PARABLES OF WAR
Reading John’s Jewish Apocalypse

John W. Marshall

ESCJ
Studies in Christianity and Judaism/Études sur le christianisme et le judaïsme
Parables of War
Reading John’s Jewish Apocalypse
Studies in Christianity and Judaism / Études sur le christianisme et le judaïsme: 10

Studies in Christianity and Judaism / Études sur le christianisme et le judaïsme publishes monographs on Christianity and Judaism in the last two centuries before the common era and the first six centuries of the common era, with a special interest in studies of their interrelationship or the cultural and social context in which they developed.

**GENERAL EDITOR:** Peter Richardson  
University of Toronto

**EDITORIAL BOARD:** 
Paula Fredriksen  
Boston University

John Gager  
Princeton University

Olivette Genest  
Université de Montréal

Paul-Hubert Poirier  
Université Laval

Adele Reinhartz  
McMaster University

Stephen G. Wilson  
Carleton University
Parables of War
Reading John’s Jewish Apocalypse

John W. Marshall

Published for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion / Corporation Canadienne des Sciences Religieuses by Wilfrid Laurier University Press 2001
CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ................................................................. vii

1. Introduction ........................................................................... 1

2. Aporias: Passages Without Passage ........................................ 10

3. Meanings: Names and Paths .................................................. 25

4. Terms: The Supplement and/or the Complement ....................... 37

5. Taxonomy: The *Sine Qua Non* of Christianity? ...................... 45


7. Names: Choosing Categories .................................................. 68

8. Date: That Long Year .............................................................. 88

9. Location: Diaspora in War ..................................................... 98

10. Parables I: Standing Fast Among the Nations ......................... 122

11. Parables II: Defending the Holy City .................................... 149

12. Results: Judaism in Asia and Devotion to Jesus ..................... 174

Epilogue ......................................................................................... 207

Bibliography ................................................................................ 208

Subject Index ............................................................................... 240

Ancient Sources Index ............................................................... 245

Modern Authors Index ............................................................... 255
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have many debts to acknowledge. John Gager, Martha Himmelfarb, and Elaine Pagels shepherded this project in its first incarnation as a dissertation at Princeton University. Through the substantial work of transforming it into a book I came to realise more and more the influence they have had on me and my work as friends, teachers, and colleagues. Leigh Gibson provided able and invaluable commentary and encouragement through the life of the project. David Frankfurter, J. Christian Wilson, and Edith Humphrey generously read the manuscript in one form or another and provided helpful and well-meaning criticisms. Peter Richardson revealed the myriad skills of a series editor as a scout, an editor, a guide, and a colleague and helped this project in all those roles. Stephanie Fysh edited the final manuscript with great skill and to its great improvement. This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Pamela Klassen has seen all sides of this project and believed in it and in me steadfastly. She has also contributed to it, with challenging discussion and supportive insight. My daughters, Magdalene and Isabel, have been a sustaining joy throughout a work that began before they were born.

For Pamela
INTRODUCTION

The “long year” looked like the last year, the last of all years, even to the Roman historian Tacitus. Consider the way the world looked then to a Jew in the Diaspora. From the island of Patmos in 69 CE, a Jew named John looked to the east and saw the holy city of Jerusalem besieged by the armies of Rome but standing valiantly, awaiting its deliverance. Beyond Jerusalem, the ghost of Nero—or a Nero who never really died—threatened to lead the armies of Parthia against his former dominions. Looking to the west, John saw the convulsions of the great beast that was Rome: war raged on Italian soil, each emperor slew his predecessor, each so-called ruler of the world was unable to rule even his own city. It appeared that the Empire was drunk on its own corruption, lurching toward its dissolution. As he looked around the province of Asia, John saw the army of the latest pretender leaving the siege of the holy city of Jerusalem and marching on to assault the great city of Rome. Myriads of soldiers under the command of Gaius Licinius Mucianus traversed the province of Asia on their way to install the fourth emperor of the year. Closer still to home, John saw his own Jewish community living dangerously among the nations, derided and scapegoated by their neighbours over the war in Judea, tempted to abandon the commandments of God for the ways of the nations.

---

1 These two descriptions, “long” and “last,” proceed from Tacitus: “that one long year of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius” (atque illum Galbae et Othonis et Vitelli longum et unum annum; Dialogue 17) and “the year that was going to be his [Galba’s] last and for the state almost the end” (annum sibi ultimum, rei publicae prope supremum; Histories 1.11).

2 “About this time [summer 69 CE] Achaia and Asia were terrified by a false rumour of Nero’s arrival. The reports with regard to his death had been varied and therefore many people imagined and believed he was alive” (Sub idem tempus Achaia atque Asia falsa exterritae velut Nero adventaret, vario super exitu eius rumore eoque phribus vivere eum fingentibus credentibusque; Tacitus, Histories 2.8).
The circumstances of those years were dire. Nero took his own life in June 68, and Galba, a general from Spain, ascended. By the middle of January 69, another general, Otho, overthrew Galba and took the imperial office. Three short months later, a third general, Vitellius, supported by the northern legions, defeated Otho in a bloody battle on Italian soil. Meanwhile in Judea, Vespasian, who had been dispatched by Nero to put down the Jewish revolt, bided his time. Most of the resistance in the countryside had been squashed, and the armies of Rome surrounded Jerusalem. When Nero died, Vespasian halted the war operations as he waited to see who would succeed to the imperial office. Eventually Vespasian's troops proclaimed him emperor; he removed several legions from the siege of Jerusalem and sent them marching toward Rome. By the end of the year, Vespasian's party was victorious and he was the fourth emperor of the year.

This crisis drove John to write his Apocalypse. He strove to make sense of this situation for himself and his community, and he saw in Rome the avatar of Babylon. He strove to make his people understand how significant and dangerous their situation was and to move them to resist the temptations of the Greco-Roman cultural complex. His vision was a parable of the war, and his message was to stand fast in the face of adversity and of the adversary and to trust that God, through his lamb, would save or even extend his people and punish their adversaries. This is the vision we have in John's Apocalypse.

This tale is the product of my labours and the source of my obligations in this book. It is both an unorthodox tale of John's Apocalypse and the narrative formulation of an unorthodox argument concerning John's Apocalypse. Putting it bluntly, I argue that the Apocalypse is a Jewish and not a Christian document. Explanations, qualifications, and cautions are immediately necessary.

I work out my argument that the Apocalypse of John ought—within the canons of historical-critical scholarship—to be understood as a Jewish rather than a Christian document in relation to four text complexes: the invective against the “synagogue of Satan” (Rev 2:9; 3:9), the descriptions of those who “keep the commandments of God” (Rev 12:17; 14:12), the portrayal of
the 144,000 people drawn from Israel or gathered on Zion (Rev 7:4ff; 14:1ff.), and the vision of the trial of holy city and the destruction of the great city (Rev 11:1-14). These four text complexes form frustrating conundrums in the interpretation of the Apocalypse of John, and I contend that the root of their consistent misinterpretation is the unargued presupposition that the Apocalypse of John is a Christian document. Put most briefly, when the Apocalypse of John is read as a Christian document, the Jews cannot be Jews, keeping the commandments does not imply keeping the commandments, those drawn from Israel are not from Israel, and the holy city Jerusalem is made equivalent to the great city Rome. I find such interpretive results unsatisfactory. Much of this study is devoted to working out in scholarly detail the analyses that underlie that rather terse summary.

More than problems, these passages are also parables. That is to say that they are instructive vignettes that are part of John's endeavour to move his readers to have faith in God's protection of his holy city and to keep themselves faithful as they live their lives far from the physical instantiation of the holy city Jerusalem. The connection of parable to apocalypse, however, is richer than just instruction implied by a short imaginary narrative. The explicit use of parable as a sub-genre of the Enoch corpus and the Shepherd of Hermas illustrates this, as does the description of a portion of Uriel's revelation in 4 Ezra as the "interpretation of a parable." Similarly, in the Apocryphon of James, "parables" (ΜΤΤλρλΒΟλΗ. 8.4) are named as such within that "revelation" (ΟΥΥΟΝΖ. 16.2-4). This explicit connection between apocalypse and parable was apparent to ancient writers; it would be no surprise to them to hear episodes within an apocalypse described as parables.

3 Of these four text "complexes," the first two are not in any sense complete rhetorical units but are repeated motifs within John's apocalypse. I chose the term "text complex" in an attempt to encompass both coherent literary units, such as Rev 11:1-14, and repeated motifs, such as the first two complexes.

4 In 4 Ezra 4.47, the angel says, "stand at my right side and I will show you the interpretation of a parable" (sta super dexteram partem et demonstrabo tibi interpretationem similitudinis). See also 4 Ezra 4.3, where the angel says to Ezra, "I have been sent to show you three ways and to put before you three parables [RSV: 'problems']" (tres vias missus sum ostendere tibi et tres similitudines proponere coram te); and 4 Ezra 8.2, where the angel says, "But I tell you a parable, Ezra" (dicam autem coram te similitudinem, Ezra).
After the shape and purpose of this study have been laid out in this introduction, the work falls into two major parts. The first is a hermeneutic reflection on the problems posed by specific texts in the Apocalypse and on the factors that condition the process of interpreting the Apocalypse (chapters 2 through 7). The second is a hermeneutic endeavour that attempts to reread the Apocalypse, specifically the four text complexes, under a new interpretive paradigm and to synthesize the results of such a re-reading for the Apocalypse itself as well as for the study of early Christianity and Second Temple Judaism (chapters 8 through 12).

Chapter 2 begins the hermeneutic reflection by highlighting the problematic interpretation of the four text complexes I have isolated as sites where the category "Christian" is a particularly troublesome obstacle to historical-critical interpretation. Chapters 3 through 6 interrogate the conditions of interpretation at the levels of terms, taxonomy, and narrative. Chapter 7 re-examines the basic terms themselves in a series of analyses that illustrate how terms that eventually become proprietary to Christianity need not entail a canonical reading of the Apocalypse in its first-century context.

Chapters 8 and 9 set out my proposal for the social, political, and cultural context against which to read the Apocalypse, namely Diaspora Judaism during the Judean War. This hypothesis provides a picture of plausible anxiety over the Judean War and its effects in the Diaspora that might specify an exigence for the Apocalypse. The result of these chapters, as well as of the more methodologically focused chapters preceding them, is a call to stand apart from traditional interpretive strategies founded upon an unexamined understanding of the Apocalypse as a Christian document.

Chapter 10 focuses the hermeneutic endeavour by offering an alternative interpretation of the "synagogue of Satan" texts and the descriptions of keeping commandments. Understood within the context of the Judean War, these passages form parables on the war designed to instruct readers how to conduct themselves in a Diaspora setting.

---

5 That is to say an occasion that calls for the Apocalypse or, more accurately, that creates demands to which John responds with his Apocalypse. Lloyd Bitzer's influential contribution to the rhetorical criticism defines a rhetorical exigence as "an imperfection marked by an urgency; ... a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (1968: 6).
Chapter 11 continues the reinterpretation with regard to the groups of 144,000 and to the great city and the holy city. In light of the Judean War, these texts also form parables on the war that emphasize God's providence for his people, Israel, and for his city, Jerusalem. Stepping back from the close analysis of chapters 10 and 11, chapter 12 sketches the broader program of the Apocalypse when it is understood according to the principles I have outlined. It also sets the Judaism of the Apocalypse in a brief comparison with other documents that pass on traditions of Jesus and with other Judaisms of Asia Minor. A brief epilogue concludes the study with reflections on the fate of John's Apocalypse under Christian interpretive hegemony.

The argument of this study depends on a willingness to dwell on the effects of religious categorization on the interpretation of religious documents. Specifically, it demands an openness to questioning whether the presence of a "Christ" is a sufficient criterion for positing a "Christianity." The understanding of the Apocalypse of John as a Jewish document does not depend on excising every element or motif that is integral (and perhaps eventually exclusive) to the Christian reception of the book but on resisting the temptation to retroject "Christianity" onto the elements of its prehistory. Rarely have scholars made the foundation of their analysis—the categorization of a document as Christian—an object of reflection and discussion, yet if the foundation is poorly laid, the whole enterprise will be unstable and the instability will increase as the building proceeds. Stanley Stowers (1994: 23-27) and Etienne Trocmé (1974) have undertaken such an examination and have realized that an uninformed application of the category "Christian" can skew the scholarly enterprise irreparably. Trocmé's 1970 address to the Society of Biblical Literature (published in 1974) undertakes the first steps by observing that the conditions at the end of the second century that enable him to understand Christianity as a religion independent of Judaism—a distinctive style of life, a conception of a third race, proprietary scriptures, a well-formed ecclesiastical organization—were not solidly in place at the end of the first century. He also takes note of the variety within first-century Judaism and suggests that the devotees of Jesus do not necessarily stand outside the broad tent of contemporary Judaism. This is the basis of Trocmé's careful examination of the materials of first-century and early-second-century "Christianity" and of his ensuing caution.
that for the period before 70 CE, and probably for several decades thereafter, the category "le christianisme primitif" may well be as useless as scholars in the 1970s had already realized "catholicisme primitif" to be (1974: 29). While Trocmé's cursory treatment of the Apocalypse is too brief to be of much help here, his characterization of Paul affords an interesting perspective on the Apocalypse. Trocmé suggests that in Paul, "la foi, les institutions et le culte juifs ne sont pas attaqués de l'extérieur mais critiqués de l'intérieur" (1974: 17). Consider John's Apocalypse: the faith, the institutions, and the cult of Judaism are not even the objects of criticism, much less of attack. Trocmé's initial examination of the category "primitive Christianity" is an early gesture toward an understanding of the first century that attempts to take account of the massive synthesizing, and misleading, power of the category "Christian."

More recently, Stowers's Rereading of Romans proceeds from the insight, among many others, that a canonical conception of religion and of Christianity itself leads almost inevitably to a canonical reading of Romans. In order to hold the inevitable conclusion of such a reading at bay, Stowers makes arguments to support his principle that "the concepts Christian and Christianity not be introduced unless the text requires them" (1994: 24). My own reading of the Apocalypse is an attempt to join the efforts of Trocmé and Stowers and to advance their insights about the immense, and potentially misleading, power of the category "Christian." The preparatory efforts are extensive because working on foundations involves deep digging.

After explanations come qualifications and cautions. The more radical an argument is, the more easily it is subject to misinterpretation, or worse, to parody. It is important, then, for me to specify clearly what my argument is not and to suggest some criteria by which I hope to be evaluated and by which an argument such as mine should be subject to falsification. My argument is emphatically not something like "all 'Christianities' before 70 CE must be understood as Judaisms." Nor am I building on a distinction that sees John as "Jew by birth, Christian by faith" and therefore understands his document as ethnically Jewish. These arguments differ from mine in their scope—the former is much broader than mine and the latter much
narrower—and in their conception of religion. It is basic to my argument that I understand religion to be much more than a matter of belief and to be a heterogeneous phenomenon, even within a singular name like “Judaism” or “Christianity.”

To be more specific, however, let me face the question of what would modify or falsify my argument. There is no shortage of examples in the New Testament or early Christian literature. If the Apocalypse of John seemed locked in the bitter struggle over what constitutes legitimate Judaism—the struggle that animates the Gospel of Matthew—I might modify the type of Judaism that I understand to characterize the Apocalypse of John. If the Apocalypse of John seemed to address itself to exclusively Gentile communities with little or no connection to Judaism—as some of Paul’s letters do—I might waver in calling it a Jewish document. If it vilified “the Jews” as fiercely as the Gospel of John does, I would be loath simply to call it Jewish. If it positioned itself as a successor to Judaism and called its protagonists “Christians”—as Luke-Acts does—I would not call it Jewish. If it defined its other as Jewish or contrasted itself as Christian against a Jewish other—as the letters of Barnabas and of Ignatius (respectively) do—I would certainly not call it Jewish. These examples are literary insights into divisions that span a range of social formations. The Judaism of the Apocalypse of John is particular, and my argument is specific. I hope it will be judged on the basis of its theoretical underpinnings, its conception of the environment of the Apocalypse of John, and its handling of the text of the Apocalypse of John itself. Rather than as a challenge, this is meant as an invitation to explore a method, a context, and a document.

The second major caution I offer concerns the term or the category “Jewish Christianity.” In the first sentence of his magisterial 1920 commentary on the Apocalypse of John, R. H. Charles states that John “was a Jewish Christian” (1920: 1.xxi). As the commentary proceeds, those aspects of John’s work or thought that Charles values receive the designation “Christian” and those that he does not value receive the label “Jewish,” or worse, they are ascribed to a Jewish source that had been clumsily integrated by John or by his “profoundly stupid” (1.xvii) Jewish editor. The category “Jewish Christian” does not afford Charles much space in which to rethink the religious provenance of the Apocalypse. Instead, it functions, as it often does, as a marker of derivative Christianity, as the label
of some murky ground between two well-sculpted alternatives, as a hybrid that is unlikely to be able to reproduce.

I plan to avoid the term “Jewish Christianity” in my analysis, as well as “Christian Judaism,” “Judaic Christianity,” and the various other arrangements of related terms for several reasons: (1) If “Jewish” is construed as an adjective that further specifies “Christianity,” then “Jewish Christianity” is a subset of “Christianity,” and yet it is used to designate a greater range of movements than the unmodified “Christianity” does. That is, when scholars talk about Paul, they quite often talk about “Christianity” without a specifying adjective, implying that Paul represents the “real thing”; when a group or document feels more Jewish than Paul feels, then modifying terms like “Jewish Christianity” or “heterodox Christianity” are more likely to arise. (2) If, in spite of the adjective/noun imbalance of the term, “Jewish Christianity” is supposed to designate a transitional stage between Judaism and Christianity, I reject the teleological element of the term: it suggests that Christianity is the primary object of my analysis and that the Apocalypse of John is relevant to me only as an example of the transition to Christianity. If the primary object of my analysis is the Apocalypse of John, then naming it in terms of what it contributed to in the future distorts its own present. (3) The distinct elements within the term “Jewish Christianity” rarely hold together beyond the act of naming. Quite

6 There also have been several proposals for shuffling the various permutations of the terms “Christian,” “Christianity,” “Jewish,” “Judaic,” and “Judaism; see for example, Klijn (1974), Malina (1976), Mimouni (1992), Quispel (1983), Riegel (1978), and Segal (1992). Although Helmut Koester recognizes how little the term “Jewish Christian” contributes to the understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of Syria and Palestine (1971: 126), he still applies it freely to the Apocalypse (155).

7 E.g., those who followed after Paul’s travels and asked his Gentile converts to observe the whole Mosaic law, the followers of Jesus who remained at Jerusalem under the leadership of James, the Ebionites, and the “Jew Christians” of Shlomo Pines (1965; 1985). From a literary point of view, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Letter to the Hebrews, the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Odes of Solomon, the Gospel of Thomas, the Apocalypse of Peter, the Letter of James, and many other documents have been designated “Jewish Christian.” Among scholars, proposals for criteria defining “Jewish Christianity” have included chronological (Danielou 1964), geographical (Klijn 1986; Quispel 1983), doctrinal (Bauer 1971; Malina 1976), and many inseparable mixes of definitional criteria. Naming the Apocalypse of John as “Jewish Christian” does little to describe it. More commonly, it serves to maintain the hold of the term “Christian” over the text.
quickly, interpreters start to divide the Apocalypse of John into its Christian elements and its Jewish elements, with the latter usually characterized as "background." I reject such a prioritizing of the elements of the Apocalypse of John and suggest that its foreground is just as Jewish as its background and that it is the secondary reception history of the Apocalypse of John that is Christian.

