

THE ROLE OF MEMORY IN THE MAKING OF THE APOCALYPSE

PAUL GAECHTER, S.J.

Innsbruck, Austria

If due exception is made of the divinely inspired character of the Apocalypse, nobody, I think, can reasonably object to applying to it the ordinary rules of literary criticism. Every intelligent reader of that book will ask himself what its literary texture is, seeing in it at the same time the double face of unity and of confusion. He invariably comes under the spell of its oneness and has the impression of reading the work of a master-mind, and simultaneously stumbles over many parts, large and small, which do not seem to fit together, but form, as it were, a jumble of disjointed pieces.

W. Bousset is of the opinion "dass die Apokalypse als eine durchaus einheitliche Schrift nicht zu begreifen ist,"¹ but holds that "der durchschlagende Grund gegen jede Quellentheorie die durchaus gleichmässige Haltung in der Sprache und dem Stil des ganzen Buches ist."² He sees "manche Sprünge und Risse in der Komposition des Apokalyptikers," yet "kein Werk der jüdischen Apokalyptik ist so straff und kunstvoll komponiert, in keinem hat der Verfasser des Ganzen den eingearbeiteten Fragmenten und dem übernommenen Material eine so einheitliche Färbung und Tendenz zu geben, wie in diesem Buch."³ Also E. Lohmeyer attests to the double feature of the book: "Keine Schrift des N.T. zeigt eine scheinbar so wirre und verwirrende Fülle von Zügen und Bildern wie die Apc Jo, keine aber auch eine so fest in sich geschlossene und planvoll gegliederte Einheit wie sie."⁴ Even R. H. Charles, to whom we owe a most penetrating commentary on the language, style and sources of the Apocalypse, comes to a similar conclusion: "When once the interpolations of John's editor, which amount to little more than twenty-two verses, are removed, and the dislocations of the text are

¹ W. Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis (Krit.-exeg. Kommentar über das N. T., begründet von H. A. W. Meyer, 16. Abt., 6. ed., 1906)*, p. 122.

² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁴ E. Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes (Handbuch zum N. T., hg. v. H. Lietzmann, 16, 1926)*, p. 181.

set right, most of the difficulties of the text disappear," and we notice "how thought and action steadily advance step by step from its beginning till they reach their consummation and culminate at its close."⁵

The impression, therefore, of oneness and confusion in the Apocalypse is general, although on a closer inspection of the text and its commentaries the difficulties of finding the unity of composition are considerably greater than would appear from those statements. Apart from the seven letters (cc. 2-3), the Apocalypse consists of two quite different parts (roughly chapters 4-11 and 12-22) with different purposes.⁶ Seeing that Charles, who otherwise is so careful in weighing the evidence, cuts out for the sake of oneness, as he understands it, the first four of the seven trumpets (8:7-12) as "not original, but a subsequent addition,"⁷ and two angels of the closed group of three angels—Son of Man—three angels (14:15-17),⁸ it seems dangerous to stress the unity of the Apocalypse and take it as a lead for literary criticism and interpretation. Before this can be done one should first prove that that unity is really the author's and not the commentator's. And this is an impossible task.

On the other hand, the critics have wrought havoc with the book by making it a mere patchwork of sundry materials and shreds of sources, almost overlooking what its author has made of them. That different sources are noticeable no reasonable commentator will deny, but every verse reveals that the author has turned them into something that suited his purpose, and thus created that impression of unity which I have mentioned. Charles, too, recognizes glosses, interpolations, dislocations, lacunae, dittographs, which he attributes partly to the author himself, partly to his "very unintelligent disciple" and editor of the book; but he is much more careful than most of his predecessors. One point, however, he has in common with all of them, as far as I know: he ascribes the making of the Apocalypse exclusively to literary processes.

This is the point which I feel inclined to challenge; not all the steps

⁵ R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John (The International Critical Commentary)*, 2 vols. (1920), I, xxiii and xxii; cf. p. lxxxvii.

⁶ P. Gaechter S.J., "Semitic Literary Forms in the Apocalypse and their Import," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, VIII (1947), 567-68, 573.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 218.

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 2, 21.

that led to the actual form of the book can be classed as literary procedure, like the collecting of written sources, their arrangement and copying, their weaving into one fabric, lastly the addition of glosses on the margin or in the text and their wrong insertion in later copies. These would be mere literary procedures. In the Apocalypse, however, there are features of a different kind. All literary procedure rests on arbitrary judgment, which may be right or wrong, but everything can be traced back to reasoning. In the Apocalypse much that is to be observed cannot by any means be explained as the result of thought and choice, right or wrong, but, in my opinion, can only be understood as the product of an agency whose laws are not those of the human intellect—the working of the memory. That the memory of St. John, the author of the Apocalypse, had its full share in the making of the book goes without saying; but I mean to point to a memory other than his—the memory of one or several of his disciples, seeing that there are many traces of a failing memory which could hardly have been that of John himself.

In the present case we cannot recognize the working of memory except by its blunders. If among the Jews of those days a longer text was repeatedly recited, it was likely to show signs of the fact by way of *concatenationes*, *inclusiones*, *responsiones*, and rhymes, as we see in the Psalms, the Prophets and the sermons of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. But with the text and contents of the Apocalypse this could not be the case. Here we can only judge by mistakes which the memory made. Where it worked smoothly, the result was a sequence of statements, each of which is fully accounted for by intellectual reasons, as by the laws of logic, history, literary method, and style. Only anomalies betray here the memory, like omissions, confusions, wrong replacements, doublets called forth by the law of catchword composition, and the like. These anomalies have to be numerous, if they are to point to the memory of another than the author himself; for then only does it seem unlikely that it was he who committed all the blunders.

This would, of course, imply that the making of the Apocalypse was a more complicated affair than is commonly thought. Above all the question arises whether John himself did write anything of it at all. In the vision which introduces the seven letters he is told: "What you

see, write in a book" (1:11), which order is repeated at the close of that vision. Then he is admonished seven times: "To the angel of the church of . . . , write" (cc. 2, 3). Later he receives the order: "Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth" (14:13), which in the end is followed by the general command to write (21:5). Besides, "when the seven thunders uttered their voices," he wanted to write, but was forbidden to do so (10:4). None of these passages suffices to prove that St. John did actually write the Apocalypse or any of its parts. The last-quoted text cannot well mean that John went into his vision provided with papyrus or vellum and an inkstand; rather he saw himself there as belonging to the object of the vision. The repeated orders to write were to be understood in the sense in which writing was commonly done, by a secretary, if possible.⁹ The imperatives "Write" mean either, "Write it yourself," or, "Have it written by somebody." On the part of those texts, therefore, nothing stands in the way of saying that St. John did not write the Apocalypse, provided, of course, that his relation to it was such that after the fashion of the ancients he had, all the same, to be regarded as its author.

This hypothesis is in accord with the tradition that the author was one of the Twelve, and that the book was written at the end of the reign of Domitian, or better under Nerva, about 96-97 A.D. By that time the author was an old man of eighty or more, who would gladly commit the arduous task of writing to a secretary, in the sense that this man had to do not only the actual penwork, but also the collecting and arranging of the material. In this connection it is worth mentioning that there are good reasons for holding that the Gospel of St. John was likewise the immediate work of an amanuensis of the aged Apostle.¹⁰ Exception is to be made for *Apc* 22:21. Before the book preface (1:1-3) was prefixed, the Apocalypse had the form of a letter (cf. 1:4), to which the apostle as its real author by his own hand added the final salutation as the autograph confirmation of its contents.¹¹

⁹ O. Roller, *Das Formular der Paulinischen Briefe (Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament, VI/6, 1933)*, pp. 6-21, on writing and its difficulties in antiquity.

¹⁰ Cf. Paul Gaechter S.J., "Der formale Aufbau der Abschiedsrede," *ZkTh.*, LVIII (1934), 205-207; "Strophen im Johannesevangelium," *ibid.*, LX (1936), 421; "Die Dolmetscher der Apostel," *ibid.*, pp. 161-87. ¹¹ O. Roller, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-78.

