

## **Thrones in the Book of Revelation**

### **Part 4: Thrones of God's Adversaries**

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The recent discussion on the apocalyptic genre confirmed that two-dimensional perspectives are inherent to apocalyptic literature.<sup>1</sup> The gap between the heavenly and earthly realms is portrayed by striking contrasts and a clear, invariable line of demarcation is made between the good and the evil.<sup>2</sup> The use of the throne motif is an appropriate example of this literary style in the book of Revelation, since antithetical thrones appear in both the epistolary and the visionary parts of the book. The positive thrones (God's, the Lamb's and the allies') have been discussed in the first three articles in our series on thrones in Revelation, therefore this study will focus on the two adverse thrones in the book: the throne of Satan (ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ; 2:13) and the throne of the beast (ὁ θρόνος τοῦ θηρίου; 13:2; 16:10).<sup>3</sup> While the dragon is designated as the

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<sup>1</sup> For the comprehensive overview of the recent scholarship on apocalypses and apocalypticism in antiquity, see Lorenzo DiTomasso, "Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity (Part I)," *CBR* 5 (2007), 235-86; Idem., "Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity (Part II)," *CBR* 5 (2007), 357-432.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth A. Strand (*Interpreting the Book of Revelation: Hermeneutical Guidelines, with Brief Introduction to Literary Analysis* [Worthington, OH: Ann Arbor, 1976], 18) notes among Revelation's numerous striking contrasts the following as exemplary: "people of God and people of the adversary, the seal of God and the mark of the beast, the Faithful and True Witness and the serpent that deceives the world, the virgin and the harlot, the armies of heaven and the armies of earth, the marriage supper of the Lamb and the fowls' supper of the men of the earth, songs of praise to God and cries of agony for rocks and mountains to fall, the fruit of the tree of life and the wine of the wrath of God, the New Jerusalem in glory and Babylon in shame, and the sea of glass and the lake of fire."

<sup>3</sup> In contrast, Ricky L. Williamson ("Thrones in the Book of Revelation" [PhD Dissertation; The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993], 151-71) argues for the presence of three adverse thrones in Revelation: Satan's (2:13), the dragon's (13:2) and the beast's (16:10). Though the dragon is specified as the originator of the beast's throne in

originator of the throne of the beast in 13:2, the existence of his separate throne is not evident in ch. 13. Since Satan's throne (2:13) and the beast's throne (13:2; 16:10) are clearly separate, they constitute together the sub-motif of the thrones of God's adversaries within Revelation's throne "motif-network" standing in antithetical relation to the throne of God and the Lamb.

#### 1. Throne of Satan (2:13)

The reference to the throne of Satan (ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ) in 2:13 is unique in biblical and Jewish literature. It is not part of a developed scene, but appears only as a single reference without elaboration. No details are provided concerning the physical appearance of this throne, neither about its occupant nor any specific activity occurring around it. The reason for the lack of elaboration is to be sought on one hand in the literary place of the reference within the Seven Messages,<sup>4</sup> but possibly also in its theological function which, I suggest, influences significantly the view of the Seven Messages as a whole.

##### 1.1. Contextual and Structural Considerations

The ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ reference is part of the letter addressed to the church in Pergamon (2:12-17) which is the third among the seven prophetic messages of Rev. 2-3. It is located at the beginning of the body of the message, following the introductory address and the characterization of the speaker. More specifically, the reference is part of the commendation section that is framed by a dual reference to Satan.<sup>5</sup> The expression "the throne of Satan" appears on one side of the commendation as a qualification of the place where the church in Pergamon lives (κατοικεῖς ὅπου ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ). The parallel reference at the other side states that Satan himself dwells beside the believers of Pergamon, not just that they live in proximity to his throne (παρ' ὑμῖν, ὅπου ὁ σατανᾶς κατοικεῖ). This parallel has been variously

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13:2, the syntax does not justify the separation of the dragon's throne from the beast's, neither is such a throne represented elsewhere in the book.

<sup>4</sup> Williamson, "Thrones," 156.

<sup>5</sup> David A. deSilva ("The Strategic Arousal of Emotions in the Apocalypse of John: A Rhetorical-Critical Investigation of the Oracles to the Seven Churches," *NTS*54 [2008], 90-114[105]) notes that the words of commendation in 2:13 are among the most developed in the Seven Messages, together with the commendation in the message to the church in Thyatira (2:19).

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interpreted. It has been suggested that the two clauses are synonymous<sup>6</sup> or that the throne reference is clarified by the other statement.<sup>7</sup> However, neither of these views is supported by strong exegetical evidence. It is enlightening to notice that the two clauses have two words in common: (1) the particle ὅπου (“where”) referring to a place; and (2) the verb κατοικέω (“dwell”) indicating a permanent residence.<sup>8</sup> In spite of the similarities, there is a critical difference in regard to the subject of the verb κατοικέω, which is first applied to the believers and then also to Satan. It seems most appropriate to view the two references in light of this difference as antithetical, employed with a peculiar theological purpose.<sup>9</sup>

It has often been suggested that Satan’s throne in 2:13 is identical to the dragon’s throne in 13:2. This view is most often argued on the basis of the observation that the dragon, who gives his throne to the beast in 13:2, is identified previously in the vision as the Devil and Satan (ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς; 12:9).<sup>10</sup> The identification of the two thrones is, however, not convincing for several reasons. First, the two references appear in two distinct parts of the book that are different even in genre. Second, in 2:13 Satan’s throne is placed specifically in

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<sup>6</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, “Satan’s Throne,” *BAR* 32/3 (2006), 27-39.

<sup>7</sup> Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 143.

<sup>8</sup> Gregory Stevenson (*Power and Place: Temple and Identity in the Book of Revelation* [BZNTW, 107; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2001], 274 n. 152) points out that in Revelation the terms σκηνώ and σκηνή are reserved for God and those who dwell in heaven (7:15; 12:12; 13:6; 15:5; 21:3), while κατοικέω is applied to those dwelling on the earth (2:13; 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8). For the use of κατοικέω in the New Testament in a metaphorical sense, see J. Goetzmann, “House, Build, Manage, Steward” in *NIDNTT*, II, 247-51 (251).

<sup>9</sup> Similar to Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 247; Robert H. Mounce, *Revelation* (NICNT, 17; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 97.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Revelation of John: An Apocalyptic Response to a Social Crisis,” *CurTM* 8 (1981), 4-12(7); M. Robert Mulholland, *Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Asbury, 1990), 106-07; Jörg Frey, “Relevance of the Roman Imperial Cult for the Book of Revelation: Exegetical and Hermeneutical Reflections on the Relation Between the Seven Letters and the Visionary Main Part of the Book” in *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune*, ed. John Fotopoulos (NovTSup, 122; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 231-55 (243).

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Pergamon, while the throne in 13:2 is not given a location.<sup>11</sup> It is hardly imaginable that the place of the beast's throne in ch. 13 is in Pergamon, since the global nature of its influence is repeatedly pointed out (13:3, 7, 9). Mounce tries to bridge this interpretive gap suggesting that 13:2 and 16:10 refer to Rome as the center of Satan's activity in the West, whereas Pergamon had become his "throne" in the East.<sup>12</sup> However, this suggestion concerning the existence of two Satanic centers is highly speculative. It is more appropriate to approach the two contexts in Revelation on their own, maintaining only a thematic parallel of a diabolic campaign against God's people.

### 1.2. Background

The reference to Satan's throne is tied specifically to Pergamon, which, according to Pliny, was considered "by far the most famous place in Asia" (*Nat.* 5.33). Ramsay argues that the reference to a throne in connection with the city implies dignity and eminence, since "no city of the whole of Asia Minor. . . possesses the same imposing and dominating aspect."<sup>13</sup> Though the scholarly literature on the ancient city of Pergamon is extensive, a short discussion of the city's pre-eminence focusing on its civic and religious influence is necessary here, since the expression "Satan's throne" is clearly grounded in a local context.<sup>14</sup>

The scholarly opinion is divided concerning the identity of the capital of Asia Minor at the time of Revelation's writing. There is a consensus that the capital was in Pergamon when Rome took over the province. Also it is generally accepted that the center was moved to Ephesus few centuries later. However, where the capital was located during the first and second centuries C.E. is controversial. Besides the two divided camps which favor either Pergamon or Ephesus, expressing of judgment on the question is widely avoided by the biblical

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<sup>11</sup> This weakness is acknowledged even by David E. Aune (*Revelation 1-5* [WBC, 52A; Dallas, TX: Word, 1997], 182), who identifies Satan's throne symbolically with Roman opposition to early Christianity.