This study is an experiment. It proceeds from a position on what religion is. This is a conscious simplification (and in some sense, for which I do not apologize, a distortion) of the category "religion" for methodological purposes in order to affect historical-critical analysis. My task has been to draw some of the benefits and liabilities of such a position with regard to the Apocalypse. I am sure that I will benefit from others' highlighting the liabilities and perhaps the benefits in different details than I have here. I hope not for an interpretation to trump all others or remove their value but for an interpretation that makes a case within a specific set of values (namely, historical-critical inquiry) and that illustrates the relation of other interpretations to other sets of values. By restricting one variable—the category "Christianity," or, more generally, the place of assent to propositions in defining a religious context—I seek to shift the range of groups into which the Apocalypse can provide insight. This has consequences for both Judaism and Christianity: understanding the Apocalypse as a Jewish document helps paint a more diverse picture of Judaism in Asia Minor; analyzing the process of naming the Apocalypse "Christian" helps to illuminate the priorities and methods of scholars of religion and especially of early Christianity. Watching the term "Christian" strain and break as it is applied to the Apocalypse reveals the interest and energy that sustain its apparently successful application by other scholars. My own analysis strains and threatens to break: discussing the Apocalypse without naming it "Christian" is an exercise in continual self-examination and constant reformulation that will ideally enrich the terms "Judaism" and "Christianity." As such, it is a reflection and an enactment of my own interest in diversity and of my belief in responsibility for coherence.
APORIAS: PASSAGES WITHOUT PASSAGE

Justin Martyr's famous assertion that Socrates was a Christian illuminates the problem of calling the community of the Apocalypse "Christian." Justin writes: "Those who lived reasonably are Christians, even though they have been thought atheists; as among the Greeks, Socrates, Heraclitus, and men like them" (First Apology 46). The problem is obvious. The passage presents a dead end, an aporia, to interpretation within a historical-critical rather than theological tradition: Socrates and Heraclitus are not Christians. In spite of Justin's witness, scholars do not treat the dialogues of Plato and the fragments of Heraclitus as pieces of early Christian literature. The interpretations and historiography that would result from such an approach would be untenable within the conversation of academic history and the history of philosophy. This is proper.

The same problems that would attend the interpretation of Socrates and Heraclitus as Christians plague the interpretation of the Apocalypse of John. The problems begin with definition. The definition lying within Justin's statement is clear: A Christian is someone who lives according to the λόγος, or "reasonably." The definition is not limited chronologically, socially, culturally, or ethnically. Instead, it consists in the relation between an individual's life and the concept of λόγος. Implicit in the usage of "Christian" and "Christianity" in treatments of the Apocalypse is a proposition-centred view of religion: those who name "Christ" as a central

1 Οι μετά λόγου βιώσαντες Χριστιανοί είσι, καν άθεοι ενομίσθαν διόν εν Ἐλλησι μεν Σωκράτης καὶ �аютοὶ αὐτοῖς. Justin's definition is not merely inclusive. In Dial. 80, Justin dismisses "Christians" who reject his belief in the millennium as being no more Christian than Pharisees were really Jewish. At this point in Justin's writing, both categories—Jewish and Christian—are falling apart.
figure in their religious outlook are Christians. Unless anachronistic criteria such as inclusion in or exclusion from the Christian canon interfere, such a definition of "Christian" is also not limited socially, culturally, or ethnically. My contention is that these elements (social, cultural, and ethnic criteria) suggest that it is inappropriate to designate the Apocalypse a "Christian" document (with the unavoidable associations of distinction from Judaism that "Christianity" brings). The result of an inappropriate designation of the Apocalypse of John as "Christian" is that key questions and bodies of data—such as the Judean War—are marginalized or excluded from consideration, while the Apocalypse is marginalized or excluded from the historical description of topics, such as Judaism in Asia Minor or Jewish apocalyptic movements.

More specifically, I understand the Christian framework of interpretation within which the Apocalypse has traditionally been read to be the primary cause of several widespread problems in its interpretation. What follows is a set of texts that I alluded to in the introduction. I call them "passages without passage."

These cruxes are sites within the Apocalypse that generate circular or self-contradictory interpretations of the religious provenance of the document. The interpretations are aporetic—α-πορος, without passage—in that scholars stop moving through the text and start moving in circles. My contention is that the aporias, conundrums, paradoxes, arise not from the writer of the Apocalypse (whether by genius or defect), but from the

---

2 Arguments have to be made that the Letter of James is a Christian document even though it is in the canon, because the Letter of James gives no evidence of centering religious life on "Christ"; it mentions "Christ" by calling James "a servant of God and of Jesus Christ" only in Jas 1:1.

3 Chronology does exercise an influence in most contemporary scholarly treatments, but scholarly journals such as the Journal of Religious History continue to publish peer-reviewed articles, such as Hann (1987), that understand Christianity as an appropriate category for groups even in the thirties of the common era. In many cases, 70 CE is trotted out as the turning point after which Judaism and Christianity were distinct. The oversimplification of a single turning point is gross, and when contemporary scholars look directly at this issue, few maintain such a position. Nevertheless, such a turning point often functions detrimentally as a rule of thumb in studies that merely talk of Judaism or Christianity without focusing on criteria for differentiating them.

4 "Christian framework" here works in two ways: designating the rubric under which the document itself is categorized and, less ubiquitously but still influentially, designating the principles of interpretation by which it is read.

5 My understanding and application of "aporia" is directly indebted to Jacques Derrida's work of the same name (1993).
inappropriate assumption that the Apocalypse is rightly understood as a Christian document. What blocks the passage, what leaves the interpreter at a loss, what generates the aporia, is an unwarranted adherence to the category "Christian" and an incomplete appropriation of the category "Judaism." The cruxes, then, arise not only from the intersections of diverse interpretive possibilities, but are generated also by the crossroads of text and interpretive resources—by intertextuality as the currency of historical-critical scholarship. And so my study specifically addresses the recurrent problems posed by four text complexes in the Apocalypse.

1. The Synagogue of Satan

Twice, John discusses his enemies as "those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan" (Rev 2:9; 3:9). The first move in the conventional interpretation of this text is to reverse it so that those who are not Jews become Jews. More broadly, the conflict that leads John to make such accusations is frequently construed as a conflict over the status of Jesus in which John draws a line between his community, which "accepts" Jesus, and his enemies, who "reject" Jesus. The problems with such interpretations are the lack of controversy over Jesus in the surrounding text, the reversal of what the text actually says, and the lack of conflict with Judaism in the Apocalypse more generally.

Early in the fourth century, Victorinus, bishop of Petau, wrote the first extant commentary on the Apocalypse. His comment on Rev 2:9 provides an economical enactment of the most common treatment of that passage in twentieth-century commentary:

"I know your tribulation and your poverty, but you are rich." For he knows that with such men there are riches hidden with him and that they deny the blasphemy of the Jews who say that they are Jews and are

---

6 Wilhelm Bousset suggests 303 CE (1906: 53). Eusebius lists what appears to be a commentary on the Apocalypse among the works of Melito of Sardis (EH 4.26.2). He also mentions that Clement of Alexandria wrote commentaries on all the canonical books (EH 6.14.1). Jerome notes a commentary by Hippolytus (Vir. Illustr. 61). Such a work does not survive, but the fragments of Hippolytus's commentary on Daniel contain a few comments on the Apocalypse of John (Comm. Dan. 2.4 on Rev 17:10; 2.20 on Rev 3:7; 2.26 on Rev 19:6; 2.39 on Rev 11:3). Given the anti-Semitic vitriol of his Paschal Homily, Melito would have been pressed to be at his most agile if he were to have written a commentary that embraced the Apocalypse of John.
not; but are a synagogue of Satan, since they are gathered together by Antichrist.\(^7\)

Victorinus says almost nothing here with which I agree, but his hidden move is the first example of a trend that continues for nearly seventeen centuries: quite surreptitiously, he transforms “those who say they are Jews\(^8\)” to “the Jews who say they are Jews and are not.”\(^9\) In case the transformation remains surreptitious, it is Victorinus’s assumption that the antagonists here are Jews rather than merely people who say they are Jews (but are not). This unexamined reversal of what the text says is ubiquitous in contemporary scholarship on the Apocalypse.\(^10\) This is where the problems become almost irreparable.

The “slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not” is not only an action to which John refers (subjective genitive) but also, by his own characterization of them as a “synagogue of Satan,” one that John undertakes (objective genitive). John reverses a reversal. Non-Jews say they are Jews, and John says, in effect, “only insofar as they are a synagogue of Satan.” Following John’s rhetorical strategy, if not his rhetorical purpose, contemporary interpreters add a third reversal: the non-Jews are Jews again. John’s Apocalypse becomes, then, in significant measure a polemic against Judaism, and from outside of Judaism. The discussion of people who are named as non-Jews founds an understanding of the Apocalypse that sees “Conflict with Jews” (Yarbro Collins 1984a: 84) as a fundamental element of the situation to which the Apocalypse addresses itself.\(^11\)

\(^7\) “Scio tribulationem tuam et paupertatum, sed dives, es. Scit enim apud se talibus divitias esse reconditas, et detractationem de Judaeis negantes, dientnt se esse Judaeos, et non sunt, sed synagoga satanae, quoniam ab antichristo colliguntur” (Haussleiter 1916). Dulaey offers an alternative reconstruction of the text: “Scio uos et pauperes esse et laborare, sed diuites estis: Scit enim apud se talibus diuitias esse reconditas, et detractationem de Judeis negat esse Judeos, sed synagogam Satanae, quoniam \(<ab>\) Antichristo colliguntur” (Dulaey 1997).

\(^8\) των λεγόντων Ιουδαίους είναι εαυτούς, και οὐκ είσιν.

\(^9\) “Judaeis negantes, dientnt se esse Judaeos, et non sunt” (Haussleiter 1916).

\(^10\) See Gager (1983: 132), Shepherd (1971), and Wilson (1992: 614-15) for some of the very few treatments that develop the hypothesis that the antagonists of 2:9 and 3:9, as John says, are not Jews.

\(^11\) It also the unargued foundation of Adela Yarbro Collins’s comment in her ANRW article on numerical symbolism that “remarks made in the messages imply that membership in Israel is not primarily a matter of birth (2:9, 3:9)” (1984b: 1281). Yarbro Collins then uses this proposition, derived from Rev 2:9 and 3:9, to argue that the 144,000 drawn from Israel (Rev 7:4) are not Jewish. The only other text she draws continued
Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza also sees the exigence of the Apocalypse in terms of "two developments" under the Flavians: an intensified imperial cult and an intensified conflict and distinction between Christians and Jews (1991: 54). In the process of describing the second development, Schüssler Fiorenza makes two moves that are characteristic of interpretation of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 since Victorinus. First, she understands the non-Jews as Jews. Second, she transforms discussion of a local conflict into conflict with "the synagogue" (1991: 55, emphasis added).

Likewise, David Aune's recent commentary ends up reversing John's words and concludes that those who the author says are not Jews are actually Jews who are not Christians (1997-98: 1.164). This is in spite of the fact that Aune notes the "virtual absence of the typical features of the polemic between Jews and Christians" (1997-98: 1.165). All three of these authors—Adela Yarbro Collins, Schüssler Fiorenza, and Aune, certainly among the finest scholars of the Apocalypse today—depend heavily on the reversed interpretation of τῶν λεγόντων Ιουδαίους είναι έαυτούς, καὶ οὐκ είσιν that eviscerates καὶ οίκ είσιν in order to reconstruct one side of the rhetorical situation that undergirds their readings of the Apocalypse.

One of the most egregious elements of the case to reverse John's declaration that his opponents are not Jews is a strange selection of supposedly illuminating parallels. The Martyrdom of Polycarp, for example, is employed to suggest that Jewish denunciation of Christians before Roman authorities in Smyrna is the issue animating 2:9. Regarding the

12 Yarbro Collins suggests that Rev 2:9-10 be construed to understand that the "Roman authorities were being pressed by certain representatives of the local Jewish community to take actions against Christians in Smyrna" (1984a: 85). She provides no documentation for this particular position, but her statement three sentences earlier that "Jewish hostility to the early Christian missionary effort is well attested for the first and second century" rests on the authority of Bousset (1896) and Charles (1920), both of whom cite the Martyrdom of Polycarp as their authority for Jewish hostility to Christians in Sardis in the first century. See also Beale (1999: 240) and F. Murphy (1998: 119). Aune makes a very cogent critique of the use of the Martyrdom of Polycarp to
interpretation of the relation of (putative) Christian and Jewish communities in the contemporary context of the Apocalypse, Charles goes into the greatest detail, treating Judaism and Christianity as distinct and competitive entities. Commenting on Rev 2:9, he writes:

The bitter hostility of the Jews to Christians at Smyrna is unmistakable from the context. The Jews were strong at Smyrna, and had maintained in practice their position as a distinct people apart from the rest of the citizens till the reign of Hadrian as an inscription (CIG. 3148, οἱ ποτὲ Ἰουδαῖοι) shows, though they had ceased to be so at 70 A.D. (1920: 1.56)

As his authority for Jewish hostility to Christians in Smyrna, Charles cites Justin's Dialogue with Trypho 16.11 (where Jews persecute Christians and curse them in the synagogue), 47 (on people, mainly ethnic Jews, who confess Christ and still observe; Justin says they will be saved in spite of, rather than because of, their observance; this chapter also mentions cursing in the synagogue), and 96 (with cursing in the synagogue). Charles also cites Tertullian, Scorp. 10, "Synagogas Judaeorum, fontes persecutionum," as well as the role of Jews in the Martyrdom of Polycarp (12.2; 13.1; 17.2; 18.2). Here, in spite of his homage to contemporary historical interpretation, Charles deals with anachronism by ignoring it. Bousset goes into less detail, but for him, too, the Martyrdom of Polycarp is a key to interpreting Rev 2:9 (1906: 208).

The other pernicious dimension of Charles's analysis of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 is the role of Paul as an interlocutor for elucidating the Apocalypse. For Charles, the governing text for the exegesis of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 is Rom 2:28-29 (1920: 1.88):

2:28 For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. 2:29 He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal. His praise is from men not from God. 13

(continued)

illuminate Rev 2:9 (1997-98: 1.162). He notes the obvious influence of the efforts passion narratives to blame the Jews, or Jewish leaders, for the death of Jesus and their influence on the story of Polycarp.

13 2:29 γάρ ο εν τω φανερω Ἰουδαίος ἐστιν, οὐδέ η εν τω φανερω εν σαρκι περιτομή· 2:30 ἀλλ' ο εν τω κρυπτω Ἰουδαίος, και περιτομή καρδίας εν continued
This contrast between pneumatic and grammatical that operates in Paul does not inhere in the text of Rev 2:9 and 3:9, yet Charles sees no need to justify its introduction into the interpretation of those texts. Equally problematic is the common transformation of Paul’s contrast between flesh ≈ appearance ≈ literal ≈ human and inward ≈ spiritual ≈ heart ≈ divine into a contrast between Jew and Christian. A standard topos of anti-Jewish polemic, the correlation of flesh/spirit with Jew/Christian, governs Charles’s commentary on 2:9 and 3:9.

Though Aune recognizes how deeply the gospel accounts, rather than social history affect, the portrayal of Jews in the Martyrdom of Polycarp, like most other scholars, he joins Charles in seeing Rom 2:28-29 as the provider of a key to Rev 2:9 (1997-98: 1.162). Moreover, Aune looks to Gal 6:16, where he considers that Paul means “Christians not Jews” when he says “Israel of God” in order to support the idea that when John says “not Jews” he means “Jews not Christians” (1.162). The term “figurative” apparently covers any contradiction.

2. Keeping the Commandments

Turning from enemies to friends, John twice portrays a protagonist community as “those who keep the commandments of God and the witness/faith of Jesus” (Rev 12:17; 14:12). Consistently, commentators eschew any understanding of “keeping the commandments of God” that might illuminate the actual social practices that John values or advocates, and just as consistently the bulk of scholarly energy is spent on the phrases that are fertile for Christian theological reflection: the witness of Jesus and the faith of Jesus. The problems here are the broad pattern of interpreting the obscure to the neglect of the simple and the tendency to treat the text as a springboard for Christian theology rather than as an object of historical analysis.

Adela Yarbro Collins treats Rev 14:12 in a way that ought to provoke reflection about the actual religious practices of the initial audience of the Apocalypse. She suggests that the proclamation of the third angel (Rev 14:9-11) “is addressed to the readers as a warning that collaboration with the

πνεύματι οὗ γράμματι, σοὶ ὁ ἐπαινοῦσιν κύκ καὶ ἀνθρώπων ἄλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.

(continued)
Roman Empire and submission to its claims will lead to eternal damnation. This function is confirmed by the remark which follows, 'Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ' (14:12)” (1984a: 115, emphasis added). The insight that Rev 14:12 calls to the readers of the Apocalypse more directly than do other parts of the text not only gives some guidance on how to read Rev 14:9-11, but also calls for an examination of how the readers are called. That is, what is the significance of keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ in a scholarly reconstruction of the identity of the audience? Yarbro Collins does not follow her own insight into such an investigation.

Charles, like most commentators, ignores the social significance of Rev 12:17 and 14:12, and the consequences are seen in one of his comments on the religious character of the Apocalypse of John. He writes that “the Apocalypse exhibits a decidedly anti-legalistic character. The Law is not once mentioned in the New Testament Apocalypse” (1913: 35). While νομός does not occur in the Apocalypse, and while to ask whether a text is legalistic or anti-legalistic is itself a markedly Christian or even Protestant question, Charles culpably ignores the importance of the commandments (τὰς ἐντολὰς) in 12:17, 14:12 and perhaps 22:14. Only by allowing Paul—or his (mis)interpreters—to transform νομός into the pre-eminent mark of Judaism can Charles ignore the practical implications of 12:17 and 14:12. Here a Christian coherence obscures a historical interpretation of the texts in question.

Not following the clue is the most common scholarly response, but when the characterization of the protagonist community as “those who keep the commandments of God” is investigated, the results are not satisfactory. Aune’s treatment of the idea of keeping the commandments of God depends on a deeply synthetic view of early Christianity, in which, for example, a markedly anti-Jewish text such as the Epistle of Barnabas provides the pre-eminent example of a distinction that governs Aune’s understanding of τὰς ἐντολὰς in the Apocalypse (Aune 1996: 280). The distinction operating here is between the “moral” and the “ethical” elements of the Torah. Aune

See Tertullian, Pud. 19, as well as the Syriac and Bohairic versions, for ποιουντες τας εντολας rather than πλυνουντες τας στολας αυτων in Rev 22:14.
suggests that the protagonist community (and, by extension, the community to which John addresses himself) “keep the commandments of God” inasmuch as they keep the moral commandments of the second tablet of the decalogue (Aune 1996: 280-81; 1997-98: 2.709-13). E. P. Sanders has convincingly made the case that the distinction between “moral” and “ritual” commandments, used in a Christian sense to differentiate commandments that ought to govern conduct from those that need not, is not characteristic of first-century Judaism (1977: 112; 1992: 194-95). Similarly, there is no justification for reducing the meaning of “the commandments of God” in order to fit the Apocalypse into an anachronistic and unjustified synthesis of Christianity.

