

# **Facing the Dragons**

## **A Historical-Analytical Study of the Parallels between the Vision of Revelation 12 and Hildegard von Bingen's Vision of the Antichrist, and their Relevance in Contemporary Society**

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### ***Abstract***

*The paper attempts to assess the power of visions in the struggle against injustice. It is argued that the Revelation of John is itself a struggle that advocates for a just spiritual and physical society. The genre of apocalyptic literature, with its symbolic language, and its presence and relevance in Medieval Europe in the writings of Hildegard von Bingen suggest that the power of a vision lies in the capability of the author to detect a problem and creatively provide a solution to emancipate society in the struggle against spiritual and physical injustice.*

### **Introduction**

The theologian Richard S. Hansen once said, "...it is more important to know the way to live in a world reckoned by storms than to know the names of the waves that [will] bounce our boat" (Hansen, 1972). The statement refers to futuristic interpretations of apocalyptic literature and poses a direct attack on the relevance of apocalyptic books such as Daniel or Revelation in one's social-economic setting. The interpretation of the visions of apocalyptic literature have also been problematic and at times subjective, as in the case of Martin Luther. Visions have been used by different groups with the purpose of fulfilling their communal or

selfish goals.<sup>1</sup> The focus of this study is the vision of Revelation 12 and its importance for the immediate recipients as well as for the struggle for justice throughout history.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze *visions that speak to the present*. I have attempted to complete my task by primarily studying Revelation chapter 12 in its social-economic context as well as its form of literature, and compare it with the twelfth century vision of Hildegard von Bingen. Even though the focus is Revelation 12, the historical context of the book of Revelation as a whole will also be considered. Not many arguments have been provided on the issue of the author and date. I have accepted the conclusions which satisfy the majority of historians.

This task will be completed by: (1) reflecting on the social-economic settings, the methodology, and the genre of apocalyptic literature; (2) analyzing and interpreting Revelation 12; (3) Introducing the vision of Hildegard von Bingen; and (4) comparing the visions with the purpose of detecting their core common elements.

## Reflecting on Methodology<sup>2</sup>

The key to the interpretation of a historical and religious work is the methodology which is primarily shaped by the social-economical settings of the historian as well as that of the reader.<sup>3</sup> As the social-economic settings change, in most cases, the interpretation is shaped and altered along with it. But there are some cases that some methodologies, due to external and internal pressure, are treated

- 1 Many theologians have used the book of Revelation as a means in itself with the purpose of predicting the future. Some have even set dates in order to predict the end of the world. See (Koester, 2001; Hal, 1970; ). Recently, a group of theologians came to the conclusion that the rapture is no later than May 21, 2011., Justin Berton, Biblical Scholars Date for Rapture: May 21, 2011. January 1, 2011, SFGate.com, [on line], Available at [http://articles.sfgate.com/2010-01-01/bay-area/17466332\\_1\\_east-bay-bay-area-first-time-camping](http://articles.sfgate.com/2010-01-01/bay-area/17466332_1_east-bay-bay-area-first-time-camping), Accessed on 16 May, 2011.
- 2 Hermeneutics have gone through centuries of scholarship and there is a great variety of materials on this subject. I do not undertake the task of offering the chronological development of hermeneutics, but only point out that the interpretation of Revelation, as part of biblical literature, has gone through changes and development. For more, see (Hassel,1978; Wright,1992; Martin and Davids, 2000).
- 3 Different movements throughout history have brought about their particular interpretation methods. The Reformation brought about Sola Scriptura, the Enlightenment focused on humanism which brought the Scriptures (the book of Revelation included) under great criticism. WWI brought about the Neo-Orthodox method which attempted to interpret the Scriptures through a pastoral reading (Barth). Modernism and postmodernism also contributed with their influential relativism (Liberation Theologies).

as trans-historical and resistant to the change (Titus, 2009; MacPherson, 2001).

There are a great variety of approaches taken in the field of New Testament (NT) studies to which the book of Revelation belongs. Some scholars appear to be more concerned with extracting theological clues based on their contemporary social-economic settings, but fail to consider the historical context of the NT itself. Others have done the opposite and turned the NT into a mere history of religions such as in the case of Bultmann, (1963) and to some extent Wright (1992). There have also been others who have attempted to provide a more balanced approach by viewing the task through the historian's as well as through the theologian's eyes, such as in the case of Marshall (2004).

