



Prolepsis and Analepsis in the Fourth Gospel: Underpriced Treasures of Johannine Narrative Prowess

© REV. ANDREAS HOECK, S.S.D.

Saint John Vianney Theological Seminary, Archdiocese of Denver.
1300 South Steele Street, Denver, CO 80210
father.hoeck@archden.org

Summary: The literary devices of *prolepsis* and *analepsis* are all but absent from contemporary scholarship of the Fourth Gospel. This present essay sets out to counter-balance that record by attempting to inquire about them from a narratological angle instead of a merely grammatico-syntactical one. That endeavor encompasses the combining of both antonymical partners into one unitary reflection, which will flow into the creation of subgroups for each phenomenon, enabling themes of Johannine theological preeminence to emerge. The overall goal is to bring out more of the uniqueness and even genius of the Fourth Gospel narrative.

Keywords: Fourth Gospel, Narratology.

Resumen: Los recursos literarios de *prolepsis* y *analepsis* están prácticamente ausentes de la erudición contemporánea del Cuarto Evangelio. El presente ensayo se propone contrarrestar ese registro al intentar investigar sobre ellos desde un ángulo narratológico en lugar de uno meramente gramático-sintáctico. Ese esfuerzo abarca la combinación de ambos socios antinómicos en una sola reflexión unitaria, y fluirá hacia la creación de subgrupos para cada fenómeno,

permitiendo que surjan los temas preeminentes de teología juannea. El objetivo general es sacar más de la singularidad e incluso el genio de la narrativa del Cuarto Evangelio.

Palabras clave: Cuarto Evangelio, Narratología.

INTRODUCTION

Even the most uninitiated reader of the Gospel of Saint John will have wondered how “Mary *was* the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair” already in 11:2, while this actual event takes place only in 12:3, exactly one chapter later. At first sight the narrative timeline is bewildering, but upon further perusing this Gospel one comes across numerous such seeming chronological inconsistencies. As a matter of fact, one is dealing with a literary technique also known as prolepsis and its antonymical partner analepsis. Their mention, however, is all but absent from older as well as more recent Fourth Gospel commentaries.

Yet, there is one recent study that does amount to a thorough investigation into this issue, at least concerning prolepsis, offered by the Belgian New Testament scholar Prof. Gilbert VAN BELLE (*Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*).¹ He states: “As far as the present writer is aware, M.-E. BOISMARD² is unique in having included prolepsis in his list of Johannine style features.”³ VAN BELLE agrees with BOISMARD that *prolepsis* is one of the least prominent features of the Gospel, identifying twelve occurrences, including John 4:35; 5:42; 7:27; 9:8.29; 11:31; 14:17, and 16:4. “As a matter of fact, prolepsis is no more than one element of a wider use of explicit and redundant style which is expressed in the Gospel of John in a variety of forms including repetitions, doublets, parallelisms, antitheses, paratactic sentence structures, definition clauses, recapitulations and parentheses or asides. [...] Given such affinities, it seems reasonable to agree with BOISMARD and treat prolepsis as typically Johannine.”⁴

Delving further into VAN BELLE’s article, it soon becomes patent that this literary device is discussed in strictly grammatico-syntactical terms. This circumstance brings us back to its classical definition as laid down, for instance,

1 VAN BELLE, G., “Prolepsis in the Gospel of John”, *Novum Testamentum* 43 (2001), pp. 334-347.

2 BOISMARD, M.-E. – LAMOUILLE, A., *L'évangile de Jean. Commentaire, Synopse des quatre évangiles en français*, Paris: 1977, p. 514.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 334.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 346.

in SMYTH's *Grammar*: "The subject of the dependent clause is often anticipated and made the object of the verb of the principal clause. This transference, which gives a more prominent place to the subject of the subordinate clause, is called anticipation or prolepsis."⁵ He goes on to determine its rhetorical purpose: "Prolepsis [...] is the anticipation of the result of the action of the verb: 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.' Prolepsis is also used to designate the anticipation of an opponent's arguments and objections. One variety is *prodiorthósis* or preparatory apology."⁶

Recognizing, therefore, the current limitation of references to prolepsis, and a glaring *lacuna* when it comes to analepsis, in Johannine studies, the goal of this essay is to take up a different vantage point: instead of looking through the lens of grammar and syntax, it appears to be perhaps more fruitful at this juncture, or at least complementary to the aforesaid approach, to unpack these concepts by appealing to narratological or rhetorical science.⁷ A second touch of originality of this treatise would be, therefore, the joining of prolepsis and analepsis in one scholarly contemplation. In the ultimate analysis, of course, we will be attempting to draw an exegetico-theological inference from both the nature and frequency of prolepses and analepses in John's Gospel. If such will indeed be the outcome, then how would it influence Johannine Theology on a whole?

With this scheme in mind, let us begin by succinctly reviewing the lexicorhetorical definition of those two notions in light of contemporary narrative theory, aiming at a broader interpretation of these stylistic features. Accordingly, the present reflection will base itself more on textual contents than grammatico-syntactical paradigms.

1. PROLEPSIS AND ANALEPSIS IN NARRATIVE THEORY

1.1. General

A glimpse into some technical terminology will be imperative in order to grasp the nature of prolepsis and analepsis. Before their meaning is examined individually, a general review might be advised. Dino FELLUGA explains the pair of concepts as follows: "What is commonly referred to in film as

5 SMYTH, H.W., *Greek Grammar*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA 1984, no. 2182.

6 *Ibid.*, no. 3045.

7 Cf. *Encyclopædia Britannica* on "Narratology or Literary Theory": <https://www.britannica.com/art/narratology> (accessed on 7/25/2018).

‘flashback’ and ‘flashforward.’ In other words, these are ways in which a narrative’s discourse re-orders a given story: by ‘flashing back’ to an earlier point in the story (analepsis) or ‘flashing forward’ to a moment later in the chronological sequence of events (prolepsis). The classic example of prolepsis is prophecy.”⁸

James PHELAN adds this explication: “Narratives typically establish a primary temporal *Now*. When the order of the discourse follows the chronological order of events, then the temporal *Now* of the discourse follows the temporal *Now* of the events. When the discourse narrates something that occurred prior to the temporal *Now*, we have an analepsis (or ‘flashback’). [...] When the discourse narrates something that will occur after the temporal *Now*, we have a prolepsis (or ‘flashforward’).”⁹

Both “flashback” and “flashforward” are used to aid in cohering a story, develop a character, or add structure to the narrative, to create an atmosphere of suspense in an audience, so that the readers are interested to know more. This literary device is generally used to build anticipation in the minds of readers about what might happen next, thus adding dramatic tension to a story. Moreover, “foreshadowing” can make extraordinary or even bizarre events appear credible, as they are predicted beforehand so that readers are mentally prepared for them. After reviewing both features together in general terms, it is time now to scrutinize the narratological essence and function of each one of them separately.