What, then, was the part that St. John had in the making of the Apocalypse? Anticipating the result of the following study and drawing the conclusions from it, my answer to the question would be the following. The Apostle provided the material. This he did by recounting what he had seen in his visions, couching it largely in metaphors and words of the Old Testament, and, it may be, of current non-canonical apocalyptic writings. Because the matter was so ample, he cannot possibly have brought all forward at one time, but had to do it in installments, therefore with interruptions. This may account for the fact that in the Apocalypse two quite different kinds of style are noticeable, some portions being extremely brief and sketchy, particularly in the first parts of the heptads of the seals, the trumpets and the bowls, like outlines of a picture drawn by a few lines of pencil; while other sections are of greater length, more like pictures made with a brush, as, e.g., the two witnesses, and in general the second half of the book, chapters 12-22.

Since John was an old man, it is not surprising that he should have spoken of his visions with the same consciousness of an overwhelming authority as he does in his Gospel and in his Epistles. He not only recounted, but to some extent preached the matter, making applications to his listeners and sometimes turning from a seer into a prophet. Instances of such applications may be seen in 13:9-10; 13:18; 14:12; 16:15, etc.; prophetic words occur in 9:6; 13:16-17, etc. With the same authority St. John sometimes adds explanations to his visions, as may be seen in 7:16-17 (words taken from the O. T.) added to 7:14-15; or 14:11 added to explain 14:9-10. There is no introductory formula that would separate his explanations from the preceding words of the angel or whatever else preceded—a procedure which is also found in his Gospel (Jo 3:14 ff.; 3:31 ff.).

Moreover, in his different recordings he also seems to have repeated himself with a supreme disregard for the way in which he had previously represented a point. For this also the Gospel of St. John affords parallels (13:33; 16:4e-6; 16:16-19). In the Apocalypse we may explain in this way the double interpretation of the seven heads (17:9 and 10) and their double functions (v. 14 and vv. 16-17), the twofold description of the locusts (9:3-6, 7-11), the wounded head and the wounded beast (13:3, 12-14), the double wailing of the

merchants over the fallen Babylon (18:11-14, 15-16), and the three different names (19:12, 13, 16).

Altogether different from such repetitions seems to be what we might call the shifting of visions. Often St. John tells us what new events he saw in his visions, but sometimes the visions seem to have changed slightly while he had them. In the opening vision Jesus is first seen standing "in the midst of the candlesticks" (1:13), whereas towards the end the seer sees himself prostrate at His feet unhampered by them (1:17). There Jesus also first holds seven stars in His right hand, whereas immediately afterwards He puts the same hand upon the head of the prostrate John (vv.16-17). Again, in the grand vision which precedes that of the seven seals (c. 4) no Lamb is visible in the midst of the four living beings and the twenty-four ancients, while afterwards it is suddenly there (5:6). At that juncture there is also an outer ring of a host of angels which the seer had not noticed before (5:11). In the vision recounted in c. 7 John at first seems to be outside the picture, which like the visions of cc. 4-5 is arranged in concentric circles. But when we learn that one of the ancients gave John an explanation of what he had seen, a change of scenery is suggested, seeing that the ancients belong to the two inmost circles. The repetitions which I have pointed out before are of a different nature from these variations. They cannot be explained as mere developments of the visions, but should be taken as different statements of St. John which are simultaneous, and in their simultaneity, irreconcilable. If they form parts of different reports, they make sense without inferring any contradiction in the Apocalypse.

All three features—these repetitions, shiftings of vision, and mixtures of report and explanations, and possibly other things as well—must have been rather confusing for John's listeners when they came to repeat what he had told them and make of it a book with well-arranged parts. This difficulty must have been keenly felt if the writing had to be done purely from memory. That the disciple of John should have had to do so without the possibility, physical or moral, of having recourse to John, looking at it *a priori*, may perhaps seem absurd. But an ancient tradition on the origin of the Gospel of St. Mark proves that such conditions could arise. In this article I shall try to show that several observations point to exactly such

conditions. There are not a few passages where we see the memory of the editor of the Apocalypse, the disciple of St. John, at work, and those passages containing blunders of his memory at the time eliminate the possibility that the writer, while composing the book, did or could consult its chief author, John. I shall collect my material from chapters 4-19, leaving alone the last three chapters because they require a separate study. I shall also omit arguments based on single words so as not to make the reading of a difficult matter altogether impossible.

THE PROBLEM OF THE LANGUAGE

Charles made a most searching scrutiny of the language, diction, and idiom of the Apocalypse, which led him to the verdict: "While he ('our author,' as he calls St. John) wrote in Greek he thought in Hebrew and frequently translated Hebrew idioms literally into Greek," whereas his disciple "was a better Greek scholar than his master, for he corrects his Greek occasionally."¹² But it is a far cry from the Greek of such texts as Charles attributes to the disciple to the idiomatic Greek of the classics, whereas in fact it comes very near the language and style of St. John himself. Here are a few instances quoted by Charles as illustrations. John would say *τὸν καθήμενον ἐπ' αὐτόν*, or *ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον*; his disciple or editor, as Charles calls him, puts *τὸν καθήμενον ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου*. In 20:4 he inserts *οἵτινες* to render the Greek text readable. Instead of the Johannine *τῷ διψῶντι δώσω αὐτῷ* he gives *τῷ διψῶντι δώσω*. Such are the differences of diction between John and his disciple. Wholly engaged in probing every detail, Charles did not see that taken in their totality those differences are so scanty that they escaped the notice even of scholars like W. Bousset, and that this scantiness gives rise to the problem, whence this surprising affinity of diction of the two so widely different minds as that of John and his disciple arose.

Nor is this the whole problem. Even according to Charles there are passages that scarcely fit in with their context but are none the less wholly Johannine in diction, whereas other parts have the linguistic garb of John's disciple without in the least troubling the current of

¹² Charles, *op. cit.*, I, xxi and xxii; the examples which follow in our text are taken from p. li.

thought or the context. If this disciple blundered in arranging parts of his own diction, why did he do the same with Johannine portions? Why did he not also change their diction? The present article rests on the assumption that we should not hold John himself responsible for blunders in the arrangement of the text. If they have to be laid at the door of his editor, and if the texts in question are sometimes Johannine, sometimes non-Johannine in diction, it is likely that the latter group do not show the diction of the editor himself, but of some third person who supplied some of the matter which the editor apparently did not remember.

The striking similarity of both the dictions can only be explained by a common source, which was none other than the Apostle himself. If the editor and his aid both had the general tendency to stick to *ipsisima verba magistri*; if the editor as the less educated of them did this as literally as could be, whereas the other man either had a memory a little less faithful, or ventured slightly to correct mistakes of John too offensive to Greek ears, I think we have exactly the result which we find in the Apocalypse. We have, then, good reason to call the language and diction of the major part of the Apocalypse Johannine as does Charles, notwithstanding the fact that John took no part in the actual writing.

Fragments

We begin the series of arguments with texts which, taken by themselves, are not a whole, and which are not anchored in the context before or afterwards by any reference to them. In 11:1 the reader of the Apocalypse is surprised by a sudden change of the scenery: the seer is told to measure the Holy House of God. There exists no literary connection with what precedes, and a very scanty one with what follows. For in 11:3 a change takes place: there suddenly appear "the" two witnesses who are unknown to the reader and as isolated within the book as is the beleaguered temple of verses 1-2. Moreover, the scene of the two witnesses seems to end abruptly before verse 13 because, as will be said later, this verse probably does not form part with its context. The witnesses as well as the beleaguered temple disappear as completely as they make their appearance, wholly unexpectedly. According to all literary standards 11:1-2 and 3-12 are fragments whose "diction differs

very perceptibly from that of our author."¹³ Also the style of 11:3-12 is different from that of the first part of the book and rather resembles that of the later cc. 12-13 and 17-20. We cannot well hold John responsible for the fragmentary state of the two pieces; he knew the whole of the visionary stories of which they formed part, and it is inconceivable that he should have cut them down to their fragmentary state and left them with their sharp edges. On the other hand it does not at all seem unlikely that one who had listened to St. John's report and wanted to reproduce it did not succeed well, having been bewildered by the rapid changes and the interlacing of the imagery and having forgotten or never fully grasped its significance and full form. Now he did his best, reproducing what he remembered, and putting it in at the most appropriate places he knew. Thus we certainly explain the two fragments as fragments, even if no positive contribution is made towards understanding their meaning. If anybody should call this explanation facile, I should submit that it is not less facile than are slips of memory in everyday life, and that to disregard them in our literary problem is to tear it away from its place in life. Other fragments occur in cc. 16 and 17, of which we shall speak at the end of this article.

