps indicates that (1) unit C is a powerful theological background (or introduction) to the rest of the Apocalypse,<sup>1</sup> especially to its central units, and (2) God is omnipotent<sup>2</sup> and His ultimate triumph is certain<sup>3</sup> because He is in control of every upcoming event described in Revelation.

In the parallel units of ABCC'B'A' one finds only four ἐξουσία passages.<sup>4</sup> These have no direct impact on the dramatic nature of the antidivine power struggle.<sup>5</sup>

The "imbalanced" structure of the Apocalypse focuses the reader's attention on the high peak of this power struggle.<sup>6</sup> As was noted earlier, an imbalance in chiasmus can serve as a driving force for the advancement of an

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, 31; George R. Beasley-Murray, The Book of Revelation, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1974), 25; Fiorenza, "Revelation, Book of," 745; idem, "The Revelation to John," 116; idem, Revelation: Vision of a Just World, 120.

<sup>2</sup>Boring, 259-260.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Eugene Gwaltney, "The Concept of the Throne in Revelation" (Th.M. thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1986), 91-92.

<sup>4</sup>See Rev 2:26; 6:8; 20:6; 22:14.

<sup>5</sup>Looking at the macrostructure of the entire Apocalypse, however, all these four ἐξουσία passages have eschatological significance, discussed below.

<sup>6</sup>The three central units (DED') can be labeled "Activity and judgment of antidivine powers." Unit E itself describes the high intensity of this power struggle by presenting the "woman" and "her seeds" versus the "dragon" and his two "beasts."

argument.<sup>1</sup> This seems precisely to be the case in Revelation.

The noun ἐξουσία, as part of the key terms used by John to make his dramatic scenes more vivid, carries the possibility of an abuse or misuse of power. It occurs that an abuse of power/authority is the motivating force behind coercion and power worship described in the Apocalypse. Thus, Revelation points to the source of conflict rather than simply depicting an *apocalyptic combat*.<sup>2</sup>

The ἐξουσία clusters--especially in the chiastic focus (unit E)--demonstrate the theological intention of John. He describes an abusive and destructive system, which ironically mimics God and the Lamb<sup>3</sup> while its sole purpose is self-assertion or self-aggrandizement. This source of conflict, which leads to the apocalyptic combat, is expressed by the ἐξουσία clusters not only in unit E but in units DD' as well. Therefore, the apocalyptic combat theme becomes central to Revelation.

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<sup>1</sup>Thomson, 40.

<sup>2</sup>This phrase perhaps carries more weight in the context of the Apocalypse than *Christian war, combat, conflict* or *battle* suggested by scholars. See an earlier discussion of these terms under the subtitle "Chiasm in Revelation."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the Greek phrases τίς ὅμοιος τῷ θηρίῳ (13:4) and εἶχεν κέρατα δύο ὅμοια ἀρνίῳ καὶ ἐλάλει ὡς δράκων (13:11).

As this section proceeds macro- and microstructural analyses of the ἐξουσία passages are carried out to show what role the term plays in the book. After the microstructural analysis of a given literary unit, key terms and stylistic peculiarities are pointed out. First, the four pairs of parallel units (A-A', B-B', C-C', and D-D') are investigated, then the study focuses on the central unit (E) of Revelation.

#### The Prologue and the Epilogue

In the furthestmost two elements of the chiastic structure (A and A' - the Prologue [1:1-8] and the Epilogue [22:6-21]), one finds ἐξουσία only in the Epilogue (22:14). This passage,<sup>1</sup> the seventh of the Beatitudes in Revelation,<sup>2</sup> has two major variations,<sup>3</sup> which do not affect the role of ἐξουσία within the text.

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<sup>1</sup>The NTG26 reads: Μακάριοι οἱ πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν, ἵνα ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς καὶ τοῖς πυλῶσιν εἰσέλθωσιν εἰς τὴν πόλιν.

<sup>2</sup>The seven sayings alternatively appear in the singular (1:3; 16:15; 20:6; 22:7) and in the plural (14:13; 19:9; 22:14). In two instances (20:6 and 22:14) ἐξουσία is part of the saying.

<sup>3</sup>Codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus read πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν whereas the Majority text witnesses ποιῶντες τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ. The variation is probably a scribal intention; cf. Swete, 307.

From a macrostructural point of view the Epilogue has its chiastic counterpart in the Prologue where one finds the balancing first macarism.<sup>1</sup> This blessing has a clear parallel in the next-to-the-last Beatitude (22:7),<sup>2</sup> and also in Rev 22:18a.<sup>3</sup> It seems that although the message of Rev 1:3 is split into Rev 22:7 and 18a, the blessing is really for those who keep "the words of the prophecy."<sup>4</sup>

The three Beatitudes in the Prologue and Epilogue point to the Parousia, thus providing an important element of thematic coherence for the whole "prophecy"<sup>5</sup> of Revelation. The book starts and ends with the emphasized notion of the Second Advent.

<sup>1</sup>Rev 1:3 reads: μακάριος ὁ ἀναγινώσκων καὶ οἱ ἀκούοντες τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας καὶ τηροῦντες τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ γεγραμμένα, ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς ἐγγύς.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 22:7 reads: καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ. μακάριος ὁ τηρῶν τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: Μαρτυρῶ ἐγὼ παντὶ τῷ ἀκούοντι τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου.

<sup>4</sup>It is noteworthy that both the first and the next-to-the-last Beatitudes refer to the Apocalypse as οἱ λόγοι τῆς προφητείας, which is claimed to be an intelligible message as opposed to speaking in tongues in 1 Cor 14:1-5; cf. Newman, 156.

<sup>5</sup>The essence of this "prophecy" is the nearness of the Second Advent. Beside the balancing macarisms the notion of the Parousia can be found an additional three times in the Prologue (1:4, 7, 8) and further two times in the Epilogue (22:12, 20).

**Rev 22:13-16**

Considering the immediate context of Rev 22:14, Giblin notices in vss. 14-15 a combination of blessing and curse.<sup>1</sup> The microdynamic of the entire passage (Rev 22:13-16), however, exhibits an even chiasm, which can be displayed as follows:

- A "I am saying" ἐγὼ τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ὠ . . .
- B "Blessing" Μακάριοι οἱ πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν, ἵνα ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς . . .
- B' "Curse" ἔξω οἱ κύνες καὶ οἱ φάρμακοὶ καὶ οἱ πόρνοι . . .
- A' "I am saying" Ἐγὼ Ἰησοῦς . . . ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ρίζα καὶ τὸ γένος Δαυίδ . . .

In this structure ἐξουσία occurs in one of the balancing central elements as part of the "blessing-curse" antithesis. The participle, οἱ πλύνοντες, is probably an equivalent to οἱ νικῶντες.<sup>2</sup> J. M. Ford observes that Rev

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<sup>1</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 218-219; cf. Rev 21:8 and Phil 3:2 for similar wording. See also the anathema in 1 Cor 16:22.

<sup>2</sup>Parallel to Rev 22:14 is Rev 2:7b which reads: τῷ νικῶντι δώσω αὐτῷ φαγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ; cf. Robert H. Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John with Introduction, Notes, and Indices, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920), 2:177.

22:14 has an evident parallel in Rev 7:14,<sup>1</sup> which might refer to the Levitical washing of robes in preparation for a sacred meal.<sup>2</sup>

The sentence flow of Rev 22:14 contains (1) a main clause and (2) a ἵνα-clause to express purpose<sup>3</sup> or result<sup>4</sup>:

(1) Μακάριοι οἱ πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν,

(2/a) ἵνα ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν

ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς

(2/b) καὶ τοῖς πυλῶσιν εἰσέλθωσιν

εἰς τὴν πόλιν.

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<sup>1</sup>The Greek text reads: Οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἐρχόμενοι ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης καὶ ἐπλυναν τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν καὶ ἐλεύκαναν αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἀρνίου; cf. Rev 19:7-8, which reads: χαίρωμεν καὶ ἀγαλλιῶμεν καὶ δώσωμεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτῷ, ὅτι ἦλθεν ὁ γάμος τοῦ ἀρνίου καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἠτοίμασεν ἑαυτὴν καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῇ ἵνα περιβάληται βύσσινον λαμπρὸν καθαρὸν: τὸ γὰρ βύσσινον τὰ δικαιώματα τῶν ἀγίων ἐστίν. Here an analogous word is used for "robe" or "garment." For a detailed discussion of these synonyms for eschatological clothing, see Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:184-188, 2:127-128.

<sup>2</sup>Ford, Revelation, 348, comments: "The faithful fight the Holy War with the 'Lamb' but they must change their apparel before they enter the holy area and perhaps partake of the eschatological banquet."

<sup>3</sup>Fritz Rienecker and Cleon L. Rogers, Jr., Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), 863.

<sup>4</sup>For a possible Semitic influence on the elusive usage of ἵνα, see C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, 2d ed. (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 142-143.

This is the only passage in Revelation (and in the Johannine writings) where the meaning of ἐξουσία comes very close to "right"<sup>1</sup> in the sense that God "permits" or "grants" the victors to eat from the Tree of Life<sup>2</sup> by fulfilling His own promise.<sup>3</sup> It is also interesting to note here that this articular use of ἐξουσία in the nominative appears to be a rare feature in the Apocalypse,<sup>4</sup> but it adds

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<sup>1</sup>It is so rendered by NASB, NIV, NKJV, and NRSV; cf. also הַבְּרִיָּה הַקְּדוּשָׁה [Modern Hebrew NT], rev. ed. of 1976 (Jerusalem: The Bible Society in Israel, 1991), where נְיָוִי (right, droit) is the translation of ἐξουσία in Rev 22:14.

<sup>2</sup>Robert L. Thomas, Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 506, concludes that "this final blessing deals with the ultimate issues of life-access to the Tree of Life (22:2) and entrance to the Holy City (21:25)."

<sup>3</sup>Rev 2:7 reads: τῷ νικῶντι δώσω αὐτῷ φαγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ. On this background it seems clear that ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς in Rev 22:14 simply means "to the tree of Life" and not "over the tree of Life." In other words, the focus is on the gift of salvation not on "civic rights" per se. For this interpretation, see Jürgen Roloff, The Revelation of John: A Continental Commentary, trans. John E. Alsup (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 251; John F. Walvoord, The Revelation of Jesus Christ (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 336; cf. also George R. Beasley-Murray, John, WBC, vol. 36 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 13, where a comparison is made to John 1:12, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν, emphasizing the gift aspect of ἐξουσία.

<sup>4</sup>Out of its 21 occurrences there are only three more verses in Rev 9:10, 19, and 12:10, where the articular ἐξουσία is used in the nominative. For the importance of the articular and anarthrous use of ἐξουσία in Revelation, see Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:75.



more weight to the universal, eschatological fulfillment of this verse.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Seven Churches and the New Jerusalem

Comparing the next two elements of the chiastic structure (B and B' - The Seven Churches [1:9-3:22] and The New Jerusalem [21:1-22:5]), one finds ἐξουσία only in Rev 2:26. From a macrostructural point of view, the lack of ἐξουσία in one of the chiastic counterparts (21:1-22:5) may indicate that the possibility of misusing authority/power will not be a question in the New World anymore. In Rev 22:5b βασιλεύω refers to the kingly reign of the redeemed with God as it is opposed to antedivine dominion.<sup>2</sup>

#### Rev 2:26-28

The ἐξουσία passage (Rev 2:26-28) has two important parallels in Revelation itself,<sup>3</sup> and two allusions in the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, where Charles considers this articular form of ἐξουσία "abnormal" and "to be equal simply to ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν." Following his earlier argumentation, however, that with the article full authority is implied within a particular context, it is reasonable to state that since Rev 22:14 refers to an eschatological reward, ἐξουσία does not mean a *limited* authority or right.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 22:5b reads: καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 2:26-28 read: καὶ ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τηρῶν ἄχρι τέλους τὰ ἔργα μου, δώσω αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν

LXX.<sup>1</sup> One of the allusions in the LXX, Pss. Sol. 17:23b-24, provides a clear indication that Ps 2:8-9 was interpreted Messianically as early as the first century B.C.<sup>2</sup> The parallels in Rev 12:5 and 19:15a do not simply reaffirm the Christocentric interpretation of Ps 2:8-9, they also emphasize the themes of eschatological Messianic ruling power and judgment.<sup>3</sup>

The microdynamic of Rev 2:26-28 exhibits an odd chiasm with an important introductory "frame passage,"<sup>4</sup>

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ράβδω σιδηρᾶ ὡς τὰ σκεύη τὰ κεραμικὰ συντρίβεται, ὡς κἀγὼ εἴληφα παρὰ τοῦ πατρός μου, καὶ δώσω αὐτῷ τὸν ἀστέρα τὸν πρωῖνον. The parallels are Rev 12:5, which reads: καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν ἄρσεν, ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ράβδῳ σιδηρᾶ. καὶ ἠρπάσθη τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ πρὸς τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ, and 19:15a, which reads: καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ῥομφαία ὀξεῖα, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ πατάξῃ τὰ ἔθνη, καὶ αὐτὸς ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ράβδῳ σιδηρᾶ.

<sup>1</sup>Ps 2:8-9, reads: αἴτησαι παρ' ἐμοῦ καὶ δώσω σοι ἔθνη τὴν κληρονομίαν σου καὶ τὴν κατάσχεσιν σου τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς ποιμανεῖς αὐτοὺς ἐν ράβδῳ σιδηρᾶ ὡς σκεῦος κεραμέως συντρίψεις αὐτούς, and Pss. Sol. 17:23b-24, reads: ἐκτρίψαι ὑπερηφανίαν ἀμαρτωλοῦ ὡς σκεύη κεραμέως ἐν ράβδῳ σιδηρᾶ συντρίψαι πᾶσαν ὑπόστασιν αὐτῶν ὀλεθρεῦσαι ἔθνη παράνομα ἐν λόγῳ στόματος αὐτοῦ.

<sup>2</sup>Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:75; James H. Charlesworth, ed., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 639-641.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 12:5; 19:15a.

<sup>4</sup>Thomson, 27, observes that "a 'frame-passage' is a spring-board from which to launch into the chiasmus . . . without itself being part of the chiastic pattern."

which refers to the overcomers. The unit shows the following pattern:

Καὶ ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τηρῶν ἄχρι τέλους τὰ ἔργα μου,

A "Promise" δώσω αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν

B "Ruling" καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν βάρβδω σιδηρᾷ

C "Judgment" ὡς τὰ σκεύη τὰ κεραμικὰ συντρίβεται,

B' "Ruling" ὡς κἀγὼ εἴληφα παρὰ τοῦ πατρός μου,

A' "Promise" καὶ δώσω αὐτῷ τὸν ἀστέρα τὸν πρωῖνον.<sup>1</sup>

In this structure ἐξουσία occurs in the opening element (A) of the chiasmus, but the term can also be applied to element B'.<sup>2</sup> Καὶ ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τηρῶν ἄχρι τέλους τὰ ἔργα μου, being a parallelism in itself, functions as an introduction.

Considering Rev 2:26-28 thematically, it seems that ἐξουσία is balanced against ἀστήρ πρωῖνος,<sup>3</sup> whereas part of the allusion to Ps 2:9 is a parallel piece to ὡς κἀγὼ εἴληφα

<sup>1</sup>For this micro-analysis, see Müller, 453.

<sup>2</sup>It is so interpreted by NASB ("authority"), NIV ("authority"), NRSV ("authority"), RSV ("power").

<sup>3</sup>See elements A and A'. Cf. also Rev 22:16b, where Jesus says: ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ῥίζα καὶ τὸ γένος Δαυίδ, ὁ ἀστήρ ὁ λαμπρὸς ὁ πρωῖνος. The five ἐγὼ εἰμι sayings of Jesus in Revelation (1:8, 17; 2:23; 21:6; 22:16) are clustered in the extremes of the parallel units (AB and B'A') of the overall chiasmic pattern. For this phenomenon, see Thomson, 27.

παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς μου.<sup>1</sup> This parallelism directs one's attention not only to the source of Jesus' ἐξουσία but also to the importance of His use of authority.<sup>2</sup> The other key verb of the center is συντρίβω (to break in pieces, crush, smash, shatter), which perhaps carries a further emphasis on the theme of divine judgment already expressed in one of the meanings of ποιμαίνω.<sup>3</sup>

The content of element B of the above pattern (καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ ) shows a closer relation to Ps 2:9 and Rev 12:5; 19:15a than it does to Pss. Sol. 17:24, therefore the canonical parallels should be preferred. This is perhaps a further indication that Christ is the norm whenever the question of authority or its use is raised. It appears that in this passage the issue of authority is not

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<sup>1</sup>See elements B and B'.