1.2. Prolepsis

Deriving from the ancient Greek πρόληψις (προ-λαμβάνω, “take beforehand, anticipate”), prolepsis conveys the idea of “preconception, anticipation”, with its first known use in the English language in 1578. In an oratorical event, it portrays the anticipation and/or answering of possible objections¹⁰, as well as representing a thing as existing, before it actually does or did so (“he was a

8 FELLUGA, D., “Terms Used by Narratology and Film Theory, Introductory Guide to Critical Theory.” <http://www.purdue.edu/guidetotheory/narratology/terms/> (accessed on 6/2/18).

9 PHELAN, J., *Narrative Theory, 1966–2006: A Narrative* (http://sins.au.dk/fileadmin/sins.au.dk/Texts/Phelan_2006.pdf (accessed on 6/3/18); supplementary sources for consultation on prolepsis and analepsis: “The living handbook of narratology: Time” (<http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/time>); Gérard GENETTE, *Narratology/Signo: Applied Semiotics Theories* (<http://www.signosemio.com/genette/narratology.asp>).

10 Cf. *cataphora*, which employs a phrase or word that co-refers to a later expression in the discourse.

dead man when he entered”); in other words, one is dealing with a figure of speech in which the speaker raises an objection and then immediately answers it. In storytelling it is known as “flashforward”, i.e., an interjected scene that represents happenings in the future, or the assignment of something to a period of time that precedes it.¹¹ Technical synonyms include *attraction*, *anachronism*, *foreshadowing*, *procatalepsis* (i.e., the anticipation of objection to an argument), and *dislocation*.

This present endeavor at defining prolepsis would remain incomplete if it did not reference MERRIAM-WEBSTER¹²: “*Anticipation*: such as (a.) the representation or assumption of a future act or development as if presently existing or accomplished, (b.) the application of an adjective to a noun in anticipation of the result of the action of the verb.” The Dictionary subjoins the following subcategories: “(i.) *Prochronism*, the assigning of a person, event, etc., to a period earlier than the actual one; the representation of something in the future as if it already existed or had occurred; the word may also refer to the anticipation of objections to an argument, a tactic aimed at weakening the force of such objections; (ii.) *Procatalepsis*, also called *prolepsis* or *prebuttal*, is a figure of speech in which the speaker raises an objection to their own argument and then immediately answers it. By doing so, they hope to strengthen their argument by dealing with possible counter-arguments before their audience can raise them. In rhetoric, anticipating future responses and answering possible objections will set up one’s argument for a strong defense. In literary discussion, *procatalepsis* is used as a figure of speech in which a description is used before it is strictly applicable. *Procatalepsis* is linked to the rhetorical term *inoculation*, i.e., a small dose of threat parallel to the awareness of the opposing argument that is used to build up one’s argument by defense in *prolepsis*. *Persuasion* research in the 1950s found that providing two sides of an issue created a greater resistance to later arguments.”¹³ We now turn our attention to prolepsis’ antonymical counterpart.

11 Applied to *Logic*, it is the anticipation of an objection to an argument; in *Grammar*, a construction that consists of placing an element in a syntactic unit before that to which it would logically correspond; in *Philosophy/Epistemology*, a so-called “preconception”, namely, a pre-theoretical notion which can lead to true knowledge of the world.

12 America’s most-trusted online Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/> (accessed on 6/1/18).

13 For further detail on *prolepsis* in narratology, see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/undergraduate/modules/literaturetheoryandtime/ltt-currie2.pdf>.

1.3. Analepsis

The same MERRIAM-WEBSTER informs us that the term analepsis was first used in 1868, stemming from the Greek ανάληψις (ἀνα-λαμβάνω “take up again”). In rhetoric, it represents a literary device that involves an interruption of the chronological sequence of events by interjection of events or scenes of earlier occurrence, a literary flashback. Flashbacks are often used to recount events that happened before the story’s primary sequence of events to fill in crucial backstory. In literature, internal analepsis is a flashback to an earlier point in the narrative; external analepsis is a flashback to a time before the narrative started.¹⁴

Adding to the foregoing clarification, The OXFORD REFERENCE asserts: “[Analepsis is] a form of anachrony by which some of the events of a story are related at a point in the narrative after later story-events have already been recounted. Commonly referred to as retrospection or flashback, analepsis enables a storyteller to fill in background information about characters and events. A narrative that begins *in medias res* might include an analeptic account of events preceding the point at which the tale began.”¹⁵

At this point in our research, let us begin by identifying the various iterations of prolepses and analepses in the Fourth Gospel, keeping in mind any leads offered by present-day commentaries for the exegetical backdrop. After in-depth scrutiny, both terms appear to be placeholders for a variety of sub-categories; as an additional point of originality, the author of this study would like to create titles for each of the above subgroups of *prolepses*, something that will be repeated regarding the *analepses* later on.

2. JOHANNINE PROLEPSES

As a preliminary recognition one might say the Johannine Passion narrative can be understood as the fulfillment of the proleptic nature of much of the Gospel: (a.) the “lifting up”, 3:14; 8:28; 12:32; (b.) the “hour”, 2:4; 7:6.30, etc.; (c.) the gift of the Spirit, 7:37-39; (d.) Jesus’ kingship, 18:28ff; (e.) “completing” the task of redemption, 4:34; (f.) revealing the “Glory” of God, 11:4.

14 By way of illustration, in movies and television, several camera techniques and special effects have evolved to alert the viewer that the action shown is a flashback or flashforward; for example, the edges of the picture may be deliberately blurred, photography may be jarring, choppy, of unusual coloration, or sepia tone, or monochrome, when most of the story is in full color.

15 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095410477> (accessed on 6/5/18).

Yet, to be more concrete, it is time now to identify and interpret the instances of prolepsis in the entirety of the Fourth Gospel. Fine-combing it one arrives at seventeen concrete iterations of prolepsis that could be grouped into six sub-categories; those occurrences will be taken up in descending order of frequency. The actual phrases will be italicized in the biblical verse cited for the sake of easier perception.

2.1. *vaticinal*

2.1.1. Starting with John 4:23a: “But the hour is coming, *and is now here*, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,”¹⁶ which theologically is a case of balance between traditional end time eschatology and realized eschatology, so typical of the author of the Fourth Gospel. Christ uses this teaching as a vehicle to reveal the Blessed Trinity. Akin to this verse is John 5:25a, “Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, *and is now here*, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God.”¹⁷ Again, classical end-time eschatology collapses into the present: “and is now”. The future tenses in this verse do look forward to the time of eventual plenitude. Narratologically speaking, “the hour is coming” is an external prolepsis which one could call *vaticinal* or prophetic, creating an atmosphere of suspense, a short burst of anticipation that adds and then resolves dramatic tension. The ecclesial *eschaton* has begun!

