

The Glory and Honour received by the Son

John and 2 Peter on Christology

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1. Introduction

The idea of alluding to 2 Pet 1:17 in the title of this comparison between the Christology of 2 Peter and that of the Gospel of John¹ is triggered by their shared vocabulary. Within the New Testament, only John and 2 Peter use the specific syntagma “receive [honour and] glory” (λαμβάνω [τιμὴν καὶ] δόξαν) to indicate the high status of dignity² which the earthly Jesus, *as a human being*, receives from “God the Father” (2 Pet 1:17; cf. John 8:54) but not from men (cf. John 5:41).³

While the *motif* of Jesus’ “glory and honour” is typical in John, it is quite uncommon in 2 Peter (cf. 2 Pet 1:3; 3:18),⁴ and the syntagma λαμβάνω τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν occurs only once in 2 Pet 1:17.⁵ Although the immediate context (the remembered experience of the transfiguration of Jesus; cf. 2 Pet 1:16–18), might have influenced the employed vocabulary (cf. εἶδον τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ in Lk 9:32⁶), both the conjunction of the syntagma with son-Christology and the theological use of the metaphor of the father-son relationship stimulate and legitimate a systematic comparison between the Christological concepts of 2 Peter and John.⁷

¹ John’s Christology is certainly a peak and, to some extent, the summit of New Testament Christology. M. KARRER, *Gesù Christo nel Nuovo Testamento*, Brescia 2011, 377, writes: “In John, in the end, the presentation of the earthly Jesus involves almost all the crucial statements of Christology, thus forming the summit in the New Testament” (all translations from the Italian are mine).

² Cf. the reference in 1 En. 14:21 to the divine πρόσωπον, τὸ ἔντιμον καὶ ἔνδοξον.

³ Otherwise it is used only in the doxological formulas in Rev 4:11; 5:12. In John’s Apocalypse, apart from Rev 21:26, the binome appears only in doxologies (cf. Rev 4:9,11; 5:12f.; 7:12). But cf. also 1 Tim 1:17: “To the King of ages, imperishable and invisible, the only God be honour and glory to endless ages, amen” (Τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων, ἀφθάρτω ἀοράτῳ μόνῳ θεῷ, τιμὴ καὶ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν).

⁴ But see T. CALLAN, *The Christology of the Second Letter of Peter*, Bib. 82 (2001), 253–263, 255.

⁵ The same is true of the Christological use of the “Son”-title and the theological use of “Father”.

⁶ All synoptic Gospels display the proclamation of Jesus as “Son”.

⁷ It should be not forgotten, however, that 2 Peter and John are very different texts in respect of length, literary genre and socio-historical context. W. GRÜNSTÄUDEL, *Petrus Alexandrinus. Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT II/353, Tübingen 2013, 288, points to another methodological challenge: Perhaps the difficulty in detecting and understanding intertextual contacts and references in early Christian literature could be caused by the

After a short sketch of recent research on the topic (part 2) and a description of the literary context (i. e. 2 Pet 1:16–18; part 3), such a comparison will be undertaken over against the background of the LXX and the rest of the New Testament (part 4), while the final part of this paper (part 5) summarizes the most important results.

2. Comparison between John's and 2 Peter's Christology in 2 Peter research

Christology is not a very much debated issue in research on 2 Peter and the amount of literature on the topic is rather limited. This is no surprise, as 2 Peter's doctrinal agenda is primarily linked to eschatological and ethical (or rather: soteriological) concerns.⁸ Christology, one might say, is the presupposed condition of 2 Peter's argument.⁹

Similarly, any kind of (possible) relationship between John and 2 Peter (may it be on a historical, literary or theological level) is quite rarely discussed at reasonable length. Even in his study dedicated to *The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and the other Early Christian Literature* (2002), Michael Gilmour mentions a possible relationship with John only in a footnote, stating that

“in terms of texts, similarities are found primarily between 2 Peter and the Synoptic Gospels. There are not many parallels with John's Gospel but Peter's awareness of his imminent death (2 Pet 1:14) brings Jesus' words in John 21,18–19 to mind – whether the author was deliberately echoing that Gospel or not.”¹⁰

With the recent contributions of Terrence Callan and Martin Ruf, two significant exceptions to this rule deserve to be discussed in the following. In his study

exegetical techniques used by the authors (one can think of the relationship between 2 Peter and Jude) who composed texts “with the ring of an ancient time” which is not yet obvious to us.

⁸ Cf. W. GRÜNSTÄUDEL, Bibliography on Jude and 2 Peter (1983–2013), online available at http://www.academia.edu/2981150/Bibliography_on_2_Peter_and_Jude_1983-2013_, [08.07.2017], who lists less than ten items regarding this topic.

⁹ As correctly shown by R. БАУСКНАМ, Jude, 2 Peter, WBC, Waco 1983, 151 f., criticising the objection of Ernst Käsemann who lamented the lack of Christocentrism in the eschatology of 2 Peter. On Käsemann's reading of 2 Peter, cf. Jörg Frey's contribution in the present volume.

¹⁰ M. J. GILMOUR, The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and Early Christian Literature, SBL Academia Biblica 10, Leiden/Boston/Köln 2002, 95 n. 30. Commenting on 2 Pet 1:16–18, the author also recalls John 12:28 (“the affirming voice is ‘from haeven’ though in a different context”, *ibid.*, 96 n. 32) and John 1:14 regarding the use of *ὁὅξα* (“it is also possible to find similar parallels with Paul and John”, *ibid.*, 97). The possible allusion to John 21 in 2 Pet 1:14 is also the only real nexus envisaged by Richard Bauckham in his commentary, cf. БАУСКНАМ, 2 Peter (cf. n. 9), 148.200 f. After evaluating other possible sources of 2 Pet 1:14, the author concludes: “the saying of Jesus in John 21:18 seems to be the only likely basis for 2 Pet 1:14” (*ibid.*, 201). Commenting on 2 Pet 1:16–18, Bauckham also recalls *en passant* the Johannine “voice from heaven” in John 12:28 as perhaps reflecting the Transfiguration traditions (cf. *ibid.*, 206).

on 2 Peter's Christology, published in 2001, Terrence Callan identifies a parallel between 2 Pet 1:1 f. and John 1:1 f.:

"... we see a similar alternation between identifying Jesus with, and distinguishing him from, God in the first verses of the Gospel of John ... It seems most likely that both 2 Peter and John consciously intend to identify Jesus with God and to distinguish him from God."¹¹

Shortly afterwards Callan focuses on the difference between both texts and underlines that

"despite the emphasis on the word of God noted above [sc. the reference is to 3,5-7 and to the great weight attributed to the prophetic word in 1,19-21; 3,2], the author of 2 Peter does not explain the relationship between Jesus and God by saying that Jesus is the Word of God. The Gospel of John first proposed this explanation, and it has been very important in subsequent Christian theology. However, 2 Peter does not seem to identify Jesus and the W/word of God. 2 Peter explains the relationship between Jesus and God by saying that Jesus is the Son of God."¹²

This assessment is based upon his reading of 2 Peter's transfiguration account, which Callan primarily interprets in a Hellenistic perspective:

"... in the Hellenistic world, 'son of God' designated divinities who were seen as literal offspring of the gods. Since 2 Peter regards Jesus as God, it is very likely that 2 Peter understands the phrase on Hellenistic lines."¹³

Connecting Peter's "non-systematic" Christology¹⁴ with broader theological developments in Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity, Callan concludes that "when Jewish monotheists encountered Hellenistic polytheism, they began to use the word 'god' in two different ways. They continue to use 'god' as a proper noun to refer to the one God who revealed himself in the Hebrew scriptures. However, they also began to use 'god' occasionally as polytheists did, as a common noun that designated any one of a class of beings ... locating this 'god' in the category of the divine."¹⁵ Following this line of reasoning, Callan detects in 2 Peter

"the beginning of early Christian use of 'god' in two senses ... He [sc. the author of 2 Peter] can also call Jesus 'god' in a more general sense, meaning that he belongs to the category of the divine. However, he does not mean either that Jesus is the God who revealed himself in the Hebrew Bible."¹⁶

¹¹ CALLAN, *Christology* (cf. n. 4), 256.

¹² *Ibid.*, 258.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 258.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 263.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 262.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 263.