<sup>2</sup>Especially if one considers the influence of ποιμαίνω (to tend like a shepherd; to rule) on the central elements (BCB') of the pattern. Cf. Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:76-77, argues that the Hebrew רָעָה (to shepherd) sometimes can mean "to devastate, destroy," as in Jer 2:16; 6:3; 22:22; Mic 5:5; Ps 80:14. See also Ford, Revelation, 404, suggests that "a double entendre" is intended by John in Rev 2:27a.

<sup>3</sup>Beside Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15 the term occurs in Rev 7:17a, ὅτι τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἀνά μέσον τοῦ θρόνου ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς καὶ ὀδηγήσει αὐτούς ἐπὶ ζωῆς πηγᾶς ὕδατων, without the notion of judgment; cf. Ps 22:1-2 (LXX).

so much historically<sup>1</sup> as eschatologically<sup>2</sup> oriented. In short, Rev 2:26 testifies that the followers of Christ will share in His eschatological Messianic rule by being united with Him.<sup>3</sup> Therefore this *share* in power "does not imply cruel, heartless domination,"<sup>4</sup> although the overcomer "will have a place in the final decisive victory of Christ over the world forces opposed to God."<sup>5</sup> The eschatological Messianic rule will be a reversal of the present antidivine power struggle.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Contra George Eldon Ladd, A Commentary on the Revelation of John (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1972), 53; Swete, 47; Walvoord, 77.

<sup>2</sup>Robert L. Thomas, Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 233.

<sup>3</sup>Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, The Book of Revelation: A Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 52, states that "what is promised to the overcomer here is really union with Christ in his universal authority"; Bruce M. Metzger, Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 37, defines the ultimate reward of those who conquer as being "with their Lord."

<sup>4</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 59.

<sup>5</sup>Leon Morris, The Revelation of St. John, TNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1969), 74.

<sup>6</sup>Adela Yarbro Collins, The Apocalypse, NTM, vol. 22 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979), 23.

## The Seven Seals and the Seven Judgment Scenes

In the third pair of the chiastic structure (C and C' - Seven Seals [4:1-8:1] and Seven Judgment Scenes [19:1-20:15]), one finds, for the first time, two balancing occurrences of ἐξουσία.<sup>2</sup> From a macrostructural point of view it is a significant new feature, because it shows how important the term is within the overall chiastic arrangement of Revelation.<sup>3</sup> It appears that ἐξουσία plays a special role in the large antithetical thematic parallelism

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., xiii; idem, Crisis and Catharsis, 111-116, describes two sets of seven unnumbered visions (12:1-15:4 and 19:11-21:8); Beatrice S. Neall, "Sealed Saints and the Tribulation," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 245-278, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 249-252, calls Rev 4:1-8:1 "historical seals" and Rev 19:1-21:8 "eschatological seals"; the latter ones are marked off by the καὶ εἶδον formula.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 6:8 reads: καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἵππος χλωρὸς, καὶ καθήμενος ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ ὄνομα αὐτῷ [ὁ] Θάνατος, καὶ ὁ ἄδης ἠκολούθει μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἐξουσία ἐπὶ τὸ τέταρτον τῆς γῆς ἀποκτεῖναι ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ καὶ ἐν λιμῷ καὶ ἐν θανάτῳ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν θηρίων τῆς γῆς, and 20:6 reads: μακάριος καὶ ἅγιος ὁ ἔχων μέρος ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τῇ πρώτῃ: ἐπὶ τούτων ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἔσονται ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ [τὰ] χίλια ἔτη.

<sup>3</sup>For this large chiastic pattern, see Naden, 117-118, who argues that Rev 4-7 are "mirrored" in Rev 19, being "historical" and "eschatological" chapters, respectively; William H. Shea, "Revelation 5 and 19 as Literary Reciprocals," AUSS 22 (1984): 249-257, where the hymns in these two chapters are stated "structural parallels" which are "reciprocal in nature" (252, 257).

of chapters 4-7 and 19-20.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in Rev 6:8 θάνατος,<sup>2</sup> "death," is hypostatized<sup>3</sup> together with Hades, whereas in Rev 20:6 ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος, "second death," a phrase unique to the Apocalypse, is personified also.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Rev 6:10, the cry of the souls under the altar as a question: "Ἔως πότε, ὁ δεσπότης ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός, οὐ κρίνεις καὶ ἐκδικεῖς τὸ αἷμα ἡμῶν ἐκ τῶν κατοικούντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς; and Rev 19:1b-2, the cry of the great multitude in heaven as an answer: 'Ἀλληλουϊά: ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, ὅτι ἀληθιναὶ καὶ δίκαιαι αἱ κρίσεις αὐτοῦ: ὅτι ἐκρινεν τὴν πόρνην τὴν μεγάλην ἣτις ἐφθειρεν τὴν γῆν ἐν τῇ πορνείᾳ αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐξεδίκησεν τὸ αἷμα τῶν δούλων αὐτοῦ ἐκ χειρὸς αὐτῆς. For the main clusters of parallel words and ideas in chaps. 4-7 and 19-20, judgment and vengeance being the most direct and comprehensive, see Jon Paulien, "The Seven Seals," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 199-243, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 204-206; cf. also Naden, 138, finds a clue to the thrust of all seven in the fifth part of each major septet; Neall, 249, where the urgent cry of the faithful ones in Rev 6:10 is considered "pivotal to the rest of the book"; Jacques B. Doukhan, Daniel: The Vision of the End, rev. ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1989), 102, commenting on Ps 94:1-3, asserts that "Love cannot work and save without the violence of His intervention."

<sup>2</sup>The Greek θάνατος is the translation of the Hebrew נִפְּי, plague, pestilence in the LXX. See especially Lev 26:25; Deut 28:21; Jer 14:12; Ezek 14:21, where the term is a part of the covenant curses.

<sup>3</sup>For similar personification, see Rom 5:14, 21; 6:9, 12-14; 1 Cor 15:24-26; cf. also Swete, 88.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Rev 2:11; 20:14; 21:8. The term "second death" seems to be a targumic concept meaning exclusion from the resurrection and eternal damnation; see Roger Le Déaut, "Targumic Literature and the New Testament Interpretation," BTB 4 (1974): 262; Martin McNamara, The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch, Analecta Biblica, vol. 27a, 2d printing with sup. (Rome: Biblical Institute

What do the emphasis and personification indicate? Taking ἐξουσία, θάνατος, and ἐδόθη together as they are interrelated, it seems evident that the focus is on the enmity between the divine and antidivine powers,<sup>1</sup> which is expressed later as a cosmic struggle.<sup>2</sup> Considering the importance of the divine passive, ἐδόθη, commentators usually give the following explanations: (1) even a limited power/authority is exercised only by divine permission,<sup>3</sup> and (2) the power/authority remains under God's control,<sup>4</sup>

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Press, 1978), 124; Jon Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets: Literary Allusions and the Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12, AUSDDS, 11 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1988), 89, n. 1.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Prévost, 124, where three septenaries (seals, trumpets, and plagues) are compared showing a "Judgment-Salvation" dynamism in Rev 6-22. Based on this comparison the cry of the martyrs in Rev 6:10 indicates a delay of the Parousia (salvation but not judgment), whereas Rev 19:2 evidently describes judgment on the wicked as part of the final triumph of salvation. See also Russell, 181, points out the problem of unfulfilled prophecy for apocalyptic writers.

<sup>2</sup>See especially Rev 12:7-12, and its study below.

<sup>3</sup>Hughes, 87; Morris, 107; Paulien, "The Seven Seals," 232-233; Powell, 74.

<sup>4</sup>Bruce M. Metzger, Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 57, states that "because God gave humankind free will, there is always the possibility that we might misuse the portion of power entrusted to us. . . . Wars, starvation, devastation--these are the means by which it is made plain that power abused is still under God's control."



although it is misused. This is perhaps a reflection on God's mercy.<sup>1</sup>

### Rev 6:8

The microdynamic of Rev 6:8 does not exhibit chiasmic or parallel elements, but one can observe the centrality of ἐξουσία and the embracing occurrence of θάνατος, which perhaps are emphasizing devices:

(1) καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοῦ ἵππος χλωρός,

(a) καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ ὄνομα αὐτῷ [ὁ] Θάνατος,

(b) καὶ ὁ ἄδης ἠκολούθει μετ' αὐτοῦ

(2) καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἐξουσία ἐπὶ τὸ τέταρτον τῆς γῆς

ἀποκτεῖναι (a) ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ

(b) καὶ ἐν λιμῷ

(c) καὶ ἐν θανάτῳ

(d) καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν θηρίων τῆς γῆς.<sup>2</sup>

Charles suggests that there are interpolations in this passage<sup>3</sup> but his argument does not seem to be

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<sup>1</sup>Ford, Revelation, 108, notes that the influence of Death and Hades restricted "to one fourth of the earth may be symbolic of God's mercy," although it is still "an awesome judgment"; cf. Walvoord, 130-131.

<sup>2</sup>For a similar micro-analysis, see Müller, 507.

<sup>3</sup>Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:169-171, is specific about καὶ ὁ ἄδης ἠκολούθει μετ' αὐτοῦ and

convincing.<sup>1</sup> Based on the foregoing, Rev 4:1-8:1 and 19:1-20:15 make up a satisfactory parallelism within the thematic organization of Revelation.

### Rev 20:1-10

C. H. Griblin rightly observed that Rev 20:1-10 forms a "concentric structure,"<sup>2</sup> with vs. 6 as part of the central unit (vss. 4-6). The microdynamic of the passage exhibits the following inverted parallelism or ABA' pattern:

A "Binding of the Dragon" (20:1-3)

Καὶ εἶδον ἄγγελον . . . καὶ ἔδησεν . . . τὸν δράκοντα

B "1000-year reign of Christ and His priests" (20:4-6)

Καὶ εἶδον θρόνους καὶ ἐκάθισαν ἐπ' αὐτούς . . . καὶ ἔζησαν

καὶ ἐβασίλευσαν μετὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ

A' "Loosing of Satan" (20:7-10)

Καὶ . . . λυθήσεται ὁ Σατανᾶς ἐκ τῆς φυλακῆς αὐτοῦ . . .

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ἀποκτεῖναι ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ καὶ ἐν λιμῶ καὶ ἐν θανάτῳ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν θηρίων τῆς γῆς.

<sup>1</sup>Charles argues that there should be only four horses in this passage, therefore the ὁ ἄδης-clause makes it redundant and confusing, and that the use of θάνατος with a different meaning in the last clause is carelessness. A careful study of the larger context of the Apocalypse, however, shows that the pairing of these terms is not uncommon to the book (see 1:18; 20:13, 14), on the contrary, it has an important role within the overall parallel structure (or chiasmus).

<sup>2</sup>Griblin, The Book of Revelation, 183.

Taking Rev 20:6 itself, the sentence flow of this Beatitude can be outlined in the following simple way:

(1) μακάριος καὶ ἅγιος

ὁ ἔχων μέρος ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τῇ πρώτῃ:

(2) ἐπὶ τούτων ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος

(a) οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν,

(b) ἀλλ' ἔσονται ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ

(c) καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ [τά] χίλια ἔτη.<sup>1</sup>

This verse shows neither chiastic nor parallel structures. But one can observe the antithesis between ἐξουσία and βασιλεύω, which points to the end of death's present dominion over the redeemed.<sup>2</sup> Within the above-described inverted parallelism, however, ἐξουσία occurs in the central part, which perhaps indicates the focus of the passage dealing with the binding and loosing of Satan.

In summary, these balancing elements (C and C') of the overall chiastic pattern of the Apocalypse carry the antithetical themes of both the limited authority of Θάνατος and the final cessation of its power over the

<sup>1</sup>For a similar micro-analysis, see Müller, 662.

<sup>2</sup>Roloff, 228; Swete, 264; Walvoord, 299; Wink, Naming the Powers, 53-54.

redeemed. In other words, Revelation is in harmony with the "already and not yet" eschatological concept of the NT.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Seven Trumpets and the Seven Plagues

Comparing the last two balancing elements of the chiastic structure (D and D' - The Seven Trumpets [8:2-11:18] and The Seven Plagues [15:5-18:24]) one encounters a heavy concentration or clustering of the ἐξουσία passages.<sup>2</sup> In the Seven Trumpets section the term appears six times,<sup>3</sup> while in the Seven Plagues section ἐξουσία occurs four times.<sup>4</sup>

From a macrostructural point of view the Trumpets and Plagues have both thematic parallel elements<sup>5</sup> and striking contrasts.<sup>6</sup> These characteristics show a

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the different aspects of this "spiritual tension" expressed by Paul in Rom 5:1-5; 6:22-23; 8:18-25.

<sup>2</sup>Out of its 21 occurrences in Revelation ἐξουσία can be found 10 times (almost 50 percent) in these bordering panels of the central section.

<sup>3</sup>See Rev 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6, which are part of the fifth and sixth trumpet blasts.

<sup>4</sup>See Rev 16:9; 17:12-13; 18:1, which are related to the fourth plague and the destruction of Babylon.

<sup>5</sup>These elements include geographical (earth, sea, waters, Euphrates) and cosmic (sun) locations as well as natural disasters (lightning/thunder, earthquake, hails).

<sup>6</sup>These contrasts involve a gradual expansion on territorial limitations, from one fourth (fourth seal) to one third (first through fourth trumpets), then to the total surface of the earth and sun. For a detailed analysis of

progression in divine and antidivine activities, as well as in the nature of God's judgment leading to the final consummation.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Trumpets are to be interpreted as symbols of spiritual realities,<sup>2</sup> the ἐξουσία passages of this section have to be explained in the same manner. An important observation is that the fifth element of three Septenaries (Seals, Trumpets, and Plagues),<sup>3</sup> or perhaps that of all four (including the Letters to the Seven Churches),<sup>4</sup> provides a dramatically changed scene. This changed scene points to a new direction in these visions.

Taking into account the thematic parallelism of sections D and D', one finds their corresponding fifth elements to be Rev 9:1-12 and 16:10-11, respectively. Their comparison indicates that "they are but different aspects of substantially the same course of procedure."<sup>5</sup> In other

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these parallel and contrasting elements, see Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, 340-343.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 342.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 362-365, where six evidences for the symbolic nature of the trumpets are discussed in detail.

<sup>3</sup>William Milligan, The Revelation of St. John (London: Macmillan & Co., 1886), 93.

<sup>4</sup>Naden, 138.

<sup>5</sup>Milligan, 98. See especially his table.

words, under the fifth trumpet the *activity*<sup>1</sup> of demonic forces is in view,<sup>2</sup> while under the fifth plague their *judgment*<sup>3</sup> is depicted.

### Rev 9:1-11

The microdynamic of Rev 9:1-11 shows an odd chiasm, which GIBLIN calls a "concentrically arranged"<sup>4</sup> structure.

The passage can be outlined as follows:

A "A fallen star opens the abyss" (9:1-2)

καὶ εἶδον ἀστέρα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεπτωκότα . . . καὶ ἤνοιξεν τὸ  
φρέαρ τῆς ἀβύσσου

B "Power is given to the locusts" (9:3-5)

καὶ ἐκ τοῦ καπνοῦ ἐξῆλθον ἀκρίδες . . . καὶ ἐδόθη αὐταῖς ἐξουσία

C "In those days" (9:6)

καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the detailed and vivid picture of a five-month torture by locust-scorpion-horses having human faces and lions' teeth in Rev 9:1-11. It is also noteworthy that this battle is self-destructive for it is directed toward τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οἵτινες οὐκ ἔχουσι τὴν σφραγίδα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων.

<sup>2</sup>See the importance of ἄβυσσος in this regard as it is discussed below.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the darkened kingdom of the Beast (who received his δύναμις, θρόνος and ἐξουσία from the Dragon) in Rev 16:10-11, where people became *inactive* because of pain.

<sup>4</sup>GIBLIN, The Book of Revelation, 101-103; *idem*, "Revelation 11:1-13," 447; cf. also MÜLLER, 342-343.

B' "Power is in their (locusts) tails" (9:7-10)

καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν

A' "Their king is the angel of the abyss" (9:11)

ἔχουσιν ἐπ' αὐτῶν βασιλέα τὸν ἄγγελον τῆς ἀβύσσου.

Within this chiasmus ἐξουσία occurs three times (Rev 9:3, 10) in two parallel units (B and B'). This is perhaps a conceptual balancing of corresponding elements.<sup>1</sup> The clustering of the term, on the other hand, also indicates intensification as well as focusing.<sup>2</sup> It appears as if John was using a magnifying glass to highlight a small but crucial detail.

The central element (C) of this chiasmus is particularly important as an imbalanced piece (vs. 6)<sup>3</sup> which shifts to an "end-time phrase" (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις),<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For this important literary device, see Thomson, 223-224, where he concludes that the purpose of the balancing of corresponding elements is either repetition (or recapitulation), contrast or expansion, or a combination of these. In our case expansion seems to be the goal.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. how John explains the torture by the locusts as he compares them first to the power (ἐξουσία) of the scorpions in general then to the power (ἐξουσία) of their tails (οὐραὶ) in particular.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ζητήσουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν θάνατον καὶ οὐ μὴ εὕρῃσουσιν αὐτόν, καὶ ἐπιθυμήσουσιν ἀποθανεῖν καὶ φεύγει ὁ θάνατος ἀπ' αὐτῶν.