2.1.2. Another instance of vaticinal internal prolepsis occurs in John 5:36b, “The works that the Father has given me *to complete*, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me.” The future tense of the Greek verb τελειώσω (*perficiam*) here is proleptic regarding Jesus’ last word on the Cross, 19:30a, “When Jesus had received the wine, he said, ‘*It is finished.*’” Jesus’ very last word (perfect passive indicative τετέλεσται), therefore, announces the completion of his Father’s work here on earth (cf. τέλος, Mt 26:58; referring to the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and to the end of the world in Mk 13:7¹⁸), i.e., our salvation through the priestly sacrifice of his Son. Within the Gospel’s narrative, this prolepsis clearly aids in anticipating the result of redemption on Calvary, and thereby coalesces

16 Biblical quotes are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRS).

17 Quoted by the Church in the context of her teaching about Christ’s descent into hell, cf. CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, nos. 631-637.

18 See also its prominent presence at the completion of the Sermon on the Mount, Mt 7:28 (ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους, *consummasset Iesus verba haec*); or else after the instruction of the Twelve at Mt 11:1.

the story by establishing an arch from chs. 5 to 19. The employment of the literary device at this time underscores salvation in the Cross of Christ.

2.1.3. A similar assessment could be measured out to John 6:38-39, “for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own *will*, but the *will* of him who sent me. ³⁹And this is the *will* of him who sent me, that I should *lose nothing* of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.” Incidentally, it is typical for the evangelist to repeat the ending of the previous verse. Before contemplating how the charge is fulfilled in 17:12, one might point out that the twofold mention of the “will” in v. 38 already constitutes an internal prolepsis regarding the “will” in v. 39. What this “will” means is a protection of the believers that is confirmed during Jesus’ prayer for his disciples in the upper room, 17:12: “While I was with them, I *protected* them in your name that you have given me. I *guarded* them, and *not one of them was lost* except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled.” The fact that Christ declares that not one was lost embodies the denouement of the announcement in 6:39. Therefore, we are dealing with a vaticinal internal prolepsis; an atmosphere of suspense is created, making readers interested to know more. This anticipation boosts the dramatic tension towards the revelation of the Father’s will. Of course, the prophecy of a final resurrection remains open-ended, reminiscent of Job’s avowal: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth” (Job 19:25), and forestalling Martha’s confession at 11:24, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”

2.1.4. Equivalently, an internal vaticinal prolepsis can be detected at John 6:64 (“But among you there are some who do not believe. For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was *the one that would betray him*.”), fulfilled in 6:71 (“He was speaking of Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for he, though one of the twelve, *was going to betray him*.”) and 12:4 (“But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, the one *who was about to betray him*.”). Corresponding to this is the relationship between John 6:70 (“Jesus answered them, Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet *one of you is a devil*.”) and 13:27a (“After he received the piece of bread, *Satan* entered into him.” cf. Lk 22:3). Thus, Judas Iscariot’s narrative character is recounted by filling in this crucial backstory.

2.1.5. Before turning the attention to another subgroup of prolepsis, there is one instance of an external vaticinal prolepsis, namely, at John 16:4 “But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes *you may remember* that

I told you about them.” External, since it is a flashforward to a time at least potentially outside the Gospel’s narrative, an era also known as the *eschaton* of the Church.

2.2. *transmutative*

2.2.1. As signaled above, there is a second brand of prolepsis which, for the scholarly exercise, we choose to dub *transmutative* (cf. 3.7.), since it mirrors a change of circumstance further down in the narrative plot. John 8:6.8 is illustrative of it: “⁶ Jesus *bent down* and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁸ And once again he *bent down* and wrote on the ground.” This gesture seems to prelude a scenario surrounding the resurrection of Christ at John 20:5.11, “⁵ He [the other disciple] *bent down* to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she *bent over* to look into the tomb.” Hence, a gesture performed by Jesus earlier on is then duplicated in a resurrectional context by “the other disciple” and Mary. Accordingly, the literary technique of internal transmutative prolepsis lends cohesion to the narrative, not just intertwining the Book of Signs (John chs. 1-12) with the Book of Glory (John chs. 13-21), but also accentuating the prominence of the Resurrection.

2.2.2. Comparable internal transmutative parameters could be applied to John 4:40.43 (“⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there *two days*. ⁴³ When the *two days* were over, he went from that place to Galilee.”), the “two days” of which transmute into an allusion to Christ’s own resurrection in the story of the raising of Lazarus in 11:6 (“after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed *two days* longer in the place where he was.”). Besides, an anticipative strain is latent pertaining to the countdown toward the all-decisive “third day” of his victory over death, complemented by the “four days” of 11:17.39.

2.2.3. Internal transmutative proleptic is also extant in John 12:7 (“Jesus said, Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might *keep it for the day of my burial*.”) and 19:39-40 (“³⁹ Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the *burial* custom of the Jews.”). Here again, one observes a transmutation from one protagonist – Mary – to another – Nicodemus, emphasizing Jesus’ burial.

2.2.4. Before moving on to the next category, a transmutative prolepsis in reappears at John 19:41 (“Now there was a *garden* in the place where he was crucified, and in the *garden* there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.”), which informs 20:15 (“Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for? Supposing him to be the *gardener*, she said to him, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”). In this case, the earlier mention of the “garden” prepares the divine “gardener” in 20:15.

2.3. *absolute*

2.3.1. A third type of prolepsis could be labeled *absolute* (cf. 3.1.) since it is the purest manifestation of narrative anticipation.¹⁹ Probably among the most recognizable iterations, as already indicated in the Introduction of this essay, is John 11:2 (“*Mary* was the one who *anointed* the Lord with *perfume* and *wiped his feet with her hair*; her brother Lazarus was ill.”), constituting an internal prolepsis toward 12:3 (“*Mary* took a pound of costly *perfume* made of pure nard, *anointed* Jesus’ *feet*, and *wiped* them with her *hair*. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.”). Clearly, the action of this significant character, i.e., Mary of Bethany, is ushered in before it actually happens.²⁰ Theologically, the washing of feet by the Master in 13:5 is prepared. Ultimately, the diffusion of perfume in 12:3 anticipates Pentecost (“and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.” Acts 2:2b).

2.3.2. Equally astounding is the literary power of the internal absolute prolepsis in John 11:41-42 (“So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, Father, I thank you *for having heard me*.⁴² I knew that you always hear

¹⁹ “Although John does not narrate it until the next chapter (12:1-8), he mentions the incident of Mary anointing Jesus with perfumed oil and drying his feet to show that this family and Jesus are close friends.” MARTIN, F. – WRIGHT, W., *The Gospel of John*, Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, MI 2015, p. 201.

