

language is found, we can avoid the types of over-interpretation that have prevailed for Matt 26.38/Mark 14.34. In modern English, Jesus did not suffer from a “sorrow unto death,” i.e., a sorrow that could lead to death, but rather he was “dying of sorrow,” in the same sense that the extremely thirsty person can say, “I’m dying of thirst!”

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DISCOURSE STRUCTURE IN 3 JOHN

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Introduction

The third letter of John is a fascinating text. It is short enough for the reader to take in the whole discourse, and it is clearly structured in that the major breaks in the discourse are easily identified. Yet there remain tantalizing problems in assessing the relative importance of these breaks, and thus in discerning the main purpose of the letter. This article presents an analysis of the letter depending on structural criteria.¹ The article arises from using 3 John as a class assignment in master’s degree courses both at Trinity Theological College, Singapore, in October 2002, and in the University of Birmingham, England, in December 2002. In both cases, the class members provided stimulating and provocative observations, and deserve warm thanks.

Where Greek words are glossed in English, the wording of the RSV is followed as far as possible. Other glosses are sometimes used in order to reflect the Greek more literally, and are the author’s own.

Criteria for the division of the discourse

Verses 1 and 15 separate themselves off almost automatically as the opening and closing of the letter. They fall within the bounds of the conventional format for letters of the period, with each introduced by a verbless clause. From a structural perspective, they are not of major interest.

Within the rest of the letter (vv. 2-14), the most striking structural feature is the repetition of the vocative Ἀγαπητέ “beloved,” in vv. 2, 5, and 11 (the last one reinforced by an imperative verb). Vocatives often mark the beginning of a new unit, and there is no reason why they should not be understood to do so here also. The occurrence of the connectives γὰρ (“for,” vv. 3 and 7) and οὖν (“so,” v. 8), and the anaphoric τούτων (“these things,” v. 4) support this analysis, and strongly suggest that vv. 2-4 and 5-8 form clearly marked units, which we may label paragraphs. Such an analysis is reinforced by the observation that the dominant main verbs in 2-4 are first person singular (εὐχόμεθα, ἐχάρην, ἔχω, “I pray,” “I rejoiced,” and “I have”), whereas those in 5-8 are second person singular (ποιεῖς, ἐργάσῃ, ποιήσεις, “you do,” “you render,” and “you will do”).

A second notable structural feature is the asyndeton, or lack of any connective particle, at the beginning of vv. 9, 12, and 13. This may support the identification

¹ For an alternative approach to this letter that considers also its information structure and rhetorical strategy, see Sebastiaan Floor, “A Discourse Analysis of 3 John,” *Notes on Translation* 4.4 (1990): 1-17.

of new units of the discourse, but other criteria are also required before new units can be posited with confidence. With respect to v. 9, one such criterion is the change back from the second person singular dominant verbs in vv. 5-8 to first person in vv. 9-10 (“Ἐγραψά, ἔλθω, ὑπομνήσω” “I wrote,” “I may come,” “I will remind”). Since v. 11 has already been identified as the beginning of a new unit because of the vocative that occurs there, it seems a fair conclusion that vv. 9-10 can be regarded as another, separate paragraph. The subject matter in these verses is significantly different from that in vv. 5-8 and 11, though “subject matter” is not a structural criterion, and is more open to arbitrary evaluation.

Similar arguments can be applied in vv. 13-14. The asyndeton is followed by verbs in the first person singular (εἶχον, οὐ θέλω, ἐλπίζω “I had,” “I do not want,” and “I hope”), so these two verses may also be treated as a distinct unit that can be labeled a paragraph. Again the subject matter shows a marked change from the preceding verses.

The most difficult and interesting place is v. 12. Since in the two previous cases, the asyndeton is supported by other criteria, it seems reasonable to start by supposing that in this case also it marks the onset of a new unit. But this time the argument from the person forms of the verbs is inconclusive. In v. 11 the dominant main verb is the second person singular imperative (μὴ μιμοῦ “do not imitate”), but in v. 12 the three main verbs are all in different persons: third person singular (μεμαρτύρηται “is testified”), first person plural (μαρτυροῦμεν “we testify”), and second person singular (οἶδας “you know”). Likewise it is not obvious whether there is a change of subject matter or not. To arrive at a decision on this, other criteria must be found, and so it is necessary to turn to higher level considerations.