<sup>4</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 102.

thus introducing a sudden change in terminology.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that vs. 6 contains the focus of John's thought.<sup>2</sup> The present tense of the phrase φεύγει ὁ θάνατος ἀπ' αὐτῶν could perhaps be designated "historical present" with future meaning.<sup>3</sup> The repetition of οἱ ἄνθρωποι in the balancing elements (vss. 4, 5, 7 and 10 in BB') also contributes to the dramatic tone of this structure.<sup>4</sup>

One of the key terms employed in this passage is ἄβυσσος, which occurs seven times in Revelation and always in connection with ἐξουσία.<sup>5</sup> A careful study of these passages indicates that their focus is either on the activity or on the inactivity of demonic forces. The two additional occurrences of ἄβυσσος in the NT<sup>6</sup> seem to support this usage.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Thomson, 215-218.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>3</sup>Rienecker and Rogers, 832, interpret the clause "death keeps fleeing from them." Such a personification of θάνατος is a carefully worked out irony.

<sup>4</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 102.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3.

<sup>6</sup>Luke 8:31; Rom 10:7.

<sup>7</sup>In Luke 8:31 the relationship between demons and the abyss is clearly stated, whereas in Rom 10:7 ἄβυσσος seems to refer to a place where Christ was laid dead.



The LXX translates the Hebrew דִּיְתָה, depth, with the Greek ἄβυσσος in the sense of "deep waters" or the "depth" of the earth.<sup>1</sup> The term appears 49 times in the LXX, mostly in the Poetic/Wisdom literature (34 times). In about 35 instances the context is water/sea. In Revelation, however, ὕδωρ or θάλασσα is never connected to ἄβυσσος.

Other key words and phrases in this passage include ἀστέρα πεπτωκότα,<sup>2</sup> ἀκρίδες and σκορπίοι,<sup>3</sup> μήνας πέντε,<sup>4</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup>Collins, The Combat Myth, 165-167; Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid, God Is a Warrior, SOTBT (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 188, n. 11; Swete, 114-115.

<sup>2</sup>A similar expression is used at the third trumpet blast (8:10), but the context there indicates that spiritual falling of leading Christian teachers is to be understood in the first place; cf. Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, 403. In Rev 9:1, however, a reference to Satan's fall is more likely. The context of the passage (9:1-11) and the thematic parallelism of Revelation (cf. 12:9) support this proposal. See also the NT (Luke 10:18-19) and OT (Isa 14:12) allusions; cf. Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 101.

<sup>3</sup>For the ancient Near-Eastern and OT backgrounds of the locusts, scorpions, and the sirocco, see Paul Lippi, "Locusts, Scorpion-Men, and the Sirocco in the Fifth Trumpet of the Apocalypse," Honors Project, Andrews University, 1974, 2-10. It can be concluded that the biblical background supports the notion of judgment as the symbolic meaning of locusts; cf. Ford, Revelation, 148.

<sup>4</sup>The five-month period is the normal life span of the locusts; cf. Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 102; Lippi, 12. Five months, however, can symbolically refer to the terminated devastation of the Flood, as in Gen 7:24; cf. Giblin, *ibid.*, 102. Number "five" itself can mean either "incompleteness" or "smallness"; cf. Naden, 149; Daniel T. Niles, As Seeing the Invisible: A Study of the Book of Revelation (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), 30.

'Αβαδδών or 'Απολλύων.<sup>1</sup> Commentators generally agree that these terms in Rev 9:1-11 carry a symbolic description of the activity of demonic forces<sup>2</sup> whose power is not only delegated but also controlled by God.<sup>3</sup>

As was noted earlier, both the Trumpets and the Plagues show a progression in divine and antidivine activities. By comparing these two septets, however, one can observe a further development in the movements. Thus the sixth trumpet (Rev 9:13-21) describes a tremendous cavalry that not only harms but kills one-third of mankind, yet those who stay alive do not repent.<sup>4</sup> The sixth plague (Rev 16:12-16), on the other hand, depicts the "last battle," 'Αρμαγεδών, on the great day of God the Almighty.

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<sup>1</sup>The Hebrew  $\text{הַיַּבֵּיט}$  means "destruction; place of destruction, abyss," while the Greek 'Απολλύων is perhaps a pun on the name of the Greco-Roman god, 'Απολλών; cf. Ford, Revelation, 152; Gibling, The Book of Revelation, 101. This wordplay, both in Hebrew and Greek, adds further flavor to the above-mentioned irony. Cf. also John 8:44 where Jesus calls the Devil ἀνθρωποκτόνος and ψεύστης.

<sup>2</sup>Collins, The Apocalypse, 61; Ford, Revelation, 151; Robert P. Gordon, "Loricatē Locusts in the Targum to Nahum III 17 and Revelation IX 9," Vetus Testamentum 33 (1983): 339; Ladd, 131; Paulien, "The Seven Seals," 229; Roloff, 114; Swete, 116; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 30; Walvoord, 164.

<sup>3</sup>Hughes, 111; Morris, 128; Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, 226; Powell, 76; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 31; Walvoord, 160.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Rev 16:8-10, the same results of the fourth and fifth plagues.

Interestingly both the sixth trumpet and the sixth plague build on the same set of catchwords ("river Euphrates," "mouth," and number "three"),<sup>1</sup> thus providing the major features of this progression.

**Rev 9:17-19**

Within the sixth-trumpet passage one detects another odd chiasm in 9:17b-19. The microdynamic of these verses displays the following pattern:

A "Horses with lion-like heads" (9:17b)

καὶ αἱ κεφαλαὶ τῶν ἵππων ὡς κεφαλαὶ λεόντων

B "Fire, smoke and brimstone out of their mouths" (9:17c)

καὶ ἐκ τῶν στομάτων αὐτῶν ἐκπορεύεται πῦρ καὶ καπνὸς καὶ θεῖον

C "One third of mankind was killed by these three plagues"

(9:18a) ἀπὸ τῶν τριῶν πληγῶν τούτων ἀπεκτάθησαν τὸ τρίτον

τῶν ἀνθρώπων

B' "Fire, smoke and brimstone out of their mouths" (9:18b)

ἐκ τοῦ πυρός καὶ τοῦ καπνοῦ καὶ τοῦ θείου τοῦ ἐκπορευομένου

ἐκ τῶν στομάτων αὐτῶν

A' "Horses having serpent-like tails with heads" (9:19)

αἱ γὰρ οὐραὶ αὐτῶν ὅμοιαι ὄφεσιν, ἔχουσαι κεφαλὰς.

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<sup>1</sup>In Rev 9:19 "serpent-like tails" and in Rev 16:13 "frog-like demonic spirits" are mentioned, probably indicating the same antidivine forces; cf. Rev 12:9.

Giblin calls the structure a description "in a concentric fashion."<sup>1</sup> The focus of this arrangement is the centrally placed element (C), which points out the increase in demonic activities. The fifth trumpet brought not killing but torture (βασανισμός). The clear purpose of the sixth trumpet, however, is to kill (ἀποκτείνω).

Only in the last element of this microstructure (A') one finds ἐξουσία, which explains the double intensity of the killing power of these horses.<sup>2</sup> The earlier "human faces" (Rev 9:7) are not seen any more, and the source of power is not only the tail (9:10) but the mouth (9:19) as well.<sup>3</sup> Finally, instead of "scorpion-like tails" (9:10) the horses now have "serpent-like tails" (9:19). This dramatic change depicts a shift from a half-human silhouette to a definitively bestial or demonic appearance.<sup>4</sup> In short, the

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<sup>1</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 108; cf. Müller, 347, 350.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: ἡ γὰρ ἐξουσία τῶν ἵππων ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν.

<sup>3</sup>See Deut 28:13, 44, where the blessing promises that "the Lord shall make you the head and not the tail," whereas the curse predicts that "he (the alien) shall be the head, and you shall be the tail." See also Isa 9:15, where "the prophet who teaches falsehood is the tail." It seems that in the progress of the fifth and sixth trumpets not only the tail but the head (mouth) is also becoming demonic.

<sup>4</sup>Collins, The Apocalypse, 63; Morris, 135; Walvoord, 165, 167.

sixth trumpet attains a crisis point in the progression of the seven by describing this dreadful and deadly power.<sup>1</sup>

Following the sixth trumpet (second woe) is an interlude,<sup>2</sup> enlargement,<sup>3</sup> or expansion<sup>4</sup> in Rev 10:1-11:14.<sup>5</sup> This section is important from a macrostructural point of view because without it the sixth trumpet was merely negative.<sup>6</sup> Rev 10:1-11:14, however, provides an assurance that neither John's global prophetic ministry nor the

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<sup>1</sup>Donald Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, 3d ed. in 1 vol. (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 979; Naden, 151.

<sup>2</sup>Isbon T. Beckwith, The Apocalypse of John: Studies in Introduction with a Critical and Exegetical Commentary, reprint of 1919 ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1967), 573; Collins, The Apocalypse, 64; Fiorenza, Revelation: Vision of a Just World, 79; Mazzaferri, 336-337; Milligan, 157; James Moffatt, The Revelation of St. John the Divine, EGT, vol. 5., ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), 289; Robert H. Mounce, The Book of Revelation, NICNT, vol. 17 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1977), 205; Roloff, 122; Strand, "The Eight Basic Visions," in Symposium on Revelation-Book I, 38-39; idem, "The Two Witnesses of Rev 11:3-12," AUSS 19 (1981): 128; J. P. M. Sweet, Revelation, WPC, ed. D. E. Nineham (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1979), 157, 175; Theodor Zahn, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, vol. 2., KNT, vol. 18 (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung Dr. Werner Scholl, 1926), 396.

<sup>3</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 96, 103, 108; idem, "Revelation 11:1-13," 434-436; Kempson, 97-101.

<sup>4</sup>Müller, 380-381.

<sup>5</sup>This section is similar to Rev 7:1-17, although here the clear link to the preceding material is missing; cf. Müller, 380. Cf. also Rev 16:15.

<sup>6</sup>Just as it would be the case with the sixth seal if Rev 7:1-17 were missing; cf. Müller, 382.

testimony of the two witnesses (prophets) will be in vain. This section further indicates that the witness of John's first-century Christian community will also be fruitful.

This long<sup>1</sup> reassuring enlargement is thematically divided into two sections, the first (10:1-11) focusing on John's prophetic testimony,<sup>2</sup> and the second (11:1-14) concentrating on the militant, prophetic Christian witness,<sup>3</sup> even to the point of martyrdom. These sections may not be separated but must be distinguished from each other.<sup>4</sup> In the second section ἐξουσία appears twice in one sentence<sup>5</sup> thus providing a "balancing," positive use<sup>6</sup> of power/authority within the Seven Trumpets unit.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. the much shorter enlargements in Rev 7:1-17, and especially in 16:15.

<sup>2</sup>Giblin, "Revelation 11:1-13," 435.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 435, 446.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 435-436, where Giblin emphasizes the ongoing prophetic testimony and the divine imperatives (cf. 10:4, 8, 11; 11:1-2, 12) as major thematic links between the two sections; cf. also the difference between the vertical dimensions of action in Rev 10:1-11 (heaven-earth) and in 11:1-13 (heaven-earth[abyss]-heaven).

<sup>5</sup>Rev 11:6 reads: οὔτοι ἔχουσιν τὴν ἐξουσίαν κλεῖσαι τὸν οὐρανόν, ἵνα μὴ ὑετὸς βρέχη τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς προφητείας αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσιν ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων στρέφειν αὐτὰ εἰς αἷμα καὶ πατάξαι τὴν γῆν ἐν πάσῃ πληγῇ ὅσακις ἐὰν θελήσωσιν.

<sup>6</sup>Compare with the earlier (9:3, 10, 19), negative or demonic use (or misuse) of ἐξουσία during the fifth and sixth trumpet blasts. See also Giblin, "Revelation 11:1-13," 447.

**Rev 11:1-13**

Rev 11:1-13 contains at least four subsections.<sup>1</sup>

One can make further observations, however, by focusing on the activity of the two witnesses (11:3-12). An analysis of the microdynamic of this passage exhibits the following even chiasmus:

A "The duration of the two witnesses' testimony" (11:3-4)

καὶ προφητεύσουσιν ἡμέρας χιλίας διακοσίας ἐξήκοντα

B "The activity of the two witnesses" (11:5-6)

πῦρ ἐκπορεύεται ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτῶν . . . οὗτοι ἔχουσιν τὴν ἐξουσίαν κλείσαι τὸν οὐρανόν, . . . καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσιν ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων στρέφειν αὐτὰ εἰς αἷμα καὶ πατάξαι τὴν γῆν ἐν πάσῃ πληγῇ

B' "The activity of the beast from the abyss" (11:7-10)

τὸ θηρίον τὸ ἀναβαῖνον ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου ποιήσει μετ' αὐτῶν πόλεμον καὶ νικήσει αὐτούς καὶ ἀποκτενεῖ αὐτούς

A' "The duration of the two witnesses' death" (11:11-12)

καὶ μετὰ τὰς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ ἥμισυ πνεῦμα ζωῆς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσῆλθεν ἐν αὐτοῖς.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 436-437, where Gibling considers vss. 1-2, An Introduction; vss. 3-6, The Empowered Two Witnesses; vss. 7-10, Their Suffering for Their Testimony; vss. 11-13, The Vindication of the Two Witnesses.

The central two elements (BB') of this pattern contain a balanced statement regarding the divine and demonic activities. The two witnesses bear God's approval for a definite time period,<sup>1</sup> while the beast's attack is abrupt, without time reference or demonic authorization.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, for a short time the beast succeeds against the witnesses.<sup>3</sup>

Giblin sees vs. 13 as the "climactic point" of the whole passage, which describes repentance.<sup>4</sup> In relation to the foregoing ABB'A' structure, however, vs. 13 functions as a "tail-piece" or "frame-passage" which concludes the literary unit.<sup>5</sup> This piece is obviously not without importance because it shows the ultimate effect of the witnesses, at least on the "remnant," οἱ λοιποί.

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<sup>1</sup>See Rev 11:3; cf. Rev 12:6.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rev 13:2, 5, where both time reference and power source are provided for the beast's activity.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Rev 13:7a, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ποιῆσαι πόλεμον μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ νικῆσαι αὐτούς, for a similar wording of the beast's success, where only the last phrase of Rev 11:7, καὶ ἀποκτενεῖ αὐτούς, is missing. See also Dan 7:21 (θ).

<sup>4</sup>Giblin, "Revelation 11:1-13," 444. It should be noted, however, that neither μετανοέω nor μετάνοια is used in this passage (cf. Rev 9:20-21 and 16:8-11, where the verb form is used). Giblin's valid statement is perhaps based on the observance that the terms employed in the last clause of Rev 11:13, καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἔμφοβοι ἐγένοντο καὶ ἔδωκαν δόξαν τῷ θεῷ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, carry the notion of repentance.

<sup>5</sup>Thomson, 27.



Based on the above-displayed chiasm, it seems clear that John's focus is not on a specific time period<sup>1</sup> but on the prophetic activity of the witnesses.<sup>2</sup> As noted above, the witnesses' use of power<sup>3</sup> can be contrasted with the misuse of power in the fifth and sixth trumpets.<sup>4</sup>

The identity of the two witnesses is an enigma.<sup>5</sup> They may characterize the "post-70 Christian mission,"<sup>6</sup> with

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<sup>1</sup>The time given to the witnesses in Rev 11:3 is "1260 days"; cf. Rev 12:6 for the same number, and Rev 11:2; 13:5 for the same period of time (42 months).

<sup>2</sup>Edwin Earl Reynolds, "The Sodom/Egypt/Babylon Motif in the Book of Revelation" (Ph.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1994), 221. In Rev 11:5-6 a reversed chronology can be observed. First references are made to the miracles performed by Elijah (vss. 5, 6a; cf. 2 Kgs 1:10; Sir 48:3; Jer 5:14; 1 Kgs 17:1) then to the plagues brought about Egypt by Moses (vs. 6b; cf. Exod 7:17).

<sup>3</sup>Beckwith, 600-601; Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:284-285; Ford, Revelation, 178-179; Hughes, 125; Roloff, 132; Swete, 136; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 91; Walvoord, 180. See especially Morris, 149, who argues that the power of the witnesses is "limited only by lack of faith."

<sup>4</sup>Even the misused power of the "locusts" and "horses" was limited by God. See the above notes on Rev 9:1-21 regarding the expansion of these powers; cf. also above comments on Rev 6:7.

<sup>5</sup>See Num 35:30; Deut 17:6; 19:17 for the *duality* of the witnesses, and John 5:31-32, 36-37; 8:13-18 for the *unity* of the witnesses.