Setting aside the grammatical ambiguity in 2 Pet 1:1 (τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), Callan's interpretation creates two major problems:

First, the Father-Son theology and Christology is not at all typical of 2 Peter which, except in 1:16–18, never uses 'Father' as a title for God or 'Son' for Jesus. Hence it appears to be difficult to consider this as its central explanation of Jesus' identity. If the author of 2 Peter uses family-related metaphors to affirm Jesus' divinity or "glory", he is probably echoing and interpreting other Christian traditions and accounts.¹⁷

Second, explaining the use of the title 'God' for Jesus in such reductive terms (θεῖος rather than θεός) hardly does justice to 2 Peter's "non-systematic" Christology. The repeated identification of Jesus as Lord and Saviour in the opening and closing of the letter (cf. 2 Pet 1:1.2.8.10; 3:18) as well as in its body (cf. 2 Pet 1:16; 2:20; 3:2), where he is also called a δεσπότης (2 Pet 2:1) whom the false teachers are ἀρνούμενοι,¹⁸ demonstrates that 2 Peter thinks of Jesus' divinity not only "in a more general sense". The final Christocentric doxology of the letter (2 Pet 3:18) points in a similar direction, especially when read *vis à vis* its theocentric *Vorlage* in Jude 24f. Borrowing the words and results of the deep historical and theological analysis of Martin Karrer, I would like to emphasize that titles like 'God' or 'Saviour', which could be used for Roman emperors or pagan gods,¹⁹ were not intended in the same way and not filled with a similar meaning by the author of 2 Peter. As Martin Karrer explains, entitling Jesus as 'God', underscores

"his relationship to the only God ... *Theos* is a relational designation ... It draws in a relation with Jesus and, by him, in his relationship with God. Behind this, a lively moved, dynamic comprehension of the only God is concealed."²⁰

Finally, the search for possible connections with Johannine Christology should not be restricted to the realm of semantic peculiarities such as Christological "titles". It seems to be at least equally important to take into account the whole spectrum of Christology-related metaphorical expressions in both the texts.

¹⁷ Of course, one might ask: but what traditions? And what is his intention? On this, cf. part 4 below.

¹⁸ Cf. the title for God, the creator and (eschatological) saviour in the LXX (Job 5:8; Wis 6:7; 8:3; 11:26; 13:3.9; Isa 1:24; 3:1; 10:33) and Jude 4.

¹⁹ KARRER, *Gesù Cristo* (cf. n. 1), 378f., speaks of "demigods, beings who ascend and descend."

²⁰ According to KARRER, *Gesù Cristo* (cf. n. 1), 379, it is not the employment but the delay in employing the title of *Theos* for Jesus that "reflects pagan usage ... *The decisive achievement of early Christianity* is not so much that of having imposed the predicate *theos*. From the pagan point of view, this would have been possible immediately after the experience of the resurrection. By opening up new perspectives, it succeeds in *delaying its use until the complete clarification of its relational structure*: to speak of Jesus as 'God' signifies living and establishing his relationship with regard to the only God."

With the detailed and extensive study of Martin Ruf,²¹ published in 2011, an important step towards a more systematic and structural comparison between 2 Peter and John and their respective Christologies has been made. Besides the several references to John's Gospel and Johannine literature²² throughout his study, Ruf devotes a whole paragraph to similarities between Johannine literature (*Konvergenzen mit johanneischer Literatur des Neuen Testaments*) and 2 Pet 1:16–18. He points to two important observations:

First of all, Ruf detects a “theologische Parallele mit lexikalischen Anklängen” in John 1:14 and 2 Pet 1:16–18: Just as the “apostolic we” in John 1:14 affirms καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, a comparable “apostolic-Petrine we” (recounting the Transfiguration experience) emphasizes its status as *eyewitness* (ἐπόπται γεννηθέντες) of the *doxa* bestowed on Jesus by the Father. If John speaks of the μονογενής and 2 Peter of υἱός ἀγαπητός, both expressions evoke the dignity of Jesus as the only Son (in the LXX for ὁ υἱός, cf. Gen 22:2.12.16; Judges 11:34; Zech 12:10). In these “lexikalischen Kongruenzen”²³, Ruf does not find evidence for a literary relationship between John and 2 Peter, but rather stresses the consonance of theological understanding and intentions (“Gleichklang der theologischen Absichten”): Like John, the author of 2 Peter describes the divine origin of Jesus with the category of Sonship, and the quality of the witness by means of the “apostolic we”.²⁴

However, Ruf does not forget to mention the substantial differences between both accounts: In John, the revelation of Jesus' δόξα is not a punctual and isolated event like the transfiguration but pervades the entire gospel and culminates in crucifixion and resurrection; likewise, Jesus' disciples act as witnesses for a much longer period of time (*Zeitraum*) – even their *relecture* of Jesus' life in the post-Easter perspective is guided by their experience as witnesses.

Second, Ruf discusses the parallels between John 12:(27–)28, the first prayer of Jesus when “his hour” arrives (the so-called Johannine Gethsemane), and 2 Pet 1:16–18. Like Luke (cf. Luke 9:31: οἱ ὀφθέντες ἐν δόξῃ ἔλεγον τὴν ἕξοδον αὐτοῦ, ἣν ἤμελλεν πληροῦν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ), John is able to blend the revelation

²¹ Cf. M. G. RUF, *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich. Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*, WUNT II/300, Tübingen 2011, 112–114.

²² In detail (all page numbers in brackets refer to RUF, *Die heiligen Propheten* [cf. n. 21]): John 1:14 (85.100.112f.589); 4:14 (451); 8:34 (460); 13:36–38 (86); 13–17 (35); 16:7 (86); 21:18f. (234.240.246.249f.); 21:22 (235). Interesting is Ruf's understanding of the possible correlation between 2 Pet 1:12–15 and John 21 (cf. *ibid.*, 235): Rather than assuming a literary relationship between the texts, he speaks of a comparable interpretation: In each of the texts Peter's death is related to the question of the parousia of Jesus!

²³ *Ibid.*, 113.

²⁴ Also C. SPICQ, *Note di lessicografia neotestamentaria* 1, Brescia 1988, 432f., proposes a parallel between Johannine and Petrine Christology when he refers to 2 Pet 1:16f. while commenting on John 1:14: “[P]recisely as in the LXX, the apostles saw the δόξα, the luminous manifestation of the Word incarnate, that is to say, his divine glory: that glory is exactly that of the Father, and Jesus possesses it *de jure* and *de facto* as only Son, that is, by virtue of his eternal filiation (cf. 2 Pet 1:16f.)”

of divine δόξα with the expectation of Jesus' death. However, it is unclear if there are any real overlaps between the presumed Johannine form of the transfiguration and its counterpart in 2 Peter. For Ruf, overlap occurs only in regard of the "voice from heaven" (instead of the Synoptic φωνή ἐκ τῆς νεφέλης, see Matt 17:5; Mk 9:7; Lk 9:35), in relation to the φωνῆς ἐνεχθείσης αὐτῶ τοιαῦδε ὑπὸ τῆς μεγαλοπρεποῦς δόξης (2 Pet 1:17) ... καὶ ταύτην τὴν φωνὴν ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐνεχθείσαν (2 Pet 1:18), and, in regard of the central concept of δόξα. In both cases, however, the overlaps can be explained with recourse to a shared *Textwelt* (the common apocalyptic literary form of the לִיךְ תִּבְרַךְ and the obvious connection between transfiguration and glory, already explicit in Luke) rather than to any literal contact.

Hence, Martin Ruf does not argue for a close relationship between John's Christological language and 2 Peter's Christology. In his opinion, the most important Johannine influence on 2 Peter's metatextual construction might be the author's consciousness of apostolic tradition and its strong relevance for the common πίστις.²⁵

Summing up, both Callan and Ruf detect the most evident resemblances of Johannine language and Christology in 2 Pet 1:16–18. In my opinion, however, it is worth studying not only the "what" of the δόξα-motif (related to Son-Christology) but also the "how".

3. The Honour and Glory received by the Son: 2 Pet 1:16–18 in its literary context

Following Callan and Ruf, my comparison of 2 Peter with Johannine language and Christology will focus on 2 Pet 1:16–18. To begin with, some notes on the pericope's immediate context (2 Pet 1:12–15.19–21) are in order.

3.1. Observations on context

The basic contextual element that I want to underline here is the insistence on the vocabulary of memory in 2 Pet 1:12–15 (ὑπομνήσκω v. 12, διεγείρειν ὑμᾶς ἐν ὑπομνήσει v. 13, μνήμην ποιεῖσθαι v. 15), which reoccurs in 3:1 f. (διεγείρω

²⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 85f. He also investigated possible relationships between 2 Peter and John's Gospel. In his opinion, for example, the thesis of literary dependence of 2 Pet 1:14 on John 21:18f. is unlikely on account of some incongruities and the difficulty of detecting a real Johannine influence. More generally, 2 Peter does not seem to have the characteristic concepts, ideas and lexical contacts that could make some knowledge of John's gospel reasonable, cf. also W. GRÜNSTÄUDEL, *Petrus Alexandrinus* (cf. n. 7), 39f.