Omissions

Under this heading two much discussed passages of a similar kind should be mentioned. At the opening of the seventh seal (8:1) "there fell a silence in heaven for about half an hour." This awe-inspiring remark would seem to be by its very nature the introduction to some extraordinarily grand and solemn sight or event in heaven. Instead, what follows in the text is the new heptad of trumpets which, after that of the seals, is no startling news. Similar, if not more awkward, is the continuation of 11:5*a*. Whatever is to be said of the heavenly scene in vv. 15*b*-18 and the erratic v. 19 (the heaven is open in vv. 15-18; how can it again be opened in v. 19?), c. 12 and what follows, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, cannot be understood as the contents of the seventh trumpet. This chapter with cc. 13 and 17-20 is of a nature altogether different from that of the seven seals, the seven trumpets and the seven bowls (whose logical place is after the seven

¹³ Charles, *op. cit.*, I, 270.

trumpets). In those heptads God deals with man in order to bring him to conversion; from c. 12 on God is dealing with the superhuman forces that wage war against Him, and for whom there is no conversion but only destruction. Wherefore nothing is left but to admit that the seventh trumpet is missing like the seventh seal.

Who was responsible for this double omission? Again it does not seem feasible to lay it at the door of St. John. For even if the doubleness of the case seems to suggest method and the intention that the seventh seal should develop into the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet into the seven bowls, there is no positive indication left of such an arrangement, as we should justly expect. But assuming, as I do, an intermediary person as the writer of the book, whose memory in places served him badly, those omissions to some extent would be accounted for. Of their possible reasons we shall learn something later on.

Loose Material

I begin this section with a comparison between the Apocalypse and the Synoptic Gospels. Let us take for an example the "journey" or *Reisebericht* in Luke 9:51-18:14. Here the Evangelist evidently put a lot of loose material together which in fact does not form an "itinerary" at all, as this part is usually called. Loose material is the result of the failing of memory; it has either never taken up the local and temporal connection of each item, or has lost sight of it in the course of transmission. It does not substantially alter the case whether the memory of one man only or of several is concerned. Moreover, the occasion of putting down loose material seems to have been a new weakness of memory, viz., where it failed to reproduce the connection between a part which was properly recorded and the thing which according to tradition should have followed. In the preceding section Luke fairly follows the order of Mark, as does Matthew: Mk 9:33-37 = Mt 18:1-5 = Lk 9:46-48. At that point the parallelism is shaken: Mk 9:38-40 is missing in Mt, but equivalent to Lk 9:49-50, while Mk 9:41 stands alone, Mt putting a parallel word elsewhere, Lk omitting it altogether. And here it is that Luke begins his "itinerary." To my mind the best explanation of this and some similar cases is that the memory of someone on whom Luke depended for the tradition failed to retain

the sequence of narratives, and either put in loose material, mechanically replacing the material lost, or else gave occasion to Luke to put in such material by way of a literary procedure, choosing it in order to bring the material in somewhere. Loose material and weak points in the chain of tradition always seem to go together; both are due to the failing memory.

These observations are applicable also to the Apocalypse, even if its tradition only consisted of John as its starting point and his disciple as the one who endeavoured to reproduce from memory what John had said. A look at the end of the seven seals and the seven trumpets suggests a similar explanation. The seventh seal is divided from the sixth, and the seventh trumpet from the sixth trumpet by a series of diverse matter (7:1-17 and 10:1-11:13). J. Wellhausen¹⁴ not very reverently speaks of "chequered intermezzos" and "gravel." Whatever be their meaning and relation to the whole book, there is no indication whatever of unity and coherence among those loose parts; each commentator shifts as best he can.¹⁵

We may derive a more accurate solution to the problem of those two groups of loose material from the literary technique of St. John. He seems to have described the first four parts of the heptads by short, characteristic indications,¹⁶ but he somewhat enlarged the description of the later ones.¹⁷ Besides, between the sixth and seventh seal and the sixth and seventh trumpet he must have put some different matter, like 7:1-3 (the sealing of the servants of God), and 10:5-7 (the great angel announcing the end). Finally, the opening of the seventh seal and the blast of the seventh trumpet each seem to have been followed by some scene in heaven in preparation for the seventh plague, possibly 8:3-5 and 11:15-18. John's disciple, who afterwards was to write down the visions told by John, had not been instructed beforehand in such a technique of arranging the matter; he was taken un-

¹⁴ J. Wellhausen, *Analyse der Offenbarung Johannis (Abhandlungen der königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Neue Folge, Bd. IX, Nro. 4, 1907)*, pp. 12 and 14.

¹⁵ Compare the summary on Apc 7 in Charles, *op. cit.*, I, 189-90.

¹⁶ See the first to fourth seal, 6:1-8; the first to fourth trumpet, 8:7-12; the first to fifth bowl, 16:2-11.

¹⁷ Compare the sixth seal, 6:12-17; the fifth and sixth trumpet, 9:1-21; the sixth and seventh bowl, 16:12-16, 17-21.

awares and lost track of the original sequence, or his memory was at least badly shaken on that point. Consequently the places after the sixth seal and after the sixth trumpet mnemotechnically became weak spots which caused him to insert some of the loose material which might, or might not, have had its original place there; simultaneously the contents of the seventh seal and the seventh trumpet escaped his memory altogether.

These two passages are not the only ones which we may call weak spots. St. John was in the habit of comforting his listeners by scenes of light in the midst of scenes of evil and darkness.¹⁸ As they came unexpectedly to his listeners, it was only too natural that they should lose track of the thought of John; the places where these surprises came in became weak spots in their memories, so that at the writing, voluntarily or involuntarily, pieces foreign to the trend of St. John's narration were inserted. Thus the interlude 14: 1-5 (the Lamb as shepherd) drew after it 14: 6-20 and cc. 15 and 16. Up to that point the closed form of cc. 12-13 and 17-20 was not recognizable, so that it did not act as a bar against such insertions.¹⁹

There is even a clue why precisely 14:6-20 came to be inserted instead of any other piece. If we compare 14:1-5 and 14:6-20 with 7: 1-8 and 7:9-17, we find the following identical elements in both double passages:

- in 7:1-8 the number 144,000 (v. 4. No. 1)
- in 7:9-17 the innumerable host of saints "from every race, and of all nations and peoples and languages" (v. 9. No. 2)
- "standing" (v. 9. No. 3)
- "(before) the Lamb" (v. 9. No. 4)
- in 14:1-5 "the Lamb" (v. 1. No. 4)
- "standing" (v. 1. No. 3)
- the number 144,000 (v. 1. No. 1)
- in 14:6-20 an angel proclaiming "to every race and nation and language and people" (v. 6. No. 2)

This looks very much like a catchword composition. The leading element no doubt was the impressive figure 144,000 of 7:4, which in the

¹⁸ Cf. the praise in heaven, 12:10-12; 16:5-7; 19:1-8.

¹⁹ On the Semitic literary form of cc. 12-13 and 17-20, see *TS*, VIII (1947), 555-57.

next section (7:9-17) was followed by the secondary elements Nos. 2-4. The figure 144,000, which also in 14:1 was accompanied by the elements Nos. 4 and 3, called forth a piece with the element No. 2, as such a piece had followed after 7:1-8. As the four elements exercised their influence upon the memory as a group, it did not matter that they were divided differently within each of the double passages.

To see in the connection of 7:1-8 with 7:9-17 the basis of that between 14:1-5 and 14:4-20 does not imply that 7:1-8 and 9-17 are linked together according to the mind of St. John. At that juncture he wanted to insert a piece of comfort, such as the sealing of the 144,000 (7:1-8).²⁰ It seems, however, that by the law of association of ideas this piece called forth 7:9-17, which is another scene of consoling nature, and itself "the work of our author."²¹ But its position in the book most probably is not due to him, but to the blundering memory of his assistant.

