I must begin by thanking Sidnie White Crawford and Cecilia Wassén for organizing the session at the International Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Vienna in July, 2014, and for editing the papers, and also by thanking all who have contributed to this stimulating discussion. The session in Vienna marked the thirtieth anniversary of the original publication of my book, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, by Crossroad publishing company in 1984. A second edition was published by Eerdmans in 1998, and a third edition, also by Eerdmans, has now appeared in 2016, in the interim between the Vienna meeting and the publication of this volume. Books, like human beings, have a way of expanding over the years. The third edition is not quite double the length of the original, but tends in that direction. The expansion is due in some part to new texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Most of it is an attempt to take account of the ongoing scholarly debates. The intervening decades have seen far-reaching changes in our understanding of the sectarian movement attested in the Scrolls, the rise and fall of “Enochic Judaism,” new light on Babylonian influence on early apocalypticism, the rise of “empire studies” and an attendant interest in the political aspects of apocalypticism, a resurgence of interest in Slavonic Pseudepigrapha, and other developments too numerous to list. But while I have attempted to deal with much new material, my basic approach to the subject remains focused on apocalypse as literary genre. As several contributors to this volume have noted, the book is conceived as a complement to the study of the genre Apocalypse published in *Semeia* 14, in 1979. I have modified my understanding of the genre in various ways, most significantly in

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recognizing the “fuzzy edges” of the genre, but the core of the project remains the same.

The essays in this volume are of various kinds. Only one, that of Matthew Goff, attempts to address the way the project as a whole is conceived. Two, the essays of Andrew Perrin and Daniel Machiela, consider the significance of the corpus of Aramaic writings from Qumran, which has only been recognized in recent years, for the study of the apocalyptic genre. A few others, those of Loren Stuckenbruck, Adela Yarbro Collins, and Benny Reynolds, expand the discussion by analyzing some apocalyptic themes in greater detail than has hitherto been attempted. Eyal Regev and Cecilia Wassén offer new interpretations of specific problems, in Regev’s case the historical references in the Animal Apocalypse, and in Wassén’s the critique of the temple in apocalyptic literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls. I do not propose to enter here into the discussion of specific texts, but will confine my comments to issues that bear on the understanding of the genre as a whole.

**Form-Criticism Adapted**

Matt Goff notes the difference in method between the study of the genre in *Semeia* 14 and the historically-oriented study in *The Apocalyptic Imagination*: “the first is primarily a form critical study and the second is solidly historical critical.” This formulation seems to imply that form criticism is not “solidly historical critical.” This is surprising. Classical form criticism, as formulated by Hermann Gunkel, was concerned to establish the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the literary units it studied. The German word *Gattung*, which is often translated as “genre,” is usually applied to smaller units. Gunkel’s main form-critical work was on the stories in Genesis and the Psalms. The method has also been

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4 In this respect, the work of Carol Newsom, “Spying out the Land: A Report from Genology,” in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays Offered to Honor Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. R. L. Troxel, K. G. Friebel, and D. R. Magary; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 437–50, has been very helpful.