<sup>6</sup>Allan McNicol, "Revelation 11:1-14 and the Structure of the Apocalypse," Restoration Quarterly 22 (1979): 201-202.

a worldwide prophetic perspective,<sup>1</sup> or perhaps the content of this prophetic ministry in mind.<sup>2</sup> In short, John's goal in Rev 11:1-13 is to provide instruction "containing the divine Spirit's explanation of the future course of the prophetic ministry."<sup>3</sup>

### Rev 16:8-9

The next ἐξουσία passage within the thematic parallelism of the Trumpets and Plagues is Rev 16:8-9.<sup>4</sup> From a macrostructural point of view this pericope finds its corresponding parallel element in the fourth trumpet (9:12). The striking contrast, however, between the opposing

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<sup>1</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 114; idem, "Revelation 11:1-13," 443.

<sup>2</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 114, mentions "the law and the prophets"; Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, 90, n. 2, proposes a NT "version of the law and the prophets read in the synagogue"; Kenneth A. Strand, "The Two Olive Trees of Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11," AUSS 20 (1982): 259-261, refers to the "OT prophetic forecasts" and the "NT apostolic confirmation"; idem, "The Two Witnesses of Rev 11:3-12," 131-135, he argues for the "word of God" and the "testimony of Jesus." For these suggestions, see Matt 5:17; 7:12; Rom 3:21; Matt 23:2; Luke 4:16-17; John 8:17-18; Rev 1:9; 6:9; 12:17; 20:4.

<sup>3</sup>Giblin, "Revelation 11:1-13," 454.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: Καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἐξέχεεν τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν ἥλιον, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ καυματίσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν πυρί. καὶ ἔκαυματίσθησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καῦμα μέγα καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἔχοντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν δοῦναι αὐτῷ δόξαν.

functions of the sun<sup>1</sup> in these two passages points to an antithesis. On the surface structural level, the closest parallels to the fourth trumpet are the fifth trumpet and the fifth plague.<sup>2</sup> But a careful study of the above thematic parallel elements (Rev 16:8-9 and 9:12) shows a dramatic antithesis between the fourth trumpet and the fourth plague.<sup>3</sup> It seems that in the case of the fourth plague God's judgment brings an increase and intensification of activity in nature, whereas in the fifth plague, as was noticed earlier,<sup>4</sup> a decrease of activity can be observed.

These opposing movements in the first four plagues and the remaining three increase the dramatic tone of the Plagues Septenary.<sup>5</sup> J. M. Ford argues that the fourth

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<sup>1</sup>In the fourth plague the sun "scorched men with fire," whereas in the fourth trumpet "one third" of the sun "was darkened."

<sup>2</sup>Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, 408, asserts that in the fifth trumpet the darkness of the fourth becomes total, which reveals the darkness of demonic control, whereas in the fifth plague the "darkness" is an apparent reversal of demonic control. It is important to note here, however, that this "control" is already limited by God in the fifth trumpet (see the clustering of the divine passives, ἐδόθη and ἐρρέθη, in Rev 9:1, 3, 4, 5).

<sup>3</sup>These two extremes (darkness and burning heat) are opposing signs of misfunctions of the sun; cf. Gen 1:17-18, where the purpose of the sun is φαίνειν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς... καὶ διαχωρίζειν ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ φωτός καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σκότους" (LXX).

<sup>4</sup>See above notes on Rev 9:1-12 and 16:10-11.

<sup>5</sup>For the importance of the fourth and fifth elements in the Septenaries, see Milligan, 93; Naden, 138.

plague is the antithesis of the cloud by day, while the fifth one of the pillar of fire by night from the Exodus tradition.<sup>1</sup> She also perceives the fine irony built on the same tradition, which runs through the whole section.<sup>2</sup> Against this background A. Y. Collins observes some important parallelisms of Rev 16:5-7 in the literary center (unit D) of Revelation.<sup>3</sup>

The microdynamic of Rev 16:8-9 shows the following main inverted parallelism (AA') with important "frame-passages," particularly a "tail-piece":

Καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἐξέχεεν τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν ἥλιον

A "It (sun) was given to scorch men with fire" (vs. 8)

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ καυματίσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν πυρὶ

A' "Men were scorched with fierce heat" (vs. 9a)

καὶ ἐκαυματίσθησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καῦμα μέγα

<sup>1</sup>J. Massyngberde Ford, "The Structure and Meaning of Revelation 16," *ExpTim* 98 (1987): 329; cf. Exod 13:21-22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Ford points out the liturgical φιάλη and ἐμνήσθη which do not bring blessing but destruction in this context; cf. Rev 18:5.

<sup>3</sup>Adela Yarbro Collins, "The History-of-Religions Approach to Apocalypticism and the 'Angel of the Waters' (Rev 16:4-7)," *CBO* 39 (1977): 373, particularly mentions the following phrases: ἀληθινὰ καὶ δίκαια αἱ κρίσεις σου (cf. Rev 15:3-4), and ἀγγέλος τῶν ὑδάτων (cf. Rev 14:18). See also Dale Ralph Davis, "Relationship between the Seals, Trumpets, and Bowls in the Book of Revelation," *JETS* 16 (1973): 149-158, proposes a "successive-final" viewpoint for the relationships of the above Septenaries.

- a           καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ  
 b                   τοῦ ἔχοντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας  
 a'           καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν δοῦναι αὐτῷ δόξαν.

The main inverted parallelism serves as a minor literary device emphasizing the dramatic tone of the plague which falls on the lost.<sup>1</sup> Interestingly G. B. Caird points out another parallelism in Rev 7:16b<sup>2</sup> which antithetically demonstrates one of the eschatological rewards of the redeemed.<sup>3</sup>

The conclusion or "tail-piece" itself also forms another inverted parallelism (aba' pattern)<sup>4</sup> which focuses on God's ultimate authority. A comparison of these inverted parallelisms (AA' and aba') clearly indicates John's

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<sup>1</sup>It appears that πῦρ is the focus of this clause. For the importance of "fire" in Revelation denoting God's judgment or wrath, or the eschaton, see Paulien, Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, 248-249.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: οὐδὲ μὴ πέση ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὁ ἥλιος οὐδὲ πᾶν καῦμα.

<sup>3</sup>George Bradford Caird, A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine, HNTC (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 203.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Müller, 618, for a somewhat similar analysis of the above passage.

intention to emphasize that God is in absolute control,<sup>1</sup> even when He gives permission or delegates authority.<sup>2</sup>

The vivid picture ends with a negative result which resembles the consequences of the sixth trumpet.<sup>3</sup> The blasphemous unrepentance manifested in the fourth, fifth, and seventh plagues<sup>4</sup> is an evident sign of the "typical heathen spirit" as repeatedly rebels against God.<sup>5</sup> In the fourth plague a fine irony can be perceived once again in the irrationality of human rebellion against God, τοῦ ἔχοντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας.

#### Rev 17:7-14

The next-to-last ἐξουσία passage within the Seven Plagues section is Rev 17:12-13.<sup>6</sup> From a macrostructural

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<sup>1</sup>Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:44, asserts that the articular ἐξουσία here "connotes full authority or power." See also Morris, 196.

<sup>2</sup>In Rev 16:8 it is expressed by the divine passive, ἐδόθη, which might also indicate a personification.

<sup>3</sup>The last clause of the sentence reads in Greek: καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν δοῦναι αὐτῷ δόξαν; cf. Rev 9:20-21. The aorist infinitive is used to express results; cf. Rienecker and Rogers, 848.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 16:8-11, 21; cf. Rev 13:5-6; 17:3. See also Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 152.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 258.

<sup>6</sup>The Greek reads: καὶ τὰ δέκα κέρατα ἃ εἶδες δέκα βασιλεῖς εἰσιν, οἵτινες βασιλείαν οὐπω ἔλαβον, ἀλλὰ ἐξουσίαν ὡς

point of view the overriding theme of Rev 17-18 is God's verdict of condemnation.<sup>1</sup> Although it seems that these two chapters focus in a unique way on the final outcome of the judgment over Babylon,<sup>2</sup> their antithetical thematic parallel sections can be found in Rev 21-22, in the description of the New Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup>

Rev 17 also shows some thematic parallelisms with chapters 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, and 19.<sup>4</sup> The key phrases of these parallel passages are: πορνεύω, μεθύσκω, θηρίον, ὀνόματα βλασφημίας, Βαβυλῶν ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη, αἷμα τῶν ἁγίων,

βασιλεῖς μίαν ὥραν λαμβάνουσιν μετὰ τοῦ θηρίου. οὗτοι μίαν γνώμην ἔχουσιν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ ἐξουσίαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ διδόνασιν.

<sup>1</sup>Giblin, *The Book of Revelation*, 161. The verdict is expressed by the Greek τὸ κρίμα in Rev 17:1, which points to the "result" of a judgment process (cf. Rev 18:20; 20:4). The Greek ἡ κρίσις, on the other hand, describes the "action" or "process" itself (cf. Rev 14:7; 16:7; 18:10; 19:2).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rev 17:1-5; 18:1-3.

<sup>3</sup>Prévost, 146-147, where his comparison of the above chapters is entitled *Des lamentations à la glorification*. Considering, however, the overall chiasmic arrangement of Revelation, units BB' (1:9-3:22 and 21:1-22:5) are the primary parallel counterparts. Thus, the "Seven Churches" will eventually be united into one, the "heavenly Jerusalem"; cf. Heb 12:22-23a, which reads in Greek: ἀλλὰ προσεληλύθατε Σιών ὄρει καὶ πόλει θεοῦ ζῶντος, Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐπουρανίῳ, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν οὐρανοῖς.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. (1) Rev 17:2 and 14:8; 18:3, 9; 19:2; (2) 17:3 and 13:1, 5, 6; (3) 17:5, 18 and 16:19; (4) 17:6 and 16:6; 18:24; (5) 17:8 and 11:7; 13:8; (6) 17:9 and 13:18; (7) 17:14 and 19:11-16; (8) 17:16 and 18:8-9.

ἀβυσσος, σοφία, Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων, ἐν πυρὶ κατακαίω.<sup>1</sup> The majority of these terms are expressions of the activity and judgment of antiodivine powers.

The microdynamic of Rev 17:7-14<sup>2</sup> exhibits the following inverted parallelisms with "frame-passages":

ἐγὼ ἐρῶ σοι τὸ μυστήριον τῆς γυναικὸς καὶ τοῦ θηρίου

A "The beast from the abyss" (vs. 8)

τὸ θηρίον ὃ εἶδες ἦν καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν καὶ μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει

B "The mind which has wisdom" (vss. 9-10)

ὦδε ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἔχων σοφίαν

A' "The beast goes to destruction" (vs. 11)

καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὃ ἦν καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν . . . καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει

<sup>1</sup>A detailed analysis of these phrases is beyond the scope of the present study. For a good comparison of common words and phrases in Rev 12-18, see Müller, 590-593, 611-613, 633-637.

<sup>2</sup>This longer section, which includes the ἐξουσία passage (vss. 12-13), is chosen because it forms a literary unit that can be entitled: τὸ μυστήριον τῆς γυναικὸς καὶ τοῦ θηρίου; cf. Müller, 622-623, for a helpful analysis of this section. A further study also reveals that the angel's explanation is given in a reversed order, e.g., first about the beast (vss. 8-14) then about the woman (vss. 15-18). Regarding the woman, see also Rev 18:1-24.



A "Ten horns without kingdom" (vs. 12a)

καὶ τὰ δέκα κέρατα . . . οἵτινες βασιλείαν οὐπω ἔλαβον

B "Ten horns receive authority as kings" (vs. 12b)

ἀλλὰ ἐξουσίαν ὡς βασιλεῖς μίαν ὥραν λαμβάνουσιν

A' "Ten horns give power and authority to the beast (vs. 13)

τὴν δύναμιν καὶ ἐξουσίαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ διδόασιν

οὗτοι μετὰ τοῦ ἀρνίου πολεμήσουσιν καὶ τὸ ἀρνίον νικήσει αὐτούς.

It was noted earlier<sup>1</sup> that John has a particular interest in small details. The above analysis of Rev 17:7-14<sup>2</sup> provides a clear demonstration of that as one's attention is drawn from the *woman* first to the *beast*, then from the *beast* to its *ten horns*.<sup>3</sup> The double foci of this passage dealing with the seven-headed beast and its ten

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<sup>1</sup>See above note on Rev 9:3, 10, with regard to John's "focusing" technique.

<sup>2</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 161-162, supports an a-x-y-z-x'-z'-a' structure for Rev 17:8-18, which perhaps reflects on the interlinked inverted parallelisms of this passage.

<sup>3</sup>For similar "focusing," see Dan 7:15-28. Note also Gregory K. Beale, The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 252, 259, as he especially refers to Dan 7:4-7, 20, 24, as "clear allusions" of Rev 17:7c, 12a.

horns include σοφία<sup>1</sup> and ὡς βασιλεῖς.<sup>2</sup> "Wisdom" is needed to explain (1) the double identity of the seven heads (seven mountains and seven kings) in Rev 17:9-11, and (2) the power dynamism between the scarlet beast and its ten horns in Rev 17:12-14. This passage builds on the obvious tension of having ἐξουσία but not βασιλεία. In other words, the inner division among the heads and their horns directs one's attention to their inherent failure and prospective doom.<sup>3</sup> They cannot help but carry out God's purpose, which is expressed by an ironic wordplay.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Rev 13:18a, for similar wording. See also Beale, *ibid.*, 268-270, and my notes on Rev 13 below.

<sup>2</sup>Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:72, remarks that the ten horns "hold a quasi-kingly power"; Swete, 222, argues that "the ten βασιλεῖς are not βασιλεῖς in the same sense as the seven, but resemble them"; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 300, concludes that the ten horns are "kings without kingdom." The interesting fact is that according to Rev 17:17, the ten horns eventually come to an agreement and will decide δοῦναι τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ. This clause clearly indicates that at some point of time the ten horns will have "the kingdom" which they unanimously hand over to the beast.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 17:13-14, 16-17.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek text of Rev 17:13, 17 read: οὔτοι μίαν γνώμην ἔχουσιν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ ἐξουσίαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ διδόντες. . . ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ἔδωκεν εἰς τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν ποιῆσαι τὴν γνώμην αὐτοῦ καὶ ποιῆσαι μίαν γνώμην καὶ δοῦναι τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ ἄχρι τελεσθήσονται οἱ λόγοι τοῦ θεοῦ. For a good explanation on the combination of δύναμις and ἐξουσία in this context, see Swete, 223.

One of the key phrases of the passage is τὸ θηρίον ὅτι ἦν καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν καὶ παρέσται.<sup>1</sup> It appears that this definition is directly contrasted with God,<sup>2</sup> or perhaps it is again an ironic wordplay<sup>3</sup> on the prerogative assigned to God and Jesus earlier in Revelation.<sup>4</sup> This phrase is repeated in a modified form within the pericope,<sup>5</sup> and, together with ἀβύσσος, it is parallel both to the beginning of demonic activity during the fifth trumpet (Rev 9:11) and to its continuation during the expansion of the sixth trumpet (Rev 11:7).

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that in Rev 17, in spite of God's verdict in vs. 1, the demonic powers are still active.<sup>6</sup> This activity points to the

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 17:8c, and also 17:8a, 11a.

<sup>2</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 164.

<sup>3</sup>Beale, The Use of Daniel, 254.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 1:4, 8; 4:8, which read in Greek: ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος; cf. Rev 11:17; 16:5, where the last element of this clause is modified.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 17:8a, 11a, where the phrase is modified by the clause καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει. It is important to note here that ἀπώλεια (destruction, ruin) and Ἀπολλύων (Destroyer) are both the derivatives of ἀπόλλυμι (to destroy, kill, lose). See also Rev 9:11, for Ἀπολλύων, and John 17:12 and 2 Thess 2:3, for ἀπώλεια.

<sup>6</sup>Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 2:72.

eschaton,<sup>1</sup> when the temporary combination of these powers will fulfill God's plan and make His will complete.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most important aspects of the "beast-horns" power dynamic are: (1) the dramatic shortness<sup>3</sup> of the time of their union,<sup>4</sup> and (2) their ultimate failure and self-destruction.<sup>5</sup> Generally speaking, the beast of Rev 17 represents "the principle of abusive governmental power."<sup>6</sup> The beast together with its horns show "one of the inherent flaws of the will to power. It does not unite; it

<sup>1</sup>Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 301, refers to Dan 7:7, 24 (and Dan 7:26-27 can be added) and concludes that these "rulers will receive their dominions in the last days." See also Beckwith, 700.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 17:17, where again God is shown to be in control of events, ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ἔδωκεν εἰς τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν ποιῆσαι τὴν γνώμην αὐτοῦ καὶ ποιῆσαι μίαν γνώμην καὶ δοῦναι τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῶν τῷ θηρίῳ ἄχρι τελεσθήσονται οἱ λόγοι τοῦ θεοῦ.