The same law of association of ideas seems to have led to the combining of 11:1-2 and 11:3-12. Their connection is merely external. In v. 2 the defiled "Holy City" is mentioned, which is an allusion to Jerusalem, and in v. 8 we hear of "the great city," which "is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified." It is another kind of allusion to Jerusalem, and this is the only literary link between the two fragments. It is therefore more than probable that 11:3-12 has been attracted by this idea of Jerusalem common to both, while on the whole the two sections have nothing to do with one another.

This procedure in the making of the Apocalypse was the cause of inserting material which, although Johannine and derived from the narratives of the Apostle, was not meant at all to figure in the book, or which at least has no proper place in it as it was actually planned and laid out. Among such sections I should reckon the two fragments of c. 11 just mentioned, the angel in the appearance of Christ, the voices of the seven thunders and the order given to John not to write (10:1-4), and the closed section of 14:6-20.

²⁰ "VII.9-17 is from the hand of our author," according to Charles, *op. cit.*, I, 190.

²¹ Charles, *op. cit.*, I, 201.

Substitutes

A number of shorter texts have in common that they do not harmonize with their context, and that where we read them the context would require something else. These texts, therefore, are not only accretions but substitutes, and wrong ones at that.

Apc 6:9-11. At the opening of the fifth seal the seer saw the souls of the martyrs "under the altar," who cried for revenge and were comforted by a divine promise. In my study on the Semitic literary forms I have made the suggestion that this passage might be considered as one of the breaks within a series of fearful scenes, of which John is fond.²² From this viewpoint, the text holds its proper place; but at the same time it takes the place of a calamity such as each seal brings upon the wicked, and for that reason I think it also has become a substitute for a part lost. This part should have followed it, before the sixth seal was opened.²³

Apc 7:1-4. "After this I saw four angels standing at the four ends of the earth, restraining the four winds of the earth, so that no wind might blow upon the earth, or upon the sea, or upon any tree." But another angel warns them not to hurt either land or sea "until we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads"; their number is 144,000. These four angels are not spoken of either before or afterwards in the Apocalypse, and their destructive action in the calamity that was to follow the breaking of the seventh seal—where, incidentally, it has been left out—is hard to imagine after the calamities of the sixth seal, that forbode the immediate nearness of the last judgment (6:12-17). Moreover, the sealing of the servants of God is meant to strengthen them against an onslaught against their religion rather than shield them against physical disaster. It is also significant that "the diction of vv. 1-4 is that of our author,"²⁴ and that, as I have already mentioned, the break between the sixth and seventh seal has an equivalent between the sixth and seventh trumpet. In both places it seems to have been the author's intention to insert a ray of light into the pic-

²² "Semitic Literary Forms in the Apocalypse and their Import," *TS*, VIII (1947), 563.

²³ This suggestion I have also found in the article of H. Windisch, *s.v.* "Johannesapokalypse," *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, III (ed. 2, 1929), 335.

²⁴ Charles, *op. cit.*, I, 191.

tures which before and after are so sombre, the after part being at least intended. Let us assume that St. John in one of his talks on his visions had mentioned the four angels of the winds, but not in this connection, and that he in fact had here inserted a scene comprising four angels and one who sealed the saints, with the difference from the present text that those four had to perform another task which had something to do with the last judgment or with the final assault of God's enemies against his friends. The editor by an error of memory mixed up these angels with the four angels of the winds, replaced them by these, and thus created the puzzle of 7:1-4. ✓

Apc 11:13 The section preceding this verse ends with the assumption of the two witnesses into heaven, "and their enemies beheld them" (v. 12). The natural thing to ask is how they reacted at that sight. Instead, something follows which evidently lacks all inner connection with vv. 3-12:

and in that hour there was a great earthquake
and the tenth part of the city fell;
and seven thousand persons were killed in the earthquake,
and the rest became terrified
and gave glory to the God of heaven.

While the city mentioned in v. 8 is Jerusalem, the capital of Christ's enemies, which as such survives in Rome, the city of v. 13 has nothing of Jerusalem nor of Rome in it. Any destruction of the tenth part of Jerusalem by an earthquake was unknown up to St. John's time, and the conversion of its populace to the God of heaven does not go well with the capital of the Jews. I should even argue that this idea of conversion is in conflict with the feature of the three heptads of seals, trumpets, and bowls.²⁵ Considering these circumstances it is certainly not hazardous to see in v. 13 the fragment of a narrative which differed from vv. 3-12. This fragment now holds the place of a remark concerning the reaction of the people who saw the two prophets rising to heaven. If there is no inner connection between vv. 3-12 and v. 13, there is at least an external bond, the word and idea of a "city" hostile to God, for this seems to have worked partly by way of an association

²⁵ Cf. Apc 9:20-21; 16:9, 11, 21.

of ideas and partly even as a catchword. The present arrangement of the text, consequently, would be the result of the working of the memory of the editor of the Apocalypse.

Apc 15:2-4. I have referred to 14:6-20 and cc. 15-16 as loose material inserted at a place where memory did not recall the sequence of parts, at least not with sufficient certainty. It is in keeping herewith that in that material further traces of troubles caused by memory should be noticeable. After 14:6-20, illustrating the threatening judgment from various angles, a certain respite was due to the reader according to St. John's custom,²⁶ especially in view of further menacing visions. Consequently we read: "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous. . . (v. 1). And I saw, as it were, a transparent sea mingled with fire, and the victors over the beast and over his image, and over the number of his name, standing by the transparent sea, holding the harps of God. And they sang the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: Great and marvellous . . ." (15:2-4). By its general contents, but not in its details, this piece suits its context. The references to the beast in c. 16 are all superficial and secondary,²⁷ whereas in 14:6-20 there is no mention of Christ's victory over the beast as 15:2 supposes, and the judgment on its worshippers in 14:9-11 is open to criticism, as will be shown towards the end of this article. If 15:2-4, on the other hand, is put after 20:3 (or more accurately before 21:9, as following next after 20:3), there would result a perfect sequence. Wherefore it seems best to see in 15:2-4 a fragment which is no doubt of Johannine origin, but which has been misplaced and has taken the position of a passage similar in its general character, which latter passage by this replacing has been lost to us. Such slips are typical of the working of memory.

Apc 16:5-6 affords another example of the same kind. The third bowl is poured out "upon the rivers and upon the spring-waters: and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying:

²⁶ W. Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis (Krit.-exeg. Komm., XVI, 6.ed.)*, p. 394, says of the scene 15:2-4: "Sie ist vom Apokalyptiker gleichsam aus ästhetischen Gründen entworfen und hierher gestellt. Nach dem grausigen Gericht 14:14-20 bedurfte seine Komposition wieder eines solchen Lichtbildes."

²⁷ "Semitic Literary Forms," *TS*, VIII (1947), 567-68.

- (5b) Just art Thou who art and who wast,
 O Holy One, in inflicting these judgments.
- (6) For they poured out the blood of saints and prophets,
 and blood hast Thou given them to drink.
 Of this they are deserving.
- (7) And I heard the altar saying:
 Yes, O Lord the All-Powerful,
 True and just are thy judgments.

Charles declares these verses to be "undoubtedly Johannine,"²⁸ but he is of the opinion that 5a is "an interpolation to introduce 16:5b-7, which originally followed after 19:4."²⁹ I am not sure whether this was indeed the author's intention concerning 5b-7, seeing that there the plural of these verses would be somewhat unexpected and unprepared for. But it is not difficult to see that vv. 5b-7 are out of place where we actually have them. The bowls, properly speaking, are not judgments as these verses make us expect, but *dire* means to bring sinful man back to God. Moreover, "You have given them blood to drink" is the equivalent to internecine war³⁰ and is here the application of the *jus talionis*, which evidently is totally different in its general character from turning water into blood. But here again we have a case where some song of victory is welcome to the reader, and is all the more in place as after John's fashion it divides the two triplets of bowls.³¹ As the original song cannot well have been the one preserved here, it is logical to recognize in vv. 5b-7 a wrong replacement, due to a failure of memory. The cause for it apparently lay in the terms: the water "became blood" (v. 4), and "they poured out the blood of saints . . . and blood hast thou given them to drink" (v. 6). This looks like a catchword composition, v. 4 drawing after it v. 5b-7.