ὑμῶν ἐν ὑπομνήσει τὴν εἰλικρινῆ διάνοιαν v. 1; μνησθῆναι v. 2).²⁶ The “memory-cluster” in 2 Pet 1:12–15 displays specific links to the preceding and the following section. Depending on which links one wants to follow, different aspects of “memory” come into sight:

If one looks back to what precedes (i. e. namely the *exordium* that summarises the divine gifts of salvation and the way traced for believers to correspond to the call and election implied by these gifts, cf. 2 Pet 1:3–5.10 f.), it has to be said that the memory demanded and assured by the author concerns exactly all these things (cf. 2 Pet 1:12: μελλήσω ἀεὶ ὑμᾶς ὑπομιμνήσκω περὶ τούτων), i. e. the things which the addressees already know (καίπερ εἰδότας v. 12) and which are the basis of their own stability ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ ἀληθείας. Incidentally, a first connection with the Johannine christocentric language of revelation could be acknowledged here, if one thinks of 2 John 1 f. In any case, the relation between 2 Pet 1:12–15 and 2 Pet 1:3–11 shows that the memory in question is not at all a mere flash-back to past events, but a soteriological apprehensive memory, i. e. the constantly renewed and deepened living-experience of theological and christological knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις)²⁷ that forms the source (2 Pet 1:2, ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν), the medium (2 Pet 1:3, διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ) and the goal (2 Pet 1:8, εἰς τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπίγνωσιν 1:8) of the believers’ eschatological salvation.

Μνήμην ποιῆσαι (to recall) is for the author indeed the exact key for living wisely and faithfully within the salvific bestowed present (see the “royal bounty”²⁸ expressed by the verb δωρέομαι in vv. 3 f.)! Because whoever is not himself alert to the “the present truth” (ὃ γὰρ μὴ πάρεστιν ταῦτα v. 9), is a λήθην λαβών, that is, one who has lost his salvific memory and, instead of receiving all that the θεία δυνάμις has bestowed on him and living by that, walks in darkness, blind to Christological and soteriological experience (τυφλός ἐστιν μωπαζών, see also 1:19, the prophetic word compared with λύχνω φαίνοντι ἐν ἀύχμηρῷ τόπῳ). The correct insight into ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ (3:4) is crucial: in the *exordium*, the first assertion of the author is that the “precious and magnificent promises” (1:4 τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα) already δεδωρηται (perfect) and are efficacious for life, that is, for “the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (vv. 3.11). Thus,

²⁶ In canonical perspective, for D. R. NIENHUIS/R. W. WALL, Reading the Epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude as Scripture. The Shaping and Shape of a Canonical Collection, Grand Rapids 2013, 100, this is connected to the “intended function” of the Petrine epistles as “witness to Peter’s legacy as chief of the Apostles.” Cf. also S. BÉNÉTREAU, Évangile et prophétie. Un texte original (1Pt 1,10–12) peut-il éclairer un texte difficile (2Pt 1,16–21)?, Bib. 86 (2005), 174–191.

²⁷ Cf. the contribution of Thomas J. Kraus in the present volume.

²⁸ BAUCKHAM, 2 Peter (cf. n. 9), 1983, 178.

the παρουσία is first of all a matter of the present and not only of the cosmological future and final judgment; “memory”, in this perspective, is the active understanding of the given, present, grace and the way to remain wisely ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ ἀληθείᾳ.

If, however, one looks forward to 2 Pet 1:16–18 when “Peter” recalls the *past* apostolic experience of the earthly Jesus who was proclaimed “the Beloved Son” by the “voice from heaven” on the “holy mountain”, it is necessary to think of “memory” also in terms of a record of past events constituting an unique and unrepeatable experience, reserved, however, not only to some ἐπόπτται from the past, but at the same time fundamental to the believers’ present life.²⁹

In this perspective, we can understand some lexical correlations between 2 Pet 1:16–18 and 2 Pet 1:3–11:

First, between the θεία δύναμις of v. 3 and the τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν of v. 16: The divine power, shared by ὁ θεός and κύριος Ἰησοῦς, is the same, already active and not subjected to the conditioning of time, and this shows the already realised truth of the promise of the παρουσία.

Second, between τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἐπαγγέλματα of v. 4 and the experience of the μεγαλειότης of Christ acknowledged in the Transfiguration and linked to “receiving” τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν from the Father: the magnitude and high quality of status and life promised to believers is not different from the status ascribed to the Son.

Third, between the “call” of the believers ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ (v. 3) and the proclamation of the Son realised exactly by the bestowing on him of τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν (v. 17) by the “voice” ἐνεχθείσης αὐτῶ ὑπὸ τῆς μεγαλοπρεποῦς δόξης (v. 17).

Acknowledging this contextual framework allows to grasp more fully the rich semantic field of gift/bestowal – built up by use of the verbs λαγχάνω (v. 1), δωρέομαι (vv. 3.4), φέρω (vv. 17.18.21), λαμβάνω (vv. 9.17), ὑπάρχω (v. 8), πλεονάζω (v. 8) –, that points to the relational structure of the “divine nature”: belonging properly to ὁ θεός and κύριος Ἰησοῦς, it is also shared by the believers in their living experience and salvific knowledge of both.

In the end, “memory” is a matter of understanding the already realised dimension of the promise of the παρουσία in Christological perspective.

²⁹ Cf. the nexus between memory, the prophetic words and the commandments of the κύριος and σωτήρ in 2 Pet 3:1 f.

3.2. Structure and rhetorical purpose

On this contextual basis, we can consider also the structure and purpose of the complex opening of the body of the letter³⁰ that is made up of three smaller units (2 Pet 1:12–15, 16–18, 19–21), the central one dedicated to Peter's account of the Transfiguration:

a) 2 Pet 1:12–15 establishes the testamentary character of the Petrine memory and teaching (the fictive occasion being Peter's imminent death³¹). It is precisely the vocabulary of memory that opens and closes this unit (vv. 12f.15). Not by accident, "the section is rich with linkages to the canonical Gospels"³² that "have the effect of grounding the content of Peter's opening homily in the teaching of Jesus, 'whose precious and very great promises' (2 Pet 1:4) enable the believer to escape worldliness and enter the kingdom he rules (v. 11)"³³. Therefore, *μνήμη*ν ποιείσθαι has a soteriological aim before an apologetic or polemic one.

b) The second unit (2 Pet 1:16–18) reveals the apologetic reason and, possibly, the polemic aim of the Petrine testament.³⁴ The author needs to defend himself (γάρ v. 16) – as an authoritative exponent of the apostolic group (see the self-designation in 2 Pet 1:1: Συμμεών Πέτρος δούλος καὶ ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) – from the charge of having brought a revelatory message about the powerful *παρουσία* of Jesus Christ which is nothing more than the product of "cleverly devised myths"³⁵, humanly concocted inventions, a charge that he will later promptly redirect to his opponents (cf. the use of the same verb *ἐξακολουθέω* in 2 Pet 2:2.15).³⁶ Moreover, he needs to answer some challenging requests about the fulfilment of the *παρουσία* – originating not from outside but inside the believers' community (cf. 2 Pet 2:1f.; 3:3f.). The problem is not only the denial of the message of the *παρουσία* but also its correct understanding.

Against the background of this struggle, the memory of the Transfiguration experience demonstrates – within the "forensic rhetoric" of the author – the firm and factual ground of what is not only heard but also seen.³⁷ Thus, it au-

³⁰ 2 Pet 1:12–21 is evaluated as a pericope, for example, by K. H. SCHELKLE, *Le lettere di Pietro. La lettera di Giuda*, Brescia 1981, 308.

³¹ Cf. J. H. NEYREY, *The Apologetic Use of the Transfiguration in 2 Peter 1,16–21*, CBQ 42 (1980), 504–519, 504.

³² NIENHUIS/WALL, *Epistles* (cf. n. 26), 134.

³³ NIENHUIS/WALL, *Epistles* (cf. n. 26), 134.

³⁴ For this, cf. J. H. NEYREY, *2 Peter, Jude. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AncB 37C, Garden City 1993, 169–177, who speaks about a "forensic rhetoric".

³⁵ NEYREY, *Use* (cf. n. 31), 505.

³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 507 and n. 13.

³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 515, who notes how in Philo's epistemological framework only what is seen is *βέβαιος*.

thenticates the message of the *παρουσία*, resulting not from human ideology but from *past apostolic experience* (in vv. 16–18 the verbal forms are consistently aorists: ἐγνωρίσαμεν ... Οὐ ἐξακολουθήσαντες ... ἐπόπται γεννηθέντες ... λαβῶν ... φωνῆς ἐνεχθείσης ... ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν).³⁸ In remembering this experience, the author reveals himself to be the first person “involved in interpretation”, responsible for “leaving an accurate”, “correct interpretation of the traditional *parousia*-material” and “for its defence”.³⁹ The aim, however, is not only a merely apologetic or eschatological one, but urgently soteriological: how can the believers maintain their “firm position” within the apostolic *kerygma* and act according their actual soteriological experience (see ἵνα μὴ τῆ τῶν ἀθέσμων πλάνη συναπαχθέντες ἐκπέσητε τοῦ ἰδίου στηριγμοῦ 3:17; but already 1:12) while defending themselves from the scorn of the scoffers within their own group (cf. 3:3: ἐλεύσονται ἐπ’ ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν [ἐν] ἐμπαίγμονῃ ἐμπαῖκται [cf. 3:16 οἱ ἀστήρικτοι]); In addition to that, what does the author actually mean when he talks about τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν?

c) 2 Pet 1:19–21: The Transfiguration event, evoked by the apostolic “we” as an historical-human experience of the ‘glory’, increases the reliability of the *προφητικὸν λόγον*,⁴⁰ and prepares the link with the polemic section of the letter (2 Pet 2:1–22). Like the apostolic witnesses of Jesus’ Transfiguration, so also the prophets are represented as witnesses of a word “from God”, shining as light “until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts”. As Vögtle notes, through the repetition of the same root φέρ- in different forms (1:17f and 1:21), the author underlines that the one and the same God, who spoke on the “holy mount”, also spoke and still speaks throughout Scripture.⁴¹ The same glorious voice that speaks to the beloved Son is that which has brought, in the past, the *προφητικὸν λόγον* into every *προφητεία γραφῆς*. The prophecy (ἤνεχθη) pertains to men moved themselves (φερόμενοι) from the Holy Spirit, just as the voice “brought” (ἐνεχθείσης) from the heavenly glory regards a man who is him-

³⁸ The Transfiguration experience, thus, seems to be an piece of undisputed evidence for 2 Peter’s audience helping “to prove the validity of the disputed matter (the promise of the *Parousia*)” (S. S. LEE, *Jesus’ Transfiguration and the Believers’ Transformation. A Study of the Transfiguration and Its Development in Early Christian Writings*, WUNT II/265, Tübingen 2009, 139).