<sup>3</sup>The phrase in Rev 17:12, μίαν ὥραν, probably refers to "a relatively brief existence"; cf. Swete, 222. See also Dan 4:19 (LXX), Luke 22:53, John 2:4; 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28, 35; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:2, 4, 21, 25, 32; 17:1; 19:27, where ὥρα clearly designates "occasion," "opportunity," or "short indefinite period of time"; cf. Newman, 202.

<sup>4</sup>Hughes, 186; Ladd, 232; Morris, 212; Walvoord, 255.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 17:16-17. See also Beasley-Murray, John, 233; Collins, The Apocalypse, 122; Kempson, 245; Hans K. LaRondelle, "Armageddon: Sixth and Seventh Plagues," in Symposium on Revelation-Book II: Exegetical and General Studies, 373-390, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 7 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 387.

<sup>6</sup>Kempson, 243.

divides."<sup>1</sup> This tragic division is later seen in the destruction of the harlot (Rev 17:16).

### Rev 18:1-24

The last ἐξουσία passage within the Seven Plagues section is Rev 18:1.<sup>2</sup> From a macrostructural point of view Rev 18 is part of God's verdict of condemnation.<sup>3</sup> In the Seven Trumpets section (Rev 8:2-11:18), which is the thematic and structural parallel to the Seven Plagues, ἐξουσία is associated with various forces of evil or demons.<sup>4</sup> In Rev 18:1, however, one finds the term used in a positive way.<sup>5</sup>

If one considers the context within the Seven Plagues (Rev 15:5-18:24), it is striking that the misuse of

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<sup>1</sup>Collins, The Apocalypse, 122.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek reads: Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην, καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐφωτίσθη ἐκ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.

<sup>3</sup>This is the only chapter in Revelation which contains both the "action" (ἡ κρίσις, 18:10) and the "result" (τὸ κρίμα, 18:20) of the judgment process; cf. my above note on Rev 17:12-13.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 9:1-21; cf. Morris, 214; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 314-315.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Rev 13:2 where the phrase, ἐξουσία μεγάλη, occurs too, but in a negative sense. See Ford, Revelation, 296; Swete, 226.

authority in Rev 17:12-14<sup>1</sup> is counterbalanced by God's ἐξουσία in Rev 16:9,<sup>2</sup> as well as by His angel's ἐξουσία μεγάλη, which illuminates the earth in Rev 18:1.<sup>3</sup> A similar feature was observed earlier within the context of the Seven Trumpets section.<sup>4</sup>

Taking Rev 18 itself, one discerns a "concentric structure"<sup>5</sup> or "chiasm,"<sup>6</sup> which can be labeled an odd

<sup>1</sup>E.g., οὔτοι μετὰ τοῦ ἀρνίου πολεμήσουσιν.

<sup>2</sup>E.g., τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἔχοντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας; cf. Rev 16:7a, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ, which adds further emphasis to God's absolute control of events on earth. For the use of παντοκράτωρ, see Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22. A careful study of the context of these passages shows that they are spread almost evenly in units CDED'C' (4:1-20:15) of the overall chiasmic arrangement of Revelation, which is significant if one focuses on the central panels of the Apocalypse. These sections may be entitled "Activity and judgment of antidivine powers." The demonic forces (οἱ κοσμοκράτορες τοῦ σκότους τούτου, in Eph 6:12) are definitely doomed, for God is ὁ παντοκράτωρ.

<sup>3</sup>Swete, 226, comments: "So recently has he [angel] come from the Presence that in passing he flings a broad belt of light across the dark Earth--a phrase used of the vision of God in Ez. xliii." It is also important to note here that, as a part of the contrast, the demonic activity is associated with smoke (καπνός) and darkness (σκότος) in Rev 9:1-2, while the angelic activity is characterized by light (φῶς) in Rev 18:1.

<sup>4</sup>See my comparison of Rev 9:1-21 and 11:1-14.

<sup>5</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 170.

<sup>6</sup>Strand, "Some Modalities of Symbolic Usage in Revelation 18," 38, 46; idem, "Two Aspects of Babylon's Judgment Portrayed in Revelation 18," 53-55.

chiasmus (ABCB'A' pattern). It clearly exhibits the following arrangement:

A "Another glorious angel from heaven" (18:1-3)

ἄλλον ἄγγελον καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν  
μεγάλην

B "Another voice from heaven (18:4-8)

ἄλλην φωνὴν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

C "Laments over Babylon" (18:9-19)

Καὶ κλαύσουσιν καὶ κόψονται ἐπ' αὐτήν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς . . .

B' "A voice in heaven" (18:20)

Εὐφραίνου ἐπ' αὐτῇ, οὐρανέ καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι . . .

A' "A mighty angel took up a stone" (18:21-24)

Καὶ ἦρεν εἷς ἄγγελος ἰσχυρὸς λίθον . . .

The center of this structure (C) depicts the very moment<sup>1</sup> of the destruction of Babylon. The ἐξουσία passage (18:1) is found in one of the extremes (A) of this pattern, which contributes an important aspect to the *background* of Babylon's fall.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The drama of a rapid way of destruction is highlighted by the repetition of ὅτι μὴ ὥρα (cf. 18:10, 17, 19). The phrase recalls Rev 17:12, where it is used to describe the short existence of the beast-horns alliance; cf. Giblyn, The Book of Revelation, 170.

<sup>2</sup>Adela Yarbro Collins, "Revelation 18: Taunt-Song or Dirge," in L'Apocalypse johannique et l'apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament, 185-204, ed. J. Lambrecht, BETL, 53

The essence of unit A (18:1-3) is to announce the tragic fact that Babylon ἐγένετο κατοικητήριον δαιμονίων καὶ φυλακὴ παντός πνεύματος ἀκαθάρτου.<sup>1</sup> In other words, Babylon has become the scene of evident demonic activity, which is now confronted with the "authoritative"<sup>2</sup> appearance of God's glorious messenger who is about to carry out a great work "on behalf of God."<sup>3</sup>

#### The Woman Versus the Dragon

The last, imbalanced element (E - The Woman Versus the Dragon [11:19-15:5]) of the chiastic structure of Revelation contains seven ἐξουσία passages,<sup>4</sup> which make up one-third of the total occurrences in the book. The heavy concentration or clustering<sup>5</sup> points to a focus in John's

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(Gembloux: Editions J. Ducolot, 1980), 193, refers to 18:3 as providing "reasons or grounds for the judgment."

<sup>1</sup>Caird points out that Rev 18:1-3 testifies to the existence of a popular feeling about consorting of animals (birds) with demons. See Caird, Principalities and Powers, 58-59, where he argues, building on Isa 13:20-22; 34:13-15, that "not only in human life but in the world of nature there is a residue which cannot be brought into congruity with the holiness of God"; cf. Matt 8:28-34.

<sup>2</sup>Hughes, 189; Ladd, 235.

<sup>3</sup>Walvoord, 258.

<sup>4</sup>12:10; 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12; 14:18.

<sup>5</sup>See my above note on similar clustering in the last balancing elements (D and D') of the overall chiastic structure.



thought. The existence of this non-balanced central element (unit E) is a particularly powerful feature with obvious implications for exegesis.<sup>1</sup> It seems that the author's focus is further underlined by "a shift" of signs (σημεία) at this central element of the chiasmus.<sup>2</sup>

The length of this central element (Rev 11:19-15:4) is still under discussion. A number of scholars consider Rev 12:1 (or 11:19) to 14:20 a closed unit,<sup>3</sup> while others extend it, including Rev 15:1-4.<sup>4</sup> Although Minear recognizes that Rev 12-22 relates "stages in the fulfillment

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<sup>1</sup>Thomson, 27, 31, 224, 226.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 27, 216-217.

<sup>3</sup>Beagley, 81; Boring, 149; Bousset, 335; Bowman, The Drama of the Book of Revelation, 75; Caird, The Revelation of St. John the Divine, 147-195; James M. Efird, Daniel and Revelation: A Study of Two Extraordinary Visions (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1978), 78; Vernard Eller, The Most Revealing Book of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), 125; Farrer, A Rebirth of Images, 47-49; William Hendriksen, More Than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1940), 26; Thomas S. Kepler, The Book of Revelation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 130; Eduard Lohse, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, NTD, vol. 11, 3d ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 68; R. H. Mounce, 48; Mulholland, 214; Müller, 573-574, 608-610; Sinclair, 61; Spinks, 216-217; Strand, Interpreting the Book of Revelation, 51-52; Leonard L. Thompson, The Book of Revelation: Apocalypse and Empire (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 38.

<sup>4</sup>Blevins, Revelation, 57-73; idem, Revelation as Drama, 79-95; Bowman, "Revelation, Book of," 64; Collins, The Apocalypse, xiii, 82; idem, Crisis and Catharsis, 112; Hurtgen, 139; Johnsson, 11-13; Michaels, 64; Minear, 105; Mulholland, 214; Paulien, "The Role of the Hebrew Cultus," 248; Wilcock, 110.

of the prophet's task (10:11)," he concludes that these chapters must be divided into smaller units.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, following Rev 11:18, Minear selects 11:19-15:4 as the first unit of the second half of the Apocalypse.<sup>2</sup> His reasoning includes: (1) "Heaven" is always the beginning of each vision; (2) Rev 11:19 is awkward if it is attached to the previous vision; (3) Rev 15:2-4 is an effective summary of the preceding chapters; (4) the hymn in Rev 15:3-4 is liturgically related to 11:19; and (5) in Rev 15:5 the opening of the temple again is a sign for a new set of plagues.<sup>3</sup>

To these valid observations one may add the "principle of *Prolepsis* or Anticipation" discussed by William Milligan.<sup>4</sup> Based on this principle one can detect the use of prolepsis both in the beginning<sup>5</sup> and in the

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<sup>1</sup>Minear, 115.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 105-129.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 115-116.

<sup>4</sup>Milligan, 114-116, particularly mentions the promises made to the overcomers in Rev 2-3 and their fulfillment in Rev 20-22.

<sup>5</sup>Rev 12:1, 3, which read in Greek: Καὶ σημεῖον μέγα ὠφθη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, γυνὴ περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον . . . καὶ ὠφθη ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἰδοὺ δράκων μέγας πυρρὸς ἔχων κεφαλὰς ἑπτὰ καὶ κέρατα δέκα.

ending<sup>1</sup> verses of the above unit. These shifts of emphasis<sup>2</sup> not only determine the contents of the following verses, but they also serve as literary devices.<sup>3</sup> It appears that prolepsis is employed to mark off Rev 11:19-15:4 in a unique way, thus embracing the themes of *combat* and *victory*. Therefore, it is clear that Rev 11:19-15:4 is both a literary<sup>4</sup> and a thematic<sup>5</sup> center of the Apocalypse, the culmination of John's dramatic message. At this high peak he focuses on ἐξουσία<sup>6</sup> and προσκυνέω,<sup>7</sup> thus providing two dramatic keywords of the divine-antidivine power struggle.

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 15:1, 2, which read in Greek: Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστόν, ἀγγέλους ἑπτὰ ἔχοντας πληγὰς ἑπτὰ τὰς ἐσχάτας . . . Καὶ εἶδον ὡς θάλασσαν ὑαλίνην μεμιγμένην πυρὶ καὶ τοὺς νικῶντας ἐκ τοῦ θηρίου . . .

<sup>2</sup>In the opening verses the focus turns from the *Woman* to the *Dragon*, while in the closing verses the emphasis moves from the *Seven Plagues* to the *Overcomers*.

<sup>3</sup>Thomson, 27, calls this chiastic phenomenon "shift and reversion," marking points of development in an argument.

<sup>4</sup>Because it is the unique, central element of the overall odd chiasmus (ABCB'A' pattern) of Revelation.

<sup>5</sup>Because it contains all the key figures and major events of the climactic antidivine power struggle, even including a victorious hymn of the overcomers.

<sup>6</sup>Out of its 21 occurrences in Revelation, it appears 7 times (12:10; 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12; 14:18) in this unit.

<sup>7</sup>Out of its 24 occurrences in Revelation, it is found 9 times (13:4, 8, 12, 15; 14:7, 9, 11; 15:4) in this element.

These terms indicate the abuse of authority as a motivating force behind coercion and power worship.

**Rev 11:19-15:4**

From a macrostructural point of view Rev 11:19-15:4 serves "as the bridge"<sup>1</sup> between the Seven Trumpets and the Seven Plagues. Chapter 12 itself functions as "the preface"<sup>2</sup> to Rev 13-22, or as "an introduction, backdrop, and summary"<sup>3</sup> to Rev 13-14, which "predicts a reign of terror."<sup>4</sup> Chapters 13 and 14 are thematic "counterparts"<sup>5</sup> that provide vivid pictures of the antdivine and divine activities with regard to worship.

The microdynamic of Rev 11:19-15:4 shows an odd chiasm (ABCB'A' pattern) with an introductory "frame-passage" which points to God's heavenly temple. The unit starts and ends with the notion of sign (σημείον) in heaven:

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<sup>1</sup>Michaels, 64.

<sup>2</sup>Masilamony Pauliah, "The Woman of Revelation 12 in the History of New Testament Interpretation" (M.Th. thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993), 55.

<sup>3</sup>Johnsson, 14.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 5, 9.

καὶ ἠνοιγή ὁ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ ὤφθη ἡ κιβωτὸς τῆς  
διαθήκης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ ναῷ αὐτοῦ

A "Signs in heaven" (12:1-6)

Καὶ σημεῖον μέγα ὤφθη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ . . . καὶ ὤφθη ἄλλο σημεῖον  
ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ . . .

B "A war between Michael and the Dragon" (12:7-12)

Καὶ ἐγένετο πόλεμος ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Μιχαήλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ  
τοῦ πολεμῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ δράκοντος . . .

C "Activity of the Dragon and the Sea Beast" (12:13-13:10a)

προσεκύνησαν τῷ δράκοντι . . . καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θηρίῳ . . .

D "The perseverance and faith of the saints" (13:10b)

Ἦδε ἐστὶν ἡ ὑπομονὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις τῶν ἁγίων

E "Activity of the Land Beast" (13:11-17)

ἄλλο θηρίον . . . εἶχεν κέρατα δύο ὅμοια ἀρνίῳ . . . καὶ ποιεῖ πάντα  
. . . ἵνα δῶσιν αὐτοῖς χάραγμα ἐπὶ . . . τὸ μέτωπον αὐτῶν . . .

F "Here is wisdom" (13:18)

Ἦδε ἡ σοφία ἐστίν

E' "Activity of the Lamb and His followers" (14:1-5)

καὶ ἰδοὺ τὸ ἀρνίον ἐστὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος Σιών καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ . . .

ἔχουσαι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ

γεγραμμένον ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν . . .

D' "The perseverance and faith of the saints" (14:12)

᾿Ωδε ἡ ὑπομονὴ τῶν ἁγίων ἐστίν, οἱ τηροῦντες . . . τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ

C' "Activity of the three angels" (14:6-13)

Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον πετόμενον ἐν μεσουρανήματι, ἔχοντα  
εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον . . . λέγων ἐν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ, Φοβήθητε τὸν θεὸν  
καὶ . . . προσκυνήσατε τῷ ποιήσαντι τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν . . .

B' "A son of man sitting on the cloud" (14:14-20)

καὶ ἰδοὺ νεφέλη λευκὴ, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην καθήμενον ὅμοιον υἱὸν  
ἀνθρώπου . . .

A' "Another sign in heaven" (15:1-4)

Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστόν . . .

C. H. Giblyn provides a somewhat similar analysis of a longer passage, "11:15-15:8 - The Seventh Trumpet-blast," which he calls "a sevenfold scenario of creation-wide conflict set forth in concentric order."<sup>1</sup> The focus of his ABCDC'B'A' pattern is Rev 14:1-5. Units C (13:1-18) and C' (14:6-20) are contrapositioned describing the activities of the demonic triad (Dragon, Sea Beast, and Land Beast) and the angelic triad, respectively. Finally, units B (12:1-18) and B' (15:1) are balancing elements depicting "heavenly signs," but the latter unnecessarily separates vs. 1 from vss. 2-4, where it belongs. Considering the specially

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<sup>1</sup>Giblyn, The Book of Revelation, 15.

marked beginning and ending of Rev 11:19-15:4, it seems awkward to add Rev 11:15-18 and 15:5-8 to this section, thus separating from their literary units.<sup>1</sup>

The focus (unit F) of my proposed structure is a remark on wisdom.<sup>2</sup> It occurs that the same rhetoric is followed in Rev 13 and 17, which are complementary chapters. Earlier in this study dealing with the microdynamic of Rev 17:7-14 it was noted that vss. 8-11 form an inverted parallelism (ABA' pattern). The central element (unit B) of that structure is a remark on σοφία,<sup>3</sup> which is bordered by units AA' describing the activities of the beast. This perhaps indicates that the μυστήριον of the rise and fall of the beast can be explained only by those who have wisdom.