In this study, I have attempted to combine different approaches of interpretation. I have attempted to understand the social-economic settings under which the book was written as well resist the temptation to treat the book of Revelation only as a historical and sociological text. My assumption and belief is that the book of Revelation is part of the canon of the Bible and this is how it will be treated in this paper.

The task of interpretation is extremely difficult, and the bar of difficulty rises due to the fact that the book of Revelation is not narrative literature but apocalyptic (Marshall, 2004). In order to bring into perspective and provide a better understanding of apocalyptic literature, I have attempted to compare and contrast Revelation 12 with the medieval visions of Hildegard von Bingen. The understanding of the social-economic setting as well as the nature of the literature of the book of Revelation, and also seen in the light of the canon of the Bible will be used to attempt to answer my main question: *Are there contemporary issues and problems that John and von Bingen address in their visions, or are those visions to be considered futuristic?*

## **Reflections on Apocalyptic Literature**

The style of apocalyptic literature is an element that needs to be comprehended. Just as other forms of literature, such as poetry, narrative, or wisdom literature, have their stylistic characteristics, so does apocalyptic literature. According to Koester, there are four characteristics of Apocalyptic literature: (1) *Symbolic Language*. The author "...uses symbolic language to depict the powers of this age engaging in conflict with the powers of God" (Koester, 2001). This genre makes use of natural elements, mainly pastoral, which were familiar to the recipients; (2) *Symbolic and Real*. At the core of apocalyptic literature and portrayed through the symbolic language lies the world covered by sin, evil practices and forces. This genre of literature brings forth a call for repentance and justice and also communicates the ultimate necessity for judgment; (3) *Symbolic Hope*. Apocalyptic

literature, used often during times of struggle and unrest, provides hope in spite of the social-economic settings; and (4) *Symbolic Change*. Apocalyptic literature often detects a problem and attempts to address it. It was very rarely used to lay a chronological overview of future events (Koester, 2001).

As indicated above, apocalyptic literature is often used during times of unrest and injustice in order to communicate hope and persuade readers to persevere. It also promises justice and issues warnings. The practice of justice is two-fold. It requires judgment and hope. Judgment is the immediate response to evil, but in the midst of evil, there is always hope and possibility for change.

The above understanding of the characteristics of apocalyptic literature provides a platform for the study of apocalyptic visions. Furthermore, these characteristics will guide the study of the vision of Revelation chapter 12 to which I now return.

### **The Social-economic setting of the Book of Revelation**

The book of Revelation does not seem to introduce much controversy pertaining to its historical setting. Most internal and external evidence points to a single author and a single time line to which the book belongs. It is commonly accepted by most scholars (such as Keener, 1993; Reid, 2004; Reddish, 2001; Koester, 2001) that Revelation was written by the Apostle John. Nevertheless there is still a small group of scholars who would argue differently (Boxall, 2006). The majority of scholars also agree that the book was written between 70-100 AD (Keener, 1993 and Reid, 2004). Among other reasons, such a date has been proposed due to the fact that the social-economic settings of the period were congruent with the events described in the book of Revelation. The period was a time of unrest throughout the Roman Empire, especially for the Christian minority. The greatest problem Christians were faced with was the "Imperial Cult," which often clashed with their convictions and loyalty to God. It has been argued that eastern provinces welcomed this practice to the extent that it defined the public life. Festivals and sacrifices were commonly practiced to publicly show allegiance to the emperor (Reid, 2004). These practices predominantly took place in the capital cities of Rome, Ephesus, and Smyrna. (Keener, 1993). The situation was intensified and had become unbearable after 70 AD, and the "Imperial Cult" grew rapidly. For example, Domitian often referred to himself as "*Dominus es Deus*," or "Lord and God" (Reid, 2004), and launched severe persecutions against Christians who were often considered as traitors (Keener, 1993, 762). Further, Nero's obsession resulted in the burning of Rome and in the persecution of Christians who were used as scapegoats. It is also believed, according to tradition, that John himself suffered under Nero (Reid, 2004). Contemporary scholarship has pro-

vided a wealth of information on this issue including details on the persecution, violence, and terror which was practiced during this period (Reddish, 2001).