³⁹ NEYREY, *Use* (cf. n. 31), 517.

⁴⁰ What is precisely meant by the “prophetic word” is very debated: For NEYREY, *Use* (cf. n. 31), the prophetic word is precisely the transfiguration of Jesus as the anticipation and guarantee of the *παρουσία*, attested by the divine voice and by the testimony of the eyewitnesses; for others, it is a single “Old Testament” text (But which one? Ps 2:7? Is 42:1?). According to NIENHUIS/WALL, *Epistles* (cf. n. 26), 135, what we have here is scripture in its totality seen as the “lamp for the feet” of the believer (Ps 119:105).

⁴¹ A. VÖGTLE, *Christo-logie und Theo-logie im Zweiten Petrusbrief*, in: C. Breytenbach/H. Paulsen (eds.), *Anfänge der Christologie*, FS F. Hahn, Göttingen 1991, 383–398, 388.

self able to “receive” honour and glory from the Father.⁴² In the Christ event, in other words, “what the scripture communicates is realised with the greatest intensity”⁴³: Not by conceptualisations or through the gradual historical development of ideas, but by the personal dignity and history of the man and Kyrios Jesus Christ.

The apostolic message about the *παρουσία* of the Lord Jesus, therefore, “is not a message dreamed up by the apostles but something attested to in Jesus’ lifetime, when they heard God’s word identifying Jesus, and corroborated by the OT witness, which is the reliable record of God’s word in history”⁴⁴.

3.3. The “Petrine” memory of the experience of the Transfiguration and the royal dignity of Jesus

It is not my intention to give an exhaustive *résumé* of all the relevant characteristics of 2 Peter’s account of the Transfiguration,⁴⁵ but to underline only some elements that might be helpful to any comparison of 2 Peter and John. First of all, the specific language by which the author focuses on the dignity of Jesus:

- a) As subject of the *παρουσία*, he is designated as *κύριος ἡμῶν* (indicating membership and *κυριότης*, kingship) and *Χριστός* (his sovereignty is connected with his messianic identity);
- b) already in his *earthly* life, he possesses a perceptible royal *μεγαλειότης*, the same as that connected with the Transfiguration event;
- c) he receives “honour and glory” from a *φωνή* that is itself borne from the *μεγαλοπρεποῦς δόξης* (majestic, splendid glory): there is, therefore, full relational identity between his and the heavenly *δόξα*, between the sovereign dignity of the Voice from Heaven who speaks and the sovereign dignity of the man to whom the Voice is brought.
- d) moreover, the *δύναμις* that qualifies his *παρουσία* cannot be other than the *θείας δύναμις αὐτοῦ* of v. 3 and, therefore, cannot be referring only to a future *παρουσία* (his second coming).

⁴² 2 Pet 1:19–21 fully attests the last stage of the New Testament reflection on the relationship between Christ, the scriptures and the promises contained in the latter. KARRER, *Gesù Christo* (cf. n. 1), 385, rightly observes: “Christology does not take its dynamism from the scriptures. The scriptures become the sphere of reference for Christology. Only in a second phase an inversion takes place which affirms that Christology confers a new certainty on the scriptures.” Our text certainly reflects this second stage. Moreover, it urges the development of a fundamental criterion for the interpretation of the prophetic scriptures themselves, the old like the new.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 386.

⁴⁴ NIENHUIS/WALL, *Epistles* (cf. n. 26), 136.

⁴⁵ See, for all these, LEE, *Transfiguration* (cf. n. 38), 130–143; GRÜNSTÄUDL, *Petrus Alexandrinus* (cf. n. 7), 113–123.

Thus, the most striking element of 2 Peter's account is that "it is not interested in presenting" the various fascinating details of the Synoptic account, "but simply summarizes Jesus' Transfiguration in two key ideas of glory and honor"⁴⁶. Insisting on the glory of the Son, the author emphasizes "the eschatological implication of the Transfiguration", that is, his assured "coming as the Son of Man for judgment"⁴⁷. With its insistence on this majestic language, however, the account in 2 Peter not only supports the defense of the second *παρουσία*, but also confirms the soteriological call and experience of the believers' status as "sharers in the divine nature"⁴⁸, thanks to the realised dimension, the essentially new christological character, of the "promise of the *παρουσία*".

Finally, in this semantic perspective, the contrast or apparent opposition between two possible interpretations of the *παρουσία* in 1:16 (the Hellenistic meaning of actual presence or divine epiphany *versus* a more Jewish-apocalyptic meaning determined by the reference to the ἡμέρα κυρίου, as in 3:10.12) can fall away: the *παρουσία*, i. e. the judicial coming and presence of Kyrios Jesus Christ, is one and the same eschatological event that can be attested as having already happened in history – namely, the *παρουσία* as referring to Jesus' mission and empowerment by God the Father in his earthly life until the perfect glorification at Easter. *Therefore*, it can be assured also in its definitive and cosmological dimension. If the Messiah actually entered into human history, it is necessary to surpass a mere chronological understanding of time in order to reach a real eschatological vision that passes from human time to God's time: "if there is no longer a chronological time, but only an eschatological one, so there is not even any delay" of the *παρουσία*.⁴⁹ As Jörg Frey has showed, the messianic metaphor of the *φωσφόρος* (2 Pet 1:19), at the same time eschatological and christological, confirms this: the eschatological time (the dawn of the day) begins with the *Parousia Christi*, but if the *φωσφόρος* (the morning star, Venus,

⁴⁶ LEE, *Transfiguration* (cf. n. 38), 139. See also GRÜNSTÄUDEL, *Petrus Alexandrinus* (cf. n. 7), 119: Little space is left for the account of the Transfiguration, and the focus turns almost entirely on the glory of Jesus and on the testimony of the apostle. The references to the Synoptic tradition need not to be explained by literary dependence but they are many. The one which most impresses is Lk 9:32 where glory "is a divine state, an honorific condition of the highest dignity, of a splendour proper to Jesus in particular which contrasts with his earthly μορφή and his passion (Lk 24:26)" (SPICQ, Note [cf. n. 24], 425). Equally, for 2 Pet 1:17, the honour and glory are closely connected with the proclamation which God makes of Jesus as Son (cf. *ibid.*, 429).

⁴⁷ LEE, *Transfiguration* (cf. n. 38), 140.

⁴⁸ See for all this, LEE, *Transfiguration* (cf. n. 38), 141–143.

⁴⁹ See P. IOVINO, *L'insegnamento sulla parusia in 2Pt 3,1–17*, in: S. Manfredi/A. Passaro (eds.), *Abscondita in lucem*, FS B. Rocco, *Ho Theologos* NS 16, Palermo 1998, 103–224, 223 f.: "There is a first salvific coming of God in history, which has already been realised, in fact, in the person of his Son (the Transfiguration is the proof and testimony of it), and there is a completion of this salvific work, which is still to be realised, but it will take place through the glorious manifestation of his sovereignty with his judgement of the world and of the history of men. In fact, the entire biblical story as in the whole of chapter 2 shows that this judgement is not being delayed."

that shines *before* the dawn) is not only an eschatological metaphor but also a *Christusprädikat*,⁵⁰ and if its rising is awaited ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, Christ's rising as "light shining" in his παρουσία is the *full revelation of God the Saviour and Lord*.⁵¹ The scriptures point to him and his παρουσία, and the apostolic experience and memory of the Transfiguration attest its already realised dimension for the present salvific faith and life of the addressees.

"The Christological link between the transfiguration and the parousia is the Glory of Jesus. Finally, the transfiguration clearly functions as a present proof of future things: paradise for mankind and parousia for the Lord"⁵².

Both, however, are stated as having already been experienced in the remembered past of the earthly Jesus – acknowledged and proclaimed in all his "honour and glory" of Son as κύριος, Χριστός, θεός and σωτήρ⁵³ – and in the present salvific life of the believers. In 2 Peter as in John, Christology is the basis of eschatological salvation and this salvation, experienced, coincides with the experienced filial identity of the one who "received honour and glory" from the Father.