What are the implications for the overall analysis of the letter if we (a) analyze v. 12 as a unit separate from v. 11, and (b) link it with v. 11 into one unit? The options can be displayed as follows, with blank lines showing major divisions, and indentations indicating possible balancing units:

Option (a)	Option (b)
1 Opening greetings	1 Opening greetings
2-4 Prayer (+vocative) 1 sg	2-4 Prayer (+vocative) 1 sg
5-8 Commendation of Gaius (+voc) 2 sg	5-8 Commendation of Gaius (+voc) 2 sg
9-10 Condemnation of Diotrephes 1 sg	9-10 Condemnation of Diotrephes 1 sg
11 Instruction to Gaius (+voc+impt) 2 sg	11-12 Instructions to Gaius (+voc+impt) 2 sg
12 Commendation of Demetrius mixed	
	13-14 Personal remarks 1 sg
13-14 Personal remarks 1 sg	
	15 Closing greetings
15 Closing greetings	

Arguments for each possibility

Under both options, the opening and closing greetings (vv. 1 and 15) balance each other, as do the prayer (vv. 2-4) and the personal remarks (vv. 13-14). The difference lies in the main body of the letter (vv. 5-12). Under option (a), the commendations of Gaius (vv. 5-8) and Demetrius (v. 12) balance each other, but the pattern of alternation in the person of the dominant main verbs breaks down in

v. 12, and the distribution of the vocatives is unbalanced and asymmetrical. The condemnation of Diotrephes and the instruction to Gaius are seen as joint items at the centre of the pattern, and could be construed as contrastive units together constituting the main purpose of the letter.

Under option (b), the commendation of and instructions to Gaius (vv. 5-8 and 11-12 respectively) balance each other, and the condemnation of Diotrephes is left as the sole unit in the centre of the pattern, thus probably forming the main purpose of the letter. The fact that v. 10 contains the longest and syntactically most complex sentence in the whole letter may point towards the same conclusion. Moreover, by this analysis the pattern of alternation in the person of the dominant main verbs is preserved, and regarded as a significant structural factor. The linking of vv. 11 and 12 can be defended on the grounds that if these verses are regarded as a single unit, then they both begin and end with second person singular dominant main verbs (μη μιμοῦ in v. 11 and οἶδας in v. 12). This inclusion is thus taken as more significant than the variation in person of the other verbs in v. 12. Such an approach respects the pattern of person alternation, which is balanced and symmetrical.

How, then, is the asyndeton in v. 12 to be explained? Not as evidence for disjunction, as in vv. 9 and 13, but rather as juxtaposition with and further exemplification of the instruction in v. 11. The negative injunction to Gaius not to imitate evil is surely an anaphoric reference to the conduct of Diotrephes in vv. 9-10. The second injunction (with the imperative verb implicitly repeated as a positive command), to imitate good is supported by the following statement about Demetrius, which is added to provide an example of the good which Gaius is to imitate. The occurrence of the name (Δημητρίῳ) in a marked position at the beginning of the sentence reinforces this view. In all likelihood, Demetrius was the bearer of the letter, and this may explain why there is no further description of him. He may have been one of the itinerant preachers mentioned in vv. 5-8, but for the writer's purpose it is sufficient to say that he is an approved colleague. As befits the bearer of the letter, he exemplifies its values, and so sets an example worth following.

It remains to note that v. 11 begins not only with a vocative, but with a vocative and imperative combination. Such a combination tends to mark a more important break in a discourse than a vocative on its own, and this too would support the analysis in option (b) above rather than that in option (a).

A further feature of note is the repetition of key lexical roots throughout the letter. Indeed every single verse participates in at least one such repetition, from ἀγαπητῷ-ἀγαπῶ (“love”) in v. 1 to ἀσπάζονται-ἀσπάζου (“greet”) in v. 15. These repetitions seem to be of varying significance from a structural perspective. The most striking example is in vv. 9-10, where there is the chiasmic repetition of ἐκκλησία-ἐπιδέχεται-ἐπιδέχεται-ἐκκλησίας (“church-receive-receive-church”). Does this not lend support to the view that these verses are the peak of the entire letter, and reveal the author's main purpose in writing it? In v. 11 there is another example almost as perfect with κακὸν-ἀγαθὸν-ἀγαθοποιῶν-κακοποιῶν (“evil-good-doing good-doing evil”). At the other extreme is the repetition between vv. 7 and 15 of ὄνοματος-ὄνομα (“name”). There is no other connection between these verses, and in fact the word points to different referents in the two places,

Christ in the first and the friends of Gaius in the second. There is almost certainly no structural importance in this particular repetition. The same is probably true of the repetition between vv. 1 and 6 of ἀγαπῶ- ἀγάπη (“I love-love”) and that between vv. 9 and 13 of Ἐγραψά-γράφαι (“wrote-to write”).

Other repetitions that may be of local cohesive significance within their own unit include εὐοδοῦσθαι-εὐοδοῦται (“be well”) in v. 2; ἐχάρην-χαρᾶν and περιπατεῖς-περιπατοῦντα (“rejoiced-joy” and “you walk-walking”) in vv. 3-4; ποιεῖς-ποιήσεις (“do-will do”) in vv. 5-6, γράψαι-γράψειν (“to write”) in v. 13; and στόμα (“mouth”) in v. 14.