<sup>12</sup> Mounce, *Revelation*, 96-97.

<sup>13</sup> William M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, rev. edn, 1994), 216.

<sup>14</sup> For representative treatments of the city of Pergamon, see the following sources and the literature cited in them: Wolfgang Radt, *Pergamon: Geschichte und Bauten einer antiken Metropole* (Darmstadt: Primus, 1999); Helmut Koester (ed.), *Pergamon, Citadel of Gods: Archaeological Record, Literary Description, and Religious Development* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998).

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interpreters.<sup>15</sup> It has also been argued that Pergamon was the titular capital, while Ephesus remained the most important city of the province.<sup>16</sup> I am inclined to agree with Worth that a date no earlier than Hadrian would make the most sense for the change,<sup>17</sup> but regardless of Pergamon's civil status by the end of the first century C.E., it is more important for our research to establish the religious position of the city.

It has been argued that Pergamon functioned as the religious capital of the province of Asia at time of Revelation's writing.<sup>18</sup> This conclusion was grounded on one hand in the pre-eminence of the imperial worship in the city, and also in the fact that Pergamon was a stronghold of pagan religion, including the cults of Asclepius, Zeus, Athene, Demeter and Dionysius.<sup>19</sup> The imperial cults and the leading pagan cults in Pergamon "were not only in spatial approximation, but in a high state of synthesis,"<sup>20</sup> as Yarbrow Collins demonstrates for the cult of Zeus<sup>21</sup> and Brent for the ritual of Asclepius.<sup>22</sup> Friesen recently challenged the view that Pergamon was the center of imperial cults in Asia. He correctly observes that "the very notion that imperial cults in Asia had a center is an unfortunate formulation," because "sacrificial activity for the emperors took place in a myriad of contexts" and there were "many

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<sup>15</sup> Roland H. Worth (*The Seven Cities of the Apocalypse and Roman Culture* [New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1999], 159-61 n. 24-26) names the following scholars as the proponents of the Pergamon theory: Allen, Bengston, Draper, Harrington, Jeske, Loane, Mounce, Webber, Lull and Wilcock. On the other hand the following scholars are referred to as arguing the primacy of Ephesus: Bean, Calkin, Cole, Frank, French, van der Heyden-Schullard, Johnson, Koester, MacKendrick, Meinardus, Miller, Nilsson, Oster, Petit, Ramsay, Scott and Tait. Also Moyise and Barnett are mentioned as refusing to take sides in this unsettled issue.

<sup>16</sup> Worth (*Roman Culture*, 161-62 n. 28-34) refers to the works of the following scholars, who express this view using different designations for the practical primacy of Ephesus: Lyall, Johnston, Mommsen, Tarn-Griffith, Cotter, Cardoux, Turner, Pentreath and Perowne.

<sup>17</sup> For a persuasive argument and a convincing critique of Friesen's thesis for dating the change in the Augustan period, see Worth, *Roman Culture*, 48.

<sup>18</sup> Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in their Local Setting* (JSNT Sup, 11; Sheffield: JSOT, 1986), 87.

<sup>19</sup> For the cultic importance of Pergamon, see Ramsay, *Letters*, 207f.; Roland H. Worth, *The Seven Cities of the Apocalypse and Greco-Asian Culture* (New York: Paulist, 1999), 112-22.

<sup>20</sup> Allen Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity Before the Age of Cyprian* (VC Sup, 45; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 181.

<sup>21</sup> Yarbrow Collins, "Satan's Throne," 36-38.

<sup>22</sup> Brent, *Imperial Cult*, 180-81.

types.”<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, this view does not diminish the pre-eminence of Pergamon as the *protos neokoros*, the precedent for the cults in the other provinces.<sup>24</sup> In this regard Frey notes:

Pergamon had the honor to be the first city of Asia where a provincial cult for Augustus and the goddess Rome had been installed in 29 B.C.E. Other cities such as Smyrna and Ephesus followed, causing a severe rivalry between those three cities, and Ephesus might have gained the predominant position with the cult of the Sebastoi granted under Domitian and then with its second “neocorate” permitted by Hadrian, but the privilege of primacy remained with Pergamon.<sup>25</sup> Thus, Pergamon enjoyed a status of eminence as a significant center both in civic and religious realms. Therefore, its connection with the throne of Satan—whatever its meaning—makes sense against this position.

### 1.3. Interpretation

#### 1.3.1. The Meaning of Satan’s Throne

On a symbolic level the throne of Satan represents a power opposed to God, “a rebellious kingdom of Satan in opposition to the kingdom of God.”<sup>26</sup> However, the very explicit association between this strange motif and the city of Pergamon in 2:13 suggests the intention of a more precise meaning. This is indicated by the articular nature of the reference, which points to a specific “throne”—literal or figurative—recognizable for the audience.<sup>27</sup>

The discussion over the identification of the “throne of Satan” resulted in a wide variety of suggestions that have all been subjected to scholarly criticism.<sup>28</sup> The complexity of the problem is well known and no answer is without difficulties. However, Barr’s statement that “we can

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<sup>23</sup> Steven J. Friesen, “Satan’s Throne, Imperial Cults and the Social Settings of Revelation,” *JSNT* 27 (2005), 351-73(363).

<sup>24</sup> On the rationale and establishment of the first provincial imperial temple in Pergamon approved for a cult of Roma and Augustus in 29 B.C.E., see Steven J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 27f.; Idem., *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 116; Leiden: Brill 1993), 7-15.

<sup>25</sup> Frey, “Relevance,” 243-44.

<sup>26</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, *Apocalypse* (New Testament Message, 22; Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1979), 82.

<sup>27</sup> Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 182.

<sup>28</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the weaknesses of the main proposals, see e.g. Friesen, “Satan’s Throne,” 357-67.

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no longer discern the precise significance of the symbol” is a pessimistically overstated perspective on the question.<sup>29</sup> Some of the interpretive possibilities are tied to specific local allusions, while others are very general. Also the synthezation of the possibilities has been often attempted, as Satan’s throne was interpreted in terms of a dual or triple allusion. The most well-known interpretations grouped on the basis of their approach are the following: (1) the political explanation which designates the Roman seat of government including the imperial cults<sup>30</sup> or specifically the temple of Augustus and Roma;<sup>31</sup> (2) the religious explanation that points to the Great Altar of Zeus Soter,<sup>32</sup> the Asclepius cult<sup>33</sup> or collectively to the polytheistic climate of the city;<sup>34</sup> (3) the geographical explanation based on the majestic physical features of the

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<sup>29</sup> David L. Barr, *Tales of the End: A Narrative Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 1998), 57.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. Robert H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John: With Introd., Notes, and Indices, also the Greek Text and English Translation* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920), I, 61; Austin Farrer, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 73; Heinz Giesen, *Studien zur Johannesapokalypse* (SBAB, 29; Stuttgart: Katolisches Bibelwerk, 2000), 131-32. The interpretation that the judgment seat of the Roman official is on mind of the author is too narrow. Probably John would employ the word βῆμα to point to the tribunal.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. Heinrich Schlier, *Principalities and Powers in the New Testament* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), 29; J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 398; M. Eugene Boring, *Revelation* (IBD; Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 91.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910), 281 n. 3; Theodor Birt, “Der Thron des Satans: Ein Beitrag zur Erklärung des Altars von Pergamon,” *BPW* 52 (1932), 1203-10; Leonard L. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation: Apocalypse and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 173. For a broader variant including not only the altar, but also the temple of Athena and the temple of Zeus, see Adela Yarbro Collins, “Pergamon in Early Christian Literature” in *Pergamon, Citadel of Gods: Archaeological Record, Literary Description, and Religious Development*, ed. Helmut Koester (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 166-76.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. Henry Barclay Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John: The Greek Text with Introduction Notes and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1906), 34; Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 5th edn, 1906), 211; Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. John Moore Trout *et al.*; 3 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1953), III, 410-11.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. Hugh Martin, *The Seven Letters* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1956), 69; Hanns Lilje, *The Last Book of the Bible: The Meaning of the Revelation of St. John* (trans. Olive Wyon; Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), 79-80; Jürgen Roloff, *Revelation* (J.E. Alsup; CC; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 51.