²⁰ “The introduction of this detail about Mary’s relationship with Jesus has been variously explained. Most commentators [...] regard it as a parenthesis that has been added to the original passage. It is regarded by the interpretation here as a deliberate literary technique that introduces the actions of a significant character before they happen. This is called a ‘gap’ or a ‘blank’ or a ‘place of indeterminacy’ within the text. The technique creates a tension for the reader who must read on to fill the ‘gap’ with information provided later in the narrative.” MOLONEY, F., *John*, Sacra Pagina, The Liturgical Press: Collegeville, MN 1998, p. 336; cf. ISER, W., *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, Routledge & Kegan Paul: London 1978, pp. 182-187.

me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”), prepared in its turn by Psa 118:21, “I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.”²¹ In prompt fulfilment of Christ’s anticipated gratitude, “the dead man came out.” (John 11:44a). Narrative “foreshadowing” can make extraordinary and bizarre events appear credible, as they are predicted beforehand so that readers are mentally prepared for them. This applies to the spectacular raising of Lazarus here.

2.3.3. A last instance of absolute internal prolepsis would be Jesus’ invitation “Rise, let us *be on our way*.” (John 14:31c; cf. Mk 14:42), which appears to be implemented only later, i.e., at 18:1, “After Jesus had spoken these words, *he went out with his disciples* across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.” Despite the 14:31c exhortation to his disciples, there appears to be no locomotion, and Christ’s discourse continues until ch. 17. Exegetically speaking, it is possible that Jesus leaves the Cenacle now, and the words of chs. 15-17 are uttered before they cross the Kidron.²² Again, the use of prolepsis coalesces the storyline and drama is heightened, as Jesus prepares to face his suffering and death, lending overall cohesion to the Passion narrative.

2.4. *incomplete*

2.4.1. In John 1:50b-51 we find a precedent of an *incomplete* prolepsis: “You *will see* greater things than these. And he said to him, Very truly, I tell you, *you will see* heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” At first sight, it appears to be an internal prolepsis, yet its achievement is not positively attested to within the Gospel narrative, since it refers to the eschatological life of the Church. As the scene looks back to Jacob’s dream in Gen 28:11-19, and adhering to a Jewish interpretation, Jesus transforms it into a future vision, shifting the emphasis away from the ladder: the angels ascend and descend upon the Son of Man, who thus becomes the “place”, the “gate of heaven”, revelatory of God’s presence. Those “greater things than these” (μείζω τούτων, *maiora his*) signal the divine aspect of the Son of Man, transcending conventional Messianic hopes, a major self-revelation of Jesus.

21 Some scholars question “whether this is a prayer at all, suggesting that it has its origin in the pre-Johannine use of LXX Psa 117:21.” MOLONEY, *John*, p. 342.

22 “Most scholars settle for the literary-critical explanation, that the words originally led directly into 18:1” (MOLONEY, *John*, p. 415), making chs. 15-17 a posterior inclusion into the existing discourse.

Jesus may have simply referred to the miracle of Cana (2:11), Nathanael's hometown (cf. 21:2). The plenary revelation of the Messianic glory is about to begin, a glory, however, which is accessible only to faith, the Johannine "Messianic secret".²³ Nevertheless, as an external prolepsis, the promise reaches its fulfillment only in the *eschaton*.

Worth noting is the circumstance that the above prolepsis is cumulatively preceded by an internal analepsis: "Jesus answered, Do you *believe* because I told you that I *saw* you under the fig tree?" (John 1:50). Jesus questions the basis of Nathanael's belief generated by his miracle, analeptically referring to his previous knowledge of Nathanael's person. In its turn, it points proleptically toward Christ's gentle reproach of Thomas a week after his Resurrection: "Have you *believed* because you have *seen* me? Blessed are those who have not *seen* and yet have come to *believe*", 20:29. In terms of narrative theory, these literary devices of prolepsis and analepsis inevitably interconnect and enliven the story line.

2.4.2. John 21:19 appears to contain a further recurrence of such an incomplete external prolepsis: "He said this to indicate the kind of death by which *he would glorify God*." Jesus alludes to Peter's future martyrdom, which, according to early Christian tradition, took place long after this conversation unfolded; on the other hand, it did manifestly happen sometime before the Fourth Gospel was written and published. Exegetically speaking, the verb σημαίνω (*significans* in the NOVA VULGATA) points to a metaphorical sense of the prediction (cf. 12:33; Rev 1:1): a typical Johannine interpretation of the Christian death in light of Jesus' victory on the Cross. This present prolepsis assists the reader in projecting his/her thoughts into a time of the Church succeeding the Resurrection of the Lord.

2.5. *binary*

2.5.1. A unique kind of prolepsis could be termed as *binary* as it includes an analeptic phrase.²⁴ Of its two occurrences, John 2:22 is the first: "After he was raised from the dead, his disciples *remembered* that he had said this; and they *believed* the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken." The sacred author predicts faith for the time after Christ's resurrection, adding a twofold anamnestic analepsis ("remembered" and "believed") at that point (see 3.3.): even the

23 The Messianic secret of the Synoptics (impressed on the disciples and on witnesses of miracles only in Jewish areas, but not inculcated in the Decapolis, cf. Mk 5:19f), is not commented on by John.

24 Very similar to the case discussed under 2.4.1.

disciples understand the saying only after Jesus' resurrection. John, therefore, meditates in terms of a post-paschal experience, interpreting events of the past. This Spirit-effected memory²⁵, the post-Easter retrospective, has fundamental and programmatic significance for the Fourth Gospel, cf. 14:26. Certainly, all the Gospels were written from the perspective of hindsight, but John is the only evangelist expressly to thematize this viewpoint and hold it up as the key to understanding the whole work.²⁶ Ultimately, therefore, the cleansing of the temple becomes a revelation of Christ's glory, disclosed only to those who believe in him.²⁷ Hence, right from the Gospel's early chapters, the narrative receives this overarching proleptic and analeptic *nexus* between Jesus' public ministry and the time after his Resurrection, which is the eschatological time of his Church.

2.5.2. A second instance of such an internal binary prolepsis recurs in John 12:16, "His disciples did not understand these things at first; but *when Jesus was glorified*, then they *remembered* that these things *had been written of him* and had been done to him." Here is again the proleptic allusion to the Messiah's rising from the dead, called "glorification", tied to an anamnestic external analepsis (cf. 3.6.), confirming the fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9 during his Passion. A "flashback" twinned with a "flashforward" re-orders this given story, coalescing it in the process. The theme of the Resurrection is further strengthened and developed, adding structure to the narrative.