Apc 16:10-11 describes the effect which the fifth bowl by its darkening of the "kingdom" of the beast produced upon its followers. In fact vv. 10b-11 are the continuation to 16:2ab,³² where we read them now, they are misplaced and inserted instead of the real consequence of the darkening, whatever its original object had been. It is quite possible that when the words, "who had the mark of the beast, and who wor-

²⁸ Charles, *op. cit.*, II, p. 121.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 44 and 120-22.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³¹ Cf. "Semitic literary forms," pp. 550-51.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 567-78, 549-50.

shipped its image," were inserted into v. 2,³³ the original continuation of v. 2*ab* in the memory of the disciple of John broke away, but not being altogether lost, secured to itself another place, a wrong one, where it in turn expelled some words from their rightful place so that they were completely obliterated.

Other Catchword Compositions and Doublets

There are certain other passages which cannot be said to replace others, but are mere intrusions, and in part doublets. Doublets as such are not necessarily to be suspected as secondary or formed by error; the Apocalypse being the work of a Semite and largely shaped after Semitic literary rules, it is as likely as not that there should be repetitions of formulae and sentences. If in this chapter of the present article doublets are pointed out, it is to indicate the probable reasons that led to their wrong insertion.

Apc 4:8*b* has the enigmatic words *κύκλωθεν και ἔσωθεν/γέμουσιν, οφθαλμῶν*. It is a distorted repetition of v. 6: *γέμοντα ὀφθαλμῶν/ἔμπροσθεν και ὀπισθεν*, for which there is no conceivable reason. And what is the meaning of having eyes "round about and within"? Charles is perfectly right when calling it "a meaningless phrase."³⁴ If no intellectual reason has produced it, we can at least recognize the memory at work. The elements in both verses are partly identical (*γέμοντα ὀφθαλμῶν—γέμουσιν ὀφθαλμῶν*), partly analogous (*ἔμπροσθεν και ὀπισθεν—κύκλωθεν και ἔσωθεν*), with the forms, number, and arrangement preserved, so that they even sound similar to the ear; only the sequence of the two halves of the phrase has been inverted. This kind of repeating is typical, not for the intellect but for memory. When "the four living beings" of v. 6 were to be repeated at the beginning of v. 8, the expression served as a catchword for v. 6*b* = v. 8*b*.

Apc 9:19*b* admits of a similar explanation. It is placed after v. 18 which is a conclusion to the second woe (9:12–17), indicating its effect upon men. The horses have already been described in vv. 16–17, the last clause being: "and out of their mouths issue fire and smoke and sulphur." Verse 19 therefore is lagging behind with its further description: "For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their

³³ This clause is bracketed by Charles as a gloss, *op. cit.*, II, 43.

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, I, 125.

tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they wound." Charles "with some hesitation" brackets "and in their tails—they wound."³⁵ I think he does so with good reason. For 19*b* introduces something which does not well harmonize with these horses, which in vv. 16–17 have been described as an army—horses with riders upon them. Charging forward, their power was all in the riders and in the heads of the horses, and it is hard to imagine how at the time they should have hurt by their tails. It is different with the locusts which in the first woe have been described as being "like" horses (9:7), with many strange features about them, one being this: "And they have tails such as scorpions have, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt mankind" (v. 9–10). Verse 19*b*, therefore, is partly a repetition of v. 10. When reproducing in v. 19 the words, "For the power of the horses (is in their mouths)," the memory of the editor unwittingly fell back upon v. 10, "and in their tails is their power," adding to v. 19*a* "and in their tails" and the rest. The word "power" acted as a catchword. From the fact that v. 19 is trailing behind anyway, it is clear that its connection with other matter was not fixed in the memory of the editor, and the addition of the preposterous v. 19*b* only confirms the fact that v. 19 was an element which had not been well grasped. Verse 19*b* may contain a trait which the seer had attributed to the locusts in connection with v. 10, and which, having been detached by the memory of his disciple, claimed its right at a wrong place, which again is typical of the working of memory.

Apc 11:19. There is some uncertainty as to how to combine this verse, whether with what precedes or with what follows.

Then the temple of God in heaven was opened,
and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple.
And there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders,
and an earthquake, and great hail.

This opening scene presages something sublime and awe-inspiring. Instead, in the next verse (12:1) there follows another typical opening sentence to a great vision, exactly as if 11:19 were not in its actual place. The partial repetition of 11:19 which occurs in 15:5 ("the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened")

³⁵ *Op. cit.*, I, 254.

suggests that here may have been the original place of 11:19. For this verse, though original as to its form, seems to have been misplaced. 15:1-5 is a troubled piece anyhow; I have already referred to vv. 2-4 as a misplaced part which now occupies the place of a scene similar in function but of different contents. 15:1 forms manifestly a doublet to 15:6*a* ill-suited to its position, so that 15:1-5 is a typical weak spot; evidently the editor's mind was very vague as to what belonged there.

The position of 11:19 is queer, not only in view of 12:1 but also in view of 11:15-18. The seventh trumpet did not immediately introduce a last woe, but, as seems to have been the method of St. John, a heavenly scene (vv. 15*b*-18). The setting is the same as in the vision in cc. 4-5, therefore the interior of the heavenly temple with God's throne in the centre. How, then, can the next verse (11:19) describe the opening of this temple, which was open already? If John wrote reasonably and for reasonable men, he could not possibly place this verse here. This seems to be the result of the working of a non-intellectual force, the memory of the editor, implying, I am afraid, the accusation that he controlled its working very insufficiently when he wrote this verse down.

If 11:19, therefore, has to be detached from its present context, and if it originally formed part of the narrative now introduced by 15:1-5, we may make an attempt at restoring this portion in the following manner:

15:5*a*: "And after those things"

15:5*a* and 1*a*: "I saw"

15:1*a*: "another sign . . . great and marvellous"

19:19: "the temple of God (which is) in heaven was opened, etc."

15:2-4: "And I saw, as it were, a transparent sea mingled with fire, etc."

15:6: "And there came out of the temple the seven angels, etc."

The elements of this scene had had no fixed place in the disciple's memory, as also the whole of c. 11 is stigmatized by the same lack of firm connection of its parts. When the heavenly scene in 11:15-18 was reproduced, it may have served as a means of association of imaginative pictures in attracting 11:19, instead of reserving it for the opening of the vision of the bowls in 15:1-5. In our reconstruction 11:19

again becomes what it must have been originally, the introduction to a new heptad of calamities.³⁶

Apc 12:11. In v. 10 the seer hears a voice in heaven:

- 10) Now has come the salvation and the power . . .
For the accuser of our brethren is cast down,
who used to accuse them before our God day and night.
- 11) And they have conquered him because of the blood of the Lamb
and because of the word whereby they bore witness,
seeing that they preferred not their lives (to all else) even when facing
death.
- 12) Exult, therefore, you heavens, and you that dwell therein,
but woe to you, land and sea,
now that the devil has come down to you with great wrath,
knowing that he has but a short time.

"Every phrase of this verse (v. 11) belongs to our authors," says Charles,³⁷ but "it interrupts, according to Völter, Vischer, Spitta, J. Weiss, Gunkel, etc., the close connection between vv. 10 and 12. . . . It comes rather incongruously between vv. 10 and 12."³⁸ The song in vv. 10 and 12 visualizes the point of time when Satan has just been thrown down from heaven upon the earth to persecute the followers of the Lamb, even the Lamb itself. Verse 11, on the other hand, makes sense only at the end of the persecution. Placed as it is between vv. 10 and 12, it infers an intolerable anachronism. The word "therefore" in v. 12 refers to v. 10, as if there were no v. 11. Besides, both verses 10 and 12 are personal,³⁹ whereas v. 11 is an impersonal statement. It may be of additional weight that v. 10 and v. 12 each have four lines, v. 11 only three.

How did v. 11 happen to be inserted here? To some extent it is a doublet to 6:9, which verse is in its proper place. Besides, we notice that 6:9 is followed by *οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτῶν* (6:11). This word affords the clue for the inept insertion of 12:11; for v. 10 speaks of the accuser *τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν*. This expression, being linked up with 6:9, caused, when repeated in 12:10, the partial repetition of 6:9, the result being

³⁶ Charles (*op. cit.*, I, 293) declares 11:14-19 to be "undoubtedly from the hand of our author," which is also his verdict on 15:2-8 (II, 28), while v. 1 "appears to be an interpolation" (*ibid.*, p. 30).