Scholars have come to the conclusion that the visions of Revelation are compatible with the historical data pertaining to this period (Boxal, 2006), and that “Persecution and Emperor Worship are...the primary problems addressed in Revelation” (Boxal, 2006). Marshall affirms that “Revelation appears to have been composed in a situation where the Church was facing severe persecution... involving the martyrdom...” (2004). In the midst of violence and injustice, and in the light of the characteristics of apocalyptic literature, the function of the book of Revelation appears to be twofold. It communicates both judgment and hope. On one hand it is “...the most explicit oracle of judgment against Rome’s rebellion against God” (Keener, 1993), and on the other it is an “...encouraging message...that God will not be defeated and...will bring judgment...[upon] the godless society...” (Marshall, 2004).

## Revelation 12

### **The Vision** (See Appendix A)

In Revelation 12, the Apostle John describes a vision which was given to him directly by a heavenly being. The vision is divided into three stages. In the *first stage*, John sees a pregnant woman located in the celestial dimensions. The woman is “clothed with the sun” and stands with her feet on the moon. She also wears a crown made out of twelve stars. John portrays the woman as pregnant and in the agony of childbirth. The vision also includes a red dragon standing beneath the woman. The dragon’s purpose is to snatch the child that is being born and devour it at the time of birth. The woman gives birth to a son, but the dragon is not able to complete its plot. God intervenes and shelters the son, and sends the woman to the wilderness on the earth. The *second stage* describes a war in the heavens between the angels of God and the dragon. During the time of the battle in the heavens there was also a proclamation on the earth in the form of a song proclaiming salvation which has come from the son on the one hand, and on the other woes for all those who had made a pact with the dragon. The vision proceeds with the banishment of the dragon from the heavens, and its being thrown down to the earth. The *third stage* takes place on the terrestrial dimension. The dragon remembers that the woman and the son are on the earth and launches a campaign to find her. The woman is again in great danger, but she receives wings like eagles and flies in the skies. Finally the dragon, desperate and tired, pours

waters like a river toward the woman, but the earth comes to her aid by swallowing the water. The woman finally escapes. The dragon recognizes that it is impossible to destroy the woman and her son and declares war against all the other sons of the woman (Revelation 12).

## Understanding the Vision

Mangina starts his commentary on Revelation 12 with the title, “Daughter of Zion Delivered” (2010). He points out that the vision is a celestial one, recognizes that there are three stages, and suggests that they must be seen as a unity (2010). According to sociologists, the vision deals with two celestial figures represented in the sky (Malina and Pilch, 2000). It is also argued that celestial figures were not a mystery to the recipients of the letter of Revelation for they were recognizable elements in Jewish culture (Mangina, 2010; Malina and Pilch, 2000). Moreover the vision was also well known among Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Persians, and Babylonians who also held a similar interpretation. The vision represents the “... conflict between gods and goddesses, the cosmic struggle between good and evil that affected the earth” (Reddish, 2001, 231). Reddish also adds that John is making use of common symbols in order to communicate the struggle (2001).

The woman in the vision symbolizes the queen of heaven. In other ancient cultures she is also represented by such figures as Virgo, Mitra, and Mylita (Malina and Pilch, 2000). The twelve stars on her head represent the chosen people of God which are the twelve tribes of Israel (Reddish, 2001, 233), or the Church. (Mangina, 2010). The woman is pregnant and she gives birth to the one who would rule nations, whom, upon birth, was sheltered by God.<sup>4</sup> John uses this image which is accompanied by many Old Testament passages (Reddish, 2001) to portray the Messiah (Boxall, 2006).

The red dragon represents a mythological monster; the ten horns symbolize his strength, and the seven diadems his authority and dominion. In other words, this is a symbol of evil which is in conflict with the goodness of God (Reddish, 2001). This figure represents Satan himself who is embodied in the social and political systems of the Roman society (Malina and Pilch, 2000; Mangina, 2010; Boxall, 2006).