2.6. *synoptic*

A last class of prolepsis could be called *synoptic* since it points into the Synoptic Gospels: "He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, You are Simon son of John. *You are to be called Cephas* [which is translated Peter]." (John 1:42). The Greek κληθήσῃ in this verse is in the future tense (NVg *vocáberis*), materializing only in Mt 16:18, "And I tell you, you are *Peter*, and on this *rock* I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail

25 Incidentally, Μνημοσύνη is the goddess of memory in Greek mythology; she was the daughter of the Titans Uranus and Gaia, and the mother of the nine *Muses*, fathered by her nephew, *Zeus*: *Calliope* (epic poetry), *Clio* (history), *Euterpe* (music), *Erato* (lyric poetry), *Melpomene* (tragedy), *Polyhymnia* (hymns), *Terpsichore* (dance), *Thalia* (comedy), *Urania* (astronomy).

26 The Song of Songs reflects on the "memories of love", *exsultemus et laetemur in te memores amorum tuorum super vinum*, Ct 1:4.

27 Cf. CHANIKUZH, J., *Jesus, The Eschatological Temple. An Exegetical Study of Jn 2,13-22 in the Light of the Pre-70 C.E. Eschatological Temple Hopes and the Synoptic Temple Action*, Peeters: Leuven-Paris-Walpole, MA 2012.

against it.” Thus, as Andrew brings his brother to Jesus, the latter defines Peter’s origin by a truly unique address of personal recognition (“You are Simon son of John!”) and future mission. The giving of a new name has, of course Old Testament precedents, e.g., Gen 32:28; 35:10 (Jacob becomes Israel). “Jesus promises something to Simon that the readers know came true.”²⁸ Thus, the narrative character of Peter-*Cephas* is amplified, foreshadowing his primacy in the eschatological Church.

3. JOHANNINE ANALEPSES

A continued examination of the Fourth Gospel yields thirty-two examples of analepsis, or about twice as many as prolepses. Let us analyze those analepses, summarizing them in eight categories, and discussing them again in descending order of frequency. Just as done previously, the actual phrases will be italicized in the biblical verse cited for the sake of easier recognition.

3.1. *absolute*

3.1.1. Beginning with an *absolute* version of *analepsis* (cf. 2.3.), John 1:47-48 can be understood as a flashback to an earlier point outside of the narrative: “When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit! ⁴⁸ Nathanael asked him, Where *did* you get to know me? Jesus answered, I *saw* you under the fig tree *before* Philip called you.” Christ’s supernatural knowledge of humanity and things is a feature of John’s portrait of Him; Jesus proves his divine omniscience by analeptically referring to a circumstance that preceded the present dialogue, and which happened outside the Gospel narrative, thus an external analepsis. Theologically, this earlier sight cannot be called miracle in the Johannine sense of miracles being “signs”, yet it does generate a response in Nathanael that recognizes something miraculous is happening.

3.1.2. A similar, yet this time internal, analepsis resides in John 2:9, “When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (*though the servants who had drawn the water knew*), the steward called the bridegroom.” Thus, it was the servers who “knew”, not the headwaiter, and their deeper knowledge is put analeptically in the middle of the verse, galvanizing the plot of Cana’s first miracle.

²⁸ MOLONEY, *John*, p. 60.

3.1.3. Then, in an illogical fashion, John 3:4 contains a flashback to an event external to the narrative, namely the interlocutor's birth: "Nicodemus said to him, How can anyone be born after having grown old? *Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?*" Nicodemus, as was usual in the scholastic exercises of the Rabbis, raises an objection as paradoxical as possible. He means to bring out the absurdity of the doctrine, a classical *reductio ad absurdum*. (cf. 6:52; Mk 12:20-23). As contemplated in the introduction, a flashback can develop a narrative character: in this case, the high-ranking Pharisee, Nicodemus, could be seen now in light of the man who was "blind from birth (*caecum a nativitate*)," John 9:1, underlining his journey towards the light and new life of faith.

3.1.4. The Gospel narrative concerning the Samaritan woman is concatenated due to the internal absolute analepsis of John 4:39 ("Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, *He told me everything I have ever done.*") referring back to 4:17-19 ("The woman answered him, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, You are right in saying, I have no husband; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true! ¹⁹ The woman said to him, Sir, I see that you are a prophet."). Likewise, by recalling an antecedent point in the narrative, support is offered to the readers in their effort to remember, and consequently realize, that Jesus possesses divine omniscience.

3.1.5. In order to stay true to the format of an essay like this, let us address the remaining iterations of absolute analepses in a more cursory fashion. They typically wind up consolidating protagonists in the Gospel, re-order the story line or make it cohere, and above all, add structure to the Johannine narrative. John 4:46 ("Then he came again to Cana in Galilee *where he had changed* the water into wine.") evidently constitutes a flashback to John 2:1-11, sustaining the reader's memory regarding the first miracle of Cana.

3.1.6. Another miracle of healing is analeptically reinforced: John 4:52-53 ("So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, *Yesterday* at one in the afternoon the fever left him. ⁵³ The father realized that *this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, Your son will live.* So, he himself believed, along with his whole household.") looks back to 4:50a ("Jesus said to him, *Go; your son will live.*").²⁹

²⁹ The 7th hour (*hora septima*) translates to 1:00 p.m., tellingly succeeding the noon time of Jesus' conversation at the well of Jacob, John 4:6. Jesus' reply in direct speech enhances vivacity and drama, reminiscent of the prophet Elijah's words raising the widow's son, 1 Kings 17:23.

3.1.7. Christ's non-acceptance of human testimony at John 5:34 (“*Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved.*”) functions as an absolute internal analepsis, tied back into 2:24-25 (“But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people ²⁵ and *needed no one to testify about anyone*; for he himself knew what was in everyone.”) and powerfully buttresses the narrative's insistence on his divine omniscience.

3.1.8. Moreover, John 9:11 (“He answered, The man called Jesus *made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, Go to Siloam and wash.* Then I went and washed and received my sight.”), emphatically reaffirmed in 9:27 (“He answered them, *I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?*”) reminisces about 9:6-7 (“When he had said this, he spat on the ground and *made mud* with the saliva and *spread the mud on the man's eyes,* ⁷ saying to him, *Go, wash in the pool of Siloam* [which means ‘Sent’]. Then he went and washed and came back able to see.”), analeptically stressing yet another miracle of healing.

3.1.9. John 9:13 (“They brought to the Pharisees the man who had *formerly been blind.*”) analeptically connects with 9:1 (“As he walked along, he saw a man *blind from birth.*”), similarly intensifying the narrative limelight on Jesus' healing ministry.