3. **144,000 from Israel or on Zion**

Twice, John sees a vision of 144,000 people, in the second instance, of men, who are under the protection of the lamb (Rev 7:4-8; 14:1-5). In each case, they stand in contrast with a broader party composed of people from the “nations, tribes, tongues, and peoples” (7:9; 14:6). Scholarly readings of these 144,000 people become unduly contorted, and in some cases ridiculous, as they strive to make two into three. That is, they strive to describe a binary contrast between Jews and Gentiles in terms of a tripartite taxonomy of Jews, Gentiles, and Christians. The other option is to compress the two groups into one and to see Christianity as the only player on the stage. The problems here are the unjustified avoidance of John’s simple description of two groups and his clear indication that his protagonist community is to be identified with Israel and with the interests of the Jewish people.

Rev 7:4 and 14:1 describe two parallel groupings of people that receive salvation, hear the divine message, or both. On the face of it, the difference between these groups is their relationship to Israel. And, on the face of it, those with a historical relation to Israel have a higher status. Scholars use various strategies to argue that the two groups (Jews and Gentiles) are not two groups (Jews and Gentiles). Bousset avoids allegory but sees the two groups as the Judenchristen and the Heidenchristen (1906: 380). Charles

15 There is, however, a tradition of seeing these groups as one group in spite of the opposite relations to Israel, the distinct descriptions, and the conspicuously different enumerations of the group. Aune gives a brief synopsis of the scholarship (1997-98: 2.447). Making two into one is no more a solution than is making two into three.
asserts that the two groups are the same group in different modalities—"first as militant on earth, vii. 1-8, and next as triumphant in heaven" (1920: 1.199). Both commentators unleash anti-Semitic clichés on the presumed sources of 7:1-8, with Charles saying, "thus Jewish particularism was the central idea of this section" (1920: 1.193), and Bousset noting, "die durchaus jüdische-partikularistiche Stimmung in diesem Fragment" (1906: 283).

Turning to the appearance of the 144,000 in Rev 14:1-4, Bousset does acknowledge that the Zion of 14:1 is the earthly rather than a heavenly Zion; this puts him ahead of most twentieth-century commentators. Charles, on the other hand, articulates clearly his understanding of the 144,000 as the spiritual Israel. By spiritualizing where the text makes no effort to encourage a spiritual understanding of the connection of the 144,000 with Israel (cf. Rev 11:8), Charles removes any connection between 7:4 or 14:1 and the social location of the Apocalypse.

More recently, Schüssler Fiorenza has interpreted the fact that the 144,000 of Rev 7:4-8 are drawn from Israel as an indication that they are drawn from the Christian church (1991: 67). Her authority for this is Gal 6:16 and the RSV's problematic translation of that verse, "6:15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. 6:16 Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God." This translation of Gal 6:16 is an inappropriate intertext for illuminating the use of "Israel" in Rev 7:4 (Richardson 1969: 74-84). Just as Gal 6:16 was an inappropriate tool for Aune to illuminate the "synagogue of Satan," so it has no place here. One obscurity and controversy does not solve another, especially when the aporia faced by interpreters in the "Israel" of Rev 7:4 proceeds only from an unwillingness to question the characterization of the Apocalypse as a Christian document. Though Schüssler Fiorenza is correct in claiming that the tribal system was not a functional means of social organization in the first century, it is not

16 Charles writes: "These are the same as the 144,000 in vii. 4-8, i.e. the spiritual Israel, the entire Christian community, alike Jewish and Gentile, which were sealed to protect them from the demonic woes" (1920: 2.4).

17 ἡρ περιτομή τι ἐστιν οὔτε ἀκραβυστία, ἀλλὰ καυνή κτίσις. καὶ δοσὶ τῶν καινῶν τῶν στοιχήσωσιν, εἰρήνη ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραήλ τοῦ θεοῦ.

18 For arguments against Peter Richardson's position, see Betz (1979: 322-23).
therefore merely a "theological" entity, as individual self-description in terms of tribal heritage shows.¹⁹

Treating the appearance of the 144,000 on Zion in Rev 14:1 (cf. 14:3), Schüssler Fiorenza avoids the conclusion that "Mount Zion" refers to the earthly Mount Zion by stating that the 144,000 are located at "neither the historical Mount Zion nor the heavenly Zion, since 14:2 clearly distinguishes between Zion and heaven. Rather, Zion refers here to an eschatological place of protection and liberation" (1991: 87). The distinction Schüssler Fiorenza mentions in Rev 14:2 is clear and does indeed suggest that "Mount Zion" is not a heavenly Zion, but nothing suggests that it is not an earthly Zion. Rejecting this sense of the text by ignoring it, Schüssler Fiorenza proposes an understanding of Mount Zion as "an eschatological place"—an insufficient proposal.²⁰ Though Zion here has obvious eschatological import, it is not thereby removed from heaven and earth into a third realm. The eschatologically significant Zion that is not heavenly is earthly. This is yet another example of the awkward efforts to make two into three. In John's Apocalypse, there is no "eschatological" place in addition to heaven and earth.

¹⁹ Paul describes himself as of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5). Josephus describes himself as being of the priestly tribe (Life 1). Within the literary realm, Tobit was designated as being from the tribe of Naphtali (Tob 1:1-2) and Anna from the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36). See Jeremias (1975). As Aune remarks, "the question, however, is not whether the twelve tribes actually existed in the first century A.D. but rather whether they were thought to exist" (1997-98: 2.461). Aune nevertheless joins Schüssler Fiorenza in seeing Gal 6:16 as an example of how to understand that in this case too John means Christians, not Jews, when he writes "Israel" (1997-98: 2.442-43).

²⁰ In spite of Schüssler Fiorenza's efforts to distinguish her work on the Apocalypse of John from comments such as that of Rudolph Bultmann (below), Dieter Georgi's comment that the term "eschatological" "works for Bultmann and for many New Testament scholars and systematic theologians ever since as a magic wand" (1985: 82) serves also as incisive critique of its use in Schüssler Fiorenza's commentary on Rev 14:2. Bultmann's comment illustrates the deeply theological work that the term "eschatological" can perform in discussing the Apocalypse:

The Christianity of Revelation has to be termed a weakly Christianized Judaism. The significance of Christ is practically limited to this: that he gives the passionate eschatological hope a certainty which the Jewish apocalyptists lack. To him as Lord over life and death (1:17f.; 2:8), as the heavenly comforter and ruler, is transferred what Judaism says of God. What gives the impression that the present is already illuminated by the light of the future is the certainty of eschatological hope and the conviction that the end is near at hand (22:10 "the time is near"; 22:12: "behold I am coming soon"). But the peculiar "between-ness" of Christian existence has not been grasped. (1955: 175)
Yarbro Collins's discussion of the 144,000, emphasizing Rev 14:1-5, takes place in service of her inquiry into attitudes to “Martyrdom and Virginity” (1984a: 127). Rev 14:1-5 and 7:4-9 do provoke reflection on those topics. Several of Yarbro Collins’s insights bring her close to understanding the 144,000 as Jews, but the unargued understanding of the general context of the Apocalypse as Christian prevents those insights from reaching such fruition. Like Schüssler Fiorenza, she notes the connection between Rev 14:1-5 and 7:4-9 but not the relevance of “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” of 14:6 as a counterpart to the “nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” of 7:9. Yarbro Collins sees the 144,000 as “a special group within the body of the saints and not Christians in general” (1984a: 127) and as a “limited group” but does not consider that “the saints” might not be “Christians in general” (or in any other sense) at all. She notes the application of the term “firstfruits” (ἀπαρχή) to the 144,000 (Rev 14:4), suggesting that the term implies both “untimely and violent death” (1984: 128). Yarbro Collins is combining the connotations of the popular image of blood sacrifice with Paul’s applications of the term to Jesus as ἀπαρχή τῶν κεκοιμημένων in 1 Cor 15:20-23. Like Schüssler Fiorenza’s use of Gal 6:16 to illuminate Rev 7:14, this is an example of exceptional usage in service of Christian ideology being used to “clarify” a common “first-order” application of the term. ἀπαρχή in the Apocalypse, as in the LXX Pentateuch, suggests a first portion associated with priesthood; as in all the New Testament uses, it indicates priority (either temporal or hierarchical or both); as in Philo (Spec. Leg. 4.80), it denotes the pre-eminent position of Israel. Violent and untimely death, present admittedly in following a slaughtered lamb, does not dominate the positive associations of ἀπαρχή with priesthood, priority, and Israel. Nor do the legitimate connotations of violence in sacrifice make martyrdom the connotation of this image to the exclusion of its other, positive, dimensions. Yarbro Collins finds the Essenes to be the group that provides the most powerful comparison with the sexual continence implied by Rev 14:4. These hints, however, do not overcome her basic determination of the document as one written by a Christian to his fellow Christians. The result is aporetic: Israel is not Israel, and Zion is not Zion.

4. The Holy City and the Great City

Finally, John's vision in chapter 11 of the temple of God and of the two witnesses discusses the partial preservation of the holy city and the partial destruction of the great city. In contradiction of John's clear use of the term "holy city" for Jerusalem and "great city" for Rome, most interpretations conflate these two cities and make them a single object of God's (and John's) wrath, understood as Jerusalem. Here again, the problem lies in the unjustified reversal of the text. John talks consistently of a holy city and refers to it as an ally in the struggle he depicts, but here the holy city is understood by commentators to be the enemy of John.

Because of the condemnation and destruction of the "great city which is allegorically called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified," Rev 11 is a foundational text for Yarbro Collins's view that John undertakes a conflict with Judaism. The other foundational texts are the "synagogue of Satan passages" (Rev 2:9; 3:9). When scholars read Rev 11, muddled articulations of the category "Christian" impede their ability to consider exegetical solutions that do not support a Christian coherence. More tellingly, the peculiarly weak configurations of argument that characterize contemporary interpretations of the other text complexes show up again in readings of Rev 11.

Yarbro Collins is convinced that both the holy city of Rev 11:2 and the great city of Rev 11:8 are to be identified as Jerusalem. In fact, she admits that such an identification is the only justification for linking the two. Moreover, she suggests that John understands the destruction of Jerusalem "as punishment for the rejection of the Messiah" (1984a: 86; cf. 1983: 740). In a striking parallel to her own description of John's attitude to Judaism as "ambiguous" and "ambivalent" (1984a: 85; cf. 1983: 739), Yarbro Collins describes John's attitude to Jerusalem as "ambiguous" or characterized by "ambivalence" (1984a: 740). The positive side of John's attitude to Jerusalem is clear—it is, as Yarbro Collins notes, a "major symbol of salvation" in the Apocalypse (1983: 740). The negative side of John's attitude depends on the reversal of the usual meaning of the term "great city" within the

22 "The only obvious link [between Rev 11:1-2 and Rev 11:3-13] is that the scene is Jerusalem in both. The time periods mentioned in each section are equivalent, but the repetition is a seam, as it were, joining the two sources. The first section focuses on the temple, but the second does not mention the temple at all" (Yarbro Collins 1984a: 65).
Apocalypse and on the interpretation of John as a Christian who must be preoccupied with distinguishing himself from Judaism. That is, the ambiguity depends on John being what he never says he is and on John meaning what he does not say.

Leonard Thompson’s endeavour to map John’s “Apocalyptic World” ignores the cities of Rev 11 (1990c). His is a map with no cities. In the context of his larger project, however, Thompson does understand the great city of 11:8 as Jerusalem (1990a: 82). In spite of his predilection for mapping the Apocalypse in terms of balanced homologies and ratios, his systematizing efforts falter when facing Jerusalem. He can only suggest that “the New Jerusalem forms a complex boundary with sacred space on earth, eschatological time, and heaven above—a boundary that cannot be charted on an ordinary space-time grid” (1990a: 47-48). Like Yarbro Collins, Thompson complicates his interpretive task by refusing to accept that John’s set of homologies between heaven and earth applies also to Jerusalem: like the Jerusalem above, the Jerusalem on earth is the city of God. Thompson’s boundary-defying New Jerusalem sounds tellingly similar to Schüssler Fiorenza’s Zion, which is neither heavenly nor earthly, but eschatological. These awkward formulations are clear indications of the stress involved in trying to shoehorn John’s Jewish vision into a Christian coherence.

Schüssler Fiorenza’s interpretation of Rev 11:1-13 is first of all based on the profitable insight that the chapter division between 10:11 and 11:1 obscures the continuity of 10:11-11:2 (which she describes as John’s “renewed prophetic commissioning” [1991: 74]). Her exegesis of the holy city of Rev 11:2 and the great city of Rev 11:8 understands the former as the “Christian community” and the latter as the “historical Jerusalem” (1991: 77). Nevertheless, she suggests that the expression “great city” may allude to the oppressive power of Rome, and she goes on to describe the inhabitants of the city as “the nations.” In explicating the “the holy city” of Rev 11:2, Schüssler Fiorenza suggests that “since the author uses the name ‘Jerusalem’ just for the New Jerusalem, his characterization of the city as the ‘holy city’ seems to refer neither to the eschatological nor the historical.

23 The exception is a footnote (Thompson 1990c: 126 n. 11) on the terms πνεῦμα and πνευματικός that associates them with resurrection (Rev 11:1) and “nominal transformation” (Rev 11:8).

24 Thompson also suggests that the great city of Rev 16:19 refers to either “Babylon or Jerusalem” (1990a: 82).
Jerusalem, which in 11:8 is called 'the great city.' If the expression 'holy city' means the same circle of persons as the figures 'temple, altar, and worshippers,' then 11:2 speaks of the Christian community" (1991:77). Schüssler Fiorenza's formulation "neither . . . the eschatological nor the historical Jerusalem" recalls her exegesis of Mount Zion in Rev 14:1 as "neither the historical Mount Zion nor the heavenly Zion." Faced again with a dilemma in which the text precludes understanding the holy city as a heavenly Jerusalem while a Christian provenance prohibits understanding the holy city as the earthly Jerusalem, Schüssler Fiorenza creates a new place—neither heavenly nor earthly, but Christian. And in creating a new place, she makes John the herald of a new race.

The interpretations of these four texts are unsatisfactory in themselves, but I believe that the common misunderstandings of these texts are not just isolated impasses but are related by their dependence on the pre-understanding of the Apocalypse as a Christian document. By "dependence," I mean that the initial interpretive stance that takes the Apocalypse as a Christian document almost inevitably leads into the interpretive cul de sacs I have outlined.

The framework for reading the Apocalypse as a Christian document is rarely justified explicitly, presumably because if a document mentions Jesus as Christ or is in the New Testament, scholars approach it as a Christian document.25 Neither of these approaches is methodologically justifiable. The problems that plague the scholarly framework for reading the Apocalypse are found at three levels: terms of discussion that uncontrolledly steer the discussion in unjustified directions, a religious taxonomy based on inadequate criteria, and a confessional and ahistorical metanarrative of the birth and growth of Christianity. These three levels of problem are the focus of the next three chapters.

25 It is worth noting that 3 John makes no mention of "Jesus" or "Christ." I am nevertheless convinced that 3 John is appropriately read as a Christian document, although neither its presence in the New Testament nor its "Christology" provides a warrant for such a conviction.
In a certain way, the observations of the previous chapter should be sufficient to call for a re-examination of the four text complexes that I highlighted. Historical-critical re-evaluation of individual texts is, however, only half of my call. Any attempt to comprehensively address the aporias illustrated here should attend to the enterprise of taxonomy of religion, strive to use its most basic terms consistently, and work with a consciousness of what metanarratives encompass the analysis. The second half of my call is for methodological re-examination and renewal, for a constant and considered meditation on the effect of the category “Christian” on the materials that are traditionally studied under that rubric and for an attempt to gain some control over those categories (worked out here only for the Apocalypse of John).

The aporias I have identified—the passages without passage—reside in the complex dynamics of the emergence of Christianity in the ancient world and proceed from the contradictory terms, ill-conceived taxonomies, and ahistorical metanarratives that scholars employ in the investigation of the emergence of Christianity. Calling for a relocation of the Apocalypse purely within the terms of previous scholarship does not sufficiently pursue “the path of the subject” that Fredric Jameson identifies as a basic component of historical research.¹ This chapter begins that endeavour with regard to the terms and categories that govern the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

¹ See pages 26-28, below.
1. Paths of Suspicion

What is commonly called a "hermeneutic of suspicion" is necessary but inadequate to the task of rereading the Apocalypse as a Jewish document. The initial question of inadequacy is simple: Of what should one be suspicious? As a lone claim, a hermeneutic of suspicion does not address that question. "Suspicion" is never sufficiently specific. It is always suspicion of particular patterns, trends, or movements in both primary sources and their interpretive tradition. While I share, and am indebted to, Schüssler Fiorenza's suspicion of the androcentric biases enmeshed in the creation, selection, transmission, and interpretation of materials pertaining to Jesus and the movements that surrounded or looked to him, my study has a different primary object of suspicion, motivated by different primary concerns.²

Schüssler Fiorenza's reflections on the operations necessary for a feminist history inform more generally the operations I understand as productive for the interpretation of the Apocalypse. Discussing the inadequacy of a "women of the Bible" approach to feminist hermeneutics, Schüssler Fiorenza states that "what is therefore necessary is not just a feminist analysis of biblical texts, but also a metacritique of the androcentric frameworks adopted by biblical scholarship without any critical reflection on their systematic presuppositions and implications" (1983: 42). For my interpretation of the Apocalypse, it is necessary to do more than just redress aporias as individual units or highlight Jewish elements in the Apocalypse (with the constant danger of doing work on a Jewish "background" that serves to reify notions of a Christian "foreground").³ It is also necessary to reflect critically on the systematic presuppositions of the Christian framework of interpretation of the Apocalypse.

Jameson articulates the dual path of analysis by which I approach the Apocalypse of John: "The historicizing operation can follow two distinct

² "Primary" bears significant weight here. I maintain the suspicion of androcentric bias that Schüssler Fiorenza advocates, and Schüssler Fiorenza has also striven to give place to a suspicion of the seeds of anti-Semitism lying within much interpretation of the New Testament and early Christianity.

paths, which only ultimately meet in the same place: the path of the object and the path of the subject, the historical origins of things and that more intangible historicity of the concepts and categories by which we attempt to understand those things" (1981: 9). What Jameson calls the “path of object” composes the more traditional part of my analysis of the Apocalypse, locating it in terms of its geographical and historical setting (69-70 CE in Asia Minor—the Diaspora during the Judean War) and its cultural provenance (Second Temple Diaspora Judaism in negotiation with Roman imperial and economic structures and the wider multicultural milieu of the Empire).