The *second part* of the vision portrays a heavenly fight between the archangel Michael and the dragon. Reddish argues that this battle does not refer to the

4 Malina and Pilch talk about a well known celestial image called the “Son of Man” and they believe John is making use of it. The phrase “Son of Man” is frequently used in the prophetic literature of Daniel and Ezekiel. For more, see (Malina and Pilch, 2000; Koester, 2001).

original battle between Satan and God which resulted in the casting of Satan out of heaven which took place before the fall of humanity. The battle symbolizes the fact that Satan, although ultimately defeated by Christ through the cross, is still trespassing on the earth until his final defeat. In verse twelve, John states that the triumph over evil occurs not only as a result of the cross but also by the battles of the martyrs. By their loyalty and service, the martyrs contribute to hastening the end of the kingdom of evil (Reddish, 2001). The defeat of Satan provides hope for the suffering Church and encourages them to persevere.

The *third part* resumes the conflict between the dragon and the woman, now on the earth. Reddish argues that the symbol of the woman taken to the wilderness for protection is very familiar to the audience. It elicits the memory of *exodus*. Exodus was always seen by the Israelites as the quintessential picture of freedom and protection. It brought back the memory of liberation and freedom from the hand of Pharaoh and renewed the confidence of the oppressed. Throughout many countries, this story provided great comfort for people under persecution. It provided a platform for understanding and a call to cling to the promises of God and renew hope for liberation (Malina and Pilch, 2000).

The vision concludes with Satan, unable to destroy the woman, conducting open war against her offspring which is a symbol of the Church (Reddish, 2001). John states that the Dragon's actions are done out of desperation, for the evil one understands that his days are numbered. The image of the destruction of evil is used to produce hope and encouragement for the suffering community (Koester, 2001).

Reddish argues that Satan represents Rome and its emperor, but not in the physical dimension. Koester notices that John's tactic is highly diplomatic; he uses the symbol of the son which is a well-known figure in Jewish literature as well as Greek mythology. In Greek mythology, the son is called Apollo, and it is he who would save the people. The irony is that the Roman emperor made good use of this symbol by calling himself Apollo and claiming to be protector and savior. When the Roman pagans heard the vision of John, it is likely that they thought of the emperor, but, as Koester assures, John is asserting that Christ is the only savior, while the emperor is associated with Satan (Koester, 2001). It seems that this diplomatic approach enabled the letter to penetrate and travel without many problems for it would not have contradicted the popular opinion. The letter also communicated to the designated original audiences that Jesus is the savior. The vision also portrays the dragon as the representation of evil which was "...embodied in the oppressive rule of the Roman Empire..." It is embodied in the political and economic rulers in order to fulfill the dragon's desperate desires (Matera, 2007). It seems that seeing Rome as the instrument of Satan, and not as Satan himself, provides a framework for loyalty toward the government. To sum

up, the vision seems to portray the war between good and evil which also seems to be congruent with the social-economic settings of the book of Revelation. John attempts to solve the problem of injustice, that is, the violence which is committed by the highest social and political institutions of society against a minority group. The apocalyptic literature serves as an exhortation against the evil powers of the system as well as hope for the oppressed minority group.

## Revelation in the XII Century

Interestingly, a similar piece of apocalyptic literature emerged in the 12<sup>th</sup> century in medieval Europe. The prophetess/writer was Hildegard von Bingen.

### Some Biographical Notes

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) was born into a noble family in Bockelheim, Germany (Valentine, 1995). Her parents dedicated her to God as a tithe (Newman, 1988) at the age of eight, and she grew up in a monastic setting (Mershman, 1910). At the age of sixteen, von Bingen became a nun and became highly involved in the convent founded by Jutta (her mentor) (Valentine, 1995) whom she would later succeed. Von Bingen lived in a very anthropocentric society where women had a low status and were considered second class citizens. Valentine Timothy states that von Bingen herself considered her femininity a disadvantage, but she did not allow it to hinder her work (1995). Today she is called “a remarkable woman, a ‘first’ in many fields” (Lerman, 1995). In 2009, *Zeitgeist Films* made her life into a movie entitled “*Vision*”. Her influence is great in music, art, theology, ecclesiology, mathematics, literature, and music, but her most important contributions were her prophetic visions, one of which is described below (Newman, 1988).