3.1.10. John 11:3 (“So the sisters *sent a message to Jesus, Lord, he whom you love is ill.*”) is referenced twice farther down in the narrative (“Martha said to Jesus, *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.*” 11:21; “When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.*” 11:32). This absolute internal analepsis equally fortifies Christ's role as a healer.

3.1.11. Three passages, namely (a.) John 12:1 (“Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, *whom he had raised from the dead.*”), (b.) 12:9 (“When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, *whom he had raised from the dead.*”), and (c.) 12:17-18 (“So the crowd that had been with him *when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead* continued to testify. ¹⁸ It was also because they heard that *he had*

performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.”) clearly recall 11:43-44 (“When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come out! ⁴⁴ *The dead man came out*, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, Unbind him, and let him go.”), another internal absolute analepsis, narratively providing further consistency to the miracle of the raising of Lazarus.

3.1.12. Both John 18:2 (“Now *Judas, who betrayed him*, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples.”), and 18:5b (“*Judas, who betrayed him*, was standing with them.”) form a literary internal analepsis toward John 13:30 (“So, after receiving the piece of bread, he *immediately went out*. And it was night.”), giving narrative prominence to Judas’ betrayal of Jesus.

3.1.13. Moreover, John 18:13 (“First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of *Caiaphas, the high priest that year*.”) serves as an internal analepsis regarding 11:49 (“But one of them, *Caiaphas, who was high priest that year*, said to them, You know nothing at all!”), structuring the Passion narrative, and compounding the character account of Caiaphas the High Priest.

3.1.14. A related Johannine internal analepsis, the authorial intention in employing these literary devices being to invite the reader to see two or more events in togetherness, resides in John 18:14 (“*Caiaphas* was the one who had advised the Jews that *it was better to have one person die for the people*.”); it harks back to 11:49-52 (“But one of them, *Caiaphas, who was high priest that year*, said to them, You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not understand that *it is better for you to have one man die for the people* than to have the whole nation destroyed. ⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, ⁵² and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God.”), with its most eloquent insertion of the Gospel writer’s own interpretation of the event in verses 51-52, shedding a deeper theological light on the high priest’s statement.³⁰

3.1.15. Furthermore, John 18:16 (“but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So *the other disciple, who was known to the high priest*, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.”) is an immediate

³⁰ On priests as occasional prophets, cf. 2 Sam 15:27.

literary flashback to 18:15 (“Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since *that disciple was known to the high priest*, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.”), weaving together the Passion narrative, and increasing the “other disciple” relevance.³¹

3.1.16. In the same vein, John 18:25 (“Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.”) relates back to 18:18 (“Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. *Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.*”), placing the attention on the narrative stature of Peter.

3.1.17. Continuing the discovery of analeptical passages in the Fourth Gospel, there is Nicodemus coming onto the scene again by night in John 19:39 (“*Nicodemus*, who had at first *come to Jesus by night*, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.”), evoking his first nocturnal visit to Jesus in John 3:1-2a (“Now there was a Pharisee named *Nicodemus*, a leader of the Jews.² *He came to Jesus by night*”). Further advancing his narrative character is his analeptic mention already at 7:50a (“*Nicodemus*, who had *gone to Jesus before*, and who was one of them”); yet another internal absolute analepsis.

3.1.18. In emblematically Johannine guise, John 21:2 (“Gathered there together were Simon Peter, *Thomas called the Twin*, *Nathanael of Cana in Galilee*, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples.”) analeptically identifies the apostle Thomas as the “Twin”, cf. 11:16; 20:24 (“But *Thomas [who was called the Twin]*, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.”). On a related plane, the allusion to Nathanael also constitutes an internal and somewhat tongue-in-cheek flashback to John 1:46 (“*Nathanael* said to him, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, Come and see.”). Besides, the location of Cana relates back to John 2:1 (“On the third day there was a wedding in *Cana of Galilee*, and the mother of Jesus was there.”).

3.1.19. A penultimate instance of an absolute internal analepsis can be located at John 21:12 (“Jesus said to them, Come and have breakfast. Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, Who are you? because they knew *it was the Lord.*”), which is pointing back to 21:7 (“That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, *It*

31 According to long-standing tradition, he is identified as the “beloved disciple” of the Lord, the brother of James, sons of Zebedee, and the author of this Fourth Gospel.

is the Lord! When Simon Peter heard that *it was the Lord*, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea.”); here, the *Dominus est* becomes a narrative theme due to its threefold reiteration. This particular flashback could be interpreted as crystallizing the post-resurrection narrative of John’s Gospel.

3.1.20. Lastly, and analogous to the preceding one, there is the classical internal flashback of John 21:20 (“Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; *he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper* and had said, Lord, *who is it* that is going to betray you?”), reinforcing the narrative bond with the Last Supper in 13:23-25 (“*One of his disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him;* ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. ²⁵ *So while reclining next to Jesus,* he asked him, Lord, *who is it?*”), and replacing the spotlight on the beloved disciple. Indirectly, yet theologically pertinent, there is a last painful reminder of Peter’s own betrayal.

3.2. *toponymical*

3.2.1. Yet another iteration of Johannine analepsis could be labeled as *toponymical*: in these instances, John reminds the reader of a locale quoted earlier to give cohesion to the narrative. John 6:59 can serve as an example: “He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at *Capernaum*.” This spatial information is based on the prior indication in 6:16-17, “When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to *Capernaum*”, as well as 6:24b, “they themselves got into the boats and went to *Capernaum* looking for Jesus.” Thus, 6:59 and its internal analepsis, is a masterful interjection of the locality of Capernaum into the discourse, a technique also known as *metachronism*: the town was mentioned in the introduction, 6:24, but this is the first advertence to the synagogue as the specific setting of Jesus’ teaching.

3.2.2. A similar scenario is displayed in John 8:20, “He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the *temple*, but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.” which analeptically points back to 8:2, “Early in the morning he came again to the *temple*. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them.” What is strikingly supplemented at 8:20 is the elucidation of Jesus being in the temple treasury. This internal analepsis succeeds in bestowing further congruity to an otherwise lengthy discourse in chapter 8.

3.2.3. Furthermore, John 12:21 (“They came to *Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee*, and said to him, Sir, we wish to see Jesus”) forms an internal analepsis towards 1:44 (“Now *Philip was from Bethsaida*, the city of Andrew and Peter.”). The sacred author also here tightly knits the narrative together by adjoining these internal flashbacks to the location of Bethsaida.