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setting;<sup>35</sup> and (4) the hostility theory, with an emphasis on Pergamon as the center of Christian persecution.<sup>36</sup>

It seems most convincing to interpret Satan's throne in Pergamon as designating the presence of the imperial power in the city with the imperial cults as the primary expression of its propaganda. Thus, the religious and the political aspects of the Roman imperial power merge into the symbol of the Satan's throne. This conclusion is based on both textual and historical argument. Textually, several pieces of evidence support this suggestion, both in an immediate and a wider context. The death of Antipas in 2:13 points in the direction of the Roman power, since it is well known that the proconsul was the only individual with the power of *ius gladii*, the legal right to pronounce the death sentence on a Roman citizen.<sup>37</sup> The sword as an appropriate symbol for the almost unlimited authority of the senatorial governor of Asia is opposed by a contra image in Christ's introduction at the beginning of the message to Pergamon, since he is portrayed as "the one having the sharp two-edged sword" (2:12).<sup>38</sup> More precisely, Satan's throne points to the imperial cults, since the Christians faced the threat of Roman execution on these grounds. Prigent rightly concludes: "It is obviously the imperial cult which alone is capable of causing Pergamum to appear as a high place particularly dedicated to this confession of allegiance to political and

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<sup>35</sup> E.g. Peter Wood, "Local Knowledge in the Letters of the Apocalypse," *Exp Tim* 73 (1961-62), 263-64. Worth (*Greco-Asian Culture*, 140) also subscribes partially to this interpretation posing the question: "Would not the idea of Satan's throne represent a natural combination of the physical setting with theological condemnations?"

<sup>36</sup> A distinction must be made here between the old persecution theory and the interpretation in terms of external pressure. While the first is focused on the Roman efforts to destroy the churches during the reign of Domitian (Ramsay, *Letters*, 67-81), the second views the pressure in terms of a tension with mainstream society (Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 183-84; Friesen, "Satan's Throne," 365-66).

<sup>37</sup> For a discussion on *ius gladii*, see Adrian N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Sarum Lectures; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 8-10.

<sup>38</sup> George B. Caird, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine* (BNTC; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1966), 37-38; Hemer, *Letters*, 85. *ῥομφαία* is in LXX in some two hundred instances a translation of *הרב*, which is very commonly also translated as *μάχαλα*. These two Greek terms do not differ in meaning as the translations of *הרב*; however, Wilhelm Michael in ("ῥομφαία" in *TDNT*, VI, 993-98[994]) notes that *ῥομφαία* is obviously a larger sword as, e.g., that of the cherubim at the gate of Paradise (Gen. 3:24) or of Goliath (1Sam. 17:45, 47, 51; 21:10; 22:10).



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religious faith which showed such intolerance towards the Christian faith.”<sup>39</sup>

The throne as imagery implies a special authority pointing to a seat of a state or institution.<sup>40</sup> The expression ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ not only reflects Pergamon’s political influence in the province, but fits well also with the city’s *neokoros* status as the pre-eminent center of the imperial cults in the first century C.E. Asia Minor. Beale appropriately notes that “life in such a politico-religious center put all the more pressure on the church to pay public homage to Caesar as a deity, refusal of which meant high treason to the state.”<sup>41</sup> Thus, Pergamon as a stronghold of the political-religious influence of the Empire is appropriately designated “the throne of Satan,” which posed a major threat to church’s existence as indicated by the martyrdom of Antipas.

#### 1.3.2. The Function of Satan’s Throne

In the statement “I know where you live—where the throne of Satan is” (2:13) is “compressed a world of meaning.”<sup>42</sup> The text implies that permanently living (κατοικέω) in the shadow of Satan’s throne put the Christian community in Pergamon in a position of danger from which escape was not a viable option. The severity of the pressure for Christians living in the city is evident from the emphasis on Jesus’ knowledge of the church’s situation rather than his acquaintance with its works, as in the majority of the other messages to the seven churches.<sup>43</sup>

The theological importance of the throne of Satan goes beyond a mere reference to the tensions between the Pergamon church and mainstream society. This is reflected in the literary structure of 2:13 in which the short account of the martyrdom of Antipas, a Christian qualified with a nominative of apposition ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστός μου

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<sup>39</sup> Pierre Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John* (trans. Wendy Pradels; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 173.

<sup>40</sup> Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1992), 182.

<sup>41</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 246.

<sup>42</sup> Ramsay, *Letters*, 214.

<sup>43</sup> In five out of the Seven Messages the emphasis is on knowledge of the Church’s works (2:2, 19; 3:1, 8, 15), while in 2:9 and 2:13 Christ refers rather to the knowledge of the circumstances of the addressed churches. The reason for this divergence may lie in the severe persecution of these churches. While the textual divergence of 2:13 from the established pattern is widely attested, in Andreas Byzantine 2351 syr<sup>b</sup> τὰ ἔργα σου is added. This variant as a scribal insertion is an attempt of harmonization with the recurring pattern. Therefore, the divergent reading of the earlier MSS is to be preferred.

(“my faithful witness”), is sandwiched by a dual reference to the Satanic presence.<sup>44</sup> It does not make much difference whether this figure of the early church became a victim of a lynch mob or was executed by government authorities, since it is clearly stated that the reason for his martyrdom was his faithfulness to Christianity.<sup>45</sup> The double emphasis on μου in relation to Antipas (ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστός μου) supplemented with another double μου in the same verse related to the church (τὸ ὄνομά μου ... πίστιν μου) brings Christ to the focus as the object of witnessing. However, the endurance of Antipas and the church is more the focus of attention, since Antipas appears in a sense as a representative of Christians in Pergamon,<sup>46</sup> whose faithfulness is highlighted by an antithesis in which the initial positive qualification (κρατεῖς τὸ ὄνομά μου; “hold my name”) is repeated and reinforced through a negative statement (οὐκ ἠρνήσω τὴν πίστιν μου; “you did not renounce faith in me”).<sup>47</sup> The association of the idea of Christian martyrdom with Satan’s throne is of particular rhetorical force, since it conveys the fundamental theological presupposition of the book that “light and darkness cannot dwell together in peaceful coexistence.”<sup>48</sup> I suggest that the antithetical relationship between God’s allies and his adversaries is also indicated by the content of Christ’s knowledge in 2:13 which is twofold: he is aware of the place where the church must live and knows at the same time its faithful witness in spite of the conditions.

The idea of satanic hostility in 2:13 links the letter to Pergamon thematically to the other messages of the vision. Thus, in the message to Smyrna the primary opposing power to the Christian community is the synagogue, which is related to Satan (συναγωγή τοῦ σατανᾶ; 2:9),

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<sup>44</sup> The name Antipas is a diminutive form of the Greek Antipatros, a form which is not widely attested (Josephus, *Ant.* 14.1.3-4; 17.1.3). On the etymology of the name Antipas and the identity of the character in 2:13, see Gerard Mussies, “Antipas,” *NovT* 7 (1964), 242-44.

<sup>45</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (“Apocalyptic and Gnosis in the Book of Revelation and Paul,” *JBL* 92 [1973], 565-81[570 n. 29]) believes that Antipas died under “a lynch-law exercised by the citizens” rather than in a persecution. In contrast, Yarbro Collins (“Satan’s Throne,” 36) argues that the term μάρτυς implies a public verbal testimony under interrogation by the Roman governor.

<sup>46</sup> While 2:13 mentions only Antipas as a martyr, the possibility is not excluded that as at Smyrna many more might die (2:10). Eusebius later named Carpus, Papyrus, and Agathonice as martyrs in Pergamon (*HE* 4.15.48).

<sup>47</sup> Aune, *Revelation* 1-5, 184.

<sup>48</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 247.

similarly to the throne in 2:13.<sup>49</sup> In the same message Satan is also portrayed as active in the imprisoning of the believers (2:10). The synagogue of Satan reappears in the message to Philadelphia (3:9), while in the message to Thyatira there is a reference to the “depths of Satan” (βαθέα τοῦ σατανᾶ; 2:24). Clearly, the tense relationship of the churches in Asia Minor with their local environment, and also their internal divisions, are viewed in terms of cosmic conflict. I suggest that the tension between the divine and the diabolic powers is symbolically stressed by a reference to two opposing thrones in the Seven Messages (2:13; 3:21) in which the throne of Satan functions as the “adversarial mirror-image of the throne of God.”<sup>50</sup> Aune’s insight provides further support for our view: he calls our attention to the fact that even the employment of the genre of the messages as a “royal or imperial edict” is to be viewed in terms of John’s “strategy to emphasize the fact that Christ is the true king in contrast to the Roman emperor who is both a clone and tool of Satan.”<sup>51</sup>

I turn now to the examination of the other adversarial throne in Revelation, the throne of the beast. Since this throne is more at the center of attention in the drama of Revelation than Satan’s throne in 2:13, it will be given more detailed attention.

