This chapter looks at multiple narrating voices, specifically the narrator pair: the narrating I and the co-narrator. As this reading of the Apocalypse shows, the narrative presents itself through either contradiction or the pairing of opposites, a feature deeply embedded in its narrative strategy. This applies not only to the characters populating the imagistic domains and to characters as protagonists but also to the characters assuming and alternating a narrating role. A reader rooted in dialectics and the Aristotelian rule of noncontradiction, who is taught to resolve contradiction not through suspension and multiplicity but rather through a judgment that favours either one proposition or the other, would have to resolve the felt unease by means of a conclusive guide. In the reading of the Apocalypse as authoritative biblical text, attempts to resolve the tension according to Aristotelian logic are common. However, this chapter shows that a reading advocating experience is sensitive to multiple narrating voices and to the effect of their alternation in recounting the events. The possible diverse narrativizations indicate the polyvocality of the text. The question then evolves around the quality of experience for the reader of a narrative that has a way of maintaining the truth in one proposition and equally and simultaneously in its apparent opposite.

The narratological categories of characters in narratives representing acting and experiencing persons connect with the cognitive concept of personhood, as Fludernik argues. Thus, personhood is what defines characters as persons. For a narrative experience, it is of little

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4 Fludernik, M. Towards a ‘Natural’ Narratology 249.
relevance to attribute personhood to an author, but, for the narrative to become alive, personhood for the narrating voice is crucial. Likewise the narrative exists in the process of creating a narrative protagonist. By engaging the reader, the narrative lets him or her affirm the personhood of the one who does the narrating. The reading/listening experience ascribes narrator personhood by evoking visualization of real-life human beings as actors. Personhood of any of the narrative’s characters is a fundamental presupposition about the real world. In effect, experienced personhood allows to balance the mental dislocation when the eternal and the temporal are merged. In the same way, attributes of personhood are present when identity is blurred by alterity – whether human or otherworldly.

The visualization of the Apocalypse necessarily builds on personhood as crucial to the experientiality that derives from the existence of a human subject. Similarly, voice is ascribed to the personhood of the characters, including the narrator, who is also a protagonist as well as an invisible narrator. Visualization and voice are clues to the ability to act, and thus add perspective and depth to personhood. This enables the crucial application of real-life frames. Moreover, this creates the premise for the narration to (strategically) use and expand on deictic options and, eventually, to build on the relation to the mystic and sublime.

According to Monika Fludernik, what the reader looks for is an existential continuity. This is felt between narrative-internal communication levels as well as between narrator-narratee levels. This chapter sets out to examine the multiple-level narrator of the Apocalypse and how the reader/hearer experiences co-narration.

5 “The anthropomorphic bias of narratives and its correlation with the fundamental story parameters of personhood, identity, actionality, etc. have long been noted by theoreticians of narrative and have been recognized as constituting the rock bottom level of story matter.” Fludernik, M. Towards a ‘Natural’ Narratology 12.
6 Herman, D. Story Logic 329–30.