3.3. *supra-temporal*

3.3.1. Let us now turn our attention to a type of external *supra-temporal* analepsis that is principally an indicator of Christ’s divine pre-existence. A representative example is John 1:15, “John testified to him and cried out, This was he of whom I said, *He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.*” John the Baptist analeptically refers to this again (a.) at 1:27 (“*the one who is coming after me*; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.”), (b.) in a second echo of the phrase in 1:30, enriched this time by the connubial ἀνὴρ, “vir” (“This is he of whom I said, *After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.*”, and (c.) in 3:28 (“You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, I am not the Messiah, but *I have been sent ahead of him.*”). What is communicated here amounts to a veritable paradox, at the same time revealing and shrouding Christ’s divine transcendence. Incidentally, “the coming One” (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) has Messianic overtones, even though the Son of man is about to surpass the criteria of Jewish Messianic expectations.

3.3.2. Coequally, there is the external analepsis at John 8:57-58, “Then the Jews said to him, You are not yet fifty years old, and *have you seen Abraham?*”⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, Very truly, I tell you, *before Abraham was, I am.*” Fifty years marked the end of a Semite’s working life. The Book of Jubilees has fifty years to measure the eras since creation. Jesus’ reply could be interpreted as mocking those who apply that cosmic measure to him: he is outside any measure of the span of time. The Messiah’s pre-existence was expressed as early as 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The perplexing juxtaposition of grammatical tenses draws the mind from time to eternity (GREGORY THE GREAT).³² Also here, the analepsis serves to give evidence of Christ’s pre-existence.³³

32 Cf. KYSAR, R., *Voyages with John. Charting the Fourth Gospel*, Baylor University Press: Waco, TX 2005, pp. 43-52.

33 “[The ‘I am’ of 8:12] becomes the simple ‘I am’ of the present verse, denoting timeless pre-existence. [...] Jesus’ words point to the Jewish belief in the preexistence of the Messiah.” MOLONEY, *John*, pp. 286f.

3.4. *festal*

3.4.1. A second variety of analepsis could be called *festal*, since it integrates the story line by way of intimations concerning the calendar of Jewish festivities. A sterling example would be John 5:9, where the evangelist prods the reader “Now that day was a *sabbath*”, clarifying something he had mentioned as a generality already at 5:1, “After this there was a *festival* of the Jews.” By the same token, the citation of the “sabbath” propels the narrative already into the new theme starting at v. 10, conferring it an informative theological backdrop.

3.4.2. Almost interchangeable is the phrasing in John 9:14, “Now it was a *sabbath* day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.” Here, too, the delay in announcing the sabbath has a literary effect, that plays into the theological discernment of the healing. Only at John 10:22 do we learn that another feast was being celebrated: “At that time the *festival of the Dedication* took place in Jerusalem. It was winter.” This relatively recent celebration was instituted to commemorate the rededication of the Temple after Judas Maccabeus’ successful campaign to take possession of Jerusalem in 164 B.C.³⁴ It summoned the people to remain steadfast to the Torah of Yahweh, which forms the narrative *Sitz im Leben* to 10:23-42, calling the attention to the ironical paradox of the Jews’ rejection of Jesus as their God-sent Messiah. This vignette of Jewish festivity will be closed only in John 11:55a, “Now the *Passover* of the Jews was near,” and “six days before *Passover*” in 12:1. Hence, time and again John articulates the linkage between the Passover and Christ’s own death (cf. 13:1; 18:28; 19:14.42).

3.5. *eschatological*

3.5.1. The evangelist’s rich narratological repertoire also features a type of analepsis that could be called *eschatological*, since it bespeaks a perspective of eternity. A first sample is John 3:21, “But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that *their deeds have been done in God*.” This evidently external flashback takes up the vantage point of redeemed life after the final judgment, tying the discourse into a reality beyond even the ecclesial *eschaton*.

34 For more historical detail of that event, see MOLONEY, *John*, p. 313.

3.5.2. Related to the above we find John 5:24, “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me *has eternal life*, and does not come under judgment, but *has passed from death to life*.” In a quintessential Johannine fashion, life is contemplated here as if it had been obtained already in its fulness; the perfect tense of “passed” (μεταβέβηκεν) is the strongest example for realized eschatology in the New Testament.³⁵ This particular analepsis enlarges the narrative horizon *ad infinitum*.

3.6. *anamnestic*

Aside from the binary prolepses (see 2.5.), the presence of the word “remember” is the trait of a third category of Johannine analepses, here named *anamnestic*. Demonstrative of it is John 2:17, “His disciples *remembered* that it was written, Zeal for your house will consume me.” There is an external analepsis to Psalm 68:10(69:9), “It is zeal for your house that has consumed me.” Unlike John 2:22, however, the disciples remember the Old Testament Scripture during the situation in progress. The interpolation of this explanatory verse characterizes the author’s narrative style.³⁶ Interrupting the plot routine by interjecting a hint to Psalm 69 unavoidably enlivens the narrative.

3.7. *transmutative*

A penultimate iteration of Fourth Gospel analepses could be named *transmutative* (cf. 2.2.). In this case, the sacred author makes mention of an item appearing previously in a different context, bringing about a sort of internal transmutation that aids in consolidating a narrative character. There is only one occurrence: “When they had gone ashore, they saw a *charcoal fire* there, with fish on it, and bread.” (John 21:9); this post-Resurrection episode starkly recalls another fire (NeoVulgate *prunas*), that one, however, pre-resurrectional: “Now the servants and officers had made a *charcoal fire* because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with

³⁵ On the *mysterium stricte dictum* of time, cf. G. GOOSEN, *Spacetime and Theology in Dialogue*, Marquette University Press: Milwaukee 2008.

³⁶ “‘Remembering’ is a technical term in John for the process by which the community came to see Jesus as the fulfillment of Scripture after the resurrection. They supply an Old Testament citation, Psa 69:9, although the evangelist has changed the present tense of the Psalm text into the future, probably thinking of the bitter hostility that is to erupt between Jesus and ‘the Jews’ (5:16.18).” BROWN, R.E. – FITZMYER, J.A. – MURPHY, R.E., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1990, p. 954.

them and warming himself.” (18:18) The protagonist under consideration is Peter, obviously, who had denied his Master three times close to a charcoal fire in John 18:18; he now confesses him in the proximity of another charcoal fire, 21:15-17. The narrative cynosure is on the head of the college of the apostles, as well as his ecclesiastical primacy in the eschatological age about to commence.

3.8. *synoptic*

Last not least, there is an internal analepsis that we term *synoptic*, since it references the Synoptic Gospels. Our case in point would be John 4:44 recalling a saying of Christ (“for Jesus himself *had testified* that a *prophet* has no honor in the *prophet’s* own country.”) that had been recorded earlier only in the Gospels of Mark 6:4 (“Then Jesus told them, A *prophet* is without *honor* only in his hometown, among his relatives, and in his own household.”) and Luke 4:24 (“Then He added, “Truly I tell you, no *prophet* is accepted in his hometown.”). Thus, this final Johannine flashback establishes a connection between his authorship and that of the Synoptic Gospels, cementing the narrative characterization of Christ as a prophet.