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, I, 328; cf. p. 302.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, I, 328-9.

³⁹ *ἡμῶν* twice in v. 10; *πρὸς ὑμᾶς* in v. 12.

12:11. It is nothing else but a catchword composition which is the hall mark of the working of memory.

Apc 16:13-14. The sixth bowl prepares "the way for the kings (that come) from the sun-rising" (v. 12). The text then continues: "And I saw (proceeding) from the mouth of the dragon, and from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet three foul spirits, as it were frogs (for they are spirits of demons working signs),⁴⁰ and they go forth to the kings of the whole world, to muster them to the war of the great day of God the All-Powerful." The diction is different from John's, in part even "unique."⁴¹ It is undoubtedly a fragment derived from a vision which was different from the one into which it has been inserted. The context mentions only the kings from the East, not of the whole world as v. 14. But this very term "kings" seems to have been the catchword for the insertion. Whether vv. 13-14 wrongly replace a part lost is not clear.

Apc 16:19. This text affords two examples of catchword composition, the second being explained by 14:8. The texts are:

<p>16:19 Καὶ ἐγένετο ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη εἰς τρία μέρη καὶ αἱ πόλεις τῶν ἔθνῶν ἔπεσαν. Καὶ Βαβυλῶν ἡ μεγάλη ἐμνήσθη ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ δοῦναι αὐτῇ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ.</p>	<p>14:8 ἔπεσεν, ἔπεσεν Βαβυλῶν ἡ μεγάλη ἢ ἐκ τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς πορνείας αὐτῆς πεπότικεν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.</p>
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Charles takes v. 19a as a gloss,⁴² but declares the diction of the whole verse to be St. John's.⁴³ I do not think that 19a has the nature of a gloss; it looks rather like a loose bit of a narrative which was here attracted by the catchword πόλις. "The great city" is out of place in this chapter, and inconsistent with, because in no way opposed to, "the cities of the nations." Nor does v. 19cd belong here, but with 11:8; 14:8 and c. 17 form the vision on Babylon. If it is cancelled, the rest of the text is coherent; the earthquake (v. 18) makes the cities of the nations fall (v. 19) and the islands and mountains disappear (v. 20).

The accretions to 16:18-21 supervened in the order in which they

⁴⁰ A gloss; cf. Charles, *op. cit.*, II, 47-48.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 47 and 41.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

now follow in the text. First, 19a was attracted by πόλις. Having now the phrase, ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη, and Babylon also figuring in the memory of the editor as "the great city" (17:18), the influence of ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη in 19a, strengthened by the preceding μέγας in v. 18 (twice), became strong enough to attract the words on Babylon. Besides, the ending word of 19b, ἔπεσαν, acted as another clue by the sequence of ἔπεσεν + Βαβυλῶν in 14:8, which passage became the pattern for the new insertion 19cd.

None of these passages is conceivable as the result of a purely literary process, but they are explained as soon as we resort to the memory of the man to whom we owe the writing of the Apocalypse. If he had been more attentive, or better perhaps, if he had been more intelligent, many of his gross mistakes would have been avoided, because nobody is forced to utter everything that his memory suggests to him. On the other hand, it may be called an advantage for us that he did not sufficiently control the reproductions of his memory, because thus he tampered less with what he had heard than would have been the case otherwise. If we do not possess the series of narratives as John formed them, we can at least largely recognize what it had been originally and have a fair degree of certainty that the editor did not purposely change the form of the matter he had heard.

Failing Imagination

Not a few of the passages discussed on the foregoing pages are unintelligible not only in their present context, but also under the assumption that they have been written down by the same man who had had the visions reported therein. Compare the eyes "round about and within" the four living beings (4:8b), the scorpions' tails of the horses (9:19b), the opening of the heavens when they were already opened (11:19), the kings of the East and the kings of the universe (16:13-14), the jumble of "the great city," the "cities of the nations" and "Babylon" (16:19). If the man who wrote those passages had enjoyed the visions whence they were taken, he could not, I think, have inserted them so ineptly. This was only possible because he had not experienced the visions himself and therefore had no imaginative remembrance of them. When he undertook to write the book, all he had at his disposal seems to have been the remembrance of what John had

reported of his visions, the hearing of which had not conveyed to him any clear imagination of the metaphoric visions.

This is the case especially when local relations are recorded. Allo touches on this problem where he discusses the quadrangular city of equal length, breadth, and height (Apc 21:16).⁴⁴ This description is of an embarrassing vagueness. Even Allo, who proposes a rather satisfactory explanation (a city covering a mountain, oriental fashion, so that indeed its height equals the sides of its quadrangular base), gives the alternative explanation that the vision had not been imaginative at all, but was artificially composed, "pensée plutôt que vue." There is a good element in this alternative, provided the failing imagination is separated from St. John and ascribed to someone else. For St. John was an outspokenly visual type, as the frequent use of "seeing" and of "light" in his Gospel suggests. The Apocalypse itself is so steeped in imaginative forms that only a few passages are couched in plain words. Blurred reports of visionary local relations, therefore, particularly since they are not rare exceptions from the rule, should not be laid to his charge. But if there was another man, who knew nothing of John's vision except from hearing John's preaching, this kind of report is quite naturally to be expected.

Here are some more examples. In 4:6 the four living beings are placed "in the midst before the throne, and around the throne." Allo's opinion is not very convincing when he calls it a "locution embarrassée due à l'inhabileté de l'auteur à se servir de particules de relation."⁴⁵ Charles simply avers: "The text is unintelligible as it stands."⁴⁶ The Lamb, which turns up in the same vision, has seven horns and seven eyes (5:6). Swete remarks that "the position (in regard to the throne) which He occupies in the picture is not quite clear,"⁴⁷ but he passes in silence over the more intriguing problem of how the eyes and horns were arranged on the Lamb; indeed, "une image bien peu plastique," as Allo writes on this text, an observation which is not illumined by the remark: "mais il n'y a que le sens qui importe."⁴⁸ The reader is equally embarrassed when he finds the souls of the martyrs "beneath the altar" (6:9). The seven heads of the dragon (12:3)

⁴⁴ E.-B. Allo, *Saint Jean, L'Apocalypse* (1921), p. 322.

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁴⁶ Charles, *op. cit.*, I, 118. ⁴⁷ H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (1906), p. 77.

⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

and of the beast (13:1; 17:3) were meant to make a bizarre picture in imitation of the Lamb, but the ten horns on the seven heads, and the seven diadems on the ten horns (12:3; 13:1) are difficult to explain as to their arrangement.

Such features are best understood if their sole immediate reason was the memory of the editor who depended neither on notes written by John, nor on John himself while the writing was in progress.

Apocalypse 14:6-20

At the end of this article I should like to submit to the reader an application of what I have tried to work out in the preceding part to two greater sections of the Apocalypse, to 14:6-20 (with which I have already dealt as a closed form⁴⁹) and to c. 17. By calling 14:6-20 a closed form I mean to make a statement only with regard to its literary structure, which does not imply that its contents are of like origin. That in fact this is not so, rather that parts of it are secondary to the author's intention, may be gathered from the following observations.

The "other" angel in v. 6, at the beginning of the closed form, indicates that once it was a well defined unit within a large complex which the memory of the disciple of John has not retained, and which consequently has not survived in the Apocalypse. This first angel announces the eternal Gospel which is meant for the conversion of man—an idea that goes best together with the millennial Jerusalem. But in v. 7 we read: "(Fear God and give glory to Him), for the hour of His judgment is come; (and worship the maker of heaven . . .)." It is hard to see how the preaching of the Gospel is to fit in with the hour of the last judgment. This sentence cannot be an original part of the context; moreover, its position between the imperatives is awkward. It may well have been that the editor, seeing the idea of judgment prevailing in 14:6-20, put this clause in.

The second angel (14:8) proclaims the fall of Babylon. This verse is a doublet composed of 18:2a and 18:3a, and comes as a surprise to the reader, seeing that Babylon is dealt with only in c. 17, and that 14:6-20 has nothing to do with it. In all likelihood it replaces by an error of memory some part lost.