The most complex and puzzling set of repetitions is that involving the roots μαρτυρ- and ἀληθ- (“witness” and “true”). The first occurs in vv. 3, 6, and three times in 12; the second in vv. 1, 3, 4, 8, and twice in 12. Thus it may be plausibly claimed that v. 12 has links both with the unit 2-4 and the unit 5-8. Both the analytical options outlined above would see more significance in the link with 5-8 than that with 2-4, despite the fact that the links with 2-4 are slightly more numerous (three as against two).

The peak from a structural perspective

Under pattern (a) above, the condemnation of Diotrephes and the instruction to Gaius appear as joint items at the centre of the pattern, and could be construed as contrastive units together constituting the main purpose of the letter. The contrast however is unbalanced, and thus unconvincing.

Under the preferred option (b), vv. 5-8 and 11-12 balance each other, and the condemnation of Diotrephes in vv. 9-10 is left as the sole unit in the centre of the pattern and so probably forms the main purpose of the letter. As noted above, the fact that v. 10 contains the longest and syntactically most complex sentence in the whole letter may support this conclusion. If this is so, then it suggests that in v. 11, it is indeed appropriate to take τὸ κακὸν (“the evil”) as anaphoric and its opposite τὸ ἀγαθόν (“the good”) as cataphoric, pointing onward to the example of Demetrius in v. 12.

If vv. 9-10 are identified as the peak of the letter, then its main purpose is seen as administering a rebuke to Diotrephes. Since this man has already refused to acknowledge the authority of the author (“the elder” of v. 1) there would be little point in writing to him directly. By sending the rebuke via a trusted and esteemed third person, Gaius, the writer ensured that his message would both reach Diotrephes, and, in the process, become known to other members of the church. This would surely help to undermine Diotrephes’ pretensions to leadership, and would also have the added advantage of politeness since it avoided a direct confrontation.

The above method of analyzing the text shows up the actual structures, beginning with smaller units and working up to larger ones. It concludes that the peak of the letter is in vv. 9 and 10, and that the real purpose of the letter is therefore to puncture the pretensions of Diotrephes. The advantage of this empirical type of analysis is that it is relatively objective, and its claims are readily available for checking. For translators, such an analysis of the text is extremely helpful, not only in preparation for the actual translation, but also in evaluating the diverse analyses given in commentaries. These are often based on a relatively subjective response to the content, and do not always look rigorously at the over-

arching syntactic patterns. If translators are to find appropriate structures in their own language, they must first have a firm grasp of the macro-structure in the source language.

First person plural forms

One question that is not of direct importance to a structural analysis, but which will pose questions for many translators is whether the first person plural forms in this letter should be translated as inclusive or exclusive. The first of these occurs in v. 8. Up to this point, all the first person forms (in vv. 1-4) have been singular and the writer has clearly been speaking of himself. The first person plural forms in v. 8 (ὀφείλομεν “we ought” and γινώμεθα “we may be”) appear to be genuine plurals, not just “editorial” plurals used as a literary convention to refer to the author. The writer is saying that people like Gaius and himself should welcome the kind of itinerant preachers he has been talking about, and the plural is therefore inclusive.

In vv. 9-10 the picture is less clear. The verbs are in the first person singular but the pronoun references (ἡμᾶς “us”) are in the plural. These plurals may perhaps still include Gaius, though this seems unlikely especially in v. 9. But they could also be taken as editorial, since in vv. 9-10 the writer is speaking about the rejection of a letter he himself had written (compare RSV “my . . . me . . .”). Such an interpretation does not sit comfortably with the singular verbs, however, and presupposes fluctuation between singular and plural that is apparently unmotivated. More likely the author intends to imply that Diotrephes rejects not only himself, but also those who support or represent him, perhaps “the brothers” of v. 5. In that case, the first person plural form would be rendered as exclusive.

In v. 12 the first person plurals (ἡμεῖς δὲ μαρτυροῦμεν . . . ἡ μαρτυρία ἡμῶν “we testify . . . our testimony”) may again be editorial, referring only to the author, and are taken this way by RSV, which renders as “I testify . . . my testimony . . .” However, since personal comments to Gaius are consistently in the first person singular (vv. 1-4, 13-14), it seems more likely that here the plural is referring to the author together with like-minded people at his location, perhaps οἱ φίλοι (“the friends”) of v. 15. So it would be safer to translate as first person plural. The immediate context in which Gaius is identified as the recipient of the author’s testimony makes it clear that if a plural is used, it should be exclusive.

In v. 14, the context makes it clear that the author is including Gaius, so the first person plural (λαλήσομεν “we will talk”) should definitely be inclusive.