4. EMERGENCE OF PERSPICUOUS THEMES OF JOHANNINE THEOLOGY

Summarizing now the foregoing research we arrive at the corollary that the inherent textuality³⁷ of John’s Gospel narrative is profoundly affected by his use of prolepsis and analepsis: the story line is constantly broken open and again woven together by pointing backward and forward. At times that includes drawing the reader’s attention to the outside, into the ecclesial *eschaton*, into eternity, or into the Synoptics.

A further exploration of the various subgroups that we identified (*vaticinal*, *transmutative*, *absolute*, *incomplete*, *binary* and *synoptic* for John’s prolepses, as well as *absolute*, *toponymical*, *supra-temporal*, *festal*, *eschatological*, *anamnesic*, *transmutative* and *synoptic* for his analepses, with *absolute* and *transmutative* being present in both prolepsis and analepsis) promises to be theologically enriching.

³⁷ Etymologically related to the process of weaving a textile, deriving from the Latin verb *tēxere*, meaning “to weave, plait, intertwine.” (cf. <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/texo>, accessed July 24, 2018).

A primary fruit of this investigation is the acknowledgment that, due to repetition, there are strands crystallizing around John's employment of prolepsis and analepsis which we might call proleptic/analeptic "themes". They will be set in descending order of frequency, taken together for the sake of concision. Reading through this short compendium one could come to the conclusion that the themes listed are also of graduated authorial import, revealing John's theological priorities:

Nine times these literary devices are at the service of Christocentricity, narratively punctuating the spectrum of Jesus' salvific mission as universal Messiah, namely his Resurrection (cf. 2.2.1.; 2.2.2.; 2.2.4.; 2.5.2.; 3.1.19.), his honor as a Prophet (cf. 3.8.), human salvation in his Cross (cf. 2.1.2.), the fulfilment of his Father's will (cf. 2.1.3.), and his burial (cf. 2.2.3.).

Seven recurrences place special weight on the ecclesial *eschaton*, even reaching into the realm of eternity (cf. 2.1.1.; 2.1.5.; 2.4.1.; 2.4.2.; 2.5.1.; 3.5.1.; 3.5.2.).

Six times priority is given to the theme of miraculous healings and raising of the dead (cf. 2.3.2.; 3.1.6.; 3.1.8.; 3.1.9.; 3.1.10.; 3.1.11.).

Five iterations help in integrating the Passion Narrative, not least by zeroing in on Caiaphas the High Priest, on Peter and on the "other disciple" (cf. 2.3.3.; 3.1.13.; 3.1.14.; 3.1.15.; 3.1.16.).

Three times, the proleptic and analeptic technique is employed to show forth Christ's divine omniscience (cf. 3.1.1.; 3.1.4.; 3.1.7.).

Lastly, twice the narrative focal point is put on Jesus' Messianic pre-existence (cf. 3.3.1.; 3.3.2.), on the miracle of Cana (cf. 3.1.2.; 3.1.5.), on the Temple in Jerusalem (cf. 3.2.2; 3.6.), on the Jewish Sabbath (cf. 3.4.1.; 3.4.2.), on the persons of Peter-*Cephas* (cf. 2.6.; 3.7.), Nicodemus (cf. 3.1.3.; 3.1.17.), as well as on Judas Iscariot (cf. 2.1.4; 3.1.12.).

And then there are those instances that occur only once, yet could be seen in two thematic groups: first, there are persons whose narrative profile is further developed, namely that of the Beloved Disciple (cf. 3.1.20.), of Mary of Bethany (cf. 2.3.1.), of Thomas "the twin" (cf. 3.1.18.), and of Nathanael (cf. 3.1.1.); and secondly, there are locales that are pinpointed more insistently, i.e., that of Cana in Galilee (cf. 3.1.18.), of Capernaum (cf. 3.2.1.), and of Bethsaida (cf. 3.2.3.).

With exegetical methodicalness, one could eventually bring into play all those criteria of narrative theory that were alluded to in the Introduction, and apply them to each of the manifestations of prolepsis and analepsis. Thus, all the

previously delineated themes have been given distinction in the Fourth Gospel: the “flashbacks” and “flashforwards” did re-order the story line, according to cohesion in the process. Themes, characters and localities are evolving, adding internal structure to the narrative, every now and then recounting events to fill in a critical background. Not seldomly an atmosphere of suspense is created, making readers interested in coming to understand more, or to connect all the dots on their own account. This anticipation ostensibly redounds to an increased dramatic tension within the narrative. Proleptic foreshadowing has been used to make marvelous events such as miracles and resurrection appear believable, preparing the mind of the hearer in advance to receive them. Of not negligible pertinency is the mnemonic assistance rendered by those analepses, taking into account the Johannine fondness for post-resurrection remembrance or *anamnēsis* by the apostolic Church. Likewise, one cannot overstate the stimulating effect that those proleptic or analeptic interpolations have on the otherwise ineludible monotony of extended discourses. Further enhancing the scope of textual interlacing, those external prolepses and analepses do widen the plot horizon even to the point of eternity.

CONCLUSION

Recapitulating the findings, we have arrived at seventeen instances of prolepsis, and thirty-two iterations of analepsis, amounting to an impressive total of forty-nine. Given that literary distinction in the Fourth Gospel, not enough attention has been given it in exegetical commentaries so far. This author would argue that prolepses and analepses are more prominent than BOISMARD and BELLE (cf. Introduction) admit to. Thus, this present study is intended to make an unambitious contribution towards throwing those features into starker relief.

Yet, let us briefly review the triple originality of this study: (a.) we have attempted to discuss the literary devices of prolepsis and analepsis from a narratological angle instead of a merely grammatico-syntactical one, (b.) combining the two antonymical partners into one single reflection, (c.) and creating subgroups for each phenomenon, enabling themes of Johannine theological preeminence to emerge.

In closing, it may be beneficial to outline an exegetical prospect for future studies in this field: as we strove to contribute to the study of Johannine narratology, we should encourage Scripture scholars to increasingly incorporate the literary reality of prolepsis and analepsis in forthcoming commentaries, making the concept more accessible to a broader public of Fourth Gospel

audiences. Such a leading-edge concentration on those literary devices and the exegetico-theological significance of each occurrence of prolepsis and analepsis will undoubtedly bear good fruit concerning the uniqueness of the Gospel narrative. How can it fail to shed more light eventually on the underpriced treasures of Johannine narrative prowess?