

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is a revised version of my doctoral dissertation (2000) written during my stay in Bloemfontein, South Africa, where I conducted research at the University of the Free State. This is one of the main reasons why this book is being published as a Supplementum to Acta Theologica. Consequently, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the University for this opportunity.

As fifteen years have passed since I submitted my dissertation, I have had to update the material I used to some extent. However, the main thrust of the book has not changed, despite the update. This suggests that, initially, the direction of my research may have been correct. At that time, there were ongoing discussions on the relationship between Literary Criticism and Historical Criticism. However, the current tendency is to view these two perspectives as complementary. It is hoped that my speech-act approach shows an integrated approach of the two perspectives, as one good example of using the findings of Historical Criticism in Literary Criticism. It may, to some extent, be similar to what Bennema (2009:20) might call “historical narrative criticism”. Of course, it is not exactly similar, because my main methodology differs from his.

It is likely that every country that practises New Testament studies displays distinctive traits in, for instance, methodology, theology, style and language. South African New Testament scholarship, in general, is very enthusiastic about, and receptive of new methodologies. This usually concerns the exploration, adaptation and utilisation of a possible approach for elucidating biblical texts from a new and different angle. The fact that South African scholars use a wide variety of methods was obvious in a Congress held in 1988, and in publications on New Testament methodologies (Hartin & Petzer 1991) result from this Congress. Scholars view a speech-act approach favourably.

Since I had the privilege of, and opportunity to study in such an atmosphere, the outcome of my work reflects South African scholarship to a great extent (positively, I hope) and also differs from studies conducted elsewhere in the world. Nevertheless, it is not purely South African. I am Japanese, born into a Buddhist family, and converted to Christianity in my university days, followed by seminary education in a Master of Divinity programme in the United States of America. It is thus likely that this work does not fully represent any particular country’s traits of scholarship, and may produce a mixed flavour. It would be my honour and joy if this study were read bearing these aspects in mind.

Most doctoral candidates agree that their dissertations are the products of the joint endeavours of themselves and their supervisors. This

was indeed true of my dissertation. In this sense, I am still very grateful to Rev C Saayman, my supervisor, for his timely advice and suggestions, leading me to rightly appreciate the depth and width of John's Gospel. I fully enjoyed the discussions we had concerning the issues presented in my work. I am also very grateful to Prof. S.J.P.K. Riekert, my co-supervisor, for his guidance and insights related to this project. Without them, this dissertation would not have been completed. I am tremendously indebted to them, although I bear full responsibility for the errors and inadequacies contained in this work.

In addition, there are many people who, in one way or another, helped me complete my dissertation. First, my sincere gratitude goes to the professors and staff in the Faculty of Theology, especially Prof. H.C. van Zyl, Prof. D.F. Tolmie, Prof. D.N. Pienaar (emeritus), for their encouragement and support. In addition, I am also grateful to the editors of *Acta Theologica*, Dr Lyzette Hoffman and Prof. R. Venter, who put their time and effort into making this present book project possible. Secondly, many staff members at the library have been a great help to me. Among them, Mrs M. van Wyk deserves special attention for her continuous help and friendship. Because of the volume of this work and the fact that I am not a native English speaker, this work went through several proofreadings, for which I deeply appreciate my proofreaders. Thirdly, I wish to thank The Japan Society of New Testament Studies, and the New Testament Society of South Africa, especially its executives and members of the Johannine subgroup, for their encouragement and interest in my work. Prof. T. Onuki also provided me with valuable information and comments. Fourthly, I wish to thank my family: my wife and my children, who understood and endured, in their own ways, what I was going through during the production of this book.

Lastly, but of course not in the least, my family and friends would agree with me that it was ultimately God's grace that sustained me during the years I spent on this project. Therefore, my deepest appreciation goes to Him upon whom all glory rests.

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2015

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NOTES ON ARTICLE PERMISSION

This book uses my articles below, in whole or part.

1. The following articles of mine were originally published in *Neotestamentica* and are used with permission.
 - Johannine irony demonstrated in John 9: Part 1. *Neotestamentica* 34(2):361-371, 2000.
 - Johannine irony demonstrated in John 9: Part 2. *Neotestamentica* 34(2):373-387, 2000.
2. The following articles of mine were originally published in *Acta Theologica* and are used with permission.
 - Command or petition?: A speech act analysis of the parents' utterances in John 9:21cd. *Acta Theologica* 20 (2):88-110, 2000.
 - The significance of Jesus' utterance in relation to the Johannine Son of Man: A speech act analysis of John 9:35. *Acta Theologica* 21(1):57-82, 2001.
 - Narrative temporality and Johannine symbolism. *Acta Theologica* 23(2):117-135, 2003.
3. The following article of mine was originally published in *AJBI* and is used with permission.
 - Macrospeech act for John 9. *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 25/26:49-90, 2001.