4. "To receive honour and glory": use and meaning of the syntagma in 2 Peter and John

4.1. The binome "honour and glory"

The pair of nouns "honour and glory" (in this or the reverse order) is commonly used in the Greek Bible (15 items in the LXX; 13 in the New Testament) and, more generally, in the Greek language as a "stereotypical synonymous word pair used in antiquity to connote fame and reputation"⁵⁴: the two terms, linked

⁵⁰ J. FREY, Retter, Gott und Morgenstern. Metaphorik und Christologie im Zweiten Petrusbrief, in: id./J. Rohls/R. Zimmermann (eds.), *Metaphorik und Christologie*, TBT 120, Berlin/New York 2003, 131–148, 144–147.

⁵¹ See BAUCKHAM, 2 Peter (cf. n. 9), 226.

⁵² NEYREY, Use (cf. n. 31), 513.

⁵³ As J. H. NEYREY, *The Gospel of John*, Cambridge 2007, 18, states, every attribute or title that is associated with a personal name of somebody is a sign of honour and dignity. With the words of KARRER, *Gesù Cristo* (cf. n. 1), 57: "Emerging later, starting with the second Christian generation, the title of Saviour becomes an essential attribute of Jesus. It brings together the liberating and powerful intervention of God in Jesus, from his earthly work to the eschatological judgement. It establishes him before the world in a way that is critical, hopeful and challenging. The community experiences the dedication of Christ and orients itself in that direction (cf., again, Eph 5:23). (...) Finally, it speaks of Jesus Christ the Saviour directly as 'God' (*Theos*). Along with Tit 2:1, 2 Pet 1:1, the latest testimony in the New Testament, is to be read in this way ... According to the density of the attestations, other than in the Pastorals, the fulcrum of the attribute is to be found in 2 Peter. Here, the Lord is the powerful, present and eschatological Saviour who frees from the corruption of the world."

⁵⁴ D. E. AUNE, *Revelation 17–22*, WBC 52C, Nashville 1998, 1173. What has been said does not need analytic demonstration: "In the Koine, especially in the inscriptions and papyri, the sense [of

together, may indicate the dignity, honour, reputation, and esteem bestowed on someone for his status or for some particular meritorious action; they can be related to all that is precious – material (such as wealth) or not (all featuring an individual or a community having the ascendancy over others) – and gives importance to someone in front of others; everything like this that someone has and/or can give and receive (cf. Rev 21:26: “And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations.”). This also seems to apply both at the anthropological level (“honour and glory” may be the sum of all that is fully worthy for human beings),⁵⁵ the religious level (“honour, glory and immortality” is what men desire to reach, working and persevering in good works to gain eternal life, cf. Rom 2:7.10)⁵⁶ and the theological level (“honour and glory” belong to the Lord, the King of Israel, cf. Ps 28:1; 95:7)⁵⁷.

It is interesting that according to Josephus, in whose writings the pair occurs six times, δόξαν και τιμὴν παρ’ ἀνθρώπων are what God promises to Moses at the moment of his calling at Sinai (cf. Ex 3) as a sign and fruit of divine favour (lit. of the divine συμπάρεμι: A. J. 2:268). According to Josephus, Daniel had enjoyed τιμὴ τε και δόξα ἢ παρὰ τῶν βασιλέων και τοῦ πλήθους during the time of his life as one of the greatest (A. J. 10:266).

δόξα] evolves into that of esteem, honour ... in frequent connection with τιμὴ, ἀρετή and ἔπαινος” (SPICQ, Note [cf. n. 24], 420).

⁵⁵ “Honour and glory” can represent, for example, the status or social role assumed by someone and shown by the things which he wears (cf. Ex 28:2.40: “You will make for Aaron, your brother, sacred clothes, for glory and beauty [τῆς δόξης καὶ τῆς καλλονῆς] // εἰς τιμὴν και δόξαν”). The dignity of a king can be celebrated with “honour and glory” at his death, as is the case, for example, with King Hezekiah: δόξαν και τιμὴν ἔδωκαν αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ (2 Chr 32:33; significantly, the MT has only ἵγ’-ישׁף-וּבְרַחֵם). “Honour and glory”, therefore, are granted (δίδωμι) to a king. Cf. Dan 2:37: σὺ βασιλεὺ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων και σοὶ οὐ κύριος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὴν ἀρχὴν και τὴν βασιλείαν και τὴν ἰσχὺν και τὴν τιμὴν και τὴν δόξαν ἔδωκεν (In Dan^{Theod.}: σὺ βασιλεὺ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων ᾧ οὐ θεὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ βασιλείαν ἰσχυρὰν και κραταίαν και ἐντιμον ἔδωκεν; cf. Dan 5:18).

⁵⁶ In this sense, already for the Greek world “ist [darin] der höchste, ideale Lebenswert ... zusammengefaßt” (G. ΚΙΤΤΕΛ, Art. δόξα. A. Der griechische Sprachgebrauch von δόξα, ThWNT 2 [1935], 236–240, 238).

⁵⁷ In religious language, typical of the Psalms, for example, “glory and honour” are what are “ascribed/brought” (Ps 28:1; 95:7) to the sovereign God, to the Lord, the King of Israel. Similarly, they are what the sovereign God bears with him in his appearance according to the speech of Elihu in Job: “Out of the north comes golden splendour, around God is terrible majesty” (Job 37:22). If it says in the MT “from the north comes gold, around God terrible majesty” (τὴν κηλὴν τὴν ἰσχυρὰν), the LXX reads: “from the north a cloud like gold (νέφην χρυσαυγούοντα)”, “great is the glory and honour of the Almighty” (μεγάλη ἡ δόξα και τιμὴ παντοκράτορος). Analogously, in the final and dramatic act of his encounter with Job, God challenges his accuser to put on his own divine regalia, symbolised, precisely, by “glory and honour”, things that can be donned like clothes characterising the majestic identity and judicial function of the one wearing them (cf. 40:10: ἀνάλαβε δὴ ὕφος και δύναμιν δόξαν δὲ και τιμὴν ἀμφίεσαι // ὡς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως). Very often in Philo, glory and honour are the goods, material or moral, which are sought externally, from human relationships, even at the cost of virtue and the quality of soul and of the interior life (cf. Mos. 2:53). The Mosaic and Sinaitic vision of glory is given by Philo in *Spec. 1:45*. In *QE 2:45* the theme of glory, visible in place of the only God, appears in relation to Ex 24:16.

In some rare but important cases, the anthropological and theological levels are intertwined when the relational sphere defined by this language is that of the relationship between man and God. This is the case, for example, in Ps 8:6: “Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God (םִיְהִי־לְמַדְּ טַעֲמֵ וְהִרְבַּח־תִּי // ἡλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ’ ἄγγέλους), and hast crowned him with glory and honour וְהִרְבַּח־תִּי תְהִי־לִי וְדָבָרְךָ // δόξη και τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας αὐτόν.” In this case, clearly, Adam, king of the universe (v. 7: πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ) and lieutenant of the Creator in the world, is “crowned” with the qualities that belong to God himself⁵⁸ (see the Christological interpretation in Heb 2:7.9).⁵⁹

Thus it appears that the binomial expression (that imposes itself in the LXX regardless of the underlying Hebrew lexicon) is employed at various levels to express and characterise the condition of reciprocal influence that qualifies different subjects (men and/or God) correlated with each other in the same existential field. “Honour and Glory” positively define a person by the reception s/he receives from another person, by the dignity, power, prestige, authority and specific weight by which s/he is recognized. In the end, just as the concept of δόξα, so the couple in question expresses no doubt a relational aesthetic: what is mighty, impressive, visibly and sensory when someone encounters another.⁶⁰ It has, ultimately, a relational value.⁶¹

⁵⁸ 1 Pet 1:7 uses the binome, together with the term ἔπαινον (praise), to indicate the guaranteed and triumphal result of the purified faith and living hope of the believers – by the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead – which, certainly, constitutes a huge theoretical and practical challenge to the pagan world. Not by chance, the proof of the truth of their hope is linked to the apocalypse of Jesus Christ, and to the latter is linked the full revelation of their “glory and honour”. The text of 1 Peter, certainly known to the author of 2 Peter, could, in fact, not be unimportant for its use of the binome in 2 Pet 1:16f. Indeed, the author could thus be demonstrating a notable ability to weave together different strands of Christological reflection.

⁵⁹ Cf. *1 Clem.* 61:2 σὺ γάρ θεάποτα ἐπουράνιε βασιλεῦ τῶν αἰώνων διδως τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων δόξαν και τιμῆν και ἐξουσίαν τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὑπαρχόντων. In the Apostolic Fathers, I have found nine occurrences of the binome, often in doxological formulae. With regard to the intertestamental literature in Greek, seven occurrences have been found, the most interesting being in *1 En.* (3:1; 14:16; 98:3; 99:1). In *Gk. Apoc. Ezra* 7:16; *T. Ab. B* 14:9 and *Apoc. Mos.* 43:4 the binome is always found in a doxology.