The third angel announces the punishment which will overtake the

⁴⁹ "Semitic literary forms," p. 551-52.

worshippers of the beast (14:9-11). There is no mention of the beast in 14:6-20 other than this, which makes those verses a fragment unconnected with its context. How did it come to be here? Verse 8 (the section of the second angels) ends with the words, *ἡ ἐκ τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς πορνείας αὐτῆς πεπότικεν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, which partly occur again in v. 10 . . . *πίεται ἐκ τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ . . . ἐν τῷ ποτηρίῳ τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ*. This appears to be a catchword composition, especially as the same words have a different meaning. In addition, the worshippers of the beast belong to the same cycle of visions as Babylon; both occur in the closed form of chapters 12-13 and 17-20.⁵⁰ When, therefore, the memory of the writer had reproduced the announcement of the fall of Babylon, it mechanically also recalled the section concerning the worshippers of the beast. As the former intruded itself into the place of an original piece lost, so did the latter.

This conclusion is in a way confirmed by 14:11^{ab} and its parallel 19:3. In both places we read: "The smoke (of their torments) goes up for ever and ever"; in 19:3 it is said of Babylon, in 14:11 of the worshippers of the beast. The warning addressed to them would have its proper place after the punishment meted out to Babylon. Moreover, they will be tormented "with fire and sulphur" (14:10c), like the beast and its false prophet, who "were cast alive into the lake of fire which burns with sulphur" (19:20). We should, then, place 14:9-11 even after the destruction of those two enemies of God, which serves as a warning to their admirers. It was by erring memory that the warning words were detached from their original place.

The vv. 12-13, which concern the "saints" and praise those "who die in the Lord from henceforth," disturb the otherwise clear arrangement of 14:6-20.⁵¹ Maybe the editor overlooked it for a moment and put it in, after St. John's fashion, as a piece of consolation that was fit to break a series of terrifying scenes.

Verse 14 is a sentence concerning "one like a son of man" sitting upon a white cloud. Every reader knew who was meant, and it was befitting that John should have assigned the central place of honor to "the one like a son of man." But what is said of him is surprisingly little compared with the parts concerning the first, third, fourth, and sixth angel. It seems that a good portion has been lost, and this loss

⁵⁰ Cf. "Semitic literary forms," pp. 555-57.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 552.

may have been connected with the "sickle," the instrument of confusion in vv. 14-20. Of course, John himself cannot reasonably be charged with such a lapse of memory; it was his disciple, as usual.

The fourth angel (14:15-16) cries out to the one seated upon the cloud to apply his sickle, whereupon the Son of Man harvests the world. Reading this we are inclined to ask about the effect, but get no answer. This is again an indication that the narrative is incomplete. The same is certain concerning the fifth angel (v. 17): "Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle." This again is so little that a good deal must be supposed to have been lost.

Finally, the sixth angel addresses the fifth in very much the same way in which the fourth speaks to the one like a son of man, which certainly is somewhat surprising. The fifth angel, then, carries out the order of vintaging with dreadful consequences. This time, at least, the narrative comes properly to its end, except that v. 20 infers a piece of a very different metaphor (horses wading in blood). What needs an explanation is the parallelism between the fourth and the sixth angel, and the attribution of a sickle both to Christ and to one of his angels.

The two metaphors of harvesting and vintaging are probably called forth by Joel 3:13: "Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: Come, tread, for the winepress is full." That in Joel both metaphors mean judgment on the wicked would not by itself prove that they must have the same meaning in the Apocalypse, because St. John applied what he borrowed from sources entirely as he pleased. There remains therefore the interpretation advocated by Swete and Allo that the harvesting concerns the good, the vintaging the wicked, abstraction being made of the "sharp" sickle in the hand of Christ and its menacing sound. The real difficulty lies not with the coupling of these metaphors, but with the sameness of forms, for the parallelism between vv. 14-16 and vv. 17-19 is embarrassingly marked. I should like to explain it in the following fashion. When it came to reproducing the two parallel actions described by St. John, the writer, or whoever he was to whom we owe those verses, got mixed up, and committed the first mistake of attributing to Christ "a sharp sickle," and then the second of making Him to be addressed by an angel in the same way in which the sixth angel was going to address the fifth. To realize this

second point it should be borne in mind that the Son of Man and the fourth angel are on different levels, Christ appearing in the sky, the angel who addresses Him, in heaven proper—a difference which rather proves a faulty reproduction than anything else. These errors drew with them the loss of several items which were connected with the original forms. Such a procedure is typical for the memory, and not applicable to literary work in its proper sense. Incidentally, the defaulting vv. 15–17 contain four constructions “which are foreign to our author’s use.”⁵² But these and the awkward parallelism do not necessitate discarding vv. 15–17, as does Charles, thus destroying the closed form of 14:6–20. The differences in style only tend to show that here another man is speaking, who came to the aid of the editor when he could not find his way. When asking himself how to fill up the parts concerning the fourth and fifth angel where his own memory failed him, he received well-meant, but ill-advised help from a fellow-disciple whose memory got stuck at the same point as the writer’s.

Looking at 14:6–20 as a whole it is in the first place not at all astounding that, belonging as it does to what I have called loose material, it should itself be of a somewhat dubious firmness. The uncertainty about its various parts is all the more understandable, if they did not from the very beginning form a tightly knit unit, but were chosen arbitrarily to make up the arbitrary form of three angels—the Son of Man—three angels. To explain by literary processes what has actually been written is a hopeless task, whereas our explanation, reducing all to the failing memory, seems to give some light on this troublesome section.

Apocalypse 17

This chapter affords another example of the manner in which the Apocalypse was made. At every step we meet that other man who stands between St. John and the book, and who gave us in writing what his memory recalled of the matter he had heard the Apostle propounding. Charles distinguishes here two sources with interspersed glosses;⁵³ the one comprises roughly vv. 1–10, and is characterized by the Hebrew order of words; the other comprises vv. 11–17 (18) where the order of words is “decidedly non-Semitic,” its linguistic character

⁵² Charles, *op. cit.*, II, 3; cf. p. 21.

⁵³ *Op. cit.*, II, 56.

even being "almost without parallel in the rest of the book." In general he declares: "The diction and idiom of this chapter show manifest traces of the hand of our author . . . but they are frequently against his usage." The contents are, as we shall see presently, in keeping with this mixture of style and diction.

17:1-2 is the introduction to the chapter, or pretends to be, for its main contents do not suit this purpose at all. "Come, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot" (v. 1). Instead of the judgment we are shown the nature and epithets of the harlot, the judgment following only in c. 18. Now it is against the ordinary way of speaking to put an introduction to something from which it is separated by a whole chapter of other contents. Consequently, we have to see in vv. 1-2 a misplaced piece which now occupies the place of a lost introduction. The reason apparently was that the words *πορνεία* (v. 4) and *τῶν πορνῶν* or *πορνειῶν* (v. 5)⁶⁴ served as catchwords for *ἡ πόρνη* (v. 1) and *ἐπόρνευσαν* (v. 2), and seduced the writer into putting the wrong introduction here.

Verses 7-18 show a half-obliterated schematic structure which is a great help for applying literary criticism to that part. Verse 7 is an introduction to the explanation which the angel is to give to St. John on the symbolic vision of "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlotries and of the abominations of the world" (v. 5). He will explain "the mystery of the women, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns."

With v. 8 this explanation begins, but in a reversed order, so that the introduction and the execution of the promise form a chiasmus. The verse opens with the structural formula of that piece: "The beast which thou sawest." As its repetitions in vv. 9*b*, 12*a*, 15, 18 prove, this should be the beginning of a predicative sentence: The beast which thou sawest, is, etc. But the text actually continues: "(The beast which thou sawest) was and is not and is about to ascend from the abyss, and will (finally) go its way into perdition." How can the woman sit upon the beast when it actually is not? For, be it noted, v. 8 is all about that beast; it does not say: The beast means something or somebody who was and is not now. . . . Verse 8*b* is thus stigmatized as a piece foreign to the context, and with v. 8*b* goes the end of v. 8

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

which is a repetition of its beginning. Charles has well perceived that the original words of v. 8 were: "The beast which thou sawest. . . . And the inhabitants of the earth shall marvel—those whose names have not been written in the book of life since the foundation of the world—at seeing the beast. . . ." ⁵⁵ The editor, by an error of memory, has inserted a portion of another explanation of John in the wrong place and deprived us of the true sequence of thought and words of v. 8.