In the above structure, where σοφία appears to be in the center (unit F) again, one can observe the bordering antithetical units of EE' (Activity of the Land Beast and the Lamb). Further, the next parallel elements (units DD')

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<sup>1</sup>E.g., the seventh trumpet is cut off from the first six, and the Seven Plagues section (15:5-18:24) is left without introduction.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rev 17:9, where the word order is reversed. See also the doxologies of Rev 5:12 and 7:12, where σοφία is grouped with εὐλογία, δόξα, τιμή, δύναμις, and ἰσχύς.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: ὧδε ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἔχων σοφίαν. αἱ ἑπτὰ κεφαλαὶ ἑπτὰ ὄρη εἰσὶν, ὅπου ἡ γυνὴ κάθηται ἐπ' αὐτῶν. καὶ βασιλεῖς ἑπτὰ εἰσιν: οἱ πέντε ἔπεσαν, ὁ εἷς ἔστιν, ὁ ἄλλος οὐπω ἦλθεν, καὶ ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὀλίγον αὐτὸν δεῖ μένειν.

highlight the characteristics of the holy ones, ἡ ὑπομονή καὶ ἡ πίστις τῶν ἁγίων.<sup>1</sup>

Beale convincingly argues in his dissertation that the combined use of the Hebrew שכל (to understand, have insight) and בִּין (to understand, gain insight) in the Book of Daniel<sup>2</sup> is the best background against which to understand the use of νοῦς and σοφία in Rev 13:18 and 17:9a.<sup>3</sup> This Danielic background stands for the idea of eschatological insight, especially in Dan 11:33 and 12:10.<sup>4</sup> Beale concludes that this usage "indicates that John understands Christians to be the fulfillment of the prophesied mas'kilim in Daniel 11 and 12."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 13:10b. Its parallel element (14:12) has an extension including οἱ τηροῦντες τὰς ἐντολάς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ.

<sup>2</sup>Dan 2:21; 9:22-23; 11:33; 12:10.

<sup>3</sup>Beale, The Use of Daniel, 268-270; cf. idem, "The Danielic Background for Revelation 13:18 and 17:9," Tyndale Bulletin 31 (1980): 163-165.

<sup>4</sup>The phrases in the MT text read וְיִשְׁכַּלְיָא עִם בְּיָנָיו and וְיִבְיִן וְיִשְׁכַּלְיָא respectively.

<sup>5</sup>Beale, "The Danielic Background," 165-166; idem, The Use of Daniel, 270. He offers two further suggestions: (1) the exhortations in Rev 13:10b; 14:12 may be based on Dan 12:12, and (2) the introductory formula, ὡδε, in Rev 13:10b; 13:18; 14:12 and 17:9 is John's own way of pointing the reader back to the context of Daniel; cf. idem, "The Danielic Background," 168. Similar pointing back to the Book of Daniel can be perceived in Matt 24:15, which reads in Greek: "Ὅταν οὖν ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ



If one considers the distribution of the seven ἐξουσία passages in Rev 11:19-15:4, it is striking that there are two balancing occurrences of the term in units B and B', which are positive.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in units C and E (both in the first half of the chiasm) five additional ἐξουσία passages are clustered, all negative.<sup>2</sup> This balancing (or embracing) technique of describing divine and demonic activities has been observed earlier in this dissertation in the Seven Trumpets section<sup>3</sup> and especially in the Seven Plagues section.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Rev 12:1-18**

The foci of the two embracing units (B and B') are the first and second advent of Christ.<sup>5</sup> The microdynamic of chapter 12 clearly exhibits a well-constructed inverted parallelism (ABA' pattern) as follows:

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Δανιήλ τοῦ προφήτου ἔστὸς ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ, ὃ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω.

<sup>1</sup>Rev 12:10 and 14:18, respectively.

<sup>2</sup>Rev 13:2, 4, 5, 7 and 13:12, respectively.

<sup>3</sup>See the demonic activity in Rev 9:1-21 as it is counterbalanced by the activity of the divine witnesses in 11:1-14.

<sup>4</sup>See the demonic activity in Rev 17:12-14 as it is embraced by the divine activity in 16:9 and the angelic activity in 18:1.

<sup>5</sup>Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, 94, states that "chapters 12-14 depict the messianic war from the incarnation (12:5) to the parousia (14:14-20)."

A "The signs of a woman and the great red Dragon" (12:1-6)

Καὶ σημεῖον μέγα ὄφθη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, γυνὴ περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον . . . καὶ ὄφθη ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἰδοὺ δράκων μέγας πυρρός . . .

B "A war between Michael and the Dragon" (12:7-12)

Καὶ ἐγένετο πόλεμος ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Μιχαήλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ τοῦ πολεμῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ δράκοντος . . .

A' "The Dragon's war with the woman and her seed" (12:13-18)

καὶ ὠργίσθη ὁ δράκων ἐπὶ τῇ γυναικί καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ποιῆσαι πόλεμον μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῆς . . .

The center of this structure is unit B which forms an inclusio that is bracketed by the cosmic and earthly scenes<sup>1</sup> of the woman-Dragon conflict.<sup>2</sup> The ἐξουσία passage

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<sup>1</sup>The alternating vertical dimensions of Rev 12 are the following: (1) vss. 1-6: heaven-earth-heaven-earth (wilderness), (2) vss. 7-12: heaven-earth-heaven, and (3) vss. 13-18: earth (wilderness).

<sup>2</sup>See Müller, 594-597, for similar analysis; cf. Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 126-130, describes a chiasmic, aba' pattern for Rev 12:4b-17; Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 398-400, proposes an "odd" chiasm for Rev 12:6-14 only, which seems to be forced. For the biblical and Qumran symbolism of Rev 12, see Roger D. Aus, "The Relevance of Isaiah 66:7 to Revelation 12 and 2 Thessalonians 1," ZNW 67 (1976): 262; David Flusser, "At the Right Hand of the Power," Immanuel 14 (1982): 45; Johnsson, 16, 19; Pauliah, 53, 55; Wink, Engaging the Powers, 91.

(12:10)<sup>1</sup> is found at the very center of this inclusio,<sup>2</sup> which is the textual center<sup>3</sup> of Revelation.

It is noteworthy that this textual center deviates from the literary or structural center (13:18) noted above. This literary phenomenon makes sense if one considers wisdom-saying (13:18) as a reflection on the identity of John's community, and the hymnic material (12:10b-12), including the ἐξουσία passage, as the central exposition of John, focusing on Jesus' authority as a basis for perseverance. Thus, hortatory material (wisdom-saying) and exposition (hymnic material) point to a double foci in the Apocalypse.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Greek reads: καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν μεγάλην ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ λέγουσαν, Ἄρτι ἐγένετο ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐβλήθη ὁ κατήγων τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν, ὁ κατηγορῶν αὐτούς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός.

<sup>2</sup>For the proposed idea of biblical or mythical backgrounds to Rev 12:7-12, see Collins, The Combat Myth, 57-161; Prigent, 120-127; Snyder, 242-358.

<sup>3</sup>See my notes on the centrality of Rev 12:7-12 under the subheading "'Εξουσία Clustering in the Apocalypse."

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Guthrie, The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis, 146, for similar conclusions regarding the two genres (hortatory material and exposition) in the Book of Hebrews, as they move "in concert, but not exact correspondence."

The two key figures of Rev 12:7-12 are Michael<sup>1</sup> and the Dragon.<sup>2</sup> As a result of Michael's victory over the Dragon, the hymn in vss. 10b-12 declares that Ἄρτι ἐγένετο ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ. It is clear that the last two phrases

(βασιλεία and ἐξουσία) of this clause complement each other.<sup>3</sup>

God established the victorious authority of His Anointed

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<sup>1</sup>The Greek name ὁ Μιχαήλ is a transliteration of the Hebrew מִיכָאֵל, meaning "Who is like God?" Outside Revelation it appears only in Jude 9 and Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1, always in a combat with evil forces. For a possible identity of Michael and the Son of Man, see Doukhan, Daniel: The Vision of the End, 100; Ferch, "Authorship, Theology, and the Purpose of Daniel," 75; Gerhard F. Hasel, "The 'Little Horn,' the Heavenly Sanctuary and the Time of the End: A Study of Daniel 8:9-14," in Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, 378-461, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOMS, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 403; Shea, "Unity of Daniel," 252; cf. Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, 74, proposes that "we should see the defeat of Satan by Michael, depicted in 12:7-9, as a symbol of the Lamb's victory."

<sup>2</sup>The Greek ὁ δράκων is identified in Rev 12:9b, 10c as ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην . . . ὁ κατήγων τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν." For Satan (Sammael) being the "accuser," see Caird, Principalities and Powers, 34; B. Talmud Berakhoth 46a; B. Talmud Yoma 20a; Midrash on Exod 12:29. See also my notes below on the possibility of equating the Dragon with the Sea Beast (Rev 13:1-13).

<sup>3</sup>In Col 1:13 βασιλεία and ἐξουσία are antithetical, but in Rev 12:10 the two terms are epexegetical or parallel, thus pointing to the fact that ἐξουσία is *not* misused any more.

One,<sup>1</sup> which is a "radical reorientation of values and power."<sup>2</sup> But this hymn also celebrates the victory of the overcomers.<sup>3</sup>

### Rev 14:14-20

The other corresponding element (unit B') of the above-mentioned embracing units is Rev 14:14-20, which focuses on the second advent of Christ.<sup>4</sup> The pericope naturally divides into two sections (14:14-16 and 14:17-20)

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<sup>1</sup>Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:326; Hughes, 139; Ladd, 172; Morris, 162; Roloff, 149; Swete, 155; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 133.

<sup>2</sup>E. P. Sanders, The Historical Figure of Jesus (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 169. See also Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Lantero (New York: Scribner, 1958), 51. For the importance of the articular ἐξουσία and βασιλεία in Rev 12:10, see Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:326.

<sup>3</sup>Rev 12:11 reads: καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐνίκησαν αὐτὸν διὰ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀρνίου καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς μαρτυρίας αὐτῶν καὶ οὐκ ἠγάπησαν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτῶν ἄχρι ἀρνίου; cf. Prévost, 139-140.

<sup>4</sup>Rev 14:14 reads: Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ νεφέλη λευκὴ, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην καθήμενον ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, ἔχων ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ στέφανον χρυσοῦν καὶ ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ δρέπανον ὀξύ. See also Rev 1:13, for the same phrase, ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. The expression seems to be a direct translation of the Aramaic שְׂנֵי רַבְרָב of Dan 7:13. Interestingly the Theodotion Greek of Dan 10:16 (καὶ ἰδοὺ ὡς ὁμοίωσις υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου) shows a closer verbal agreement with Rev 14:14 than the LXX Greek of Dan 7:13. For other NT allusions which emphasize "sitting on" and "coming on/with the clouds," see Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev 1:7. These allusions perhaps indicate *exaltation* ("sitting") as well as *judgment* ("coming"). Similarly, in Rev 1:13; 2:1, "walking" might mean *priestly function*.

depicting two<sup>1</sup> harvests. The keyword "harvest" (θερισμός) is used here figuratively to denote the image of final judgment executed by God.<sup>2</sup>

The microdynamic of Rev 14:14-20,<sup>3</sup> shows two exegetical inverted parallelisms (ABA' patterns):<sup>4</sup>

A "One like a son of man seated on the cloud with a sharp sickle" (14:14) καθήμενον ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου . . . καὶ ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ δρέπανον ὀξύ

B "Send forth your sickle and harvest . . ." (14:15)

Πέμψον τὸ δρέπανόν σου καὶ θέρισον, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα θερίσαι . . .

A' "He who is seated on the cloud cast his sickle" (14:16)

καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῆς νεφέλης τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ

<sup>1</sup>For similar duality, see Matt 13:24-30, 36-43; 25:31-46.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Matt 13:39b, which reads: ὁ δὲ θερισμὸς συντέλεια αἰῶνός ἐστιν, οἱ δὲ θεριστὰὶ ἄγγελοὶ εἰσιν, and Mark 4:29, which says: ὅταν δὲ παραδοῖ ὁ καρπός, εὐθὺς ἀποστέλλει τὸ δρέπανον, ὅτι παρέστηκεν ὁ θερισμὸς. For a clear OT allusion, see Joel 4:13-14 (LXX), ἐξαποστείλατε δρέπανα ὅτι παρέστηκεν τρύγητος εἰσπορεύεσθε πατεῖτε διότι πλήρης ἡ ληνὸς ὑπερεκχεῖται τὰ ὑπολήνια ὅτι πεπλήθυνται τὰ κακὰ αὐτῶν ἦχοι ἐξήχησαν ἐν τῇ κοιλάδι τῆς δίκης ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἡμέρα κυρίου ἐν τῇ κοιλάδι τῆς δίκης.

<sup>3</sup>The ἐξουσία passage (14:18) reads: Καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος [ἐξῆλθεν] ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου [ὁ] ἔχων ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός, καὶ ἐφώνησεν φωνῇ μεγάλη τῷ ἔχοντι τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὀξύ λέγων, Πέμψον σου τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὀξύ καὶ τρύγησον τοὺς βότρυας τῆς ἀμπέλου τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἤκμασαν αἱ σταφυλαὶ αὐτῆς.

<sup>4</sup>For similar literary phenomena, see my notes above on Rev 16:8-9 and 17:7-14.

- A "Another angel came out of the temple with a sharp sickle" (14:17) Καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἔχων καὶ αὐτὸς δρέπανον ὀξύ
- B "Send forth your sharp sickle and gather . . ." (14:18) Πέμψον σου τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὀξύ καὶ τρύγησον . . .
- A' "The angel cast his sickle . . ." (14:19-20) καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ ἄγγελος τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ

The second parallelism is longer and more detailed, which perhaps indicates John's focus. It is evident that this literary device aims to emphasize the "harvest" motif by repetition and contrast. The two foci (units B) of these patterns depict the same activity, "reaping" or "gathering ripe fruit." The clear verbal parallels are striking and highlight the dramatic tone<sup>1</sup> of John. In the focus (14:18) of the second inversion one finds an angel ἔχων ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός.<sup>2</sup> This passing note on the angel's function adds further emphasis to the idea of judgment<sup>3</sup> or divine wrath<sup>4</sup> already expressed by the word θερισμός.

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<sup>1</sup>This dramatic tone is further expressed by using ingressive aor. (πέμψον, θέρισον, and τρύγησον) in 14:15, 18.

<sup>2</sup>For the importance of "fire" in Revelation, see my note above on Rev 16:8-9.

<sup>3</sup>Ladd, 201; Morris, 186; Roloff, 178; Walvoord, 222.

<sup>4</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 144; Swete, 191; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 222.

Within the embracing units (B and B') of Rev 11:19-15:4, one finds five additional ἐξουσία passages (in units C and E).<sup>1</sup> These provide a vivid picture of the Dragon-Beasts triad as they abuse their delegated authority<sup>2</sup> and unite in an antidivine power struggle.

From a macrostructural point of view, Rev 13 and 14 are antithetical parallel elements focusing on the issue of divine and demonic worship.<sup>3</sup> According to Bauckham, Rev 13 itself is primarily a religio-political critique of the Roman power.<sup>4</sup> The very essence of this prophetic critique is the parody of the Roman ideology, which takes a "totalitarian direction"<sup>5</sup> when it absolutizes its immense

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<sup>1</sup>Rev 13: 2, 4, 5, 7, 12. It is almost one-fourth of the total ἐξουσία occurrences in Revelation clustered in a single chapter.

<sup>2</sup>It is signified by the divine passive ἐδόθη in vss. 5(2x), 7(2x), 14, 15; cf. Collins, The Apocalypse, 92-94; Ford, Revelation, 212; Ladd, 180; Morris, 168; Naden, 195; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 161.

<sup>3</sup>See especially the use of προσκυνέω in 13:4, 8, 12, 15 and 14:7, 9; cf. Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, 35.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 36. Here Bauckham emphasizes the aspect of political critique in Rev 13, while he considers Rev 17-18 primarily economic critique, but both "deeply religious." The description of a boycott in Rev 13:16-17, however, seems to be an economic critique, too.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 37-38; Gunneweg and Schmithals, 173.



power. Rev 13 may also be understood as the amplification of Rev 12:13-17,<sup>1</sup> which is the "great wrath"<sup>2</sup> of the Dragon.

Rev 13:1-8, which describes the appearance and activity of the Sea Beast, shows verbal and thematic parallelism to 17:3, 8, 14, and 11:7. These passages, in turn, are clearly based on Dan 7-8.<sup>3</sup> Rev 13:11-18, which depicts the activity of the Land Beast, evidently alludes to Dan 3:1-7.<sup>4</sup>

Beale observes, both in Dan 7 and in Rev 13, "a threefold pattern" of the beast's activity.<sup>5</sup> This activity

<sup>1</sup>Beale, The Use of Daniel, 229; Johnsson, 12. The same can be said about Rev 14:8 and 17:1-2; 18:1-3.