Display of the text

In the following display of the Greek text, double lines (====) are used to indicate breaks between major sections, and single lines (——) to indicate breaks between smaller sections. The display follows the analysis given in option (b) above. Indentation shows approximately the degree of subordination, and items which are parallel with each other within a section are placed at the same degree of indentation as far as possible. Underlines indicate the principal words that are repeated within the text.

3 John

1 Ὁ πρεσβύτερος Γαῖω τῷ ἀγαπητῷ,
ὄν ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.

2 Ἀγαπητέ, περὶ πάντων εὐχομαί σε εὐδοῦσθαι
καὶ ὑγιαίνειν,
καθὼς εὐδοῦταί σου ἡ ψυχή.

3 Ἐχάρην γὰρ λίαν ἐρχομένων ἀδελφῶν
καὶ μαρτυρούντων σου τῇ ἀληθείᾳ,
καθὼς σὺ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ περιπατεῖς.

4 μειζοτέραν τούτων οὐκ ἔχω χάραν,
ἵνα ἀκούω τὰ ἐμὰ τέκνα ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ περιπατοῦντα.

5 Ἀγαπητέ, πιστὸν ποιεῖς ὃ ἐὰν ἐργάσῃ εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς
καὶ τοῦτο ξένους,

6 οἱ ἐμαρτύρησάν σου τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐνώπιον ἐκκλησίας,
οἷς καλῶς ποιήσεις προπέμψας ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ·

7 ὑπὲρ γὰρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐξήλθον

μηδὲν λαμβάνοντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνικῶν.

8 ἡμεῖς οὖν ὀφείλομεν ὑπολαμβάνειν τοὺς τοιοῦτους,
ἵνα συνεργοὶ γινώμεθα τῇ ἀληθείᾳ.

9 Ἐγραψά τι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ·

ἀλλ' ὃ φιλοπρωτεύων αὐτῶν Διοτρέφης οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται ἡμᾶς.

10 διὰ τοῦτο,

ἐὰν ἔλθω,

ὑπομνήσω αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα

ἃ ποιεῖ

λόγοις πονηροῖς φλυαρῶν ἡμᾶς,

καὶ μὴ ἀρκούμενος ἐπὶ τούτοις

οὔτε αὐτὸς ἐπιδέχεται τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς

καὶ τοὺς βουλομένους κωλύει

καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐβάλλει.

11 Ἀγαπητέ, μὴ μιμοῦ τὸ κακὸν
ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀγαθόν.

ὁ ἀγαθοποιῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν·

ὁ κακοποιῶν οὐχ ἐώρακεν τὸν θεόν.

12 Δημητρίω μεμαρτύρηται ὑπὸ πάντων

καὶ ὑπὸ αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας·

καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ μαρτυροῦμεν,

καὶ οἶδας

ὅτι ἡ μαρτυρία ἡμῶν ἀληθῆς ἐστίν.

13 Πολλὰ εἶχον γράψαι σοι
 ἀλλ' οὐ θέλω διὰ μέλανος καὶ καλάμου σοι γράφειν.
 14 ἐλπίζω δὲ εὐθέως σε ἰδεῖν,
 καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλήσομεν.

=====

15 εἰρήνη σοι.
ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ φίλοι.
ἀσπάζου τοὺς φίλους κατ' ὄνομα.

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THE IMPACT OF THE BIBLE ON THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN JAPAN

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Let me begin with a paradox. The Bible was almost certainly one of the most influential texts during the period in which Japan opened itself to the outside world. And yet, Japan has never become a Christian nation. Even today, the conversion rate to Christianity is very small—less than one percent of the total population. The translation of the Bible into Japanese did have a considerable impact on modern Japan—but in unforeseen and unpredictable ways. This article explores the influence of the biblical text through the impact it had on a variety of influential figures in modern Japanese history and language.

The Bible was introduced into nineteenth-century Japan in three stages. First, it was written in the Chinese language, and as such could be read only by the Japanese *literati*, around two percent of the total population. Then missionaries taught the English text of the Bible to young Japanese students, many of whom later became the leaders of modern Japan. The third and final stage saw the completion of the translation of the Bible into Japanese. This monumental work was completed in 1887, and is one of the greatest achievements in translation during the modern period, as it unified disparate styles and established a distinct one which was to have so strong an impact on the development of modern written Japanese.

In this article I shall consider three elements which helped define the biblical influence on the development of modern Japan. These are: (1) the work and influence of a key Western missionary figure, Guido Fridolin Verbeck; (2) the stories of the Japanese followers of the Bible; and (3) the impact on the Japanese language.

The cultural impact of the text through education, politics, and leaders

The influence of the biblical text on Japanese history and culture can be seen through the impact it had on the attitudes of the intellectuals and many of the leaders of the *Meiji* era (1868-1911). There is a cultural point to be made here. Even now, in modern Japanese society, when a movement is evaluated or judged, it is the people, not the principles, that are the focus. When assessing Christianity,