My attempt to chart the “path of the subject” involves, of course, detailed attention to the history of the interpretation of the Apocalypse, but in a different register than most forschungsberichtlich endeavours. Rather than chronicling persons and positions—there are histories of research that do that well— I strive to pay attention to the processes of pre-understanding that shape the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

My endeavours along the path of the object and the path of the subject are marked by certain suspicions that are basic to my understanding and

4 Clearly, the field is well plowed. Bousset’s commentaries (1896: 51-171; 1906: 49-119) treat the history of interpretation from the second to the nineteenth century in great detail, although his treatment of English and French scholarship is quite weak. Charles (1913: 1-78; 1922: 1-12) treats roughly the same territory as Bousset but with some attention to English scholarship. André Feuillet’s L’Apocalypse: État de la question (1963) analyzes the first sixty years of the twentieth century and is alone in the attention it pays to French scholarship of that period. Otto Böcher’s Die Johannesapokalypse (1988b) details the German interpretive tradition with scant attention to English and French work. His Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romische Welt essay (1988a) merely condenses his earlier work. Schüssler Fiorenza’s essay “Revelation” (1989) only covers work from 1945 to 1980, but it offers a view of literary-critical approaches in North America that Böcher omits. Ugo Vanni’s “L’Apocalypse johannique: État de la question” (1980) covers the same ground as Schüssler Fiorenza’s essay but emphasizes French, Spanish, and Italian literature where Schüssler Fiorenza treats North American literature. Jacques Chevalier’s monograph on the Apocalypse takes a different tack than most treatments but provides a helpful view of the history of interpretive methods organized under the headings of anagogical, teleological, and genealogical (1997: 126-74). Robert Muse’s annotated bibliography on the Apocalypse of John (1996) brings the periodical literature up to date. These histories of interpretation of the Apocalypse review research thematically as well as chronologically, but in all cases the treatment of the religious and cultural context of the Apocalypse, both within the review and within the works that are the subject of review, receives discussion only within the unargued context of Christianity. This deserves emphasis: there is no precedent for a detailed consideration of the liabilities of the term “Christian” as an analytical apparatus for reading the Apocalypse.
practice of historical-critical inquiry. My answer to the question "of what is one to be suspicious?" isolates three movements in the interpretation of the Apocalypse and of the development of Christianity of which I am deeply suspicious. These are homogeneity, teleology, and, for lack of a better term, logocentrism. By "homogeneity," I mean that I am suspicious of understandings of the Apocalypse that contrast it with a monolithic Judaism or place it within a monolithic Christianity. And so assertions that the Judean War marked a "parting of the ways" for Judaism and Christianity strike me as irresponsible given the broad variety within these movements and the manifold patterns of relation that they demonstrate over the first three, four, or five centuries. By "teleology," I mean readings of the Apocalypse that end up interpreting its initial situation on the basis of its future. Broadly, this might mean practices of interpretation that locate the Apocalypse first within the New Testament canon, that is, within a perhaps third- or fourth-century Christian collection and selection of documents. Specifically, my suspicion of teleology might mean suspicion of readings of the phrase "synagogue of Satan" that look to the Martyrdom of Polycarp, more than sixty years later, to explain Jewish-Christian relations in Smyrna. Finally, by the unwieldy term "logocentrism," I mean understandings of religion that give decisive priority to propositional content in defining and classifying religion. For my purposes, this means suspicion of moving from the observation that the Apocalypse discusses and reveres a figure it occasionally calls "Christ" to the conclusion that the Apocalypse is rightly understood as a "Christian" document, with all the distinction that the term "Christianity" implies. I am convinced that these objects of my suspicion are relevant impediments to scholarship on the Apocalypse of John.

2. Signification and Reference

The foundation of a critical perspective on the terms and categories of New Testament scholarship is a critical perspective on the process of signification and interpretation more broadly. Since the ascendancy of the New Criticism (and beyond its decline), the "author's intention" has lost its status as the arbiter of a work's value and meaning. 

5 Interpreters who value historical

---

5 For examples within the New Criticism and after, see Frye (1957: 86-87) and Barthes (1977).
context and who would not attempt to characterize their work as a thoroughly immanent reading have maintained that insight and integrated it into a new historicism at the level of the work and the primary source. I contend that this insight applies also at the level of the word and the secondary source; that is, the "meaning" of contemporary interpretations is not fully under the control of their authors' intentions. Ferdinand de Saussure suggests that "the sign always to some extent eludes control by the will, whether of the individual or society" (1983: 16). This applies to all of language, including names, and to all attempts to point beyond language, including certain theological understandings of signification. Because terms exceed the control of those who wield them, no particular term can become sacrosanct in historical discussion. It must be legitimate to question any particular formulation.

This work, then, problematizes the terms that dominate the discussion of the Apocalypse and, more widely, the discussion of early Christianity—most importantly, the unquestioned application of the term "Christianity," with all its unifying and synthesizing power. Four notions cast forth "Christianity" in particular as a problem. First, Jacques Derrida's concept of the undetachable (or even undistinguishable) signifier and signified makes terms themselves significant beyond any attempt to circumscribe them. Second, his critique of a *topos noetos* understanding of a signified can be applied specifically to elucidate the action of applying the term "Christianity" to situations that do not generate the term directly. Third, the specific status of "Christianity" as a proper name intensifies (by masking) the confusion of signifier and signified. And fourth, the ways in which a *topos noetos* understanding of a signified entails what may be termed a "theological" understanding of meaning can illuminate a corresponding theological dimension of historiography. Attention to such problems attending the use of Christianity to frame discussions of the Apocalypse makes it possible to take responsibility for naming and classifying the document and to become conscious of the benefits and liabilities of particular approaches to the document. My contention, of course, is that an understanding of the Apocalypse as Christian poses nearly insurmountable

---

6 "An excuse, a screen, a cloak" LSJ πρόβλημα III.
7 This phrase of Derrida's, meaning literally "cerebral place," is elaborated on page 30 below.
problems within the context of the academic study of religion, whereas an understanding of the Apocalypse as Jewish offers singular advantages in addressing the problems that plague current interpretation of the document. This chapter examines the linguistic conditions that enable the particular problems that the term and category “Christian” visits upon the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

Derrida has been an important leader in literary and philosophical considerations of a shift of attention from a meaning “behind” and “independent” of writing to writing itself. His philosophical project has been to criticize the metaphysical foundations of Western philosophy by foregrounding the tense relations within the process of signification, particularly the ever-fleeing signified understood as an intention, a meaning, or, most generally, a presence that is not also signifying language (with all the contingency, relativism, and deeply conditioned value that we habitually and casually heap on the signifier). Paraphrased, simplified, and thus (re)produced, Derrida’s powerfully repeated suggestion that all “content” is simultaneously form implies that all “form” is simultaneously and integrally content (with detailed caution about the very terms of this opposition). The tension of “Utopia” is visited upon the notion of a signified presence: the notion advertises a safe harbour, or a good place, to anchor meaning—a of τοπός—but instead, the utopia of the signified turns out to offer no anchor, to be no place—an of τοπός. Choosing between the epsilon and the omicron is an ideological and ethical choice. Choosing “Christianity” as a signifier for the Apocalypse is also inescapably an ideological and ethical choice.

Derrida discusses presence-saturated conceptions of signification in many terms, often naming the binarisms that depend on such conceptions. In these discussions, he employs the phrase “topos noetos”—literally a cerebral space or an intellectual realm—to name the understanding of a

---

8 Derrida chooses “writing” (writ large) as the exemplary process of signification that continually makes clear the iterative and individual moments of communication.

9 “. . . worldly and non-worldly, outside and inside, ideality and non-ideality, universal and non-universal, transcendental and empirical, etc.” (Derrida 1974: 8). “All dualisms, all theories of the immortality of the soul or of the spirit, as well as all monisms, spiritualist or materialist, dialectical or vulgar, are the unique themes of a metaphysics whose entire history was compelled to strive toward the reduction of the trace” (Derrida 1974: 71).
signified fully divorceable from any signifier. Discussing Nietzsche's attempt to escape from a metaphysics of presence by distancing his thought from a "primary signified" object, Derrida writes: "reading, and therefore writing, the text are for Nietzsche 'originary' operations . . . with regard to a sense that they do not first have to transcribe or discover, which would not therefore be a truth signified in the original element and presence of the logos, as topos noetos, divine understanding, or the structure of a priori necessity" (1974: 19). Here Derrida empowers the reader (or shifts to the subject) in a different way than do reading theories that emphasize distortion or the effects of position (with their implication of position relative to an object). The "object" as a topos noetos lying within the text—suspended by non-existent forces so that it does not touch and is not contaminated by the linguistic vessel that contains it—is removed from activity in the communication equation and removes from the articulating subject any responsibility to what I might oppose to the topos noetos as the réma epigeios (ῥήμα ἐπίγειος, "earthly word"). Derrida's argument is that such a removal is untenable within contemporary understandings of semiosis.

In his essay "Différance," Derrida again uses this formulation negatively to describe the differences that enable linguistic meaning: "These differences are themselves effects [of différance]. They have not fallen from the sky fully formed, and are no more inscribed in a topos noetos, than they are prescribed in the gray matter of the brain" (1982: 11). The question Derrida addresses non-simply (believing and arguing that it cannot be addressed simply and is perhaps formulated in contradiction to the information it requests) is, "where are differences inscribed?" While Derrida's answer, written in relation to the history of philosophy, elaborates the notion of the trace, my own answer can pay the price of being less abstruse, less general, and less technical: the differences that generate my interpretation and the meaning I take from the Apocalypse must be inscribed in the historical situation of the original author and audience. This is a self-consciously partial description of the location of difference. It is not possible that those differences can be inscribed solely in that ancient context; they proceed equally from my own communities, purposes, and experiences. I suggest that, to an important degree, interpreters of the Apocalypse employ the terms "Christian," "Christianity," and "church" as topoi noetoi, ignoring the web of signification outside their discourse that grounds those terms within it, and largely ignoring the relation of those
terms to the historical contexts that otherwise receive so much of their erudite attention. The *topos noetos*, then, is the ideal of the fully separable signified. Theorists of communication and language have explored the problems with this notion of signification; at issue here is the problem that a *topos noetos* understanding of the particular term “Christianity” creates for historical-critical inquiry. Such an understanding entails a host of diachronic conceptions of Christian history that are scarcely controlled in their application to the Apocalypse; it also defines ahistorically a field of inquiry within which the text must have its coherence.

The tense negotiations between the *topos noetos* and the *rêma epigeios* are compounded by the status of “Christian” and “Christianity” as *proper* nouns. As such, they have the ambiguous status of signifiers that ideally refer purely without signifying in the web of language. In their common applications to individual people as names, they may be unique and point only to the concrete object—the person. Proper nouns as names pretend to provide an escape from the bondage under language that is the human condition—a bondage all the more offensive when people glimpse (as they can in proper nouns) the structurally arbitrary character of language. Proper nouns do not deliver the escape they promise. In their actual applications, they stand in a whole web of namesakes, cultural locations, patterns of assonance that are as local as taste. Jonathan Culler writes: “A proper name as mark ought to have no meaning, ought to be a pure reference, but since it is a word caught up in the network of a language, it always begins to signify. Sense contaminates this non-sense that is supposed to be kept aside; the name is not supposed to signify anything, yet it does begin to signify” (1982: 192). The terms “Christian” and “Christianity” are not labels under the control of the one who applies them, but points of entry into a millennium-spanning web of history. The status of these terms as proper nouns obscures this entry but does not mitigate it. English orthographic practice intensifies the subterfuge by compelling translators, interpreters, and readers to choose between “god” and “God,” “christ” and “Christ,” “beast” and “Beast,” “lamb” and “Lamb,” and, most problematically, “he” and “He.” The anachronism and necessary distortion of such a choice passes

---

10 On the problems posed by proper nouns, see Saussure (1983: 171), Derrida (1993), and Culler (1982: 192). These sources inform this whole section.
without discussion, yet such a choice is a key interpretive act. This choice makes clear the way naming raises the stakes of communication in general.

Beyond the false promise of the proper, names applied to (and creating) a collectivity always include and exclude according to political and ideological criteria that have little chance of coinciding with historical-critical criteria. Writing of character but hinting at a wider circle of relevance, Barthes writes of the name, “it is an instrument of exchange: it allows the substitution of a nominal unit for a collection of characteristics by establishing an equivalent relationship of sign and sum: it is a book-keeping method in which, the price being equal, condensed merchandise is preferable to voluminous merchandise” (1970: 95). What Barthes alludes to, and often does not name, are the locations of difference that give the name its political and ideological character: the criteria for delimiting a collection of characteristics, the hope for subjective gain that motivates exchange, and the impossibility of exact equality or equivalence. These factors open every name to question, compel the use of names, and constitute the value of historiography in general without absolutizing the value of any historiographeme. Therefore, writes Barthes, “all subversion, or all novelistic submission, thus begins with the Proper Name” (1970: 95). The particular subversion, the particular narrative, the particular name at issue here is “Christianity.” The properness of the name “Christian” serves two masters, rides two horses, stretches two bows; it operates—with undoubted value—in the academic study of religion while at the same time it serves Christian theological interests (broadly understood). In the interpretation of the Apocalypse, these two interests are at odds, and the collecting and exchanging operations of the proper name function at the expense of historical-critical coherence.

The choice between “he” and “He” is usually understood as a theological choice, but the role of theology in interpretation may be

11 Derrida writes: “. . . it is because the proper name has never been, as the unique appellation reserved for the presence of a unique being, anything but the original myth of transparent legibility present under the obliteration; it is because the proper name was never possible except through its functioning within a classification and therefore a system of differences, within a writing retaining the traces of difference, that the interdict was possible, could come into play, and, when the time came, as we shall see, could be transgressed; transgressed, that is to say restored to the obliteration and the non-self-sameness [non-propriété] at the origin” (1974: 109).

understood much more widely and involves much more subtle choices. The *topos noetos* is in an important sense a *theological* strategy of naming and communicating. While at least some interpreters of the Apocalypse would shrink from the suggestion that there is anything theological about their work, there is (perhaps unavoidably) a theological dimension to the foundations of the hermeneutic they employ and to the assumptions that undergird the communication their works undertake when they discuss the Apocalypse as Christian. Culler quotes Barthes:

> "We now know," writes Barthes with that assurance that comes upon some writers in Paris, "that the text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of an Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture."

Though Culler's jab at Barthes's confidence hints at the unavoidability of an assurance that might well be described as theological, it does not contradict Barthes. Instead it enacts the unstably iterative understanding of communication that Barthes describes. It willingly, unprotectedly, enters the theological assurance that is the problematic condition of writing and the false goal of reading. But what would it be to read "a multi-dimensional space" and "a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture"? Barthes's description of the text in general is an apt description of the Apocalypse. To consider the Apocalypse this way involves seeing it in a Jewish matrix and in a Hellenistic matrix and not as the *sui generis* herald of a third race. Equally important, to treat the secondary literature on the Apocalypse in this way is to see the possibility that it is enmeshed in a division of the religious world that depends on a confessional culture of scholarship. And, most difficult, to write with a consciousness of Barthes's insight is to strive to locate oneself in a cultural position that is not necessarily a centre and to take responsibility for that act of location; it is, in this instance, also to see my writing as committed to an academic and pluralistic context that does not draw lines confessionally. "This way" is always a "certain way," and also a partial way. Derrida writes that "the

---

14 Note Derrida's near-definition of deconstruction: "The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor can continued
motif of homogeneity, the theological motif *par excellence*, is what must be destroyed" (1981: 64). The univocity or homogeneity of the characterization of the Apocalypse as Christian is a deeply theological position.

Writing more directly of interpretation, Derrida concludes that “the sign and divinity have the same time of birth. The age of the sign is essentially theological” (1974: 14). The *topos noetos* understanding of the signifier is built into the sign and brings with it a platonic or theological position. Scholarly interpreters of the Apocalypse might not describe their interpretive procedures as theological, but they enact (similar) theological positions in their use of the term “Christian.” It may be that it is always necessary to enact these positions in some measure, to inhabit a theological paradigm (in the Derridean/Barthesian sense), but then there is great value in a different means of habitation and a different “certain way.”

Jameson phrases the historical critique of “theological” hermeneutics in a way that facilitates comparison with Christian theological language: “The transition witnessed by Saussure, and dramatized by the other great moments of verbal impairment alluded to above [in Rimbaud, Wittgenstein, Valéry, and others], may be described as a movement from a substantive way of thinking to a relational one” (1972: 13, emphasis added). It is scarcely surprising that the terminology of current literary theory and of late antique theological and philosophical reflection coincide to produce a powerful critique of the dominant code that governs the interpretation of early Christianity. The works of Eusebius and the trinitarian controversies instantiate the interpretive resources and processes at work in the interpretation of the Apocalypse, both specifically and structurally, in the dominant platonist metaphysics and hermeneutics of our culture. Traditional ways of reading are substantive in that “Christianity” is a *topos*...
noetos that precedes the analysis. To relate such an analysis to Jameson, I might call “Christianity” an οὐσία νοητική (a cerebral substance) or, in the terms of the New Testament (which may be the dominant intertext), a τόπος ἐπουράνιος (a heavenly place; cf. Ephesians). Lodged firmly in a heavenly place, composed apparently of pure cerebral substance, “Christianity” is the dominant force in contemporary interpretation of the Apocalypse, yet it is exempt from criticism or sustained examination.

The interpretive category “Christianity,” anchored as a topos noetos, reified as a proper name, divinized in its scope and power, is certainly available to twentieth-century readers of the Apocalypse, but it is by no means necessary or neutral. The point is not that some elusive proper category will be necessary and neutral, but that other interpretive categories and strategies formulated within the canons of historical-critical inquiry can address the exegetical difficulties that the Apocalypse poses and can simultaneously expose the difficulties and detriments that the interpretation of the Apocalypse as Christian produces. Predictably, “Christianity” is not a term without value in the study of “early Christianity.” Nevertheless, precisely because it defines a field, it merits sustained examination. Even when it is employed, its power needs to be described. What follows then is an examination of the contradictions plaguing the actual use of the terms “Christianity” and “Judaism” in the interpretation of the Apocalypse. I suggest that employing the category “Judaism” for the Apocalypse can be defended within the canons for historical-critical inquiry and that the category “Judaism” provides a hermeneutic lever to open passages that have previously been ἄπορως—without passage.
TERM: THE SUPPLEMENT AND/OR THE COMPLEMENT

For the historical situation of the Apocalypse, is Christianity on the same taxic level as Judaism—a complement to Judaism—or is it subordinate to the taxon Judaism—a supplement? It is a basic question in any taxonomic system: What constitutes a taxon, and what operations are properly undertaken within a taxon in distinction to those operations that are properly undertaken between taxa? The taxa that concern me are (1) religion and (2) sect or denomination; the operation that concerns me is comparison properly conducted only between objects on the same taxic level. The synthetic formulation of these questions for understanding the religious character of the Apocalypse might be thus: Is Christianity an entity on the same taxic level as Judaism and so suitable for comparison with Judaism? For standard treatments of the Apocalypse, the answer is both yes and no. For my treatment of the Apocalypse, the answer is simply no.

1. The Problem

The problem at one level is John’s religious identity. Who is John? Who is this fellow with “fellow Christians” and “fellow Jews” (Yarbro Collins 1984a: 49, 58)—who, according to Yarbro Collins, “claimed the name ‘Jew’ for himself and his fellow Christians” (1984a: 79)? Are his fellow Christians fellow Jews? Are his fellow Jews fellow Christians? Although, like many contemporary scholars of the Apocalypse, Yarbro Collins makes the “social

---

1 The title of this chapter borrows the categories of Derrida’s analysis of Rousseau’s view of language, speech, and writing. Derrida’s reading of Rousseau illustrates well the pitfalls of mixing terms uncritically (1974). The logic of the question posed in the first sentence, however, has been laid out in great detail by Gabriele Boccaccini (1991: 7-30) with specific application to the relationship of Judaism and Christianity.
identity of the author” a foundational element of her interpretation of the cathartic function of the Apocalypse in the face of (perceived) social crisis, the relationship of Jews and Christians constantly shifts in her work on the Apocalypse. It moves unstably between understanding Christians as distinct from Jews and understanding Christians as a subset of Jews.