## 2. Throne of the Beast (13:2; 16:10)

The throne of the beast (ὁ θρόνος τοῦ θηρίου) appears twice in Revelation. In 13:2 its origin is specified as the extension of the dragon’s authority, whereas 16:10 points to its fate without mentioning the dragon. Both references are undeveloped and they point metaphorically to the notion of satanic kingly rule. While the throne of the beast is not described, a detailed picture is provided of the activities of the throne’s occupant, who steps onto the stage of the book of Revelation as an

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<sup>49</sup> For the meaning of συναγωγή τοῦ σατανᾶ, see Mark R.J. Bredin, “The *Synagogue of Satan* Accusation in Revelation 2:9,” *BTB* 28 (1999), 160-64; Jan Lambrecht, “Synagogues of Satan (Rev. 2:9 and 3:9): Anti-Judaism in the Book of Revelation” in *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel*, eds. Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt and Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001), 279-92; Paul B. Duff, “The Synagogue of Satan: Crisis Mongering and the Apocalypse of John” in *The Reality of Apocalypse: Rhetoric and Politics in the Book of Revelation*, ed. David L. Barr (SBL SymS, 39; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 147-68.

<sup>50</sup> Yarbrow Collins, “Pergamon,” 166.

<sup>51</sup> David E. Aune, *Apocalypticism, Prophecy and Magic in Early Christianity: Collected Essays* (WUNT, 1999; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 232.

arrogant anti-Christ power acknowledging only the authority of his throne.

### 2.1. Contextual and Structural Considerations

The reference to the throne of the beast in 13:2 forms part of the larger literary context of 12:1–14:20. This material, known as the Cosmic Conflict vision, takes place at the heart of Revelation’s chiasm as “the central axis of the book and the core of its pictorial ‘argument.’”<sup>52</sup> The immediate literary context of 13:2 is the vision of 12:18–13:18, which forms a coherent textual unit. This section is closely related to 12:1-17, since it develops the theme of the dragon’s wrath set out in 12:17. Barr rightly notes that the war in 13:1-18 is the continuation of the dragon’s offensive which failed in its attempt to destroy the male child and the woman in ch. 12.<sup>53</sup> While Barr’s observation is basically correct, he fails to notice that the dragon’s defeat is threefold in this context. Namely, the overthrow in the heavenly conflict, including the casting down from the heaven (12:7-9), also needs to be included in the list of the dragon’s failures. In line with Barr’s reasoning, Prigent rightly concludes that “we can only interpret Rev. 13 correctly as the logical and coherent sequel to the preceding chapter,” the unfurling of the defeated dragon’s rage.<sup>54</sup>

The two large textual blocks of 12:1-17 and 13:1-18 are linked by the transitional verse of 12:18.<sup>55</sup> This text portrays the frustrated dragon as God’s antagonist, who positions himself on the seashore and calls forth the sea beast (13:1-10) and the land beast (13:11-18) as his two agents for the final conflict. While it has been argued that the dragon is essentially extraneous to the narrative in 13:1-18 and his appearance is

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<sup>52</sup> Boring, *Revelation*, 150.

<sup>53</sup> Barr, *Tales*, 125.

<sup>54</sup> Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 398.

<sup>55</sup> There is a disagreement concerning the place of 12:18 in the textual unit’s structure. It has been argued that the standing of the dragon on the sea shore is to be viewed as the concluding statement of 12:1-17 (e.g. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Revelation* [IVPNTCS, 20; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997], 154-55), but the great majority of the commentators interpret it as introductory to the following vision. The central issue of the debate is a text critical problem. While some MSS have *καὶ ἐστάθην* (“and I [John] stood”; 025 Oecumenius<sup>2053</sup> Andreas Byzantine), the variant *καὶ ἐστάθη* (“he stood”) has superior MSS support (e.g. p<sup>47x</sup> A C 1854 2344 2351). Probably the variant *ἐστάθην* is the result of accommodation to *καὶ εἶδον* in 13:1 (Josef Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes* [2 vols.; Münchener theologische Studien; München: Zink, 1956], II, 77).

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the result of redactional additions,<sup>56</sup> this suggestion has been convincingly refuted by Siew. He demonstrates that the dragon, who gives the throne to the beast in 13:2b, plays a significant role in the vision as a recipient of the worship directed to the beast. Therefore, his standing in 12:18 is of pivotal significance for the entire vision: “Even though the role of the dragon is not mentioned after v. 4, the whole of ch. 13 is coloured by the fact that it is the dragon standing on the seashore calling forth the beast from the sea and giving him all the authority necessary to enforce his will on an unwitting world.”<sup>57</sup>

Both beasts appear for the first time in the book in ch. 13. They are introduced in accordance with the identification–description literary technique of Revelation (13:1-2, 11), according which the new major figures appearing for the first time in the drama of Revelation are identified in terms of personal description before their functions and actions are specified. Since the beast’s throne occurs within this pattern, it can be concluded that the tendency in introducing major characters by including a reference to the throne motif continues as God’s (4:2), the Lamb’s (5:6), the the elders’ (4:4), the living creatures’ (4:6), the angelic hosts’ (5:11) and the great multitude’s (7:9) identity is also intimately tied to the throne.

The second reference to the throne of the beast (16:10) is located within the Seven Bowls cycle (16:1-21). The vision is introduced by a temple scene with a twofold focus: the preparation of the seven angels for the delivering of the bowl plagues and the celebration of the victorious saints (15:1-8). The entire section begins with a formula signalling a new textual unit: καὶ εἶδον ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστόν (“then I saw another great and wonderful sign in heaven”; 15:1). The phrase ἄλλο σημεῖον refers to the third such sign in Revelation—the first two appear in 12:1, 3. Wellhausen rightly concludes that this literary device connects 15:1–16:21 with the previous narrative and functions at the same time as the title or superscription for the entire textual unit.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> E.g. Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 357-58; David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16* (WBC, 52B; Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 735.

<sup>57</sup> Antoninus King Wai Siew, *The War Between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiasmic Reading of Revelation 11:1–14:5* (LNTS, 283; London: T. & T. Clark, 2005), 171 n. 126.

<sup>58</sup> Julius Wellhausen, *Analyse der Offenbarung Johannis* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1907), 25. This is noted also e.g. in Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 392; Farrer, *Revelation*, 169; Roloff, *Revelation*, 182.

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It has been widely demonstrated that the Seven Bowls cycle is literary and theologically modelled on the Egyptian plague narrative.<sup>59</sup> Prigent rightly observes that the theme of salvation modelled on the exodus motif “is the focal point around which everything revolves” in Rev. 16.<sup>60</sup> The content of each bowl plague is explained in a sequence. Müller observed a common pattern with five stereotypical features of the individual bowls: (1) the commissioning/empowering of the angels who bring the plagues; (2) the pouring out of the bowls; (3) the general effects introduced by the expression *καὶ ἐγένετο* (“and it happened”); (4) the effects on the earthly beings within the affected area; and (5) the negative response of people.<sup>61</sup> The commissioning/empowering of all the seven angels happens at once, before the bowl sequence (15:5-8), while the other four features appear in the description of the outpouring of the individual plagues. The pattern is not slavishly applied to each individual plague; however, for the purpose of our study it is significant to note that the description is the most complete in the fifth plague targeting the throne of the beast, with all the five features represented (16:10-11).

## 2.2. Background

It is generally accepted that John drew on at least two mythic sources in his portrayal of the two beasts of Rev. 13: the Leviathan–Behemoth traditions and the beasts rising from the sea in Dan. 7. While it is acknowledged that these sources are deployed in “eclectic and creative ways,”<sup>62</sup> there is a divergence of opinion concerning the extent of their individual influence in the composition. The two backgrounds mentioned will be discussed here, after which the question of the leading influence within John’s synthesis of the two traditions will be addressed.

Gunkel’s landmark work *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit*, published in 1895, provided the first in-depth study of the

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<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Hans P. Müller, “Die Plagen der Apokalypse: Eine formgeschichtliche Untersuchung,” *ZNW* 51 (1960), 268-78; Hans K. LaRondelle, “Contextual Approach to the Seven Last Plagues” in *Symposium on Revelation—Book 2*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (DARCOM, 7; Silver Springs, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 133-49.