In 1136, von Bingen succeeded her mentor and became the head of the monastic order. She is the first nun to found a religious order recognized by the Pope. Her order was determined to live a simple life of poverty. Cantor, commenting on the place where she lived, states, “This is not a place for a woman of German nobility. Not even a knight would be happy to see his daughter here” (1994). It is vital to note that poverty was a common way of life for the monastic orders (Ozment, 1980), but such a lifestyle did not completely portray the life of the established ecclesiastical system (Russell, 1968) which von Bingen would come to attack through her visions. The visions, affirmed von Bingen, were the result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. She rejected the notion that her visions were a result of an ecstatic emotional state as some have insinuated (Valentine,



1995). Her visions were a reflection of the social-economic setting of her society and it would not require a keen eye to detect a parallelism between the meaning of the visions and the state of the established ecclesiastical order. In his book, Russell explains that the Middle Ages were a time of conflict between order and prophecy. The Church came to gain economic power and the bishops came to possess the majority of the land. The institution of the Church became powerful and very corrupt with the result that the spiritual dimension of life was often neglected. In the midst of such a dry spirituality, reform was needed (Russell, 1968). The degraded condition of the religious, political and spiritual life of the ecclesiastical system obliged the monastic community to take it upon itself to reform the Church.<sup>5</sup> Hildegard Von Bingen attempted to bring spirituality back into the corrupt, dry and luxurious life of the established ecclesiastical system. With her visions she attacked the corruption of the Church, and provided a vision for a better society. She herself confessed that her goal was "...to transform the clergy from a selfish group of exploiters of Christ... [She believed that] now it is up to the cloistered nuns to try where the Pope and Cardinals [had] failed" (Cantor, 1994). Von Bingen's attitude seems to be overwhelmingly similar to that of the Apostle John. She recognized a problem in the medieval ecclesiastical system and decided to address it. Just like John, von Bingen makes good use of apocalyptic language in order to construct her vision, to which I will now turn.

### **Von Bingen and the Antichrist** (See Appendix B)

Von Bingen's most striking vision is the one of the Antichrist (Czarsk, 1999). The vision becomes even more powerful in a time of corruption and dry religious life. She claimed to have received her vision directly from God through the Holy Spirit (Czarsk, 1999) and not from migraine attacks as Flanagan (1990), and Singer (2005) have come to believe. Referring to her spiritual experience, she states:

"And it came to pass...when I was 42 years and 7 months old, that the heavens were opened and a blinding light of exceptional brilliance flowed through my entire brain. And so it kindled my whole heart and breast like a flame, not burning but warming...and suddenly I understood the meaning of expositions of the books..."<sup>6</sup>

5 Monastic in medieval Christianity, Department of Medieval Art and Cloisters, 2000-2009, [on line], Available at [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mona/hd\\_mona.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mona/hd_mona.htm), Accessed December 15, 2009.

6 Irene B. Hahn, The Incredible Life and Prophecies of St. Hildegard, [on line] Available at <http://www.unitypublishing.com/prophecy/HildigardSaint.htm>, Accessed February 25, 2010.

She opens her vision by introducing five beasts: (1) a dog, (2) a yellow lion, (3) a pale horse, (4) a black pig, and (5) a gray wolf (King-Lenzmeier, 1953). The animals all come from the north and their eyes are set upon the west. In front of them there are five hills. The hills are connected to the animals by means of a rope which descends from their mouths to the hilltops (King-Lenzmeier, 1953). The presence of the number five has been debated by scholars like Klaes (1993) and Liebeschütz (1930), but the precise significance of this number does not have direct bearing on this study. What is essential are the symbols that the animals represent. Czarsk states that the first four "...animals signified five very fierce courses of temporal kingdoms... [and] [t]he fact that these future kingdoms were symbolized by animals located in the direction of the north indicates that these kingdoms would be tainted by sinful, [and filled with] carnal desires" (1999). The fifth animal is of a different nature according to Czarsk. In medieval times, the wolf is "...characterized by men who would struggle for control over kingdoms... The grey colour symbolizes the cunning or deceit these men would employ to obtain power because they would try not to appear black or white..." (Czarsk, 1999). The wolf holds a very important position in the vision for it is when the wolf falls that the Antichrist would appear in order to fill the earth with injustice and violence. The animals were common metaphors for medieval European society. Emmerson notes that "...the wolf... [is seen] a[s a] *symbol* of the Antichrist because this animal was the enemy of the lamb, which symbolized Christ" (1981). The vision proceeds with the imagery of a woman in the pains of childbirth, and the image of Christ. "...Christ appear[s] in the upper right corner...seated on the building that has been under construction until now and is nearing completion" (King-Lenzmeier, 1953). On the left, there is the pregnant woman covered in blood and suffering while giving birth to the Antichrist. King-Lenzmeier states that this woman, the mother of the Antichrist, is the Church steeped in sin. The Church is also the one who will teach the Antichrist the ways of magic and power (King-Lenzmeier, 1953). The ugly and frightening head conjures up images of judgment and intensive injustice and violence, and in retrospect raises the consciousness for the Day of Judgment. The notion of judgment calls for repentance. It affirms that although the judgment is "here but not yet," there is still time for repentance. The Church is still able to abandon her evil ways. The vision concludes with an element of hope in the belief that "[o]nce the Church is freed she shines forth in all her golden glory, and the people sing the praise...the conquering Savior" (King-Lenzmeier, 1953). Von Bingen detected a problem in the established ecclesiastical system and boldly addressed it through her visions. She believed that her goal was "...to transform the clergy from a selfish group of exploiters of Christ" (Cantor, 1995). In this respect, von Bingen proclaims a message of repentance similar to the message of Jonah in Nineveh. Her purpose is