⁶⁰ To the verified occurrences of the binome, one can extend what was stated by G. VON RAD, *Art. δόξα.* C. בָּרַךְ im AT, *ThWNT* 2 [1935], 240–245, 241, in regard of the substantive בָּרַךְ: if used in relation to man, it is “etwas Sinnenfälliges, etwas Ansehnliches, eine gravitas, die die Stellung des Menschen in der Gemeinschaft erst konstituiert, und dabei doch nahezu ein anthropologischer Begriff.” Similarly, if referring to God it is “das für Menschen Sinnenfällige an ihm, die Wucht seiner Erscheinung” (*ibid.*, 241) as appears clear when one looks at the images, the sounds and sensory which accompany theophanies.

⁶¹ To give “(honour and) glory” to God signifies inevitably “das Gewicht seiner Göttlichkeit mit allen Folgerungen anzuerkennen” (*ibid.*, 245). If the divine δόξα refers to his honour and power, then the power of God is “ein Ausdruck seines göttlichen Wesens; die Ehre, die ihm vom Menschen zuerkannt wird, ist letztlich nichts als Bejahung dieses selben Wesens” (G. KITTEL, *Art. δόξα.* C. δόξα in LXX and bei den hellenistischen Apokryphen, *ThWNT* 2 [1935], 245–248, 247). In the usage of the LXX, the association with τιμῆ also imposes this relational meaning, weight or value on the term δόξα, as *ibid.*, 246, implicitly maintains: “[D]ie Bedeutung [‘Ehre, die einem Menschen

When both terms are employed as a couple within the religious sphere, they confront us with a relational aesthetic structure that implies the mutual recognition of subjects in the act of experiencing the presence of one another in a sensory way.

4.2. The syntagma “to receive honour and glory”

As for common use, the same cannot be said for the syntagma built with the verb λαμβάνω. In extra-biblical Greek, in fact, the syntagma does not seem to be particularly frequent. However, λαμβάνω appears both with τιμή and δόξα: someone can get a bad name (*Epist.* 3:5 of Demosthenes: λαμβάνειν δόξαν φαύλην) or desire to make himself a good name (λαβεῖν κλέος; Josephus, *A. J.* 6:198)⁶² and gain δόξαν (Plato, *Polit.* 290d) or τιμήν (Aristophanes, *Thes.* 823)⁶³ or every other desirable good thing (cf. Philo, *Ebr.* 1:75). The verb, therefore, seems to be employed in the active sense of “gain” rather than in the passive sense of “receive”.⁶⁴ Josephus also gives a typical Greek meaning: to get a false opinion (Josephus, *A. J.* 6:288; 9:39; cf. Philo, *Somn.* 2:50).

In the Greek pseudepigrapha, the syntagma occurs in *1 En.* 99:1 where the meaning is much closer to the one in John and 2 Peter (Οὐαὶ ὑμῖν οἱ ποιοῦντες πλανήματα, καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ψευδέσιν λαμβάνοντες τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν. ἀπολώλατε, οὐκ ἔστιν ὑμῖν σωτηρία εἰς ἀγαθόν). In *T. Job* 43:16 (ἀπολαμβάνω δόξαν) the glory gained by the faithful by persevering in their fidelity and obtaining remission of all their sins is in view. Finally, the exact syntagma occurs in the LXX/NT only in John 5:41.44; 2 Pet 1:17; Rev 4:11 and 5:12.⁶⁵

erwiesen wird'] ist bei δόξα sogar seltener als der Gebrauch von τιμή in diesem Sinn, dessen einziges neben δόξα häufiges Übersetzungswort gerade dieser Bedeutungsgruppe angehört, nämlich τιμή.”

⁶² Κλέος “credit”, “fame”, occurs only three times in the LXX and the NT (Job 28:22; 30:8 and 1 Pet 2:20). The desire for κλέος is attributed by Saul to David who, for his part, would have felt δόξης καὶ τιμῆς ἀμοίρω (on account of his humble origin and condition, *A. J.* 6:200).

⁶³ Cf. G. DELLING, Art. λαμβάνω κτλ., ThWNT 4 (1942), 5–16, 5, and also Dan 2,6^{Theod.} (δόματα καὶ δωρεὰς καὶ τιμὴν πολλὴν λήψεσθε παρ’ ἐμοῦ). For λαμβάνειν τιμὴν see Josephus, *A. J.* 4:19 (to receive honour from a tribe according to the will of God); 6:308 (to receive a dignity or have it recognised); *A. J.* 12:42 (receiving of the priestly dignity; cf., also, 5:362; 11:297; 20:229 with Heb 5:4). In *A. J.* 16:53, Antipater receives honour and Roman citizenship, while in 11:120, Xerxes receives the kingdom (cf., also 15:40.180). In Philo, *Leg.* 1:46, it is a question of taking honour, that is, of having honour recognised.

⁶⁴ In *A. J.* 10:268, it is stated that Daniel “gained esteem” on the part of the crowd (δόξαν ... παρὰ τοῖς ὄχλοις ἀποφέρεσθαι) for his divine power (as credible prophet and announcer of joyful events!). Another idiomatic use of the syntagma λαμβάνειν τιμὴν can be found in *T. Zeb.* 3:2 but signifies “to receive the price” for someone (in this case, Joseph sold by his brothers). Cf. Philo, *Ios.* 1:178 or *Spec.* 2:114.

⁶⁵ In Ezek 22:25^{LXX} – in a negative oracular context – the Hebrew *laqah hosen w’yiqar* (“to take treasure and precious things”) is translated with τιμὰς λαμβάνοντες ἐν ἀδικία; and, in Dan 4:31, (with παραλαμβάνω) the reference is to the receiving of every royal honour and abundance by Nabucodonosor’s successor (again, in a negative context of judgment). Dan 4:31: Τὴν ἐξουσίαν σου καὶ

Therefore the use of the pair of nouns in 2 Peter requires an interpretation as a stereotypical formula (cf. 4.1.1.) appearing within an uncommon⁶⁶ syntagma (governed by λαμβάνω). To grasp its meaning in a more specific way, it is necessary to compare it with the only other “Biblical” occurrences of the same construction in John and Rev.

a) If one examines the syntagma in Revelation’s doxologies/axiologies (the first, theocentric: ἄξιός ἐστι, ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, λαβεῖν τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν, ὅτι σὺ ἔκτισας τὰ πάντα καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημα σου ἦσαν καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν [Rev 4:11]; the second christocentric: ἄξιόν ἐστιν τὸ ἄρνιον τὸ ἐσφαγμένον λαβεῖν τὴν δύναμιν καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχύον καὶ τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ εὐλογίαν [Rev 5:12]), it is clear that the background of the syntagma’s use is a socio-political one. The royal acclamations affirm the kingship of the Lord God and his Christ manifest in the creation (the first doxology) and redemption (the second doxology). As Pierre Prigent explains: “il convient bien à un texte qui célèbre la royauté de Dieu d’utiliser les mots que le langage commun réfère aux souverains humains.”⁶⁷ The Christology is thus affirming itself in contrast with the imperial cult.⁶⁸ From the προσκύνησις to the deposition of crowns, the schema is the same as that employed in royal courts and in Roman provinces.⁶⁹

In 2 Peter, too, the proclamation of Jesus’ messianic kingship is an important aspect of the syntagma, resembling even some “counter-cultural” overtones. Nevertheless, there is hardly any anti-imperial perspective but rather a focus on the *relational structure between God and men*, granted to believers by the ἐπίγνωσις Χριστοῦ in faith. This is something that the addresses should know already as the foundation of their salvific vocation and steady position (cf. 2 Pet 1:3–11), something that is challenged, however, by false teachers and scoffers.

τὴν δόξαν σου καὶ τὴν τρυφήν σου παραλήφεται ὅπως ἐπίγνωσιν ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ θεὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ὧ ἐὰν βούληται δώσει αὐτήν.

⁶⁶ In the context of the Greek Bible.

⁶⁷ P. PRIGENT, *L’Apocalypse de Saint Jean*. Edition revue et augmentée, Genève 2000, 181.

⁶⁸ PRIGENT, *Apocalypse* (cf. n. 67, 41).

⁶⁹ Working on the doxology in Rev 5:12, Prigent notes the clear parallelism between Rev 5:7f. (to receive the book) and Rev 5:11 (to receive honour, glory, etc): The doxology which belongs to the sovereign God for his work of creation belongs now to God the Redeemer, that is, to Christ the Lamb who by his action brings all the scriptures to fulfilment. PRIGENT, *Apocalypse* (cf. n. 67), 199: “Il faut donc croire que le rouleau reçu par l’agneau lui conférerait un statut méritant une aussi totale adoration ... Si l’agneau peut seul recevoir et ouvrir le livre, c’est parce qu’il est le sujet central des prophéties qui y sont contenues. L’histoire du salut qui s’y trouvait annoncée reçoit enfin sa claire finalité; le messie attendu est là, voici l’Accomplissement, l’agneau pascal. Comment ne pas célébrer comme Dieu ce Christ qui mène à son moment décisif le plan de salut. Il vaudrait mieux dire: qui est lui-même ce moment décisif, car il est vraiment Dieu sauveur?”

b) If we turn to John's gospel, we find "glory" – something that Jesus "receives from (λαμβάνειν παρά) [God]" (John 5:41) and does not "search/gain for himself" (John 7:18; 8:50) –, as a special connotation of the unique relationship between Jesus and God.⁷⁰ As in 2 Peter, this "glory" is challenged constantly. Thus, in both texts the δόξα-motif is placed in the centre of a "forensic rhetoric".