<sup>60</sup> Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 455. The bowl septet is not an isolated example of the employment of the exodus tradition in Revelation. It has been demonstrated that the motif permeates the fabric of the entire book. For a typological interpretation of the exodus tradition in Revelation, see especially Jay Smith Casey, “Exodus Typology in the Book of Revelation” (PhD Dissertation; The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981).

<sup>61</sup> Müller, “Plagen,” 268-70.

<sup>62</sup> Steven J. Friesen, “Myth and Symbolic Resistance in Revelation 13,” *JBL* 123 (2004), 281-313(303-304).

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subject of the divine conflict with the dragon and the sea.<sup>63</sup> Since then, a considerable amount of literature has been written on the topic.<sup>64</sup> Gunkel's exegesis at the point of suggesting that the two beasts of Rev. 13 reflect the mythic tradition concerning Leviathan and Behemoth won widespread support.<sup>65</sup> He argues that these two demonic monsters in Job 40-41 are two of God's most powerful mythological creatures,<sup>66</sup> which were defeated in battle by God during primordial time.<sup>67</sup> Whereas the beasts continue to exist in a subdued condition in spite of their defeat in the *Urzeit*,<sup>68</sup> the battle will also have an *Endzeit* manifestation because of the sea beast's persistent attitude of defiance.<sup>69</sup> Until then the monsters "are constantly held in check" by God and they "may still make attacks on God's creation from time to time. The ongoing battle between God and these beasts is thus a mythological expression of the constant tension between creation and chaos."<sup>70</sup> Thus, in addition to the protological and eschatological aspects a historical dimension of the conflict is also implied.

The Leviathan and Behemoth monsters appear together in three texts of early Jewish literature: *4Ezra* 6:47-52, *2Bar.* 29:4 and *1En.* 60:7-9, 24. Whitney demonstrates that these texts, in spite of individual peculiarities related to the context, represent a single "combat-banquet" tradition.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen. 1 und Ap. 12* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895).

<sup>64</sup> See the following exemplary treatments of the topic: Mary K. Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster: A Study in Biblical Imagery* (Leiden: Brill, 1973); John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 35; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); William K. Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts: Leviathan and Behemoth in Second Temple and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (HSM, 63; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006).

<sup>65</sup> Gunkel's interpretation is rejected in E. Bernard Allo, *Saint Jean L'Apocalypse* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1921), 223; Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 435-36.

<sup>66</sup> While the most developed appearance of the Leviathan-Behemoth imagery is in Job 40-41, see also Ps. 74:13-14; 89:10; Isa. 27:1; 51:9; Ezek. 32:2.

<sup>67</sup> Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, 41-69. On different interpretive options concerning the nature and identity of the two monsters, see Day, *God's Conflict*, 62-87.

<sup>68</sup> Job 7:12; Amos 9:3; cf. *Apoc. Abr.* 10; 21; *Midr. Rab. Lev.* 13:3; *B. Bat.* 74b.

<sup>69</sup> *2Bar.* 29:4; *1En.* 60:7-11; *4Ezra* 6:49-52.

<sup>70</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation* (HDR, 9; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 164.

<sup>71</sup> Whitney notes that Leviathan appears alone in *Apoc. Abr.* 10:10; 21:4 and *Lad. Jac.* 6:13 (long recension, 6:3) in a cosmological role (called "the 'axis mundi' tradition"). For an in-depth treatment of the "combat-banquet" and the "axis mundi" tradition, and also the Leviathan and Behemoth materials in Rabbinic Judaism, see *Two Strange Beasts*, 31-153.

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The expression incorporates two similarities within the same mythic pattern. First, each of the texts alludes to a primordial event in which God separated the monsters confining them in their respective spheres (Leviathan to the water and Behemoth to the land).<sup>72</sup> Second, in each text also is implied an eschatological dimension according to which the two monsters will appear as food for the righteous.<sup>73</sup>

John uses the mythic Leviathan–Behemoth pattern in Revelation with significant variations. Not only are the names avoided allowing more flexibility in the deployment of the pattern, but the tradition is applied to the eschatological opponents without including the banquet theme.<sup>74</sup> The divergence from the earlier pattern led Gunkel to the conclusion that in Revelation “the ancient combat myth has been transformed from a primordial myth into an eschatological myth.”<sup>75</sup> His suggestion has been developed further by Aune, who notes the theological significance of the two monsters’ emergence in 13:1, 11 from the realms to which they were appointed (13:1, 11). Namely, in the act of rising an eschatological action is indicated which “signifies the emergence of chaos from order, i.e., the irruption of chaotic forces as the dying gasp of the old, worn-out creative order just before a period of restoration and renewal.”<sup>76</sup>

Revelation’s beast arising from the sea (ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης θηρίου ἀναβαῖνον; 13:1) shows close affinity with the four beasts of Dan. 7, which ascend from the same realm (τέσσαρα θηρία ἀνέβαινον ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης; 7:3).<sup>77</sup> The formative influence of the Danielic source, which is particularly strong in the identification–description of the beast in Rev.

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<sup>72</sup> The association of the two beasts with the sea and the land was widespread in the apocalyptic works (*IEn.* 60:9; *4Ezra* 6:49-52; *2Bar.* 29:4) and was also confirmed in Rabbinic literature (*B. Bat.* 75b; *Pes.* 188b). The reference to the gender of Leviathan as a female and Behemoth as a male is unique in *IEn.* 60:7-8.

<sup>73</sup> *IEn.* 60:24; *4Ezra* 6:52; *2Bar.* 29:4; *B. Bat.* 75a.

<sup>74</sup> The banquet theme is represented in Rev. 19:17-18 within a judgment oracle, where it is turned into a call to dine on carrion.

<sup>75</sup> Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, 367.

<sup>76</sup> Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 728.

<sup>77</sup> Yarbro Collins (*Combat Myth*, 162) notes: “The effect of depicting the four kingdoms as beasts of watery chaos in Daniel 7 is to characterize them as rebellious and as manifestations of chaos rather than order.” Against this background the sea as a symbol of chaos and rebellion from where the beast of Rev. 13:1-10 arises, represents “the climax of human rebellion against God” (Siew, *War*, 252).



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13:1-2, has been demonstrated by Beale.<sup>78</sup> Significantly, this beast is portrayed as taking on the combined characteristics of all four Danielic beasts, but in reverse order. It has even been widely argued that the seven heads of the hybrid sea monster is the sum of the heads of the four beasts from Dan. 7.<sup>79</sup> D’Aragon notes: “The Seer has blended into one image various characteristics of the four beasts in Dan. 7; the result is a monstrous creature that defies the imagination.”<sup>80</sup> The combination “highlights the extreme fierceness” of the monster,<sup>81</sup> symbolizing “all that is evil . . . all that have gone before it” regarding the opposition to God and his people.<sup>82</sup>

The relation of the Leviathan–Behemoth myth and the Danielic four beasts within John’s synthesized imagery has received different interpretations. The dividing issue has been the question of primacy.<sup>83</sup> The formative influence of the Leviathan–Behemoth myth cannot be denied. Against this background Revelation’s sea beast is rightly interpreted by Yarbro Collins as “the chaos monster, temporarily defeated by the creator god, reviving and returning from his place of imprisonment to renew his revolt.”<sup>84</sup> However, Beale is also correct in his observation that the argument of Yarbro Collin must be “tempered” in light of Caird’s view, which points out that “no Jewish or Christian writer could use the lens of this myth except as it had been reground by Daniel.”<sup>85</sup> I also hold that in addition to these two major backgrounds the

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<sup>78</sup> For a detailed comparison, see 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), 229-48.

<sup>79</sup> E.g. Farrer, *Revelation*, 152; Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 403. This view has been challenged by Mounce (*Revelation*, 250), who views in the seven heads a reference to the idea of completeness: “A seven-headed beast would be an appropriate symbol for the ultimate enemy of the believing church.”

<sup>80</sup> Jean-Louis D’Aragon, “The Apocalypse” in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, eds. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy (2 vols.; Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), II, 467-93(483).

<sup>81</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 685.

<sup>82</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 492.

<sup>83</sup> The primacy of the Leviathan–Behemoth myth has been argued in e.g. Yarbro Collins, *Apocalypse*, 91; Barr, *Tales*, 108; Friesen, “Myth,” 304f. On the other hand the primacy of the Danielic source is defended in e.g. Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 230-31; Roloff, *Revelation*, 154-55; Christopher Rowland, *Revelation* (Epworth Commentaries; London: Epworth, 1993), 112.