to initiate change among the established ecclesiastical system of the XII century. Her hope is that the Ecclesia will understand her state, repent, and turn to her God. In regard to all of the above, Czarsk asserts that von Bingen could rightly be considered as "...an Old Testament prophet in the tradition of Isaiah or Jeremiah [or John] in that she criticized the moral lapses of leaders like Archbishop Henry of Mainz..." (1999).

## Conclusion

In light of the arguments and the discussion above, it is argued that the vision of Revelation 12 portrays a twofold lesson. It serves as a warning to the established economic and political system headed by the emperor of Rome. John detects the social problem of injustice and violence and addresses it in a very creative way. Revelation 12 also delivers a message of hope for all those who remain faithful. As argued above, von Bingen's vision is very similar to that of John. Just like John, von Bingen saw a problem (corruption and injustice) being committed by the established, ecclesiastical system, and through visions, addressed it. She was not aiming to condemn the ecclesiastical establishment, but to initiate repentance and change. Her vision was not a picture of the future to come, but a picture of how the future could be should the Church refuse to change her ways. John, writing from a remote location and under great persecution, produced a form of literature that could not easily be detected by the authorities and could provide hope for the community who was able to understand it. Hildegard von Bingen, situated in the darkest times of Medieval Europe, was able to communicate a vision of judgment and hope, and at the same time remain a friend of the Ecclesia.

It is argued that understanding the visions as a response to a spiritual and social problem provides hope for the suffering community of the XXI century. The vision is the voice of the voiceless Christian minority (Revelation), as well as the monastic minority (Hildegard von Bingen) in their struggle for spiritual and physical justice. The vision encourages those who are being persecuted for their allegiance to Christ in the Middle East. It encourages those who are being oppressed under a corrupt political system in Eastern Europe. It encourages those who are suffering injustice due to their color, race, or sex. It also teaches how a community can potentially deal with the waves of the roaring sea. It reminds the people that suffering is temporary and promotes a just order. But it does not *only* remind, it *also* creates hope and inspiration. It provides power and a voice for the oppressed (spiritually or physically) in their struggle to remind the oppressor (spiritual or physical) of their own dignity and faith.

**Appendix A**  
**An artist's rendition of the vision of St. John, Revelation 12**



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**Appendix B**  
**A depiction of Hildegard von Bingen's vision of the Antichrist**



Anne H. King-Lenzmeier, *Hildegard of Bingen; An Integrated Vision*, (Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 2001) 45.

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### **Suočavanje sa zvijerima**

#### **Povijesno-analitička studija paralela između vizije u Otkrivenju 12 i vizije Hildegard von Bingen o Antikristu i njihove relevantnosti u ondašnjem društvu**

#### **Sažetak**

U radu se pokušava odrediti moć vizije usred borbe protiv nepravедnosti. Ističe se da je i samo Ivanovo Otkrivenje borba koja zagovara pravedno duhovno i fizičko društvo. Književna vrsta apokaliptičke literature s njezinim simboličkim rječnikom kao i zastupljenost i relevantnost u srednjovjekovnoj Europi u djelima Hildegard von Bingen sugerira da moć vizije leži u autorovoj sposobnosti otkrivanja problema, kreativnom pronalaženju rješenja i emancipiranja društva u borbi protiv duhovne i fizičke nepravедnosti.