<sup>2</sup>See especially Rev 12:12, 17.

<sup>3</sup>Beale, The Use of Daniel, 313-320, proposes that Rev 1; 4-5; 13; 17, or perhaps Rev 12 and 20 too, are midrash on Dan 7-8. See also Steve Moyise, The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation, JSNTSS, 115 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 59-63, who argues that this attempt is forced, with the exception of Rev 13, which is clearly based on Dan 7. Moyise offers the term "intertextuality" in the place of "midrash," meaning that "John has built a bridge between two contexts, thereby setting in motion an interaction that continues to reverberate throughout the whole book" (ibid., 142). See further Jean-Pierre Ruiz, Ezekiel in the Apocalypse: The Transformation of Prophetic Language in Revelation 16,17-19,10, EUS, 23 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989), 520, who states that John persuades his readers to enter into a "dialogue with the text and with the texts within the text."

<sup>4</sup>Beale, The Use of Daniel, 242-244, lists Dan 3:5 (3:2-7) and 7:6 as "probable allusions."

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 245-248. Here Beale provides the following three points: (1) the stepping forward of an agent, (2) the "authorization" of the agent, and (3) the effect of the given power; cf. also Hans-Peter Müller, "Formgeschichtliche

is antidivine and inhuman, and its sole purpose is self-glorification, which manifests itself as coercive power worship.<sup>1</sup>

### Rev 13:1-10

Rev 13 is, then the principal chapter in the Apocalypse dealing with the abuse or misuse of (delegated) authority. This chapter naturally divides into two sections.<sup>2</sup> An analysis of the microdynamic of Rev 13:1-10 exhibits an odd chiasm (ABCB'A' pattern),<sup>3</sup> which is embraced by important introductory and concluding "frame-passages" as follows:

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Untersuchagen zu Apc 4F" (Th.D. dissertation, University of Heidelberg, 1962), 108-111, who considers only two characteristics of the agent.

<sup>1</sup>Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, 37, 164; Kempson, 231; Wink, Engaging the Powers, 93-94.

<sup>2</sup>Vss. 1-10 depict the activity of the Sea Beast, vss. 11-18 describe the activity of the Land Beast.

<sup>3</sup>Giblin, The Book of Revelation, 132-134, proposes a fivefold concentric pattern (abcb'a') for Rev 13:3b-8, which he later calls "concentrically-structured, dramatized scene" and "geometrically-designed literary composition"; Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 403, suggests an ABCDED'C'B'A' pattern for Rev 13:1-5. See also E. Müller, 598-601, for a helpful analysis.

Καὶ εἶδον ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης θηρίον ἀναβαῖνον, ἔχον κέρατα δέκα καὶ κεφαλὰς ἐπτὰ . . . καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ δράκων τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην

A "The whole earth worshiped the Dragon and the Beast"  
(13:3b-4)

καὶ ἐθαυμάσθη ὅλη ἡ γῆ ὀπίσω τοῦ θηρίου καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ δράκοντι, ὅτι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῷ θηρίῳ, καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θηρίῳ . . .

B "Authority was given to the Beast" (13:5)

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία ποιῆσαι μῆνας τεσσεράκοντα [καὶ] δύο

C "The Beast blasphemes God and the heaven dwellers"  
(13:6)

καὶ ἤνοιξεν τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ εἰς βλασφημίας πρὸς τὸν θεόν . . . καὶ τὴν σκηνην αὐτοῦ, τοὺς ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ σκηνοῦντας

B' "Authority was given to the Beast" (13:7)

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία ἐπὶ πᾶσαν φυλὴν καὶ λαὸν . . .

A' "The whole earth will worship the Beast" (13:8)

καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

Εἰ τις ἔχει οὖς ἀκουσάτω. . . Ὡδέ ἐστὶν ἡ ὑπομονὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις τῶν ἁγίων.

This pericope shows the most striking ἐξουσία clustering in the entire book. Although the term does not

appear in the focus (unit C) of this pattern, it dominates most of the structure. It occurs four times, in units A and BB' as well as in the introductory passage. The introductory passage and unit A provide the source<sup>1</sup> of the Beast's ἐξουσία, while units BB' contain time limitations<sup>2</sup> and a seemingly unlimited<sup>3</sup> horizontal expansion of the Beast's power. Therefore, the ἐξουσία clustering in Rev 13 points to the highest intensity of demonic activity, which finally culminates in the power of the Land Beast.

Rev 13:1-8 also contains a vertical contrast between the "heaven dwellers" and the "earth dwellers."<sup>4</sup> The blasphemy uttered by the Beast, as part of this contrast, resembles that of the rebellious humankind in the Seven Plagues section, but under different circumstances.<sup>5</sup> These

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<sup>1</sup>An interesting dynamism can be observed in vss. 2, 4 and vss. 5, 7. In the first two verses the power source seems to be the Dragon, but in the latter two verses God is in control. This transition is perhaps a fine indication that even the misused authority is under God's ultimate rulership.

<sup>2</sup>Regarding the same period of time (42 months or 1260 days), see my notes above on Rev 11:1-14 and 12:1-18.

<sup>3</sup>Roloff, 157.

<sup>4</sup>The vertical movements of Rev 13:1-8 are the following: (1) sea/earth, (2) heaven, and (3) earth. For similar contrast, see my notes above on Rev 12:1-18.

<sup>5</sup>See my notes above on the fourth, fifth, and seventh plagues; cf. also Dan 7:8, 11, 21, 25.

horizontal and vertical movements of the Sea Beast's activity depict its immense power.

**Rev 13:11-15**

The microdynamic of Rev 13:11-15 exhibits an even chiasm (ABB'A' pattern)<sup>1</sup> with "frame-passages" as follows:

Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλο θηρίον ἀναβαῖνον ἐκ τῆς γῆς . . . καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πρώτου θηρίου πᾶσαν ποιεῖ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ

A "The earth dwellers worship the first Beast" (13:12b)

καὶ ποιεῖ τὴν γῆν καὶ τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ κατοικοῦντας ἵνα προσκυνήσουσιν τὸ θηρίον τὸ πρῶτον

B "The Land Beast works great signs (13:13)

καὶ ποιεῖ σημεῖα μεγάλα . . . ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων

B' "The Land Beast deceives by the signs (13:14a)

καὶ πλανᾷ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς διὰ τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ποιῆσαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θηρίου

A' "The earth dwellers make an image for the (first) Beast"

(13:14b) τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ποιῆσαι εἰκόνα τῷ θηρίῳ καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ δοῦναι πνεῦμα τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ θηρίου, ἵνα καὶ λαλήσῃ ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ θηρίου . . .

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<sup>1</sup>Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, 404, proposes an ABB'A' pattern for Rev 13:11-14 only.

The central elements (units BB') of this structure affirm the miracle-working power of the Land Beast<sup>1</sup> whose purpose is "to mislead" (πλανάω).<sup>2</sup> The last ἐξουσία occurrence in Rev 13 is in the introductory frame-passage of this unit (13:12a), which points out the "dragon-nature" of the executive power of the Land Beast.<sup>3</sup>

The key figures of Rev 13 are the Dragon and his allies, the Sea Beast and the Land Beast.<sup>4</sup> This demonic

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<sup>1</sup>The repetition of ἐνώπιον in vss. 12, 13, 14 underlines the visual effects of the Beast's activity.

<sup>2</sup>This is one of the reasons why the Land Beast is called ὁ ψευδοπροφήτης in Rev 16:13; 19:20; 20:10. Another reason is perhaps the double nature of this beast, εἶχεν κέρατα δύο ὅμοια ἀρνίῳ καὶ ἐλάλει ὡς δράκων.

<sup>3</sup>The Land Beast works in harmony with the Dragon and the Sea Beast; his aim is not competition. In a sense he "serves" the other two, and at the same time he is controlled by God; cf. Griblin, The Book of Revelation, 135; Hughes, 151; Ladd, 183; Morris, 171; Swete, 169; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 174; Walvoord, 205.

<sup>4</sup>The appearance of the Sea Beast resembles that of all four beasts in Dan 7:3-7; cf. Beale, The Use of Daniel, 230-231; Collins, The Apocalypse, 89-91; Fiorenza, Vision of a Just World, 83; Swete, 165-166. The Land Beast seems to be a unique figure to John. A number of scholars believe that the Sea Beast can be identified with the MT יָמִינִי (Job 3:8; 40:25; Pss 74:14; 104:26; Isa 27:1) or the LXX δράκων (Job 7:12; 26:13; 40:25; Pss 73:13-14; 103:26; Isa 27:1; 51:9), whereas the Land Beast is usually considered as the MT נִימְרֹת or the LXX θηρία (Job 40:15); cf. especially Caird, Principalities and Powers, 61-62; Collins, The Combat Myth, 161-170; Snyder, 301-304; Mary Katharine Wakeman, "God's Battle with the Monster: A Study in Biblical Imagery" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1969), 88-115, 161-165, 179-191, 200-255; Howard N. Wallace, "Leviathan and the Beast in Revelation," in The Biblical Archeologist Reader,

triad<sup>1</sup> is the counterpart of the angelic triad in Rev 14:6-11. It is evident that the activities of this demonic triad are described in an ironic way.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the most striking ironies are formulated in Rev 13:4b<sup>3</sup> and 13:7b,<sup>4</sup> which point to the fact that the seemingly absolute power of the Dragon-

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vol. 1, ed. G. Ernest Wright and David Noel Freedman (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961), 290-298.

<sup>1</sup>Rev 16:13-14 reads: Καὶ εἶδον ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ δράκοντος καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ θηρίου καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ ψευδοπροφήτου πνεύματα τρία ἀκάθαρτα ὡς βάρβαροι: εἰσὶν γὰρ πνεύματα δαιμονίων ποιοῦντα σημεῖα . . .

<sup>2</sup>Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, 37, 114; Beale, The Use of Daniel, 301-305; Caird, Principalities and Powers, 62; Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 1:351; Collins, The Apocalypse, 89-91; Ford, Revelation, 212; Johnsson, 20-22; Morris, 168; Neall, 265, n. 32; Ronald H. Preston and Anthony T. Hanson, The Revelation of Saint John the Divine: Introduction and Commentary (London: SCM Press, 1949), 96; Roloff, 16; Swete, 165; Wink, Engaging the Powers, 92.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek reads: Τίς ὅμοιος τῷ θηρίῳ καὶ τίς δύναται πολεμῆσαι μετ' αὐτοῦ; This double question becomes a perfect irony when one considers the Dragon's lost battle with Michael in Rev 12:7-12. A further trace of irony might be found in the comparison of Rev 12:18 (καὶ ἐστάθη ἐπὶ τὴν ἄμμον τῆς θαλάσσης) and 14:1a (Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ τὸ ἀρνίον ἐστὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος Σιών), where the "battle grounds" of the Dragon and the Lamb are contrasted.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία ἐπὶ πᾶσαν φυλὴν καὶ λαὸν καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ ἔθνος. The irony is perfect again if one compares this statement with that of Jesus' in Matt 28:18, which reads: 'Ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς. πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη . . .

Beast is only the remains of an already-lost fight.<sup>1</sup> Although the war continues the decisive battle has been won on a cosmic level.<sup>2</sup> The clustering of the divine passive ἐδόθη in Rev 13:5(2x), 7(2x), 14, 15 further emphasizes that something more than imperial persecution is "in mind."<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the ambiguous number 666, the "human number" of the Beast, in Rev 13:18<sup>4</sup> might also be a fine irony, for it summarizes the whole chapter in three numbers. This irony may reflect on the failed attempt of the demonic triad towards perfection,<sup>5</sup> their becoming bestial,<sup>6</sup> and their mimic of the sovereignty of the Lamb-Christ<sup>7</sup> who is

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<sup>1</sup>Emil Brunner, Christianity and Civilisation, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), 117-118, rightly argues that "the sovereignty of God excludes an absolute of human power. It excludes both the absolute sovereignty of the state and the absolute sovereignty of the people." We may add that the absolute sovereignty of the Church is also excluded.

<sup>2</sup>See Rev 12:7-12.

<sup>3</sup>Morris, 169; Thomas, Revelation 8-22, 163.

<sup>4</sup>The Greek reads: Ὡδε ἡ σοφία ἐστίν. ὁ ἔχων νοῦν ψηφισάτω τὸν ἀριθμὸν τοῦ θηρίου, ἀριθμὸς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς αὐτοῦ ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ.

<sup>5</sup>Johnsson, 31.

<sup>6</sup>Beatrice S. Neall, The Concept of Character in the Apocalypse with Implications for Character Education (Chicago: University Press of America, 1982), 153-155.

<sup>7</sup>Tremper Longman III, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," Westminster Theological Journal 44 (1982): 299, asserts that "there may also be a contrast between the beast and Christ in that the



the final victor of the *apocalyptic combat*, because He is "King of kings and Lord of Lords."<sup>1</sup>

### Synthesis of the Research

This study investigated how ἐξουσία is employed in the context and literary structure of Revelation. As a general observation, it was concluded that in the majority (18) of the passages the term denotes the supernatural use of authority/power, which is in harmony with the LXX, Jewish apocalyptic, and NT usage.

Figure 1 made evident the use of ἐξουσία clusters in the central chapters (11-13) and in chapters 9 and 16-18 of Revelation. Figure 2 took into account the chiastic structure of the book, which highlights John's intention for using the term in an artful way.

The theme of *apocalyptic combat* is the conceptual backdrop to Revelation, and 11:19-15:4 is the *chiastic focus* of the book. The high point of this combat is a life-and-death struggle between divine and antdivine powers, which

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former has a number which conceals a name, and the latter has a name which conceals a number." Further he suggests that "Christ has a name (King of kings and Lord of Lords) which when converted to Aramaic and added up results in 777." See also Patrick W. Skehan, "King of Kings, Lord or Lords (Apoc. 19:16)," *CBO* 10 (1948): 398, who provides the Aramaic מלך מלכין מרא מרון.

<sup>1</sup>See Rev 17:14, 19:16 and 1 Tim 6:15 for the phrase Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων.

centers around *worship*. Worship in this context is an expression of the acceptance of divine or demonic ἐξουσία.

The microstructural analysis of the ἐξουσία passages revealed that if the term occurs within an inverted parallelism (ABA' pattern), it is always found in the central unit (B), which is the focus of the author's thought. In the case of an odd (ABCB'A' pattern) or an even (ABB'A') chiasmus, ἐξουσία appears either in units A/A' or B/B' but never in unit C. This characteristic usually shows an imbalance or intensification within the structure. In rare cases, when the term occurs in balanced units (BB'), or in the introductory "frame passage," it provides a dramatic backdrop to the central unit or focus (C).<sup>1</sup>

In summary, it is evident that ἐξουσία plays a special focusing role both in the macro- and the microstructures of the Apocalypse. Thus, it significantly contributes to the overall message of Revelation, which is the activity and judgment of antdivine powers.

Figure 3 provides a summary visual display of the chiastic arrangement of Revelation. The nine literary units include the Prologue and the Epilogue, and seven major visions. Units AA', BB', CC', and DD' are parallels. There

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix D for a summary of these analyses. The microdynamic of the structures is signified by the underlined units (e.g., A) where ἐξουσία occurs.

are two balancing themes in units CC' (Salvation and Judgment). The central units (DED') form the chiastic focus of the book, labeled "Activity and judgment of antidivine powers." The important ἐξουσία clustering in units DED', and the distribution of the term in units A', B, and CC' are signified by the numbers in parentheses.