<sup>84</sup> Yarbro Collins, *Apocalypse*, 91.

<sup>85</sup> George B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980), 229; Beale, *Revelation*, 683.

influence of the eschatological antagonist myth should also be given some attention. This background as related to the beast's function deserves a detailed investigation, which is beyond the scope of this study.<sup>86</sup>

### 2.3. Interpretation

#### 2.3.1. Enthronement of the Beast (13:2)

There is a close relation between two major figures of Rev. 12 and 13: the dragon and the sea beast. The physical appearance of these characters coincide: both have ten horns, seven heads and wear diadems (12:3; 13:1).<sup>87</sup> While these remarkable similarities imply a shared pedigree, a difference can be observed concerning the location of their diadems, since they are placed on the heads of the dragon and on the horns of the beast. It seems that this divergence is not of specific significance. However, the joining of the diadems and horns in regard to the beast—both are symbols of power—might possibly imply intensity of influence. The physical similarity highlights the beast's function as the dragon's agent, his *alter ego* in this world.<sup>88</sup> As noted by Thompson, the point of the correspondence is not the appearance, but the action.<sup>89</sup>

While significant attention is given to the physical characteristics of the beast in 13:1-2, the figure's description climaxes in the reference to its enthronement as the dragon's deputy (v. 2). In harmony with the

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<sup>86</sup> The significance of the eschatological antagonist myth for Rev. 13 has been pointed out in D. Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im Späthellenistischen Zeitalter* (HNT, 21; Tübingen: Mohr, 1926), 254-56. For the eschatological antagonist tradition generally, see Wilhelm Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des Neuen Testaments und der Alten Kirche: ein Beitrag zur Auslegung der Apokalypse* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895); Gregory C. Jenks, *The Origins and Early Development of the Antichrist Myth* (BZNW, 59; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1990); G.W. Lorein, *The Antichrist Theme in the Intertestamental Period* (JSPSup, 44; London: T. & T. Clark, 2003).

<sup>87</sup> Sophie Laws (*In the Light of the Lamb: Imagery, Parody, and Theology in the Apocalypse of John* [GNS, 31; Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1988] 38 n. 1) notes that the color of the two figures is also parallel. While the dragon's color is specified in its initial description (12:3), the identification of the color of the beast happens only later (17:3). Although the words are different in Greek, πυρρός ("fiery red") for dragon and κόκκινος ("scarlet") for the beast, Laws holds that "this is not a point to be pressed." It seems that the blood-red have been widely regarded as a colour appropriate for dangerous mythological dragons (Homer, *Il.* 2.308; Vergilius, *Aen.* 2.207).

<sup>88</sup> James L. Resseguie, *Revelation Unsealed: A Narrative Critical Approach to John's Apocalypse* (BibIS, 32; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 123.

<sup>89</sup> Leonard L. Thompson, *Revelation* (ANTC; Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998), 137.

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book's identification–description pattern the beast is in his first appearance introduced in reference to the throne motif. The direct transfer of the Satanic authority (ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ δράκων; “the dragon gave him”) is emphasized by a triple authorization formula τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην (“his power, his throne and great authority”). The order of the authorization terms, I suggest, is of significance here. Namely, “power” and “authority” appear as synonymous concepts which sandwich the reference to the throne of the beast, the symbolic representation of these concepts. The authorization of the beast reveals that in spite of the dragon's ejection from heaven, his influence has not disappeared completely. Retaining the status of “the prince of this world” (Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) he is still in a position to confer his power and, as is evident in Rev. 13, he is “still actively executing his schemes” through his agents.<sup>90</sup> Thus, the career of the beast needs to be viewed in terms of the dragon's reign. Nevertheless, the repeated divine passive ἐδόθη in ch. 13 implies the underlying assumption of divine sovereignty and stresses that the ultimate power, throne and authority is derived from God.<sup>91</sup>

It has been persuasively argued that in spite of the beast's enthronement in 13:2 the dragon is actually the focus of attention in this text. As Siew notes, this is indicated on one hand by the repetition of αὐτοῦ in the transfer formula, which calls attention to the dragon's “power” and “throne” (ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ δράκων τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ), and on the other hand by worshiping the dragon alongside his authorized representative (13:4).<sup>92</sup> However, the connection between 13:2 and 13:4 is more profound, since the worship account of 13:4 refers back to the transfer with a triple verbal parallel (δίδωμι, ἐξουσία and θηρίου). This points to the dragon's throne transfer as the basic reason behind the universal worship of him and his deputy. In this way the worship of the satanic ally, repeatedly emphasized throughout

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<sup>90</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 687. There is a parallel between the enthronement of the beast in 13:2 and Satan's offering of authority to Jesus in his wilderness temptation. While the only shared words between 13:2 and Lk. 4:6 are δίδωμι and ἐξουσία, the idea of the transfer of authority links the two texts thematically (cf. 2Thess. 2:9; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.25.1). In the synoptic parallel in Mt. 4:9-10 the emphasis is rather on προσκυνέω, which appears as the key word in Rev. 13.

<sup>91</sup> Rev. 13:5(2x), 7(2x), 14, 15. The idea that God is to be viewed as giving authorization for doing things is repeatedly present in Revelation (6:2, 4[2x], 8, 11; 7:2; 8:2, 3; 9:1, 3, 5; 11:1, 2; 12:14; 16:8; 19:8; 20:4).

<sup>92</sup> Siew, *War*, 171 n. 126.

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the vision,<sup>93</sup> is directly linked to the throne motif and it is contrasted to the universal call to worship God in 14:7.<sup>94</sup> Thus, I suggest that the issue of the legitimate possession of the ruling authority is brought to the center of attention, further indicated by the contrast between the rival thrones of 13:2 and 14:3.

The significance of the beast's enthronement becomes more evident against the broad theological pattern followed in Rev. 13. Beale calls our attention to three elements within the schema: (1) the stepping forward of an agent; (2) his authorization; and (3) the effect of giving over power. In the case of the sea beast the stepping forward occurs through emerging from the sea (13:1), the authorization in his enthronement (13:2) and the effect of giving over power is manifested in the universal worship (13:2-4, 8), the power to blaspheme (13:5-6) and the persecution of the saints (13:7). The pattern is modelled on Dan. 7:13-14 in which the Son of Man steps forward to God's throne, receives dominion and, as a result of empowerment, all people, nations and tongues serve him.<sup>95</sup>

It has been appropriately noticed by Laws that a two-dimensional apocalyptic picture is produced of the beast in Rev. 13, since this character is related not only to the dragon, but also to Christ.<sup>96</sup> It is widely acknowledged that the entire scene is laid out as a distorted counterpart to the Lamb and his heavenly enthronement in ch. 5 through the technique of parody. While some scholars stop at this consideration,<sup>97</sup> others go a step further viewing in the activities of the dragon-sea beast-land beast coalition the emergence of a counterfeit trinity.<sup>98</sup> Since

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<sup>93</sup> Rev. 13:4 (2x), 8, 12, 15; 14:9, 11.

<sup>94</sup> On the theological significance of προσκυνέω as the key word of the vision, see Jon Paulien, *What the Bible Says about the End-Time* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1994), 122-23.

<sup>95</sup> Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 244-48. Beale's pattern differs from the approach of Hans P. Müller ("Formgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Apc Joh. 4-5" [PhD Dissertation; Heidelberg University, 1962], 108-11), who argues for only two components as he fuses the Hervortreten of the agent and the Bevollmächtigung (Übergabeakt) into a single element.

<sup>96</sup> Laws, *In the Light*, 40.

<sup>97</sup> The proponents of this view often note that at the same time the dragon functions as the antithesis of God. See e.g. Caird, *Revelation*, 164; Ford, *Revelation*, 219; Roloff, *Revelation*, 155; Yarbrow Collins, *Apocalypse*, 91; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World* (Proclamation Commentaries; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991), 83; Thompson, *Revelation*, 137-40; deSilva, "Strategic Arousal," 14f.

<sup>98</sup> Most often the dragon is viewed as a counterfeit of the Father, the sea beast of Christ and the land beast of the Holy Spirit. See e.g. Otto Böcher, *Kirche in Zeit und Endzeit: Aufsätze zur Offenbarung des Johannes* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983), 90-96; Boring, *Revelation*, 154-57; John Sweet, *Revelation* (TPI New Testament

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the answer to the question of the exegetical validity of the latter suggestion does not affect our research significantly, the focus in this investigation will remain on the parody of the Lamb and his enthronement that directly involves the throne motif.

