

Robyn J. Whitaker

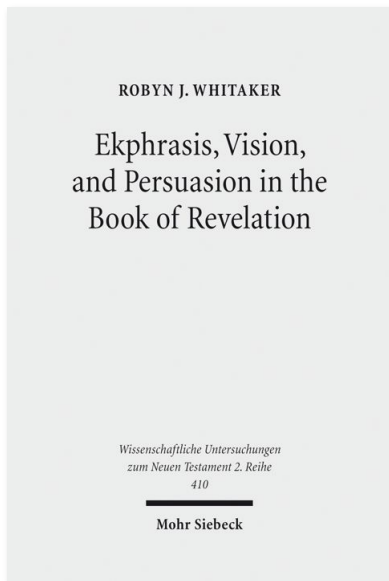
Ekphrasis, Vision, and Persuasion in the Book of Revelation

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Robyn J. Whitaker demonstrates how a rhetorical analysis of the visions of God in the Book of Revelation reveals the persuasive role of the visions of God and the Lamb in John's argument against cultic images and worship. Through the rhetorical technique of ekphrasis, the author adapts his Jewish sources to make present a God who is perceived to be spatially or temporally absent. In doing so, he offers a verbal-visual image that seeks to combat the power of imperial cult images. Locating the text in its religious and rhetorical context, Robyn J. Whitaker argues that the author participates in an ongoing debate over whether writers or sculptors (artists) could best represent the gods; that is, whether God is best represented by words or images. John ultimately mounts an argument for the epiphanic power of words and of his text in particular as a way to encounter divine presence and, moreover, to facilitate worship of the divine.

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