Yarbro Collins, one of the pre-eminent scholars of John’s Apocalypse, is not alone. Thompson describes Christians “as Asian Jews” but suggests that “as Jews cross into the seer’s world, they become ‘the synagogue of Satan’ ” (1990b: 187, 190). Furthermore, he suggests that Christians had lost their “shelter of tradition” within Judaism (190) and were recognized even by Pagans as being outside Judaism (130), while at the same time he affirms that “the seer [John] is the one making up the sharp contrast and opposition between Christians and Jews” (126). Examples of such contradiction could easily, though tediously, be multiplied with other scholars. The tension, even contradiction, evident in thought about the relationship of John and his community (named “Christianity” by scholars) to Judaism lead to contradictions in the analysis of the Apocalypse and proceed from unjustifiable assumptions about the development of Christianity.

### 2. The Possibility of a Supplement

Within treatments of the Apocalypse of John, Christianity appears as a subset of Judaism. It is a stock tactic of current scholarship to include a sentence or two on the uncertainties of distinguishing Christianity from Judaism in the first century. Yarbro Collins writes, “[some] scholars consider the so-called synod of Jamnia, dated between 80 and 90, to be the turning point. The separation between Jews and Christians cannot be understood as

---

2 The social identity of the author and the audience is also the focus of several of Yarbro Collins’s scholarly articles: “Persecution and Vengeance in the Book of Revelation” (1983), “Insiders and Outsiders in the Book of Revelation and Its Social Context” (1985), and “Vilification and Self-Definition in the Book of Revelation” (1986). “Political Perspective of the Revelation to John” (1977) approaches a thoroughgoing endeavour to understand the Apocalypse within Judaism but still sees the Apocalypse as a document to be compared with Jewish writings (241).

3 In fairness, I must note that Thompson writes this sentence as part of a larger discussion of how John actively intensifies the contrasts between his own immediate (and idealized) community and those who disagree with his program. His point is that it unlikely that John’s community suffered any significant measure of persecution by (in my estimation, other) Jews.
a simple event that took place at a single moment in time and which held for every locality. The separation was gradual and very likely relative to individual perceptions and to the circumstances of each geographical area” (1984a: 75-76). This caution, however, does not impede Yarbro Collins’s frequent designation of the Apocalypse as a document engaging in “conflict with Jews.”

Similarly, Thompson’s cautions about distinguishing between Christians and Jews (1990a: 130) produce more backpedalling than analysis. Though Thompson rightly raises the possibility that the term “Christian” might be used anachronistically by Tacitus and Suetonius, this insight does not act as an effective caution for his own usage. Thompson’s strategy here is parallel to Justin Martyr’s (casting Socrates as a Christian) and gives no hint of how it could be chronologically (or geographically) delimited. Thompson cites Rev 2:9 and 3:9 as instances of the “clear distinction” between Christians and Jews (1990a: 130), though Rev 2:9 and 3:9 are anything but clear.

Schüssler Fiorenza does not make a general statement on the process of separation between Jews and Christians in her 1991 commentary, but her comment that Christians such as John “represented a particular party or group within Judaism” (1991: 35) clearly puts forth the proposition that Christians could be Jews and Jews Christians. These statements from Yarbro Collins, Thompson, and Schüssler Fiorenza clearly commit each of these scholars to the possibility that the people they choose to name as Christians, specifically the author and initial audience of the Apocalypse, could be Jews.

Thompson most strongly distances himself from this possibility, and Schüssler Fiorenza most clearly welcomes it.

4 The heading “Conflict with Jews” in Yarbro Collins’s text does not lead to a nuanced discussion of conflict with other Jews, but to the even more careless characterization of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 as constituting an “attack on the Jews” (1984a: 84, emphasis added; cf. Yarbro Collins “conflict between Christians and Jews” [1985: 217] and “conflict between Christians and Jews” [1986: 313]).

5 At several other points in their work, all three scholars write under the conviction that the writer of the Apocalypse of John is within Judaism. Yarbro Collins writes: “At first, followers of Jesus and believers in Christ simply belonged either to Jewish organizations or to their own, which were understood by Gentiles in terms of Jewish ones” (1984a: 97). “It may be that the Laodicean Christians were Jewish or at least on good terms with the Jewish community” (1984a: 138); “Toward the end of the first century, it is quite credible that in western Anatolia there were Christians who were virtually indistinguishable from Jews” (1984a: 196-97); “It is anachronistic and misleading with regard to the book of Revelation, as with much of the New Testament, to assume the author thought of the Church as a new religion and a new institution replacing... continued
3. The Practice of a Complement

The practice of treating Christianity as a complement to Judaism is not always located in explicit declarations, but usually resides in terms of comparison—named and unnamed—and in formulations of John's context. A simple way to ask whether modern commentators work out the implications of considering Christians as Jews (e.g. Thompson 1990a: 172; Yarbro Collins 1984a: 138), or more specifically as a particular party within Judaism (Schüssler Fiorenza 1991: 135; cf. Yarbro Collins 1985: 208; 1986: 319), is to ask if the statements they make about “Christians” could be made, in similar taxonomic terms, of a group such as the Pharisees. That is, could Yarbro Collins write of a split between Jewish and Pharisaic organizations the way she discusses “the split between Jewish and Christian associations in Asia Minor” (1984a: 99)? The answer is no. In this instance, she treats Christianity as a proper and comparable complement to Judaism. If she were referring to any other group within Judaism in the last half of the first century, could Schüssler Fiorenza write the following?

An appeal to cultic imagination was difficult, since Christians had no cultic institutions—neither priests, nor sacrifices, nor temples. John, therefore, had to derive his cultic language and symbolism not only from the traditional temple cult of Israel, but also from cultic celebrations which were popular in Asia Minor. (1991: 122-23)

Long after the destruction of the temple, the lineage of priesthood, debate and concern over sacrifice, and positive views of the temple in retrospect and in prospect were undeniably significant in Jewish “cultic imagination.” Inasmuch as Schüssler Fiorenza’s Christians were Jews, they faced the loss of their temple, looked upon the cessation of their sacrifices, and strove to

(continued)
understand the social significance (if any) of their priesthood. To this extent—to the extent that a paradigm wherein Christians are Jew implies investment by these “Christians” in the central cultic structures of Judaism—Schüssler Fiorenza does not consider Christians as a sect of Jews.

Thompson is more forthright in considering Christians a complement of Jews during the last decade of the first century. And so he writes that John uses a “Jewish-influenced Christian mythos” (1990a: 8). This would be an absurd formulation if Christians had the same taxonomic status as Pharisees or Essenes; the problematic redundancy in “Jewish-influenced Pharisaic mythos” is apparent. In a clear step that implies that the distinction between Christian and Jew is fully obvious for the writer of the Apocalypse, Thompson writes that “those with the Lamb, that is Christians (not Jews), are the faithful chosen” (1990a: 51). Aune is also quite direct in his comment that it is “most obvious” that “Revelation is a Christian Apocalypse, not a Jewish Apocalypse” (Aune 1997-98: l.lxxxviii). Just as clearly as scholars commit themselves to the possibility that the “Christians” of the Apocalypse are Jews, so they repeatedly work with the understanding that the author and initial audience of the Apocalypse are not Jews.

6 It is, of course, possible that some Jews understood the destruction of the Temple and the cessation of sacrifice as God’s loving and simultaneously chastising action, but this does not make the events any more distant from them.

7 Rev 17:14 persuades Thompson that the lamb, by John’s design, overshadows Moses in Rev 15:3. Several other passages in Thompson’s work portray a similar relation of the categories “Christianity” and “Judaism”: in his discussion of “ratios,” the relationship with Judaism implied in Rev 2:9 is not a matter discussed but a matter assumed and used as exemplary (1990a: 90). Discussing the large, well-integrated Jewish community of Sardis, Thompson writes: “the first Christians at Sardis were probably drawn from the Jewish community there” (1990a: 124). Similarly, he writes of, “city-dwellers in Asia who were neither Christian nor Jewish” (1990a: 130).

8 At many other points in their work, Yarbro Collins and Thompson write with the understanding that the writer and initial audience of the Apocalypse of John are distinct from Judaism. Yarbro Collins writes: “Jewish hostility to the early Christian mission effort is well attested for both the first and the second century” (1984a: 85); “Not only are Jews vilified, but other Christian leaders and the Roman empire are attacked with strong language as well” (1986: 308); “Insofar as Christian messianism appeared to be a new and separate phenomenon, it had no status” (1986: 314); “To the extent that Christian converts were former Jews . . . ” (1986: 314); and “In the first century, Christianity and Judaism were young siblings, struggling to gain recognition and to shape an identity or to maintain them” (1986: 320). Thompson writes that: Apollos is a “learned (logios) Alexandrian Jew” and “another Christian convert from Judaism” (1990a: 118); “The first Christians at Sardis were probably drawn from the Jewish community there” (1990a: 124); and “city-dwellers in Asia who were neither Christian nor Jewish . . . .” (1990a: 130).
4. Conflicted Functioning

To talk at the same time of John’s “fellow Jews” and his “fellow Christians” is unresolvably contradictory—especially when authors affirm both that Christianity was a subset of Judaism and that Christianity was distinct from Judaism. The function of the contradictory views of Christianity is predictably dual: by calling upon the interpretive category “Christianity within Judaism” or “Christianity, the supplement to Judaism,” analysts avail themselves of interpretive resources for many of the qualities and characteristics of the Apocalypse, such as its valuation of sexual continence,9 its concern with eating meat sacrificed to idols, and (especially) its stance of resistance to the Roman Empire.10 At the same time, however, the category “Christianity, the supplement to Judaism” sets up a problem: how does such a group find itself in conflict with the wider culture of the Empire, and the wider culture of the Empire in conflict with it? Josephus strove to sharpen the Roman gaze, to assist the Roman elite in differentiating one party of Jews from another, to specify its conflict with Judaism as a conflict with “zealots” and “brigands.” With all his resources and his (relative) insider position, Josephus did not effect a wide change in Roman perceptions of Judaism. Yet Nero is constantly said to have expelled “Christians” from Rome, and little energy is spent to inquire into how Nero would have differentiated Christians from (other) Jews and in what circles news of such an action would have been spread, preserved, elaborated.11

The point is not to make a liar of Tacitus, but to note that the power of discrimination attributed to outsiders or Pagans is all out of proportion to the significance of the movement(s) within Judaism; it is in proportion, however, to the (disproportionate) evidence concerning movements that were useful to the Christians of subsequent centuries. Understanding “Christianity within Judaism” accounts for the conflict with the wider

---

9 Concerning the interpretation of Rev 14:4, Josephine Massyngberd Ford (1975) and Yarbro Collins (1984a: 129-31) provide excellent discussions of the illuminating similarities between the attitudes toward sexual continence in the Apocalypse of John and those in the literature of the community at Qumran.

10 Yarbro Collins has extensively documented the close relation in patterns of resistance to the Roman Empire evident in the Apocalypse of John and the Jewish strata of the Sibylline Oracles. She has also set the Apocalypse of John in the wider context of eastern resistance to Rome (1984a: 89-96).

11 See Tacitus, Annals 15.44.
Roman/Hellenistic culture that John undertakes, but it does not account for the specifically Christian contours of the conflict that contemporary interpreters draw.12

The “solution” to this problem is the second and contradictory movement in the term “Christian”: understanding it as “Christianity distinct from Judaism,” or “Christianity, the complement to Judaism.” In this understanding, Christianity (and the Apocalypse) confronts Empire (and vice versa) apart from any context that the category “Judaism” would imply. The very local example of Pliny governs the interpretation of texts written in the previous century and grouped together by Christians in the subsequent centuries.

The movement between these contrary understandings of Christianity—from within Judaism to without—is a movement covering decades or centuries. Compressed into the category “Christian” and applied to the Apocalypse, these movements force a teleology onto inquiries that ask synchronic questions. Glimpses of problems that arise in this collision appear in characterizations of John’s “failed” vision of his own community. Yarbro Collins states the problem most starkly: “Although the possibility that John was born a Gentile cannot be excluded, it is likely that he was a Jew by birth. Such a hypothesis helps explain his massive assumption of continuity; that is, his failure to distinguish an old and a new Israel” (1984a: 46-47, emphasis added).13 Of course, “failure” is a careless formulation of non-action, and Yarbro Collins does not “blame” John for such a failure, but the distinction that John does not make is crucial. His “massive assumption of continuity” is actually an argument for more than continuity; it implies identity. From the beginning, “continuity” suggests difference and discontinuity. Again, it is clear that suggesting a “continuity” between Judaism and the Rabbinic movement is awkward in that it suggests that the Rabbinic movement is distinct from Judaism, rather than a specific

12 Furthermore, the understanding of “Christianity within Judaism” is the first move in a strategy that unifies “Christianity,” with the risk of, or tendency toward, homogenizing it, and sets up the initial condition of a teleological narrative of the separation of Christianity from Judaism.

13 Yarbro Collins also formulates this lack of distinction in the Apocalypse of John more moderately: “John did not distinguish between the Jewish people and the Christian church, between old and new covenant” (1984a: 44). See also Yarbro Collins: “John makes no distinction between an old Israel and a new or between Israel and the Church” (1985: 208).
development within Judaism. More properly, "continuity" describes members of the same taxic entity, therefore I am interested in describing the continuity of the Apocalypse with specific Jewish apocalyptic traditions, specific Jewish liturgical traditions, specific Jewish social traditions, but not with Judaism. The identity that Yarbro Collins can only describe as an "assumption of continuity" and a "failure to distinguish" also surfaces in the analyses of other interpreters; Schüssler Fiorenza concludes that in the Apocalypse, "no fixed impermeable boundaries are drawn between those who are saved and those who are not, between Christians and non-Christians" (1991: 129), and Thompson notes that "just as there is no fundamental distinction between heaven and earth, so there is no final 'dualistic division of humanity'" (1990a: 84). In a more specific discussion, Aune—who states emphatically that the Apocalypse is not Jewish and that John "moved from Judaism to Christianity" (1997-98: 1.cxxi)—suggests that John probably did not distinguish between "Old Testament" and Christian prophets (1997-98: 1.liv). By these admissions, buried in the thick of the monographs, having little substantial effect on the analysis, the major commentators on the Apocalypse state that the distinction between Christian and Jew that looms so large in their work is in some sense foreign to the Apocalypse.

All coherences have limits, places where the torque of conflicting forces is shut in, contained as much as possible, nursed and lubricated to keep the enterprise underway. In the study of the Apocalypse, "Christianity" is the containment field for the "warring forces of signification" (Johnson 1980: 5) that threaten the analysis. It does not have to be thus. My purpose here is to illustrate how the analysis of the Apocalypse of John can thrive precisely when the category "Christianity"—applied to John's Apocalypse—breaks down.
What makes the divided concept of Christianity possible—that is, what facilitates the creation of a singular taxic entity out of the materials in, for example, the New Testament—is an understanding of religion that privileges a single differentiating characteristic (usually belief) as a key to religious taxonomy: in the words of Jonathan Z. Smith, a "monothetic" theory of classification.\(^1\) It is by making "Christ" the sine qua non of Christianity that interpreters differentiate Christianity from Judaism. This practice is suspect on the grounds first that religion is a polyadic\(^2\) phenomenon, and a single characteristic is never sufficient to generate a viable taxonomy; and second, even if a monothetic strategy were acceptable, it would not fully differentiate Christianity from Judaism (see chapter 7). Nevertheless, the effects and functions of a monothetic understanding of religion are evident in the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

1. Smith's Critique and Proposal

Starting with the thorny problem of differentiating walnuts and pecans,\(^3\) Smith narrates development of taxonomic theory through Porphyry and

\(^1\) Smith's 1982 essay "Fences and Neighbors: Some Contours of Early Judaism" in Imagining Religion is the source of the theoretical perspective of this section.

\(^2\) The OED defines "polyadic" as "Involving many (usu., three or more) quantities or elements. Hence ... polyadicity, the state or quality of being polyadic." It then credits its first citation of "polyadic" to C. S. Peirce in Monist XVI.512 (1906): "A Predicate is either non-relative, or a monad ... as is 'black'; or it is a dyadic relative, or dyad, such as 'kills', or it is a polyadic relative, such as 'gives'."

\(^3\) In a monothetic understanding, a walnut is a life form with chlorophyll, true flowers, closed ovaries, an embryo with two cotyledons, bisexual flowers, spikes on the flowers, secondary sterile catkins in addition to fertile flowers, no corolla on the flowers, and a four-toothed calyx with petals, whereas a pecan is a life form with chlorophyll, true

continued
Linnaeus and the challenges that evolutionary biology raised for synchronic botanical classification. As Smith notes, his sample classification of the walnut and its differentiation from the pecan (paraphrased here in note 3) is logically precise but lacks any justification that would make it preferable to an equally precise classification "according to other sets of differentiae such as wood anatomy or the morphology of pollen grains" (1982: 3). Certainly the sample classification, or either of Smith's alternate proposals, does not effectively reckon with a set of differentiae conditioned by evolutionary, and therefore historical, factors. These two failings—the lack of justification for privileging any particular differentia and the inadequacy of monothetic classifications in the face of evolutionary and historical concerns—have undermined the utility of monothetic classification in the biological sciences. In the study of religion, however, monothetic classification, with all its logical and historical problems, is the standard (though often obscured) strategy of definition and classification. The result is differentiae phrased in terms of value-laden binary oppositions and ad hoc "essences" formulated apologetically so that slogans replace method (Smith 1982: 5-8).

Taking his cue from methodological currents in botany, Smith proposes a classificatory method based on broad constellations of social, cultural, propositional, and material phenomena. He introduces this "polythetic" mode of classification with a paraphrase of methodological developments in botanical taxonomy:

What was proposed [by Beckner (1959) and Sokol and Sneath (1963)] was a new, self-consciously polythetic mode of classification which surrendered the idea of a perfect, unique, single differentia—a taxonomy which retained the notion of necessary, but abandoned the notion of sufficient criteria for admission to a class. In this new mode, a class is defined as consisting of a set of properties, each individual member of the class to possess a "large (but unspecified) number" of these properties, with each property being possessed by a "large number" of individuals in the class, but no single property being possessed by every member of the class. (Smith 1982: 4, with quotations from Beckner 1959: 22-25)

(continued)

flowers, closed ovaries, an embryo with two cotyledons, bisexual flowers, spikes on the flowers, secondary sterile catkins in addition to fertile flowers, no corolla on the flowers, and a four-toothed calyx lacking petals (Smith 1982: 3).
Supplemented by a view of what “properties” of human life are relevant to a
description of religion, this proposal can emancipate religious taxonomy
from the apologetic arrangements generated within, and often in the service
of, confessional groups. Smith’s own preliminary application of it performs
two operations. First, Smith examines the inadequacy of circumcision as a
sine qua non of Judaism. The practice of circumcision was held up by (some)
Jews and (some) Pagans in the ancient world as the definitive marker of
Judaism, while at the same time writers such as Philo and Josephus discuss
its usage beyond Judaism, note non-religious aspects of the practice, and
understand it as an inadequate differentia of Judaism. Furthermore, within
the narrative of 1 Maccabees, there are Jews who are identifiable as such
without circumcision (those who were forcibly circumcised, 1 Macc 2:46).
Second, Smith examines almost a thousand inscriptions and derives several
onomastic, cultural, and social criteria that may identify a Jew. Smith’s effort
is by his own admission partial and preliminary, but it offers an approach
that deals with the broad complexity of Judaism, even within such a limited
window on differentiating characteristics as funerary inscriptions.