The parody as a rhetorical technique is defined by *The Oxford English Dictionary* as “an imitation of a work more or less closely modelled on the original, but so turned as to produce a ridiculous effect.”<sup>99</sup> The original model in our case is the Lamb from Rev. 5, while the beast in ch. 13 is portrayed in terms of his “parodic mirror image.”<sup>100</sup> The parody extends to the concept of enthronement which is clearly central to ch. 5 in regard to the Lamb, but also is of major significance for the beast in ch. 13, because his career and the universal response to it are portrayed in terms of the results of the authorization. Before discussing the parody of the Lamb two observations need to be made: (1) though the focus of the Lamb’s counterfeit is in Rev. 13, the parody is not confined to this chapter; (2) parody as a rhetorical technique is of major significance for the rhetorical strategy of Revelation and it is not limited to the counterfeit of the Lamb.<sup>101</sup>

I suggest five basic aspects of the Lamb–beast parody which will be set out here and then will be briefly discussed: (1) the transfer of authority; (2) the effect of the enthronement; (3) the career of the enthroned; (4) the character and the claims of the enthroned; and (5) the universal response to the rule. First, the transfer of authority (δύναμις,

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Commentaries; London: SCM; Philadelphia, PA: Trinity Press, 1990), 206-19; Vern S. Poythress, “Counterfeiting in the Book of Revelation as a Perspective on Non-Christian Culture,” *JETS* 40 (1997), 411-18(411); Robert W. Wall, *Revelation* (NIBCNT, 18; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 167; LaRondelle, *End-Time Prophecies*, 291-92; Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 369-71. For a critique of this view, see Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 415 n. 2. Austin Farrer’s (*A Rebirth of Images: The Making of St. John’s Apocalypse* [Westminster: Dacre, 1949], 284-98) interpretation differs in the identification of the third member of the demonic triad, whom he sets in contrasting parallel with the Two Witnesses. Similarly, Richard Bauckham (*The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993], 434) holds: “The dragon relates to the first beast as God the Father to Christ. The second beast relates to the first beast not as the Holy Spirit to Christ, but as the Christian prophets, inspired by the Spirit, relate to Christ.”

<sup>99</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961).

<sup>100</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *Vision of a Just World*, 83.

<sup>101</sup> For a wider treatment of parody in Revelation, see e.g. Harry O. Maier, *Apocalypse Recalled: The Book of Revelation after Christendom* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002), 164-97; William G. Campbell, “La Parodie dans l’Apocalypse: Une Investigation Littéraire et Théologique des Thématiques Contrastées qui se Concentrent dans l’Apocalypse” (PhD Dissertation; Queen’s University of Belfast, 2002); Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 368-75.

θρόνος, ἔξουσία; 13:2) from the dragon to the beast parodies the Lamb's receiving of the sealed scroll and sitting on the throne (5:6-7, 12; cf. Jn 5:23). Second, the effect of the beast's enthronement results in a universal rule over every tribe, people, language and nation (ἐπὶ πᾶσαν φυλὴν καὶ λαὸν καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ ἔθνος; 13:7), which parodies the enthroned Lamb's authority over human beings from the same groups as suggested by the verbal parallels (ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς καὶ γλώσσης καὶ λαοῦ καὶ ἔθνους; 5:9). Third, the beast's career is the parody of the Lamb's redemptive ministry in three respects: 1260 days of blasphemy and persecution (13:5-7) contra the similar period of ministry of redemption and blessing (5:9-10); enforcing the mark of the beast (13:18) contra the sealing of God's people (7:1-8; 14:1); the mortal wound and healing of the beast (ἐσφαγμένην; 13:3) contra the slaughter and resurrection of the Lamb (5:6[ἐσφαγμένοι], 12[ἐσφαγμένον], 9[ἐσφάγης]). Fourth, the character and claims of the beast parodies that of the enthroned Lamb: the similarity between the dragon and the beast (13:1) contra Jesus as the image of Father (Jn 14:9); the blasphemous name of the beast (13:1) contra the glorious names of Christ (e.g. 19:11, 13, 16); the beast's false claim to sovereignty symbolized by ten diadems (δέκα διαδήματα; 13:2) contra the true sovereignty of the King of Kings, who wears many diadems (19:12, 16; διαδήματα πολλά). Fifth, the universal response to the beast's reign parodies the homage to the Lamb's enthronement in several respect: the universal allegiance of all nations (ἔξουσία ἐπὶ πᾶσαν φυλὴν καὶ λαὸν καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ ἔθνος; 13:7) contra Christ's universal lordship (ὄχλος πολὺς, ὃν ἀριθμῆσαι αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο, ἐκ παντὸς ἔθνους καὶ φυλῶν καὶ λαῶν καὶ γλωσσῶν; 7:9-10); the dragon and the beast as the recipients of worship together (13:4) contra worshipping the Father and the Son at the same time (5:13); the two questions raised in the hymn of praise, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" (13:4) contra the well-known Old Testament rhetorical question "Who is a God like You?"<sup>102</sup> together with the parody of the name Michael ("Who is like God?"; 12:7).<sup>103</sup>

These parallels suggest that Revelation is permeated with a parody of power and might. It has been rightly noted by Maier that "the slain Lamb

<sup>102</sup> E.g., Exod. 15:11; Ps. 89:8; Isa. 44:7; Mic. 7:19.

<sup>103</sup> Michael "the great prince" or "archangel" is mentioned in Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:7. For the Michael tradition in Jewish literature, see Darrell D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity* (WUNT 2/109; Tübingen: Mohr, 1999), 15-121.

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is a kind of theological coefficient that qualifies and “trans-contextualizes” all that follows, from chapter 5 onward.”<sup>104</sup> The throne motif is of central significance in this parody. Since the throne-room vision introduces the veritable sovereignties in the universe from a heavenly point of view, it is logical to consider the reign of the beast in ch. 13 as the crucial manifestation of the abuse of authority in the book. The parody has an unmasking effect in interpreting the true reality about God, the Lamb and their adversaries. Roloff rightly notes that the demonic power and the society under its control is disclosed as “nothing unique, only a poor copy, even when it itself is not conscious of it! It usurped power, born out of the negation of God and his claim to dominion, and therefore is capable of nothing constructive, but only of negation.”<sup>105</sup> The throne motif centralizes the conflict between the true and the quasi-sovereignties in Revelation and points to the question of the legitimacy of rulership as the major issue in the cosmic conflict.

2.3.2. Dethronement of the Beast (16:10)

The pouring out of the seven bowls in Rev. 16 has been compared to a seven-stage successive bombing of the earth in which every aspect of it is destroyed until evil’s dominion is completely overthrown.<sup>106</sup> The object of our interest is the fifth bowl plague which targets the beast’s throne (16:10-11). It seems that this plague occupies a specific place within the sequence. It is preceded by four bowls that are poured over the major parts of the earth (land, sea, rivers and springs of water, air) symbolizing jointly the whole created world.<sup>107</sup> At the same time, the last two plagues focus on Armageddon and reflect in addition to the exodus tradition influence of other biblical and apocalyptic sources.<sup>108</sup> The fifth

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<sup>104</sup> Maier, *Apocalypse Recalled*, 185.

<sup>105</sup> Roloff, *Revelation*, 155. He aptly notes concerning the contemporary application of this principle: “Every power trusting only itself that does not inquire into God’s claim on his world, and every society that is based on such autonomous power, becomes without fail a caricature of the authority of Jesus Christ and carries within it the traits of the antichrist.”

<sup>106</sup> Barr, *Tales*, 131.

<sup>107</sup> Yarbrow Collins, *Apocalypse*, 113.

<sup>108</sup> The two most prominent additional motifs in the sixth and the seventh bowl plagues are the motif of the fall of Babylon and the motif of divine warfare. Casey (“Exodus Typology,” 168) rightly notes that they serve to “embellish” the exodus plague motif, the basis of the whole vision. Thus, we can rightly speak of the “fusion” of motifs here, as noted by Hans K. LaRondelle (“Armageddon: Sixth and Seventh Plague” in *Symposium on Revelation—Book 2*, 373-90[381]).