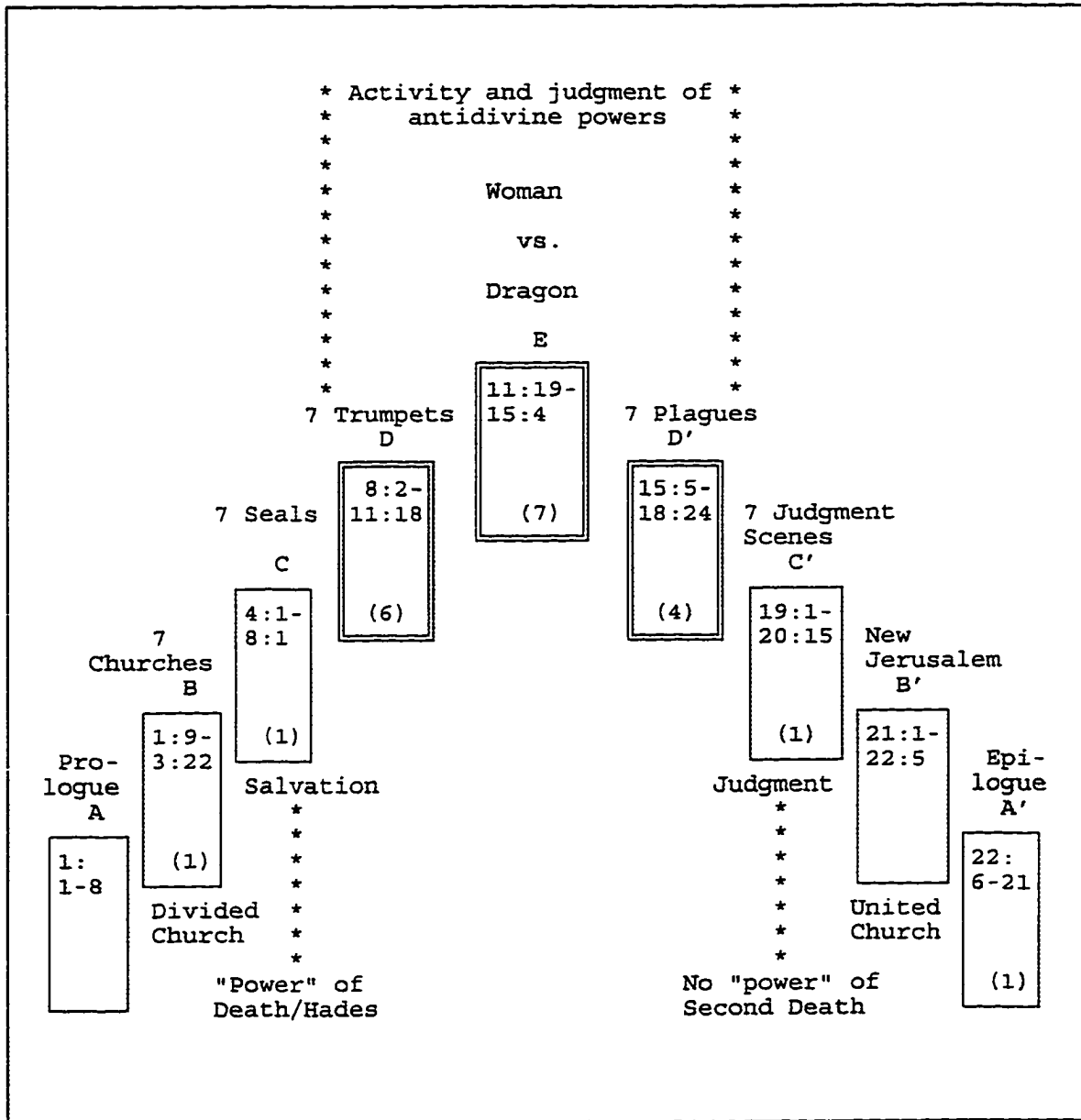


Fig. 3. A content analysis of the literary units of Revelation. The numbers in parentheses indicate the occurrences of ἐξουσία.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### Summary

'Εξουσία is derived from ἐξέστυ, and its most frequent Hebrew and Aramaic equivalents are הַשְׁלָטָה and שְׁלָטָה, respectively. The corresponding Latin terms are potestas and auctoritas.

The review of the representative studies on ἐξουσία demonstrated that earlier works tend to interpret the term as *power* or *authority*, while recent publications focus on the meanings of *freedom*, *liberty*, and *right*. It appears that the legal aspect of ἐξουσία has become dominant. Recent dictionary articles emphasize philosophical categories for authority and their references to Revelation are marginal or nonexistent.

W. Foerster's article in TWNT/TDNT is still the most comprehensive exposition of ἐξουσία, especially his discussion of the word in Revelation. O. Betz's article in TBNT/NIDNTT groups ἐξουσία with δύναμις and θρόνος, which together form the bulk of the power language in the Apocalypse. Betz also points out the importance of the Book

of Daniel as background for the meaning of the term.

Journal articles generally limit their ἐξουσία studies to the Gospels and the Pauline corpus.

The background study of the nonbiblical and biblical sources revealed that both the Greco-Roman and the Hellenistic Jewish writings emphasize the legal aspect of the term and discuss the problem of abusive power/authority. In the LXX ἐξουσία most frequently translates the Hebrew מְשִׁלָּה and the Aramaic מְשִׁלָּה, and predominantly denotes delegated authority and its misuse in the human realm. The OT Pseudepigrapha focus on the supernatural aspect of ἐξουσία.

In the NT the majority of the ἐξουσία passages closely follow the LXX and Jewish apocalyptic usage, especially in the area of delegated authority in human and supernatural relationships. In the Apocalypse, however, the supernatural aspect of the term is more emphasized, which includes the problem of abusive authority.

The structural studies of the ἐξουσία passages in Revelation showed that the term is clustered in certain parts of the book, predominantly in the central chapters (11-13). Considering the chiastic arrangement of Revelation, this means that ἐξουσία plays a special role at

the *chiastic focus* of the book by highlighting the *apocalyptic combat* theme.

A detailed study of this chiastic focus revealed that the key issue for John was a life-and-death struggle between true and false worship. He deliberately employed irony, especially in the central chapters, in order to unmask the bestial nature of the antidivine (anti-Christian) powers.

### Conclusions

What complex role does ἐξουσία play within the chiastic ordering (including macro- and microstructures) of the Apocalypse? As one of the most important terms of the power language employed by John, ἐξουσία has a unique role both on the macro- and the microstructural levels. First, the clear association of the divine passive ἐδόθη with ἐξουσία in most of the passages makes evident that in the different phases of the power struggle (1) God is in control, and (2) the power, used or misused, is delegated by God. Second, the message of Revelation focuses on the activity and judgment of antidivine powers (8:2-18:24) which reaches its high peak in the central chapters (11-13) and is expressed by a heavy concentration of ἐξουσία passages.

What is the impact of the ἐξουσία clusters on the entire chiastic arrangement of the book? The foregoing analysis of the nine literary units of Revelation revealed that ἐξουσία, sometimes together with δύναμις and θρόνος, carries the dynamism of antdivine power struggle. The three main ἐξουσία clusters (Rev 9; 13; 17) express a development in this struggle. The final outcome of the combat is the self-destruction of the united abusive powers (Rev 17:12-18).

How does ἐξουσία function on the microstructural level? The microstructural analysis underlined the central function of the term. In the majority of the ἐξουσία passages, where even chiasms or inverted parallelisms are observed, ἐξουσία contributes to imbalance and intensification. In rare cases (Rev 9:3-10; 13:2-7), however, the term occurs in the balancing elements of odd chiasms and provides a dynamic and dramatic backdrop to the focus. What are some implications of these findings?

### **Implications**

The Apocalypse unmasks the most dominant constructions of this world as an ideology of the powerful. In that sense Revelation is a theology of power, or more



precisely, the issue of power/authority is one of its deepest theological concerns. This concern is expressed in a unique and artful way and shows that behind the abuse or misuse of power/authority in human relationships there is always a demonic force, which prompts for self-glorification and power worship. This force naturally comes from demons who are described in the NT as personal, spiritual beings (e.g. Mark 1:23-27; 3:11-12; 5:1-13, etc.).

The book of Revelation presents God's rule as well, a rule which does not, however, contradict human freedom (e.g. Rev 2:7, 11, 17, etc., Rev 13:9; 22:17). God's universal rulership is clearly associated with the term *θρόνος* which symbolizes His overall control of activities, both good and evil. The nature of God is shown as essentially good. John depicts this goodness in divine promises and liturgical hymns (Rev 21:1-7; 15:3, 4). God is good because He shares His *ἐξουσία* and *θρόνος* (Rev 2:26-28; 3:21; 5:9-10; and 20:4).

The theology of Revelation was certainly directed and still appeals to people who believe themselves to be in conflict because they are a despised minority. The Apocalypse offers a theology of hope to those who choose a powerful resistance to worldly power.

When power/authority is considered as an ethical issue, it is inseparable from our vertical (with God) and

horizontal (with humankind) relationships. In a general sense all authority is delegated by God, which evidently leads to human responsibility and discernment. This responsibility includes an assertion of all God-given personal human rights including resistance when one is confronted by unjust authority.

Revelation provides a balanced picture by describing both the use and misuse of power/authority. To avoid becoming an end in itself, power has to be rooted in love and controlled by justice. God shares power with His creatures and makes them responsible for it by pointing to eternal rewards and judgment.

This responsibility (or ethical action) of a person as a moral agent centers around fidelity, the worship of God alone. This behavior is also described as "patience" or "perseverance" in Rev 1-3, and 13-14. In short, the Apocalypse, especially its Epilogue (22:6-21), concentrates on one decisive factor--influencing behavior.

History teaches us that in any society, when a creative minority degenerates into a dominant minority, it provokes the breakdown of that civilization. This is precisely the case in Rev 13 and 17-18 where the Beast-Babylon power structure becomes tyrannical (13:11-18) and fully demonic (18:1-4). The prophetic critique of this abusive power is one of the main concerns of John.

Facing despotism or abuse by institutional power structures, where too much uncontrolled power is concentrated in the hands of a person, can be an almost everyday occurrence for anyone. It is, therefore, noteworthy that Plutarch (ca. A.D. 50-120) pointed out the irrationality of human behavior in situations determined by fear and superstition. His practical observation is as follows: "It is equally true that men give welcome to despots, and pay court to them, and erect golden statues in their honour, but in their hearts they hate them and 'shake the head'" (Moralia, De superstitione 11., Plutarch's Moralia II, LCL, 489). The power struggle described in the Apocalypse is thus played out in everyday life not only at the cosmic level.

Based on the central theme of the activity and judgment of antiodivine powers in Revelation one can perceive a real danger for the Church too, as it can become a power structure at any time that it takes on a secular character and coerces human conscience. The balanced description of the use and abuse of authority in the Apocalypse, including eternal consequences, can help readers to avoid the trap of power delusion.

Possible areas of further study would include the following three main tasks:

1. A complex exegetical approach to the power language (θρόνος, ἐξουσία, δύναμις/δύναμαι, βασιλεία/βασιλεύω, κράτος/ κρατέω, ἰσχύς/ἰσχύω) used in the Apocalypse, one which analyzes the literary, thematic, and structural context of the particular passages.

2. A detailed study of how the power language in Revelation relates to the language of the Hebrew cultus so frequently employed throughout the book.

3. An ethical study of the relationship between the power language employed by John and the nature of God, where God's goodness is contrasted with the nature of evil and the demonic. In addition, the interdependence of human behavior and hope, rewards, and patience as motivating factors could also be explored.

## APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A

### ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ OCCURRENCES IN THE LXX

This list is based on the order of books in the LXX text by Alfred Rahlfs. The Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents of ἐξουσία in the MT are provided for the sake of comparison.

#### LXX Text

#### MT

1. 4 Kgdm 20:13	2 Kgs 20:13 מְשָׁלָה
2. 1 Esdr 4:28	
3. 1 Esdr 4:40	
4. 1 Esdr 8:22	
5. Esth 3:13b	
6. Esth 4:17b	
7. Jdt 8:15	
8. 1 Macc 1:13	
9. 1 Macc 6:11	
10. 1 Macc 10:6	
11. 1 Macc 10:8	
12. 1 Macc 10:32	
13. 1 Macc 10:35	
14. 1 Macc 10:38	
15. 1 Macc 11:58	
16. 1 Macc 14:4	
17. 2 Macc 3:6	
18. 2 Macc 3:24	
19. 2 Macc 4:9	
20. 2 Macc 4:24	
21. 2 Macc 7:16	
22. 2 Macc 10:13	

## LXX Text

## MT

33. 3 Macc 7:12  
24. 3 Macc 7:21

25. 4 Macc 4:5  
26. 4 Macc 5:15  
27. 4 Macc 6:33

28. Ps 113:2  
29. Ps 135:8  
30. Ps 135:9

Ps 114:2 מְהַשְׁלָה  
Ps 136:8 מְהַשְׁלָה  
Ps 136:9 מְהַשְׁלָה

31. Prov 17:14

32. Eccl 8:8

Qoh 8:8 שְׁלִיט

33. Wis 10:14  
34. Wis 16:13

35. Sir 9:13  
36. Sir 10:4  
37. Sir 17:2  
38. Sir 24:11  
39. Sir 30:11  
40. Sir 33:20  
41. Sir 45:17

42. Pss. Sol. 9:4

43. Dan 3:2

Dan 3:2 שְׁלִטָּן

44. Dan 3:97

45. Dan 4:17

Dan 4:19 שְׁלִטָּן

46. Dan 4:27

Dan 4:23 שְׁלִטָּן

47. Dan 4:31

48. Dan 4:31

Dan 4:31 שְׁלִטָּן

49. Dan 4:31

Dan 4:31 שְׁלִטָּן

50. Dan 4:37

51. Dan 4:37

52. Dan 4:37

53. Dan 5:4

54. Dan 5:7

Dan 5:7 שְׁלִט

55. Dan 5:16

Dan 5:16 שְׁלִט

56. Dan 5:29

Dan 5:29 שְׁלִיט

57. Dan 6:4

58. Dan 7:12

Dan 7:12 שְׁלִטָּן

59. Dan 7:14

Dan 7:14 שְׁלִטָּן

60. Dan 7:14

Dan 7:14 שְׁלִטָּן

## LXX Text

## MT

61. Dan 7:14  
 62. Dan 7:26  
 63. Dan 7:27  
 64. Dan 7:27  
 65. Bel 25

Dan 7:14 שְׁלֵטֹן  
 Dan 7:26 שְׁלֵטֹן  
 Dan 7:27 שְׁלֵטְנָא  
 Dan 7:27 שְׁלֵטְנָא



## APPENDIX B

### ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ OCCURRENCES IN THEODOTION

This list contains the occurrences in Daniel and Bel in the Theodotion text by Alfred Rahlfs. The Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents of ἐξουσία in the MT are provided for the sake of comparison.

LXX Text	MT
1. Dan 3:2	Dan 3:2 שְׁלֵטָן
2. Dan 3:3	Dan 3:3 שְׁלֵטָן
3. Dan 4:3	Dan 3:33 שְׁלֵטָן
4. Dan 4:26	Dan 4:23 שְׁלֵטָן
5. Dan 4:34	Dan 4:31 שְׁלֵטָן
6. Dan 4:34	Dan 4:31 שְׁלֵטָן
7. Dan 7:6	Dan 7:6 שְׁלֵטָן
8. Dan 7:14	Dan 7:14 שְׁלֵטָן
9. Dan 7:14	Dan 7:14 שְׁלֵטָן
10. Dan 7:27	Dan 7:27 שְׁלֵטָנָא
11. Dan 11:5	Dan 11:5 מְמַשְׁלָה
12. Bel 25	

## APPENDIX C

### ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΖΕΙΝ OCCURRENCES IN THE LXX

This list is based on the order of books in the LXX text by Alfred Rahlfs. The Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents of ἐξουσία in the MT are provided for the sake of comparison.

LXX Text	MT
1. 2 Esdr 7:24	Ezra 7:24 שְׁלִיט
2. 2 Esdr 15:15	Neh 5:15 שְׁלִטָּן
3. 2 Esdr 19:37	Neh 9:37 מְשֵׁל
4. 1 Macc 10:70	
5. Eccl 2:19	Qoh 2:19 שְׁלִיט
6. Eccl 5:18	Qoh 5:18 שְׁלִיט
7. Eccl 6:2	Qoh 6:2 שְׁלִיט
8. Eccl 7:19	Qoh 7:19 שְׁלִיט
9. Eccl 8:4	Qoh 8:4 שְׁלִיטוֹן
10. Eccl 8:8	Qoh 8:8 שְׁלִיט
11. Eccl 8:9	Qoh 8:9 מְשֵׁל
12. Eccl 9:17	Qoh 9:17 מְשֵׁל
13. Eccl 10:4	Qoh 10:4 מְשֵׁל
14. Eccl 10:5	Qoh 10:5 שְׁלִיט
15. Sir 20:8	
16. Sir 47:19	

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF THE MICRODYNAMIC OF THE ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ  
PASSAGES IN REVELATION

Chiastic Units	Passages	Odd Chiasm	Even Chiasm	Inverted Parallelism
B	2:26-28	<u>A</u> BCB' A'		
C	6:8			<u>A</u> BA' ?
D	9:1-11	<u>A</u> BC <u>B'</u> A'		
	9:17-19	ABC <u>B'</u> <u>A'</u>		
	11:1-13		<u>A</u> BB' A'	
E	12:1-18			<u>A</u> BA'
	13:1-10	<u>Int</u> + <u>A</u> BC <u>B'</u> A' +Con		
	13:11-15		<u>Int</u> + <u>A</u> BB' A' +Con	
	14:14-20			<u>A</u> BA'
D'	16:8-9			<u>a</u> ba' (tail piece)
	17:7-14			<u>A</u> BA'
	18:1-24	<u>A</u> BCB' A'		
C'	20:1-10			<u>A</u> BA'
A'	22:13-16		<u>A</u> BB' A'	
-----				
Totals:		5	3	6

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