Certainly the "glory" motif is a characteristic and synthetic cross-motif of John's Christology in a biblical-theological and theophanic sense. In addition to that it is related at various levels of meaning to the motif of honour and shame given to, received by or denied to Jesus.⁷¹ The honour and glory of Jesus⁷² is at the same time a theological (How does God exercise his majestic and glorious kingship?), a Christological (Can the crucified and absent Jesus be the empowered Messiah and Son of Man?⁷³) and a soteriological/ecclesiological problem (In what manner and in which sense is Jesus proclaimed σωτήρ τοῦ κόσμου [John 4:42]? How are the disciples enabled to share their master's fate?).

Against this background it seems not to be implausible that the author of 2 Peter faced a threefold attack against the "honour and glory" of Jesus (the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι are depicted as τὸν ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς δεσπότην ἀρνούμενοι in 2 Pet 2:1), the theological message of the παρουσία (as which he brings as representative of the "apostolic we"), and the theological stability of his addressees. Maybe he choose the reference to the honour and glory received by the pre-Eastern Jesus (and not to the glory of the Risen One) not by chance.

4.3. The Theology of Revelation and the Doxa-Christology between honour and shame in the Fourth Gospel

As already mentioned, one of the characteristics of John's development of the motif of Jesus' glory is its different depiction on intradiegetic and extradiegetic level. While Jesus' honour and glory are a matter of contestation, challenge and trial throughout the entire gospel, they are simultaneously the object of clear

⁷⁰ Expressed through paternal-filial metaphors, cf. John 1:14; 8:54; 17:5.22.24.

⁷¹ Cf. the use of the verbs τιμάω and ἀτιμάζω in John 5:23; 8:49 and the noun τιμή – that also can be found in the Synoptic-like logion of John 4:44 – that is direct object of the same verb λαμβάνω in 2 Pet 1:17).

⁷² Like that of his disciples, cf. John 9:28 ἐλοιδορήσαν αὐτόν; 9:34 ἐν ἀμαρτίαις σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὁλος καὶ σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς; καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω; 16:2f.: ἀποσυναγωγὸς ποιήσουσιν ὑμᾶς ἀλλ' ἔρχεται ὥρα ἵνα πᾶς ὁ ἀποκτείνας ὑμᾶς δόξῃ λατρεῖαν προσφέρειν τῷ θεῷ. καὶ ταῦτα ποιήσουσιν ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὸν πατέρα οὐδὲ ἐμέ.

⁷³ According to N. CHIBICI-REVNEANU, Die Herrlichkeit des Verherrlichten. Das Verständnis der doxa im Johannesevangelium, WUNT II/231, Tübingen 2013, *passim*, the Johannine insistence on the vocabulary and theme of 'glory' would have as its ultimate goal to demonstrate that the death of Jesus on the cross is not the proof of his failure as an impostor but the event in which his dignity as the one sent by the father attains its full manifestation.

and solemn proclamation by the witnesses of his earthly life (cf. the “we” in John 1:14). Both at the level of the socio-anthropological relational structures reflected by John’s gospel⁷⁴ and at the level of their transformation into a theological and christological key element⁷⁵, the glory and honour received by Jesus as “the Son” are a matter of theological $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$.

Without doubt, Johannine Christology can undoubtedly be epitomised in the cipher⁷⁶ of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$.⁷⁷ This is, however, a $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ *sui generis*⁷⁸ as it is not proclaimed primarily and/or only of the risen Son of Man but first and foremost of the earthly Jesus.⁷⁹ Therefore, it is a $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ in *dramatic* action: A matter of $\delta\omicron\zeta\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$, an action that involves the Father, the Son (the Spirit) and every man in the “world”, disciple or not, in a network of relations in which the man Jesus is challenged in his dignity and identity. In this network of relationships, Jesus can receive different answers to his $\lambda\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu/\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ as well as to his $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\iota\nu$, i. e. to his gigantic, enormous claims as well as to his marvellous and puzzling signs: honour or shame. With Jerome Neyrey, we have to say that “there is no Johannine Christology apart from honour and shame”⁸⁰!

The well-known problem is “the what and how” of the Johannine concept of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ and $\tau\upsilon\mu\acute{\eta}$ and their theological and christological employment.⁸¹ One of the most difficult aspects is the connection of the two semantic levels of Johannine $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ -language: the so-called profane (human) level and the so-called biblical-theological (divine) level.⁸² In fact, in John’s theology of revelation and

⁷⁴ The so called “profane” meaning of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha/\tau\upsilon\mu\acute{\eta}$: honour, esteem, good reputation, everything which is gained by the success of one’s own actions and by one’s own teaching (cf. John 5:41.44; 7:18a; 12:43 and, in certain ways, 9:24).

⁷⁵ The proper theological meaning of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ as divine glory: aesthetic cipher of the revelation of JHWH to his people and, still more broadly, of his imminent presence to the entire universe (the earth is full of his glory ...). For Y. IBUKI, *Die Doxa des Gesandten. Studie zur johanneischen Christologie*, AJBI 14 (1988), 38–81, 45, the Old Testament matrix of the Johannine concept of glory is evident, but does not suffice to explain the specificity and the differences or tensions of the Johannine semantics. Cf., e. g., J. FREY, “... dass sie meine Herrlichkeit schauen” (Joh 17:24). *Zu Hintergrund, Sinn und Funktion der johanneischen Rede von der $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ Jesu*, in: id. (ed.), *Die Herrlichkeit des Gekreuzigten. Studien zu den johanneischen Schriften 1*, WUNT 307, Tübingen 2013, 639–662.

⁷⁶ H. U. VON BALTHASAR, *Gloria. Una estetica teologica 7: Nuovo Patto*, Milano 1977, 236: “the cipher does not signify many different things but always one thing alone under different aspects.”

⁷⁷ IBUKI, *Doxa* (cf. n. 75), 38 (following H. Schlier): “Es steht außer Frage, daß der Doxa-Begriff im Johannesevangelium vor allem für die Christologie eine bedeutsame Rolle spielt. Die johanneische Doxa ist ein letztlich christologischer Begriff.”

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁸⁰ NEYREY, *John* (cf. n. 53), 21.

⁸¹ IBUKI, *Doxa* (cf. n. 75), 43.

⁸² Already *Ibid.*, 48f., for example, noted that in particular cases, such as Jn 7:18 (but also 8:50.54), both the uses of the term – the ‘profane’ and the ‘christological’ – could be quietly superimposed and that, then, it would be impossible to distinguish clearly between a profane sense of the term (“honour”) and a christological one (“glory”).

Christology, the same 'profane' concept of δόξα/τιμῆ as honour is deeply rooted in the theological concept of δόξα as the irradiating fullness of life that belongs to God alone and that can only be received from him (παρὰ τοῦ μόνου θεοῦ, John 5:44).⁸³

This is the core of John's brilliant synthesis: Jesus – as man who is active in an inescapable relational field with other men and woman – is the place, subject (active and passive) and protagonist of God's salvific and active presence (or δόξα) in the midst of his people. This doxa is both God's δόξα and human δόξα.⁸⁴

The anthropological structure of God's glory and the familial metaphors conveying it (Father/Son) are, therefore, the essential ground and matrix of Johannine Christology in its multiple dimensions; the aesthetic (and ecstatic!) place *par excellence*.⁸⁵ Not only of Christology but also of soteriology: Realising the radical openness to God the Father and sharing his power of life and judgment, the Glorified Son can also "give", i. e. share his glory with his disciples, for whom he is the *broker* of divine gifts. The same could be said of 2 Peter's account of the Transfiguration.

According to Ybuki, the Johannine theology of δόξα receives all its soteriological value from its connection with John's Sending Christology: The believer realises in himself the same relationship with God as the sent Son, and opens himself to the glory of the creator: "in this eschatological experience God reveals himself as Creator."⁸⁶

We have now found a new (soteriological) point of contact between the Christologies of John and 2 Peter, expressed by the metaphor of honour and glory received by the Son: To be embedded into the relationship of Son and Father means enjoying the eschatological experience of God's kingship and judging power that belong to him as creator and κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (2 Pet 3:9).