2. Monothetic and Polythetic Movements in the Interpretation of the
Apocalypse of John

Of course, interpreters of the Apocalypse do not state or make a conscious
choice of monothetic over polythetic classification. They address neither the
question of how to distinguish Christianity from Judaism nor that of
method in such a taxonomy. Nor has Smith’s work on the subject of
classification left a discernible influence on their treatments of the Apo-
calype. It would perhaps be an unfair distortion of their work then to label
their efforts “monothetic.” What occurs, however, is either a tendency to
emphasize a single characteristic in statements that imply a differentiation,
even if this is in tension with other characterizations of religions (Yarbro
Collins), or a tendency to emphasize the continuity or identity of Christ-
ianity and Judaism over a range of social, cultural, and theological
phenomena and then still differentiate them with the implication that Jesus

---

4 See Cohen (1999) for the most recent and comprehensive discussion of this matter.
5 The subject of gender and the utter inadequacy of circumcision as a criterion for
Judaism in the case of women does not directly enter Smith’s discussion, but as an
example, it only makes Smith’s case for polythetic classification stronger.
as Christ is what separates the groups in spite of their many continuities or identities (Schüssler Fiorenza and Thompson). E. P. Sanders's (in)famous statement that what bothered Paul about Judaism was that it was not Christianity\(^6\) plays its joke on Paul, and perhaps undercuts the value of Sanders's own study, by making the border across which Paul's supposed dissatisfaction gazes absurd and at the same time absolute. This is true also for Thompson and Schüssler Fiorenza: What separates Christians from Jews is that they are Christians.

Yarbro Collins's work implies that the issue dividing Jews and Christians is Jesus. Such a formulation sounds reasonable enough, but its plausibility turns on the multiple meanings of "divided"—on the divisions in "division." What factions or communities or religions argue over is one dimension of their division; what brings them into conflict is another; and what constitutes a scholarly justification for dividing entities into discrete members of a taxon is yet a third. These three facets of division need not coincide. A look at Yarbro Collins's use of Rev 2:9 illustrates concretely the problem I have tried to formulate generally. In explaining the seemingly positive reference to Jerusalem in Rev 11:1-2, Yarbro Collins writes: "It is likely that the opposition between the church as the true Jews and those Jews who did not accept Jesus as the Christ played some role in the author's understanding of the prophecy of 11:1-2. The references to Jews as the synagogue of Satan in 2:9 and 3:9 attest to the vehemence of his on feelings on this subject" (1984a: 68, emphasis added). "This subject" is precisely the problem. Rev 2:9 and 3:9 fall clearly within discussion of whether or not it is proper to eat food that has been offered to Pagan gods. The idea that the subject of the passage is the distinction between Jews who accepted Jesus as Christ and those who did not makes what may be a difference into what must be the source of a division. Because Jesus as lamb (much more often than as Christ in the Apocalypse) plays such a large role in the (mytho)logic of John's rhetoric, there is a temptation to make Jesus the primary object of controversy in the Apocalypse and, moreover, the dominant differentia between the community of the author and Judaism. To yield to this temptation is to yield academic position to Christian theological position.

Discussing the identity of the "John" who wrote the Apocalypse, Yarbro Collins takes issue with Ford's theory that John the Baptist and his followers

---

6 "This is what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity" (Sanders 1977: 552).
TAXONOMY

were responsible for the Apocalypse (Ford 1975: 28-37). Yarbro Collins states that

Ford's theory [that Apocalypse developed in circles around John the Baptist] is problematic also because it ignores the Christian character of the book as a whole. One may dispute whether it truly preaches Christ, as Luther did, but it is quite clear that the author considered himself a follower of Christ. Only by arbitrarily eliminating the references to the Lamb, its death, and its redeeming blood, or by interpreting them in a strained way can the Christian character of even chs. 4-11 be denied. (1984a: 31)

For Yarbro Collins, Christ functions here as the *sine qua non* of Christianity in the Apocalypse. Without references to Christ, it is not Christian; with the references, it is. 7 As Yarbro Collins notes, one may dispute, as Luther did, whether the Apocalypse "truly preaches Christ," but if this line of reasoning, so dependent on the theological "truly," determines whether or not it is a Christian document, then the issue is likely to metamorphose into a "dispute whether it truly preaches Christ, as Luther did." Luther disputed and Luther preached—much more than he is able to serve as a model either for historical research or of taxonomy in the study of religion.

Yarbro Collins also describes Christians in such a way as to leave the possible differentia between Christians and Jews quite obscure:

Towards the end of the first century, it is quite credible that in western Anatolia there were Christians who were virtually indistinguishable from Jews. These would have been as observant (or non-observant) as their Jewish neighbours and have had a Christology which did not offend them. They would have had their own gatherings, but would have participated in those of the local synagogue or synagogues as well. Such Christians would have shared in the legal status of the local Jews. (1985: 196-97)

The question arises, what makes the Christians Christians? To be "virtually indistinguishable" is still to be distinct. The distinction between the Christians and Jews in Yarbro Collins's comment is a distinction based on christology and on supplemental social gatherings. The distinction between

---

7 Cf. Yarbro Collins (1985: 209): "For the author of Revelation, the primary boundary between Christians and other Jews was the question whether messianic expectation had been fulfilled in Christ" (emphasis added).
Jews and Christians here—invisible to other Jews, invisible to Romans—is invisible because it is made in a topos noetos untouched by most of the social, cultural, and material differentiae that would condition a polythetic taxonomy of religion.8

Others lean toward a monothetic scheme of classification in this second way: emphasizing continuity and then still differentiating, seemingly on the basis of belief in Jesus. Schüssler Fiorenza notes that “the author emphasizes the works or the praxis of the Asian churches” (1991: 53), but this pushes her analysis into a rather difficult corner, in which it appears that Christians are the poor, economically pressed, politically resistant Jews, while Jews (unmodified) are prosperous and accommodating, perhaps even worldly. And so she argues that prosperous Jews withheld legitimation from “those who were poor and had little power but much messianic fervor” (1991: 31). This is both a matter of historical-critical dispute (what was the social status of the audience community of the Apocalypse?) in which one might cite Thompson against Schüssler Fiorenza9 and a matter of method (how do these lines of difference—rich/poor, privileged/oppressed, conservative/revolutionary—relate to a taxonomic distinction between Christianity and Judaism in the setting of the Apocalypse?). The matter of historical-critical dispute is treated in later chapters, but the matter of method is inevitably a circular question. I draw attention to Schüssler Fiorenza’s formulations of belief as if it were a bed-rock difference10 and oppose to them her own gestures toward a polyadic view of religion (covered partially in her term “theo-political”). Thompson offers even fewer hints of a broad constellation of differentiae,11 and in the end does not provide a proposal more detailed...
than the intuitive idea that belief in Christ makes for a Christian, when he calls Christians the "faithful" (1990a: 67).

In parallel to the work on taxonomy of religion, John J. Collins offers a detailed and productive application of polythetic taxonomy in his work on the apocalyptic genre but does not extend it to his treatment of Judaism and Christianity. Writing of the value of the title ἀποκάλυψις in classifying the genre of a work, Collins states: "The presence or absence of a title cannot, in any case, be regarded as a decisive criterion for identifying a genre. Rather, what is at issue is whether a group of texts share a significant cluster of traits that distinguish them from other works" (1992a: 3). Collins is clearly proposing a polythetic method of classifying literary genres in reaction to the inadequacies of a monothetic system that depends on the occurrence of the title ἀποκάλυψις (or any other single differentiating characteristic, such as pseudonymity, review of world history, or other-worldly journey). It is a simple matter to build a statement about classifying religions on the basis of Collins's statement about classifying genres. With debt to Collins, I propose the following:

The presence or absence of a title single figure, belief, text, or practice cannot, in any case, be regarded as a decisive criterion for identifying a genre religious group. Rather, what is at issue is whether a group of texts constellation of religious practices (including the writing, transmission, and reading of texts) shares a significant cluster of traits that distinguish them from other works religions.

The long substitutions here (e.g., "single figure, belief, text, or practice") are awkward gestures to the content of the next section, namely, a polyadic view of religion.

3. Polythetic Classification and a Polyadic Understanding of Religion

The polythetic classification endeavour that Smith proposes implies a polyadic understanding of religion, that is, a conception of religion as composed of many types of phenomena: material, ritual, narrative, propositional, experiential, and so forth. Developments in the anthropology

--- (continued) ---

depends largely on an anachronistic contrast between "church" and "synagogue" that does not inhere in ἐκκλήσια and συναγωγή.

12 See note 2 on page 45 for a discussion of the origins of this term.
and sociology of religion over the last thirty years or so largely support such a conception as a basis for the study of religion. One of the most influential attempts to lend some rigour and definition to the category “religion” has been Clifford Geertz’s 1966 essay “Religion as a Cultural System.” Geertz defines religion as “(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motives in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic” (1973: 90). By and large, the problem faced by definitions of religion in the context of anthropology is not sufficiently locating religion within culture, but sufficiently distinguishing religion within culture. And so Geertz leaves many of the properties of religion undiscussed within his definition, under the rubric “a [cultural] system of symbols,” and spends the bulk of his energy on differentiae within the genus “[cultural] system of symbols.” As he unpacks Part 1 of his definition, Geertz makes it clear that religion is not isolated within the realm of preaching or belief but, like any other cultural system, cuts across ritual practice, mythology, materiality, and so forth.

It is important here to give a considered interpretation to Geertz’s use of “symbol.” Put briefly, “symbol” contributes to the polyadic understanding of religion, and to the breadth of its location in “culture” within Geertz’s definition, when it designates the whole sign unbroken into signifier and signified: not only the generalized form of the menorah that points to or proceeds from the various examples that E. R. Goodenough (1953-68)catalogues, but equally the carvings and drawings as material objects; not only the order of a meal in memory of Jesus’ death outlined by the Didache, but equally the differences from such an order that a community might practice by design or accident—ritual conformity and difference, success and failure; not only the text of Daniel in the Hebrew Bible, but also the additions of the Septuagint, as well as every telling of those tales with “additions” and “subtractions,” by design or accident, that does not survive or was never written down; not only the experience of transcendent love in community, but also (more commonly?) the experience of letdown or inadequacy in spite of community and its promises. These extensive examples attempt to illustrate that religion is not exclusively or even primarily a conformity with the dominant self-characterizations of a religion, but the practice—including symbolic practice—of members of a social
entity, observed and evaluated from a position (or perspective) outside that entity.

This extension of religion across the many arenas of culture that lie within Geertz's exegesis of his own definition is at the forefront of Peter Byrne's definition of religion. Building on Geertz's work, Byrne defines religion as "an institution with a complex of theoretical, practical, sociological and experiential dimensions, which is distinguished by characteristic objects (gods or sacred things), goals (salvation or ultimate good), and functions (giving an overall meaning to life or providing the identity or cohesion of a social group)" (1991: 7). Byrne's differentiae, in terms of objects, goals, and functions, are less flexible than Geertz's, but his definitional statement has the advantage of foregrounding the multiple properties of religion. Ron Grimes's list of the components of religion goes further in emphasizing the "non-transcendent" properties of religion. He offers the following components of religion:

- Actions: dancing, walking, kneeling
- Places: shrines, sanctuaries, homes
- Times: holidays, seasons, eras
- Objects: fetishes, masks, icons, costumes
- Groups: congregations, sects, moieties
- Figures and Roles: gods, ancestors, priests, shamans
- Qualities and Quantities: circularity, seven
- Language: myths, stories, texts
- Sounds: music, chants
- Beliefs, Attitudes, Intentions, Emotions: creeds, codes, joy, ecstasy

It is possible to extend such an enumeration of the components of religion much further. Perhaps it would even be profitable. For my purposes, however, it is sufficient for these sketches of the components of religion to offer a caution to any deployment of the category "religion" that treats it in a much more restricted manner. Such a polyadic understanding of religion has influence within the study of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity as a means of generating topics of study, but its implication concerning taxonomies of religion is rarely taken seriously. The relation-

---

14 Hans Dieter Betz approaches the question of defining religion directly in his article "Christianity as Religion: Paul's Attempt at Definition in Romans" (1991), but his treatment of religion is heavily skewed to "terminologies, conceptualities, and
ship between defining religion and distinguishing among religions is this: among the relevant components of the phenomenon, there must be meaningful differentiation across a significant number of components. Belief is neither a sufficient differentia nor a sufficient analytical tool for religions of the Greco-Roman world (see Brooten 1994). A provocative question might clarify what is at stake for the interpretation of the Apocalypse and its religious provenance: even if one grants that other Jews in town would not have agreed with the book John wrote, would they not still have eaten in his kitchen? And which axis of discord or concord—the book or the kitchen—is a better index of religious community?

Yarbro Collins writes that only by interpreting the Apocalypse, particularly its references to “the Lamb, its death, and its redeeming blood,” in “a strained way” is it possible to deny the “Christian character” of the book (1984a: 31). In a perverse agreement with that statement, it is my goal to interpret the Apocalypse in a strained way. I am the one who strains. I strain to think through the text without Luther or Akiba standing over my shoulder. Interpretations that do not strain themselves but strain the Apocalypse through the mesh of the history of Christianity from Constantine (or even Luke-Acts) to the present day unreflectively deny the difference in the context of the Apocalypse by becoming its pretext and by restricting its intertexts.

Taxonomy is an utterly basic element in the study of religion. It defines the field of possibilities within which an argument is made. Taking the time to examine the enterprise of taxonomy makes it possible to approach the Apocalypse of John with a measure of responsibility for the configuration of that field. I have argued that there is little, if any, possibility of coherently removing John’s Apocalypse from the taxon “Judaism” and creating a taxon “Christianity” on the same level. The next task, then, is to examine the narrative that usually accompanies the category “Christianity” and to develop an analysis of the effects of that narrative on the interpretation of the Apocalypse of John.

(continued)

doctrines” that “describe the essentials of the Christian religion” (317). His explicit “presupposition” that all the authors of the New Testament “have explicitly rejected the traditional religions of Judaism and Paganism” (316) is foundational to his understanding of Paul’s ancillary objective in Romans as defining the Christian religion. It is a shaky foundation. Betz nevertheless calls Paul a “Christian Jew” (323).

I owe this formulation to Martha Himmelfarb (oral communication, 15 April 1995).
Previously, I have considered the term “Christian” in interpretations of the Apocalypse in its roles as a semantic element and as a taxonomic differentia; this chapter focuses on the narrative function of the term. The very use of the term “Christian” inscribes the Apocalypse in the canonical narrative of a world religion spanning continents and millennia. Critically and programatically, Roland Barthes and Jean-François Lyotard have examined the legitimating functions of narrative modes of knowledge. Even if—even though—no escape from the broad circularity of narrative is possible, understanding the function of the term “Christian” in the interpretation of the Apocalypse requires explication of the narrative into which the document is inscribed by the use of the term. In contrast to the skeptical narrative of the development of the term “Christian” implied by the analyses in chapter 7 and in contradiction to the objects of suspicion articulated in chapter 3, the narratives of “Christianity” into which interpreters inscribe the Apocalypse are Christian narratives in which Christianity falls from a *topos noetos*, landing on the earth fresh from the heavens. The result is an Apocalypse that cannot be conceived apart from Christianity in spite of any historical-critical arguments to the contrary.

1. The Great Collective Story

For the past thirty or forty years, scholars of philosophy, language, and culture have become acutely aware of the problematic and foundational

---

1 Here there is an analogy on a broad syntactic level to the circle of semiosis usually conceived on a lexical/semantic level.
function of narrative in culture. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century studies of myth and the function of myth in "other" cultures realized such a foundational role but commonly assumed that elite Western culture could be founded on more reasonable principles. Barthes's series of essays in the French popular press, later gathered under the heading *Mythologies*, undertook to parse Western popular and consumer culture as instantiations and sometimes transformations of myths (i.e., narratives) that legitimated the dominant institutions, boundaries, and values of Western culture. Barthes offers several characterizations of mythology: myth is "a metalanguage" that makes individual utterances intelligible within a broader culture and ideology (1973: 115); myth is arbitrary, like an ideograph, in that it works by selection and that this selection is ideological (127); myth is that which "transforms history into nature" (129). Each of these definitions could characterize the application of the term "Christian" to the Apocalypse: the term locates the Apocalypse in a religious phenomenon extending culturally, geographically, and chronologically beyond the text; its application is arbitrary—that is, a matter of responsibility—inasmuch as it does not demonstrably derive from the usage of the community or document under study; the term appears "natural" for the Apocalypse, as is clear from the utter lack of attention to its application by scholars, but it is undoubtably historical. The confusion of historical origins and development with an idea of nature or essence hides the activity and effects involved in naming the Apocalypse "Christian" and in writing its history within the larger Christian myth.

Lyotard (1984) developed the term "metanarrative" to refer to the combination of speech modes (denotative, interrogative, prescriptive, etc.) that provide legitimation for particular realms of discourse, such as science, aesthetics, and ethics. Writing in a more philosophical mode than Barthes in *Mythologies*, Lyotard extends Barthes's critical apparatus by "drilling down" on the topic of legitimation in order to undercut the possibility of a universal metanarrative (as in traditional societies) or a universal inter-

---

2 Here "other" largely means not well-educated in the traditions of the Enlightenment.

3 Cf. "Myth is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things: in it things lose the memory that they once were made" (Barthes 1973: 142).

4 "In passing from history to nature, myth acts economically: it abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences, it does away with all dialectics" continued
interpreting subject community (as in Habermas). The result is that all meta-
narratives are local. Lyotard writes:

The recognition of the heteromorphous nature of language games is the
first step in that direction [of freeing justice from universal con-
sensus] . . . . The second step is the principle that any consensus on the
rules defining a game and the "moves" playable within it must be local,
in other words, agreed on by the present players and subject to eventual
cancellation. This orientation then favors a multiplicity of finite meta-
arguments, by which I mean argumentation that concerns meta-
prescriptives and is limited in space and time. (1984: 66)

Such a local consensus is critical to the study of religion. The conflict in the
study of the Apocalypse is between the broad principles of historical
criticism and Christianity's narrative of its own development.