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plague seems to be interlocked between these two blocks striking at “the heart of the problem,” the beast’s throne.<sup>109</sup>

The meaning of the beast’s throne is closely related to the concept of βασιλεία in the context of the fifth bowl. The two terms appear in 16:10 as almost juxtaposed: the “throne” is the targeted realm, while the darkness as the effect of the plague covers the “kingdom” of the beast. However, there is a slight difference between the two concepts. The beast’s throne represents a place from which authority and power are exercised; therefore, it points metaphorically to the center of his government. On the other hand, the beast’s kingdom designates the realm of his reign including all his followers and worshipers.<sup>110</sup>

Numerous views have been advanced concerning the primary background of the darkness bowl plague. Ford suggests that we should look beyond the Egyptian plagues considering the whole exodus event. According to her understanding, the darkness of 16:10-11 is to be viewed as the antithesis of the pillar of fire by night (Exod. 13:21-22).<sup>111</sup> While this idea fits into her interpretation of the bowl sequence as an irony directed to a Jewish audience, it ignores the parallel with the darkness plague in the exodus tradition (Exod. 10:21-29). On the other hand, Charles holds, following Spitta, that the darkness over the beast’s kingdom is the result of the smoke from the pit from which demonic locusts are issued (9:1-2).<sup>112</sup> This view also cannot be taken seriously, since it is based on a fallacious methodology of interpreting the fifth bowl primarily against the parallel trumpet plague. It is most natural to view the model for the darkness bowl of Rev. 16:10-11 in the darkness plague of the exodus (Exod. 10:21-29).

Significantly, in both contexts the center of a kingdom is targeted. Whereas in 16:10 the beast’s throne is struck, the exodus plague of darkness was similarly an attack against the Pharaoh’s authority. Davies observes that the Pharaoh was considered an incarnation of the sun god Ra, therefore an absence of light had a humiliating effect that struck at

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<sup>109</sup> Jacques Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse Through Hebrew Eyes* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002), 149.

<sup>110</sup> Krodel, *Revelation*, 284.

<sup>111</sup> J. Massyngberde Ford, “The Structure and Meaning of Revelation 16,” *Exp Tim* 98 (1987), 327-31.

<sup>112</sup> Charles, *Revelation*, II, 44-45; cf. Friedrich Spitta, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (Halle: Waisenhaus, 1889), 171. For a critique of this hypothesis, see e.g. Mounce, *Revelation*, 297; Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 468-69.



the very heart of Egyptian religion.<sup>113</sup> Similarly, the darkness plague in Revelation affects the ruling ability of the beast and poses a fundamental challenge to the authority of his regime, which claims sovereignty.

The crisis of the beast's empire is additionally called to the attention by the reaction of the people who are part of his kingdom to the darkness plague. It is not immediately clear why the darkness inflicts such an intensive pain that they "gnawed their tongues in anguish" (16:11). Swete argues that the pain is the result of the previous plagues, particularly the fourth bowl of the scorching sun (16:8-9).<sup>114</sup> However, a citation from a Midrash on the exodus explains more appropriately the author's intention, as has been widely recognized.<sup>115</sup> The Egyptian darkness is interpreted in Wis. 17:2 as symbolizing spiritual separation from the true God, while in Wis.17:21 it designates the eternal darkness of the hell that awaited the Egyptians (cf. *Midr. Rab. Exod. 14:2*).<sup>116</sup> According to this source the climax of the spiritual terror was that the Egyptian's contemplation of their own wretchedness became "more burdensome than the darkness" itself (17:21). Against this background the darkness-strike of the fifth bowl can be interpreted as internal anarchy within the beast's empire, "the total eclipse of the monster's imperial power,"<sup>117</sup> which indicates a dethronement.

The bowl plague of Rev. 16:10 is the first judgment in Revelation which directly attacks the power of the beast.<sup>118</sup> While the victory over the beast and his mark has been already stated in the book (14:9-11; 15:2), only in ch. 16 begins the reversal of the beast's career through the exposure of his rule "for what it is, a domain of delusion and

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<sup>113</sup> John J. Davies, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1986), 133-36.

<sup>114</sup> Swete, *Apocalypse*, 204.

<sup>115</sup> See e.g. Ford, *Revelation*, 272; Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 469; Osborne, *Revelation*, 588.

<sup>116</sup> Edmondo F. Lupieri (*A Commentary on the Apocalypse of John* [trans. Maria P. Johnson and Adam Kamesar; Italian Texts & Studies on Religion & Society; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006], 240) arrives at a similar conclusion on the meaning of darkness in 16:10, but on the basis of the parallel with the teaching of Jesus on the "outer darkness," where "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30). The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" without darkness occurs also in Mt. 13:42, 50; 24:51; Lk. 13:28. For the motif of interruption of patterns of cosmic light sources in Old Testament and Jewish literature, see Beale, *Revelation*, 483-85.

<sup>117</sup> Caird, *Revelation*, 204.

<sup>118</sup> Bauckham, "Revelation," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, eds. John Barton and John Muddiman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1287-1306(1299).

confusion.”<sup>119</sup> With the darkness-strike on the throne of the beast the sense of wondering is replaced by torment (13:3-4; 16:11). More significantly, this crisis signals the beginning of the official collapse of the diabolic empire,<sup>120</sup> but it is only in ch. 20 that Satan as “the deepest root of the problem”<sup>121</sup> is finally eliminated.

### 3. Conclusion

Since Revelation as an apocalyptic work is the book of opposition, it is not surprising to discover that besides the positive thrones of God, the Lamb and their allies two adverse thrones are also represented. The throne of Satan appears once in the epistolary part of the book (2:13), while the throne of the beast appears in two contexts in the visionary section (13:2; 16:10). While these thrones cannot be taken as identical, they are closely linked jointly making the sub-motif of the thrones of God’s adversaries in Revelation. Several conclusions emerge with regard to both thrones that will be set out here.

The question of the identity of the throne of Satan (ὁ θρόνος τοῦ σατανᾶ) has attracted much scholarly attention. It has been argued in this article that the religious and the political aspects of Roman imperial power are merged in this symbol. Thus, Satan’s throne designates the presence of the imperial power in the city of Pergamon with the imperial cults as the primary expression of its propaganda. More significantly for our purpose, I have suggested that Satan’s throne is contrasted in the context of the Seven Messages with the only other θρόνος text in which the throne occupation of God, the Lamb and their allies is stated (3:21). Significantly, these characters, or rather their thrones, form the other three sub-motifs discussed in the previous three articles in our series on thrones in Revelation. The contrast reveals that the throne of Satan is set up in opposition to the authority of the divine powers and their allies

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<sup>119</sup> Dennis E. Johnson, *Triumph of the Lamb: A Commentary on Revelation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2001), 230.

<sup>120</sup> Jon Paulien, *Armageddon at the Door* (Hagerstown, MD: Autumn House Publishing, 2008), 95. The collapse of the beast’s empire receives a detailed discussion in 17:1–19:10. This section functions as a clarifying elaboration of the last two plagues of 16:12-21 called the “Babylon Appendix” by Yarbrow Collins (*Combat Myth*, 32) or “appended interlude to the bowl septet” by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (*The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment* [Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985], 172).

<sup>121</sup> Frederick J. Murphy, *Fallen is Babylon: The Revelation to John* (The New Testament in Context; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 340.

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bringing into focus the theme of conflict over the issue of legitimate authority which is central to the visionary part of the book.

The throne of the beast (ὁ θρόνος τοῦ θηρίου) appears in two contexts that, I suggested, are fundamentally connected. The occupant of this throne, the beast emerging from the sea, is depicted in terms of the counterfeit of the Lamb. While numerous aspects of the Lamb's identity and function are counterfeited, for our interest the parodying of his enthronement in 13:2 is particularly significant. As the Lamb is introduced in reference to the throne and his ministry is depicted throughout Revelation against the authority he receives, similarly the enthronement of the beast by the dragon appears as a major aspect of his introduction, which defines his career. Not only the beginning, but also the fall of the beast's kingdom is portrayed by employing the throne motif. The darkness plague of 16:10 hits the beast's throne, the center of his ruling authority, and effects a major crisis from which no recovery is envisaged. Thus, the plague of darkness is to be understood in terms of the dethronement of this quasi-sovereignty. It can be concluded that just as the Lamb's ministry is framed by the throne motif (Rev. 5 and 22:1-5), the beast's career is also (13:2; 16:10). However, in the Lamb's case the enthronement is matched with the affirmation of his eternal reign, whereas in the career of the beast an enthronement–dethronement pattern can be observed.

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