⁸³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 52f. G. KITTEL, Art. δόξα. F. Der nt.liche Gebrauch von δόξα II, ThWNT 2 [1935], 250–255, 251, notes: "In einer scheinbar merkwürdigen Weise stehen hier die Bedeutungen besonders schroff nebeneinander: einerseits die sichtbare δόξα, ganz im Sinn der at.lichen דָּבָר ... andererseits – nur 2 Verse entfernt – eine doch wohl ganz im Sinn von menschlicher Ehre, Ruhm, die bald von Menschen, bald von Gott ausgehen können, zu fassende B[edeutung] ... Bei jedem Übersetzungsversuch entsteht ein fast unerträgliches Auseinanderklaffen der Bedeutungen, das sichtlich für den nt.lichen Schriftsteller nicht besteht."

⁸⁴ Despite his dualistic framework, John does not consider the human condition as a low one; on the contrary, he develops a very deep understanding of Adam's status and mission in the world (see the multiple references to Gen 1–3, for example, in Jn 5:16–18 and 8:31–47). *Contra* YBUKI, *Doxa* (cf. n. 75), 41, according to whom the paradox of faith consists precisely in the conjunction of the "lowliness of pure humanity" with the "majesty of the Revealer".

⁸⁵ Cf. VON BALTHASAR, *Nuovo Patto* (cf. n. 76), *passim*. According to SPICQ, Note (cf. n. 24), 423, the biblical δόξα, theologically understood as "manifestation of the presence and action of the invisible and transcendent God" is "connected with sensible experience, even if its brightness cannot be perceived by the eyes of the flesh (cf. Ex 33:22; Acts 22:11) but is contemplated with the spirit. The biblical δόξα, therefore, involves a note of luminescence."

⁸⁶ YBUKI, *Doxa* (cf. n. 75), 74.

5. Conclusion: Christological reflections on John and 2 Peter

Should the similarities between the Christologies of 2 Peter and John be explained in terms of literary dependence? I think not! Is it plausible that the author of 2 Peter (and his addressees) were unaware of the Johannine metaphoric-christological structure and language? Again I do not think so. As Petrine traditions were known in Johannine circles (cf. John 21), so Johannine traditions could be known in the Petrine 'world'. How should we then explain the lexical and theological closeness of both pieces of Christological reflection? And, overall, what could be its historical and theological significance?

Regarding the first question, I am convinced that an intentional "echoing" of the Johannine language and structure is sufficient to explain the analogies as well as the differences. Furthermore, it is possible that they share a messianic reinterpretation – in a Jewish-Hellenistic context – of Adam's status and vocation.⁸⁷ Regarding the meaning and functions of the royal-messianic and, at the same time, family-metaphorical language of the "honour and glory received by the Son" employed in the two texts and reflecting their respective Christological understanding, I want to conclude with four observations:

a) There are a lot of analogies between the salvific memory in 2 Peter – the place of the ever-better understanding of scripture and the apostolic tradition – and the 'inspired' (that is, pneumatic-guided) memory that rules the post-Easter narrative of Jesus earthly life in John.⁸⁸ In both texts, memory is also an ecclesiological key and allows believers to tie together the past of the earthly Jesus – whom they proclaim as *κύριος*, *Χριστός*, *θεός* and *σωτήρ* – and the challenging present of their own lives.

Similarly, in both texts the interpreting and salvific memory makes Jesus' earthly life transparent to his honour and glory as Son as well as to the dignity of the believers which are destined to enter into the eternal messianic kingdom.

b) The insistence on the Father/Son metaphor underlines the anthropological structure and shape of the Christologies in 2 Peter and John, representing the peak of the so-called "high Christology" within the New Testament.⁸⁹ Maybe it reflects the inescapable need to tie Christology (and the correlated eschatology and ethics) permanently to the memory of the earthly Jesus – especially when addressing generations distant in time and space from the Easter event.

⁸⁷ Cf., e. g., Ps 2:7; 8:6 but also the promise of CD A 3:19–4:2 for all those who maintain firmly in the covenant with their God: "they will obtain eternal life and all the glory of Adam is for them", *וְכָל כְּבוֹד אָדָם לָהֶם* [3:20]).

⁸⁸ See M. MARCHESELLI, "Davanti alle Scritture" di Israele. Processo esegetico ed ermeneutica credente nel gruppo giovanneo, *Ricerche Storico Bibliche* 22 (2010), 175–195.

⁸⁹ See, for 2 Peter, CALLAN, *Christology* (cf. n. 4), *passim*, and FREY, *Retter* (cf. n. 50), *passim*.

In particular, the language of “honour and glory” attributed to and received by the Son – perceived in a sensory way in its powerful *παρουσία* by the witnesses of his Transfiguration (2 Peter) or in his earthly life and Easter events (John) – has a remarkable aesthetic quality demonstrating the permanent theological and pragmatic efficacy of metaphoric Christology.⁹⁰ This anthropologically shaped and metaphoric language builds the basis for a genuine theological hermeneutic. For our New Testament authors, it helps to escape the *aut-aut* (Χριστός and θεός) when they intend to affirm the unique judging and salvific power shared by both. In 2 Peter’s language, this is their *κυριότης* (2 Peter 2:10).⁹¹

In an Asian Jewish-Hellenistic context, identifying God’s and Christ’s Kingdom – as both John and 2 Peter do – allowed putting Jesus Christ at the centre of preaching, while distinguishing emerging Christianity from all other monotheistic tendencies in the Hellenistic world and all forms of worship to pagan gods or human emperors that could be familiar to the addressees of both texts.⁹² However, the analogy with images and honours typical of earthly kingship contributed to the effectiveness of Christological communications.⁹³

c) The metaphor of “honour and glory received by the Son”, employed by only these two texts within the later New Testament, attests, in my opinion, an intrinsic (and not merely apologetic, instrumental, and extrinsic) need for the later “apostolic witnesses” to connect (even if in the Easter-perspective) with the earthly Jesus in their Christological reflections. The memory of the earthly Jesus is still of structural importance for the metaphoric process behind both of our texts and thus directly proportional to the experiential and phenomenological matrix of Christology.

In 2 Peter’s case, the memory of the Transfiguration is the memory of a punctual event in the life of the earthly Jesus and at the same time a cipher of his “powerful presence” that transcends time. It is therefore a cipher of his identity and functional dignity (as Son and plenipotentiary King). In 2 Peter as in

⁹⁰ The “Son-motif” (KARRER, *Gesù Cristo* [cf. n. 1], 210) is common to the most ancient christological formulae and “the images of the father and the son” are very quickly applied to the Father and the Son (KARRER, *Gesù Cristo* [cf. n. 1], 273). In other words, the christological title *par excellence* (Jesus as [only-begotten] Son) originates with the family metaphor and receives from it permanently all its nourishment. Because of its concrete historical matrix it contains, however, royal-messianic (the king-Messiah-son), anthro-po-theological (biblical anthropology) and mystical-religious (Hellenistic mysticism and the concept of *theosis* bound up with the Transfiguration and the promise of the kingdom) implications. On the usefulness of metaphorical language, cf. FREY, Retter (cf. n. 50), 136.

⁹¹ VÖGTLE, *Christo-logie* (cf. n. 41), 395f.

⁹² FREY, Retter (cf. n. 50), 139f.

⁹³ Cf. *ibid.*, 140.

John, this dignity belongs to Jesus in the entirety of his human experience, and overcomes time (see John 8:58).

d) This christological reflection is not a goal in itself. In John as in 2 Peter, it has always an ultimate soteriological goal. If 2 Peter recalls the Transfiguration of the earthly Jesus as proof of his powerful *παρουσία*, it ensures its readers that they already share the “divine nature” as long as they follow the *ὁδὸς τῆς δικαιοσύνης* (2 Pet 2:21) and keep growing in their knowledge (2 Pet 3:18),

“At first sight, it seems to be the case that 2 Peter does not mention any implication of the Transfiguration for the believers. However, through the key term ‘promise’, 2 Peter makes a tight connection between the Transfiguration of Jesus / the Parousia and the believers’ new existence [sc. *ἐπάγγελμα* 2 Pet 1:4; 3:13 and *ἐπαγγελία* in 2 Pet 3:4.9] (...) In the theological scheme of the author, the coming Parousia, the Day of the Lord, is the time when the New Heavens and Earth come into existence on a cosmological level. On the ecclesiological level, already in the present, the individual believer begins to experience the Parousia or the New Heavens and Earth by becoming a participant of the divine nature.”⁹⁴

In certain sense the transfigured one represents the believers own dignity, vocation and election: not only in the final judgment, but already here and now. The “*metaphorische Christologie*” becomes transformed, then, into a “*christologische Metaphorizität*”⁹⁵ that has still all its anthropological, soteriological and ethical potential. The *Gestalt* of the Son honoured and glorified has a real – existential and ethical – relevance for believers even if they cannot yet see the full achievement of the *ἐπαγγελία τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ*.

⁹⁴ LEE, Transfiguration (cf. n. 38), 141.

⁹⁵ R. ZIMMERMANN, Paradigmen einer metaphorischen Christologie. Eine Leseanleitung, in: J. Frey/J. Rohls/id. (eds.), *Metaphorik und Christologie*, TBT 120, Berlin/New York 2003, 1–34, 33.