In spite of Jameson's commitment to the study of the "historicity of the
concepts and categories by which we attempt to understand" (1981: 9), he
seeks in his own foreword to The Postmodern Condition to exchange
Lyotard's dissolution of universal metanarratives for sublimation of those
narratives into what he calls, at great length, the "political unconscious"
(1984: xxii). In his own work of that name, Jameson expresses this com-
mitment more directly: "These matters [historical events] can recover
their urgency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a single
great collective story" (1981: 19). For Jameson, the great collective story is
the Marxist struggle "to wrest a realm of Freedom from a realm of
Necessity" (1981: 19). With Christian rather than Marxist presuppositions,
contemporary exegetes recover the relevance of the Apocalypse by
retelling it "within the unity of a single great collective story," though that
story is Christianity rather than Marxism.5 This is Barthes's metalanguage or
Lyotard's metanarrative made explicit in Jameson as allegory. At the same
time as he critiques the traditional metanarratives of Western culture and
supports Lyotard's analysis, Jameson exemplifies the relentless temptation to
universalize foundational narratives.6

5 A glance at the purple foreword to Charles's commentary on the Apocalypse of John
exemplifies the power of the Christian metanarrative.
6 Mieke Bal sees a "drive to coherence" in a semiotic framework similar to that which
Jameson and Lyotard articulate for a narrative ideological analysis: "Coherence is a
continued
No longer are scholarly lives of Jesus written along the plot line given in the Apostles’ Creed: “Conceived by the holy ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.” This narrative clearly serves theological rather than historiographic purposes. Similarly, the Johannine Prologue forms a foundational narrative for the broader purposes of the Gospel of John; the bulk of that gospel works out in detail the descent, work, and return of the saviour. Eusebius recognizes the value of John’s prologue and makes it a foundation of the first major pillar in his metanarrative. For Eusebius, the history of the Christian church is comprehensible on the basis of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ (EH 1.2), of the preparatory work of God in the history of Israel (1.2-3), and of a “new race” of Christians that appeared with the advent of the saviour. This third pillar—the beginnings of Christianity and its distinction from Judaism pushed as early as possible—shows up clearly in Eusebius’s description of the martyrdom of Stephen: “On the martyrdom of Stephen there arose the first and the greatest persecution of the church in Jerusalem by the Jews” (2.1.8). Distinction from Judaism and a robust Christian identity (εκκλησία is always, for Eusebius, a Christian assembly) are, for Eusebius, unambiguous from at least the mid-thirties of the first century. The combination of the first two pillars of Eusebius’s narrative—the pre-existence of Christ and the work of God in the history and prehistory of Israel—pushes the genesis of Christianity at least back to Abraham. In a remark similar to Justin’s concerning Socrates, Eusebius suggests that Abraham, or even Adam, is rightly understood as a Christian: “If the line be

——— (continued)
traced back from Abraham to the first man, anyone who should describe those who have attained a good testimony for righteousness, as Christians in fact if not in name, would not shoot wide of the truth” (1.4.6). The broadest strokes of Eusebius’s narrative of the history of the church from Adam to Jesus to Constantine—preparation, intervention, and realization—thoroughly compromise historical-critical understanding of the development of Judaism and Christianity in the Roman Empire.

The Eusebian metanarrative is by no means a thing of the past. Various samples from twentieth-century scholarship on Judaism and Christianity in the Roman Empire exemplify its critical elements. Paul Tillich’s History of Christian Thought begins explicitly with a discussion of the “preparation” for Christianity in Pagan and Jewish contexts in matters of philosophical development (1968: 1-16). And he sees the beginnings of Christianity’s defining characteristics in Jesus’ vigorous attacks on the legalism of the Pharisees (1968: 12). Tillich’s teleology of the Roman Empire is eerily similar to that of Eusebius (EH 1.2.22-23); his account of the “preparation” for Christianity combines the first two Eusebian pillars. The third pillar—early distinction from Judaism—is seen throughout scholarship on the period in the unargued application of the term “Christian” to Paul, Peter, Stephen, and so forth.

These tropes of twentieth-century scholarship stand as a bridge between the core of the Eusebian myth and Lyotard’s broadest formulations of the legitimating metanarratives of Western culture—the realization of the Idea and the attainment of Freedom (Lyotard 1984: 31-37; cf. Jameson 1984: ix-x). Tillich (and Charles) portrays the Roman Empire and the history of Israel as God’s preparation for the realization of God’s primal idea: the Messiah, the Logos. The chronology and teleology borne in the now rare term Spätjudentum encodes the Christian idea/fiction/polemic of emancipation from the supposed yoke of the Jewish law. The tendency of these conceptions to extend back to the mind of God or forward from the life of Jesus to a presumed eclipse of Judaism remains a consistent impediment to historical understanding.

9 πάντας δή έκείνους επί δικαιοσύνη μεμαρτυρημένους, εξ αυτού Αβραάμ επί τον πρώτον άνθρωπον, έργω Χριστιανούς, ει και μη δυνάματι, προσειπών τις ουκ άν έκτός βάλοι της άληθείας.
Barthes demonstrates the legitimating power of myth, Lyotard destabilizes the universal context, and Jameson articulates the simultaneous necessity for context. Without assenting to Jameson’s attempt to recover the universal through a retooled Marxism, we can see that legitimation is a local endeavour and that there is no action or axiom that can guarantee an infinite horizon of legitimation. This admits the possibility that the Christian metanarrative and the historical-critical endeavour (whose legitimating narrative remains to be succinctly articulated) will not coincide. Although neither necessarily delegitimizes the other within every context of discourse, the Christian metanarrative compromises the attempt to understand the Apocalypse within a historical-critical community of discourse.


Interpreters of the Apocalypse rarely set out to write a story of Christianity even when they set out to write the Apocalypse within the great collective story of Christianity. Schüssler Fiorenza, Yarbro Collins, and Thompson each leave hints of the Christian story within which they set the Apocalypse, and in each case Christianity is something that comes into being in the period between Jesus and Paul. By the time the earliest documents gathered into the New Testament—namely, the letters of Paul—are written, Christianity is apparently on the scene and justified by the veneration of the name “Christ.” This “Christianity” gathers materials about Jesus and Christ into a great collective story and looks forward to its future of dominance in the Gentile world. Each of these interpreters of the Apocalypse have their own particular take on the Christian story within which they set John’s vision and John’s community.

Schüssler Fiorenza is clearly the most hermeneutically reflective of the major commentators. In her earlier work, In Memory of Her, she makes clear the “master-code” that governs her work. She writes within a “feminist theological hermeneutics having as its canon the liberation of women from oppressive patriarchal texts, structures, institutions, and values” (1983: 33). Such forthrightness is admirable and so is such a canon. One of the persistent struggles of her work, which she has faced squarely, is the potential for the coincidence of a narrative of liberation from patriarchy with a narrative of liberation from Judaism. Schüssler Fiorenza has striven to distinguish these narratives and to distance hers from the latter, but her view of the early distinctiveness of Christianity makes matters perhaps more
difficult than they need be. Her commentary on the Apocalypse exemplifies the view of Christianity that contributes to the very problems of incipient anti-Semitism from which she so assiduously works to distance herself. In her distinctive concern with reconciling the Apocalypse and Paul, Schüssler Fiorenza suggests that it was the “author’s intention” to write a Pauline-style letter to the seven churches of Asia Minor (1991: 23) and that “as prophetic messages, they [the seven messages of Rev 2-3] address the whole church in Asia Minor” (53). The dominance of Paul and the unification of scattered assemblies into the church mimics the consolidating fictions of the deuteropaulines that transformed Paul’s own discussion of plural assemblies into a singular cosmic entity, the church. The assimilation of the Apocalypse into the potentially anachronistic genre of the Pauline letter—the Apocalypse of John may predate any of the Pauline pseudepigraphy—is possible largely because the grounds of literary comparison in Schüssler Fiorenza’s commentary are, for the most part, the “common testament” (23) and the post-Pauline Christian literature. When Jews of the Second Temple period apparently leave the stage, the Apocalypse looks perhaps a little more Pauline, but only because Paul is the pre-eminent Jewish writer left on the stage. This exit of Judaism is clear in Schüssler Fiorenza’s discussion of liturgy in the Apocalypse: “They [heavenly liturgies] do not have liturgical, but political-theological functions. Since Roman political power was ratified in cultic terms, the symbolic universe of Revelation must appropriate cultic symbols in order to draw its audience away from the magnificent symbols and cultic drama of the imperial cult” (122). This is quite helpful in understanding the role of liturgy within the Apocalypse, but Schüssler Fiorenza’s conception of Christianity creates the need for the caveat that follows directly: “Yet such an appeal to cultic imagination was difficult, since Christians had no cultic institutions—neither priests, nor sacrifices, nor temples. John, therefore had to derive his cultic language and symbolism not only from the traditional temple cult of Israel, but also from cultic celebrations which were popular in Asia Minor” (122-23). This is the tabula rasa theory of Christian origins. There is no reason to suppose that the transition from Jewish practice to a distinct and differentiated Christian practice was an ending, an empty rest, followed by a Christian cultic life. It is quite unlikely that the practice of an emerging religion was without cultic dimension, even if it was without widespread uniformity. It is not like wearing black and enacting a desexualized identity for a year (more or less)
after the death of a spouse, followed by renewed sexual activity. Given John's association of negatively evaluated cult with sexual immorality, it seems that Schüssler Fiorenza has taken his idea and transferred it to the separation of Christianity and Judaism and then transferred that back to the Apocalypse. The whole narrative of Christian development implied by Schüssler Fiorenza's caveat only makes sense when Judaism disappears from the stage with the arrival of Christianity and all that's left of it is the "traditional temple cult of Israel" known from the Hebrew Bible. The result is a Christianity that arises almost ex nihilo after the appearance of Paul. Schüssler Fiorenza's applications of the term "Christian" clearly imply that the emergence of Christianity begins with, perhaps even before, the work of Paul (121-33).

Discussing the distinction between Jews and Christians that she sees operating in the Apocalypse, Schüssler Fiorenza adds an economic dimension to the criterion of beliefs about Jesus. She describes the conflict that leads to the accusation that the enemies of John are a synagogue of Satan as a conflict "of honor and legitimacy" (1991: 136). Her reading, insulated by "may" and "might," is that rich or prosperous Jews withheld legitimation from "those who were poor and had little power but much messianic fervor." These are the ideal Christians. In the constellation of values that constitute the universe of Schüssler Fiorenza's interpretation, this opposition poor/rich corresponds directly to good/bad and Christian/Jew. The Jews in Schüssler Fiorenza's narrative are parsimonious rich Jews who hold down their Christian (Schüssler Fiorenza's term, passim) neighbours whenever they can. Schüssler Fiorenza goes on to correlate a positive view of the Empire with Jew in distinction to a correlation of resistance to the Empire with Christian, but neglects the contradiction between this and her description of the "Christians" Paul and "Jezebel." She also takes pains to note that John's accusations were not made within the same set of power relations that enabled the horrors of later Christian anti-Semitism. In contrast, Thompson's investigations into the social situations of John's followers in Asia Minor offers detailed refutation of the idea that their situation should be understood in terms of notable poverty or powerlessness (1990a: 186-97). The broad sweep of Schüssler Fiorenza's implied narrative of the growth of Christianity creates stereotyped oppositions that actually impede historical-critical endeavours.
Like Schüssler Fiorenza, Yarbro Collins locates “Christianity” before Paul: “Early Christian prophecy was evidently very widely spread by Paul’s time” (1984a: 49). Her discussion of the small-scale social pressures amplified by plausible perceptions of crisis to which she understands the Apocalypse to be responding articulates a narrative of Christianity before John’s writing: “Roman magistrates were often brought in to arbitrate these social conflicts [competition over scarce resources]. They increasingly looked with disfavor upon Christians and condemned their endurance as stubborn disobedience” (99, emphasis added). Though there is little or no evidence for these conflicts before the Apocalypse, Yarbro Collins’s use of “increasingly” and “often” implies a narrative structure drawn largely from Acts. The motif of being “flogged in the synagogues” (Matt 10:17; Mark 13:9; Luke 12:11; 21:12) occurs in the synoptic tradition, and there need be no doubt that the movements surrounding Jesus sometimes or often caused conflicts that resulted in censure by more powerful parties within the local synagogue. This does not, however, justify the division of the groups into Jews and Christians. Yarbro Collins’s use of “Christian” for the pre-Pauline period and her description of relations with the Roman Empire lends Christianity that which Eusebius knew was of utmost legitimating importance: antiquity.

Two other motifs characterize Yarbro Collins’s narrative of Christianity: an early tendency toward orthodoxy and an equation with Judaism that not only artificially ages Christianity, but also underplays the antiquity and continuity of Judaism. The tendency toward orthodoxy appears in her practice of lending the name “Christian” to John and Paul while never applying it directly to the groups that she discusses within Christianity as the Nicolaitans or as the followers of Balaam and Jezebel (1984a: 87). It shows up clearly in her discussion of “conflict with Gentiles,” in which “Christian” functions as a marker and creator of orthodoxy. After introducing the section with remarks on how hated and exclusive Christians were, Yarbro Collins goes on to describe the relations with Pagan cult and culture implied for the Nicolaitans, the followers of “Jezebel” and of “Balaam”: openness, flexibility, membership in guilds. She characterizes this as a reaction to Gentile and Jewish antipathy, but there is no reason to suggest that this was not an initial position of these groups (as well as of many Jews in antiquity). Though certainly recognizing that the Nicolaitans, the followers of “Jezebel” and “Balaam,” are within the movement that she organizes as Christianity,
Yarbro Collins only directly applies the name "Christian" to the audience of John and retains John's polemical names for the people who offer a different response to the wider culture of the Empire. The second motif, the juvenilization of Judaism, is clearest in her article "Vilification and Self-Definition." She writes: "In the first century, Christianity and Judaism were young siblings, struggling to gain recognition and to shape an identity or to maintain them. Today they have the opportunity to relate as adult siblings, respecting difference and rejoicing in a common origin" (1986: 320). As I have indicated, it is not clear in what sense Christianity existed in the first century. On the other hand, Judaism was centuries old, even if reckoned from the return from the exile, and older still if one credits the continuity with the religion of Israel that appeared so natural to Jews and Pagans at the beginning of the millennium. Judaism of the first century faced fateful changes, but it was not a young religion in any sense, and certainly not in such a way as to facilitate comparison in age with the Christianity of the first or second century. Aging Christianity and hiding the age of Judaism serves primarily Christian interests.10

Like Yarbro Collins and Schüssler Fiorenza, Thompson implies that Paul was a Christian (1990a: 116-17). He describes Apollos as a "learned (logios) Alexandrian Jew" and "another Christian convert from Judaism" (18, emphasis added). Likewise, the people who hosted Paul are "Christians" (148). In an excursus within a reflection on traditions regarding Domitian, Thompson mentions Melito of Sardis's argument that Christianity flowered in the reign of Augustus but sides with Tertullian, who Thompson says "links the emergence of Christianity more accurately to the time of Tiberius" (1990a: 137).11 Augustus's reign (31 BCE-14 CE) is indeed a

10 It is, of course, possible to describe Christianity and Judaism as twin siblings (Segal 1986: 1), though this usually involves seeing Judaism proper as not starting until the rabbinic movement's narrative of its own origins in the first century. Certainly the term "Judaism" is older than this (see page 82, below), and the religion of the Second Temple usually receives the designation "Judaism."

11 Thompson is discussing Melito of Sardis, To Atomnus, and Tertullian, Apol. 5. Eusebius records Melito thus: "Our philosophy first grew up among the barbarians, but its full flower came among your nation in the reign of Augustus" (η γαρ καθ’ ημάς φιλοσοφία πρότερον μὲν εν βαρβάροις ήκμασεν, επανθήσασα δὲ τοῖς σοῖς ἔθνεσιν κατὰ τὴν Αὐγούστου. EH 4.26.7). Eusebius also preserves the following comment by Tertullian: "Tiberius, therefore, in whose time the name Christian came into the world . . . " (Τιβέριος οὖν, καθ’ οὗ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ὄνομα εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσελήλυθεν. . . . EH 2.2.6). Tertullian himself writes: continued
problematic date for the start of Christianity, but that of Tiberius (14-37 CE) is scarcely an improvement. Even though Thompson comes close to giving direct consideration to the decisive question of the point at which one should employ the term “Christianity,” he eschews any frank engagement with the question and chooses between two Christian apologists.

Mieke Bal’s comment on Christianity’s myth of Judaism applies also to Christianity’s myth of itself:

Myth succeeds precisely when it passes unperceived, when it goes without saying, when it confirms a position set up as a protection against doubt, when it universalizes history by saying (without saying it), “That’s the way it is.” Myth says this when it narrativises the world, providing it with an origin. It is according to the equations “priority=proof” and “priority=primacy” that myth produces its effects. Christianity’s rewriting of the Hebrew Bible is a veritable tour de force: preserving, but then turning upside down, the initial viewpoint, which was prospective, it has no difficulty in monopolizing the history of the Jewish people, by reading their texts retrospectively as a projection whose realization is situated beyond Judaism, in Christianity. (1991: 44)

The canonical myth of Christianity removes argument and substitutes story. By comparing scholarly metanarratives of the Apocalypse with the theological metanarratives of Eusebius and Acts, I have characterized the myth of Christianity that conditions the study of the Apocalypse. There is, however, a most succinct formulation of the myth that legitimates Christianity—mythic even its earliest extant context—and in a different key characterizes the scholarly attitude toward religious taxonomy. The hymn to Christ telling of the descent and return of Jesus in Phil 2:6-11 reaches its climax stating, “2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 2:11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” It seems as if at the name of Jesus every scholarly knee bows and declares to the glory of God that the document is Christian. What then is the “Christianity” that Thompson, Yarbro Collins, Schüssler Fiorenza, Aune, and others found

“Tiberius accordingly, in whose days the Christian name made its entry into the world . . ..” (Tiberius ergo, cuīus tempore nomen Christianum in saeculum introivit; Apol. 5.2).
their scholarly analyses upon? Semantically, it is a divided notion that slips unstably among incompatible patterns of relationship. As a taxic category, it is undertheorized, lacking appropriate justification across sufficient criteria. As the emblem of a foundational narrative, it is a tale of the descent of the redeemer—and even the redeemed—from a *topos noetos*. In its application to the Apocalypse of John, it is not a historical category, no matter how much erudition it organizes. It lies in a *topos noetos*, insulated from the gaze of scholarly inquiry, not subject to historical investigation, not conditioned by historical forces. The emblems of a mythology accomplish their work in a nearly instantaneous impression so that later retractions or modifications do not undermine their power.12 Here is the power of the word “Christian”; later hedging does not undermine the totalizing signification of that compressed encapsulation of the mythology it names: the Christian mythology.

3. The Difference

The aporias I have sketched in the interpretation of the Apocalypse proceed from the conditions of language that accompany any discussion of the Apocalypse in combination with the particular approach to the Apocalypse that has dominated twentieth-century historical-critical scholarship. This chapter has narrated some of that interaction. All along I have hinted that a different approach to the Apocalypse is possible, one that generates a solution to some of the key passages that have been impassible in previous paradigms. The remainder of this study is dedicated to moving from hint to demonstration, to illustrating and arguing the difference that suspending the category “Christian” and employing the category “Judaism” can make to the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

The difference, formulated negatively, that approaching the Apocalypse as a Christian document makes is that individual passages are incomprehensible without fatal paradox, and a whole document often has to be dismembered to be understood; moreover, the history of Judaism is impoverished by a dearth of documents from Asia Minor and a paucity of

12 “Myth essentially aims at causing an immediate impression—it does not matter if one is later allowed to see through the myth” (Barthes 1973: 130-31).
well-located prophetic activity in the first century. The difference that approaching the Apocalypse as Jewish makes is in movement through the formerly aporetic passages and in freedom to see in higher relief the movements that made up Second Temple Judaism and, in particular, the precursors of Christianity. The task that follows from this possibility is to reflect on the particular categories that are traditionally used in the interpretation of the Apocalypse and to gain both perspective on their application and responsibility for employing them or holding them in abeyance.

13 An alternate strategy for a history of research would have been to chronicle the histories of Judaism that do not make mention of the Apocalypse of John as a Jewish text and to ask how the contours of the Judaism(s) they draw would have differed if the Apocalypse of John had been mixed into the pot. This would have yielded an even greater litany of lack than this chapter has offered. Suffice it to say that Barclay (1996), Boccaccini (1991), Cohen (1987), Collins (1983), Grabbe (1992), Jaffee (1997), Tcherikover (1961), and even the voluminous works of Neusner do not discuss Judaism by including the Apocalypse as a direct (i.e., not to be "mirror read") source.
Every interpretation of the Apocalypse is conditioned by the terms and categories available to and employed by the interpreter. From this there is no escape. The terms and categories employed in a particular reading never proceed strictly and simply from the text, but always form a circle of which the text may be a member. Nor is there any escape from this circular structure. What is available are alternate positions of reading, alternate circles of signification, and alternate purposes of interpretation that can both relativize and enhance each other.