Verse 9a, "Here (is needed) the mind which has understanding," is the end clause to that which precedes, rather than the beginning of what follows.

Verse 9b continues the explanation begun, but badly continued, in v. 8: "The seven heads are the seven mountains on which the woman is sitting." I fail to see why, as Charles maintains, ⁵⁶ this should be an obvious addition to the text. In the vision the woman sits upon the beast; unfortunately, the original interpretation of the beast has not been preserved. The woman commonly passes as pagan Rome, the "city of the seven hills." Why should not John have interpreted in our place the seven heads as those seven hills? In so doing he did not commit himself to retaining this symbolism forever, as the following words show.

Verses 9d-11 give another explanation of the seven heads: "And they are seven kings; five are fallen, one is now, another has not yet come, but when he comes he is bound to remain for a short time only. And the beast which was and is not now, is himself the eighth, yet is one of the seven, and he goes his way to perdition." It is unthinkable that John should have simultaneously offered two different explanations of one and the same symbol. And it is equally improbable that he should have attached the same sense simultaneously to two different parts of the same vision, as he would have done, if the ten horns of the next verse (v. 12), which are ten kings, did thus follow in his original report. Verse 11 illustrates one of the seven kings with words partly identical with v. 8ab, which is secondary in this context. Moreover, it is remarkable that v. 11 (with 13: 12, 14) identifies this king with the beast instead of with one of the heads, as v. 10 would require (and as 13: 3 in fact has it). These inconsistencies make it clear beyond doubt that here various interpretations are intertwined. Verses 9d-11

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

are an explanation of the heads and the beast other than v. 9bc, and given by John in some other connection together with the insertion in v. 8. Where these verses stand now, they occupy the place originally allotted to some further details concerning the seven hills or mountains, which is again the work of a failing memory.

Verses 12–14 begin with the stereotyped formula: “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, etc.” These kings are allied to the beast and enemies of the Lamb, but they serve God unwittingly, because the final victory will be with the Lamb. The text does not indicate when this victory will be won; wherefore there is no cogent reason to put v. 14 after vv. 16–17 so as to avoid an anachronism, as Charles wants to have it.⁵⁷ We notice, however, that vv. 13–14, and perhaps also v. 12bc, are not words of the explaining angel, but have been added by the seer, so that the angel has to be introduced anew in v. 15. It is not unlikely that such comments of John once had followed after each short predicative sentence which the angel spoke. These comments may not always have been closely connected in form and contents with those words of the angel and thus they gave rise to confusion and forgetting.

Verse 15, after the introductory word, “And he said to me,” is again molded on the stereotyped form: “The water which thou sawest, where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and races and languages.” The slight divergencies from the diction of John may be signs that the writer had here derived some matter from another disciple of the seer.⁵⁸ That Rome was not situated on many waters is no argument against the Johannine origin of the verse. John did not intend to describe the geography of Rome, but a symbolic figure which meant Rome. If he transferred to her a feature of the Mesopotamian Babylon, he did it for the sake of symbolism, as he had done in 11:8 (Jerusalem-Rome); in so doing he was perfectly consistent with himself, having given her the very name of Babylon (17:5).

Verses 16–17 occur where, according to my conjecture, there had followed originally some comments of John after the word of the angel. The sequence had been lost to sight and by the working of the memory of John’s amanuensis a piece that did not form part of c. 17 had supplanted the original words. The beginning, “And the ten horns which

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁵⁸ On the diction of v. 15 see Charles, *op. cit.*, II, 72.

thou sawest," is a replica of v. 12*a*, an evident sign that all is not correct here. The confusion which reigned over this section is also apparent in the addition "and the beast," and in the contents of vv. 16–17, which do not harmonize at all with the rest of the chapter. For this deals with the greatness and power of the harlot, whereas vv. 16–17 describe the beast and the ten kings as her enemies bent on her destruction. Finally the word *γνώμη* in 17*a* was a catchword for 17*bc*; the kings effect God's "purpose" by destroying the harlot, and "act with one purpose" as was said of them in v. 13, this "purpose" being something else than the "purpose" in 17*a*. There is no difficulty in deriving vv. 16–17 from St. John, but he must have spoken them on another occasion than the substance of c. 17. This is one of the proofs that occasionally he repeated himself, and did so without any concern for what he had previously said on the subject. He dealt with it as its absolute master and gave to the same symbol, if it so suited him, quite different interpretations. Thus v. 8 (in part), vv. 9*d*–11 and vv. 16–17 belonged to one cycle of explanations, the rest of c. 17 to another.

Verse 18. "And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city which holds empire over the kings of the earth." This is a word of the angel; one expects some further explanation, but it is broken off.

Those are the major literary difficulties of this chapter. Apart from the various doublets they chiefly consist of insertions taken from a different narrative and put into the framework of the chapter. These insertions regularly take the place of other matter which has dropped out. For judging by the remainders of the original v. 8 and by the vv. 12–14 it is very likely that all the formulae ("The . . . which thou sawest is . . .") were followed by corresponding comments, all of them probably words of the author himself, for which we now look in vain. Leaving alone the doublet in v. 16 (parallel to v. 12), the formulae are five in number:

- v. 9: "The beast which thou sawest . . ."
- v. 9: "The seven heads (*omits*: which thou sawest) . . ."
- v. 12: "And the ten horns which thou sawest . . ."
- v. 15: "The waters which thou sawest . . ."
- v. 18: "And the woman whom thou sawest . . ."

The middle formula is followed by the mention of the Lamb, which for the moment opens up a brighter view in the midst of the threaten-

ing symbols of the woman and the beast with its satellites. By this feature vv. 12-14 became prominent among the other parts and thus should be considered the centre of the whole arrangement, two formulae preceding and two following. Originally, therefore, 17:12-14 was the central section of 17:8-18 which formed a closed symmetrical structure.

It is impossible to explain the inconsistencies of c. 17 by any sort of literary process. Only if we rule out reason and take the text that is before us as the result of the working of memory do we get a satisfactory explanation. Somebody might object that this kind of explanation in reality is no explanation at all, since it leaves the disharmonies of the text where they are. To this objection I should reply that in this article we were not concerned with explaining the content of the texts, but with its origin. Our explanation is psychological, not logical. The many omissions, doublets, insertions of wrong material, erroneous replacements cannot be explained by logical reasons nor be smoothed over; at any rate it cannot be done if the Apocalypse is to be judged by the ordinary rules of literary criticism or, what is the same, of literary aesthetics. As those perplexities, all the same, came into being by human activity, man's reasoning mind being excluded, they are only comprehensible as the result of memory, which is man's mental power but not itself working after the fashion of reason. If the inconsistencies were only few in number, they might pass as slips of the seer himself, whose intellect would have set right possible aberrations of his memory when detected, as would have happened in most of the cases. But the one who did the writing obviously was not in a position to correct the deficiencies of his memory by applying his knowledge of the matter which he wrote down since he had not himself seen the visions. Even in that supposition he might have left us a more orderly work than our Apocalypse, had it not been partly for his incapacity in literary matters,⁵⁹ and for his endeavour to follow as closely as possible the words of John as best he remembered them. For this we owe him our thanks.

The blunders of which I had to accuse him are many. But I do not pretend to give here a comprehensive explanation of all the discord-

⁵⁹ I should not, however, go the whole way with Charles (*op. cit.*, I, 1-1v) in denouncing the writer's stupidity.

ances of the text. For instance, there seem to be two narratives in c. 12 which are intertwined or, as it were, dovetailed, which can only be the outcome of a literary procedure. Still, there remain a great many blunders which I ascribe to the editor of the work. There is nothing odd and surprising about this, seeing how strange to John's listeners must have been his reports, seeing the diversity of his matter, the absolutely unexpected sequence of one metaphor after another, the mixture of pure reports and of explanations interspersed, in particular also the diverging explanations of the same symbols proffered at different times, or similar explanations given to different symbols. Had it not been for the tenacity of the disciple of the Apostle in repeating what he remembered having heard, even if not understood, we should not be in a position to hear in the Apocalypse John himself speaking, although he did not write the book himself.