This is, of course, a hermeneutics cut loose from the idea of a univocally correct interpretation. The challenge it faces is to keep the interpretation acceptably tethered to history. Jonathon Culler's formulation that "meaning is context-bound, but context is boundless" (1982: 128) leaves room for a historically responsible interpretation and hints at the operation necessary for the production of meaning: the binding of context. The restricted context in which I intend to produce a persuasive interpretation of the Apocalypse is the academic and historical-critical study of religion. I share with other authors—whether we agree or disagree on particular points of interpretation—the valuation of the immediate surroundings of the author and the initial audience as a primary member in the foundation that supports any historical-critical interpretation of the Apocalypse. Nothing, however, is absolutely fixed, and I proceed as much as possible in my reconstruction and interpretation from the principles I state in chapter 3. I can only invite my colleagues to adopt, even provisionally, these principles and then to contend with me over what results when these principles are applied to the interpretation of the Apocalypse.

My proposal, then, for the analyses that follow is to problematize the application of the terms "Christianity" and "Christian" and of the opposition
church/synagogue to the Apocalypse. Conversely, I want to widen the terms “Judaism,” “Jewish,” “Jew,” and “Christ,” in order to accommodate the Apocalypse. Scholars are quick to say that the Apocalypse proceeds from a Jewish matrix; I argue that it moves within a Jewish matrix. The difference is full of meaning.

1. Christian, Christianity (χριστιανός, χριστιανισμός)

Several types of difficulty attend upon efforts to locate the term “Christian” (χριστιανός) in the ancient world. Chronologically, it is not clear whether the word should be located at its first surviving literary occurrences between 90 and 110 CE or, trusting in the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, in the early forties of the first century (Bickermann 1949).1 Paralleling this chronological concern, the mere occurrence of the term says nothing about its distribution and function. For individual geographical, sociological,  

1 “Christianity” (χριστιανισμός-christianismus) is quite certainly a later term than “Christian” (χριστιανός-christianus). See Ign. Rom. 3.3; Ign. Phld. 6.1; Ign. Magn. 10.1,3; Mart. Pol. 10.1 for the earliest instances. Regarding χριστιανός, Erik Peterson believes that it was the staff of the Roman governor that applied the name χριστιανός to the students of Jesus in Antioch (1946). Elias Bickermann suggests that the narrative of Acts 11:26 is basically reliable and that the community at Antioch actively assumed the name χριστιανόι around 40 CE (1949). J. Moreau largely concurs with Bickerman but suggests that the analogy to imperial groups such as the Caesariani is a Christian effort to distinguish themselves from other religious groups which did not use that formation (i.e., there were no Isiainii or Serapiani) (1949-50). Harold B. Mattingly suggests that the name was derisively applied from the outside in the sixties in Antioch in analogy to the Augustiani who were Nero’s troop of laughtrack yes-men (1958). Erik Peterson (again) sees Christianity as a new party within Judaism in Antioch (1959). Glanville Downey simply accepts Acts 11:26 (1961: 275); Walter Grundmann et al. conclude that χριστιανοί replaced μαθηταί at Antioch with Paul and was coined because “the Christians in Antioch were now viewed as a separate society rather than as a sect of the Jewish synagogue” (1974: 537). Baruch Lifshitz takes issue with Bickerman’s vision of the community actively taking on the name χριστιανοί and strives to modify Bickerman’s understanding of the antecedent nomenclature (1962). Justin Taylor understands the narrative of Acts to be an accurate account of the coining of the name χριστιανοί around 39 to 40 CE, but the “Why” in his title, “Why Were the Disciples First Called ‘Christians’ at Antioch?” (1994) illustrates the assumption that “the disciples were first called ‘Christians’ at Antioch.” Taylor understands that one of the purposes of the name was to distinguish Christianity from Judaism and that it was applied first by Latin-fluent Jews (1994: 91). One of the interesting questions in this debate is the precise significance of the use of the -ian ending to form a name for the group in question. Those who lean toward continued
economic, and ethnic locations, the term may have had no historical existence at the time of the Apocalypse. Smoothing over such distinctions is the strength and weakness of any collective name. Because the strength of this name has been employed so extensively (and perhaps exhausted), I study it in its weakness.

The first documentary occurrences of the term “Christian” appear in the early second and perhaps the late first centuries. Acts, Didache, Ignatius, 1 Peter, Pliny the Younger’s 96th letter, Suetonius’s Lives of Nero and Claudius, and Tacitus’s Annals all use the term χριστιανός-christianus. Establishing a firm chronology of these documents is difficult. Acts is almost always the focus of investigations of the term “Christian,” but this is due as much to the setting of its narrative of the genesis of the term as to a firm conviction about the date of Acts. Especially if one is willing to separate Acts from the Gospel of Luke, it seems more likely that Acts is a second-century document, dating anywhere from 100 to 140 CE. Making such an argument comprehensively is a separate project, but I put it out as a proposition of my analysis: Acts may very well be a second-century document. First Peter is also quite difficult to date. John H. Elliot sees a terminus ad quern for 1 Peter in 1 Clement (1992: 276). But although there are similarities and applications of perhaps the same previous materials, a relationship of dependence is not at all clear, nor is the date of 1 Clement. I suggest also that 1 Peter may be a second-century document. Dates for the

(continued)
understanding the Roman authorities as the source of the name emphasize the political understanding (and contempt) of the group that would generate such a name.

2 Acts, Didache, Ignatius, and 1 Peter all write in Greek (χριστιανός), and Pliny, Suetonius, and Tacitus all write in Latin (christianus). The ending of the term in Greek (-ιανός) suggests that it was either coined in Latin and transliterated into Greek or coined in Greek on a Latin model, much in the same way as Ἱρῳδιανοὶ (Mark 3:6; cf. Josephus, Ant. 14.450) or Augustiani (Tacitus, Annals 14.13-15). It seems impossible to decide among these possibilities. I have not included in this study the mention of χριστιανός in Josephus, Ant. 18.3, 3 § 64. I concur with the widespread consensus that it is a later Christian interpolation.


4 Elliot actually specifies 72 to 93 CE as the range of dates for 1 Peter (1982: 87). Elsewhere he suggests 70-90 CE (1976: 254).

5 See, for example, Koester (1982: 294).
Didache range from the first century to the third, but enthusiasm for a first-century date has been waning since the initial excitement of its discovery. The letters of Ignatius are reliably dated to the second century. Around the same time that χριστιανός appears in the above within the Christian historical stream, "christianus" also crops up in a few Pagan occurrences: Pliny in 112 CE, Tacitus around 115 CE, and Suetonius around 120 to 135 CE. The occurrence of the term "Christian" in these works does not, however, indicate that it was available to the writer of the Apocalypse (whether one dates it to 69 or to 96 CE), or that it is an appropriate description of the initial context of the Apocalypse.

Dating the earliest literary occurrences of "Christian" is one matter; reasoning on that basis concerning the usage and oral history of a term is another. This is so even though many of its early occurrences have what one might call a very general "feel," as if the term was not a neologism in any of those contexts; that is, there is no effort to explain the term or to justify the introduction of the term. Most probably it was not new. I suggest, however, that although "Christian" might feel general, the locations in which it appears actually share a common cultural willingness or eagerness to embrace (or at least tolerate) the Roman imperial order and its broad cultural effects. In this they are worlds apart from the Apocalypse of John.

Acts narrates a story of the origin of the term χριστιανός in the forties in Ephesus (Acts 11:26) and also places the term on the lips of Agrippa in Caesarea—several hundred kilometres from Ephesus—(Acts 26:28) at a trial of Paul that bears suspicious similarities to the trial of Jesus narrated in Luke, in which the Jewish people are vilified en masse and thereby distinguished from the followers of Jesus. The trial scene in Acts 25 and 26 is an active tool in Acts' program of depicting a Christianity that properly supersedes Judaism and that is fully compatible with the Roman social order. Luke's deployment of the term "Christian" in his narrative in the first instance (Acts 11:26) serves to give a somewhat honourable colouring to

---

6 Clayton N. Jefford gives an overview of the history of dating the Didache (1989: 16-18) as does Kraft (1992). Jefford hedges on a definitive date but suggests that the main structure was in place by 80 to 120 CE. Kraft suggests a date in the latter half of the second century, preserving some very early "forms of (Jewish-) Christianity" (1965: 76).

7 On the basis of Eusebius (EH 3.36), Ignatius' writing is dated to the period of 110 to 117 CE (Schoedel 1985: 5).
the initial application of "Christian" by outsiders and omits the negative connotations of the name.  

First Peter's use of the term χριστιανός is a particularly intriguing case because of the implicit comparison with the Apocalypse. There are several striking commonalities between 1 Peter and the Apocalypse: 1 Peter (1:7, 14) contains in its text the phrase that is the incipit of Apocalypse—άποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:1); both speak of Jesus as a lamb (1 Pet 1:19; Rev passim) and as a purchase price (by blood) for the protagonist audience of the work (1 Pet 1:18; Rev 5:9); both understand their protagonist community as a priesthood (1 Pet 2:5,9; Rev 5:10); finally, both refer to Rome as "Babylon." More generally, 1 Peter shares with the Apocalypse the resource of the Hebrew Bible (and/or the LXX) and a certain sense of continuity with the Jewish community (seen in the notion of Διάσπορά, 1 Pet 1:1).

It is in this "certain" sense, however, and in their understanding of proper relations with the Roman Empire, that 1 Peter and the Apocalypse differ most significantly. Though a general picture of the social and cultural location of the audience of 1 Peter will necessarily be hypothetical and controversial, I posit an audience composed significantly of former God-fearers. Thus, the author of 1 Peter writes as if his audience is being brought into the people of God, while John writes to a people as if they have always been the people of God. 1 Peter writes to an audience being brought from an association with Judaism, and John, I contend, writes to an audience within Judaism concerning the integration of others who were formerly outsiders. The difference between 1 Peter and the Apocalypse on the matter of proper relation to the Roman Empire and perhaps to Hellenistic culture more

---

8 See Mattingly (1958).
9 Cf. Gal 1:12.
11 The parallel between 1 Pet 2:9 and Rev 5:9 is most striking: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτὸν, βασιλείαν ἱερύτευμα, ἐθνὸς ἅγιον. 1 Pet 2:9a), "and [he] hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth" (καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ἴμων βασιλείαν καὶ ἱερεῖς, καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Rev 5:10).
12 1 Pet 5:13; Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21. Cf 2 Bar; 4 Ezra; Sib. Or. 5.
13 Though 1 Peter is much more inclined to cite the Jewish scriptures (e.g., 1 Pet 1:16, 24-25; 2:6, 7, 8; 3:10-12; 4:18; 5:5), the Apocalypse of John alludes densely without ever citing or quoting.
widely forms their starkest contrast. While 1 Peter advocates almost unquestioned acceptance of the naturalness and goodness of the imperial order,14 the Apocalypse can spare no effort in demonizing it. Perhaps more subtly, 1 Peter’s use of the Haustafeln (1 Pet 2:18-3:7) suggests a conservative appropriation of Hellenistic moral reasoning that totally contradicts the countercultural force of the Apocalypse.

In some ways, this brief look at 1 Peter shows the flexibility and specificity of my argument. Though 1 Peter adopts some Jewish language and narrative resources, its emphasis on the “futility” of religion before Jesus (1 Pet 1.18), its thoroughgoing acceptance of imperial structures, and its forthright adoption of Hellenistic moral systems all suggest a great measure of difference from the social, cultural, and political environment and life of the Apocalypse. For this reason, the “Christian” of 1 Peter may designate a distinct religion in 1 Peter, namely Christianity, but the term alone does not bear all the weight. The similarities between 1 Peter and the Apocalypse in the matter of tradition-materials need not extend that religious designation to the Apocalypse.

Ignatius’s use of the term “Christian” and his attitude to the wider Roman world is complex but does not display any particularly countercultural stance.15 It is difficult to specify the political position of the Didache, which uses the term “Christian” quite nonchalantly, but there is certainly no sense of tension with the world in any part of it. The ethics espoused by the “two ways” section is generally passive with regard to authorities (in sharp contrast to the Apocalypse). Neither of these documents show any signs of a significantly Jewish social milieu at the point of their final redaction.

14 “Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to the governors as sent by him to punish those who do wrong” (Υποτάγητε πάση ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσει εἰς βασιλεῖ ὡς ὑπερέχοντι, εἰς ἁγιόσαν ὡς δὲ αὐτοῦ πεμπομένοις εἰς ἐκδίκησιν κακοποιῶν ἐπαινόν δὲ ἄγαθοποιῶν. 1 Pet 2:13-14); “Honour all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the emperor” (πάντας τιμήσατε, τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἀγαπάτε, τὸν θεόν φοβεῖσθε, τὸν βασιλέα τιμᾶτε. 1 Pet 2:17).

15 Schoedel discusses Ignatius’s lack of discomfort with “the world” on one hand and his definite vision of Rome as the place where he will be tested and martyred on the other (1985: 14-15). While Ignatius does, to some degree, position himself against Rome in his letter to the Roman assemblies, there is no broad anti-Roman message in his writings.
The earliest Latin occurrences of "christianus" are in Tacitus, Pliny, and Suetonius. Tacitus, describing the efforts to quell rumours that Nero was responsible for the fire of 64 CE, mentions the group that Nero found as scapegoats: the Christianos, followers of one called "Christus" who was executed under Pontius Pilate (Annals 15.44). Nevertheless, it seems that Tacitus had in mind followers of Jesus of Nazareth, even if he is slightly misinformed about their name. His further description of the followers of Christus repeats the anti-Semitic cliché of misanthropy that Tacitus uses in his direct discussions of Judaism. The fragmentary remains of Tacitus’s Histories also mention the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem “in order” to destroy the religion of the Jews and Christians. Suetonius makes a brief mention of Christiani as a group put down under Nero (between sweetmongers and charioteers; Nero 16.2) and mentions an action by Claudius that is commonly thought of as a reference to Christians: "Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit" (Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he [Claudius] expelled them from Rome; Claudius 25.4). Suetonius writes a similar story and similar misinformation to those of Tacitus. Pliny’s correspondence with Trajan (Letter 96) is the most extensive of the early Pagan discussions of Christians and suggests a well-developed concept as well as some image on Trajan’s part of what Christians are. On one hand, these Pagan witnesses demonstrate a broadly functional idea of Christians among Roman aristocrats of the early second century. On the other hand, the picture is frequently conditioned by misunderstandings of nomenclature as well as by anti-Semitic stereotypes circulating in the Roman world. The association of followers of Chrestus/Christus with the objects of Nero’s temper is provocative, but it does not coincide with any ability to distinguish those followers from or within Judaism (except in the historian’s retrospect), nor does it move the concept outside the orbit of a small selection of the Roman elite.

16 The oldest manuscripts actually mention Chrestianos, followers of one called Chrestus. See Fuchs (1958).
17 Frag. 2 in Tacitus (1925-31: 3.220-21), drawn from Sulpicius Severus, Chron. 2.30.6.
18 It must be remembered, however, that these three Roman witnesses do not represent any particularly wide distribution of the term; they were all personally acquainted as friends and colleagues, even if Suetonius was definitely the junior.
The design of these observations on the earliest surviving usages of "Christianity-χριστιανισμός-christianus" is to make culpable that which looks natural and necessary. I draw attention to the distinct probability that there is no direct first-century witness to the term "Christianity" by emphasizing the local characteristics of the second-century usage (in circles with positive relations with or attitudes to the Roman government and with very little or no ethnic Jewish membership). An analogy from the gospels of Matthew and Luke might illustrate my contention: The presence of ἰασὶν in Matt 23:7 does not found a convincing argument that the rabbinic movement was afoot at the time of the historical Jesus. Either the author of Matthew added it to Q 11:43 or the author of Luke deleted it. In any case, the presence of the term in a narrative concerning the thirties does not imply a distinct social movement such that one could discuss the Rabbis in synchronic comparison with the Essenes or the Sadducees. Similarly, the term "Christian" cannot be universalized for the movements surrounding, or merely including, Jesus (in, for example, 110 CE, much less in the previous century). Furthermore, the usages outside of Acts do not justify the distinction from Judaism that the usage of the term in scholarship on "early Christianity" commonly includes.

What then is involved in the application of the term "Christian" to the Apocalypse? Instead of enumerating historical propositions, I would suggest more generally that the application of the term "Christian" to first-century phenomena involves a belief in "the effective presence of a goal in the steps that lead to it." "Christianity" applied to first-century phenomena is a Christianity located in a topos noetos and unbounded by questions of social distinction, native usage, or class conditioning. Because of the restricted social locations and the late dates of the surviving occurrences, the ancient usage is not sufficient justification for the wide application of the term to the first-century historemes that are within the tradition stream of second-century and later Christianity. Though the term may feel general, it is not. Its usage suggests that only a relatively restricted slice of the movements within (and, by the second century, occasionally without) Judaism is its object, applied by both outsiders and insiders.

19 Kloppenborg indicates his judgement that Matt 23:7 has "little or no probability of an origin in Q" (1988: 113).
20 Derrida (1985: 116), criticizing such a conception.
2. Christ (Χριστός)

The role of the term χριστός in the Apocalypse is properly the province of later chapters, but to hint briefly at my argument, I must say that the place of Christ in the logic of resolution that the author of the Apocalypse applies to the problems or exigences that he faces is not necessarily characteristic of the problems themselves. Thus, “Christ” is not necessarily a locus of social conflict and differentiation, but a topos noetos to which the author frequently repairs in the construction of his argument. Though presumably his audience shared this commitment to the topos noetos of Lamb/Jesus/Christ, it is not a sufficient characteristic to define their group identity as “Christian.”

Though the term “Christian” is absent from the Apocalypse, χριστός makes frequent appearance and plays an important role in the text. I wish to suggest that discussion of a Christ is not sufficiently distinguishing to justify consideration of the Apocalypse as a document separate from Judaism. The heritage of the term χριστός used for Jesus of Nazareth descends in two lines: from the Greek χρίω, χρίσμα, χριστός and from the Hebrew נְשָׁה, נְשָׁף. The endeavour to trace the history and action of these terms necessarily involves an imprecise passage between “term” and “concept” in which the relevant borders and contours of the territory are always in danger of being defined in a particularly Christian manner. In the Greek-speaking world, χρίω meant “to rub,” or “to anoint” and the adjectival form χριστός had no native connotation of a cosmically significant figure, but only meant “rubbed” or “anointed.” The LSJ definitions

21 Though the words χρίω, χρίσμα, χριστός and נְשָׁה, נְשָׁף are certainly older than the Apocalypse of John, there is significant debate on when the concept of a messiah-figure of broad religious expectation arose. Recently, John J. Collins has seen an incipient messianism in the royal ideology of Israel, which was in large measure dormant from the exile until the Hasmonean monarchy (with possible exceptions in the Persian period); Collins’s larger project in his 1995 work is to develop a case for messianic expectation as a widely distributed—though not systematic, normative, or ubiquitous—element of Jewish world views at the turn of the era. He provides an extensive bibliography of previous research.

and examples are quite sufficient to describe Greek usages apart from Jewish influences.\(^{23}\)

Within the Hebrew Bible, נֶשֶׁם ("to anoint") and its nominal form נֶשֶׁם ("anointed thing or person") can refer to an anointed high priest, to the altar, to the tabernacle and its vessels, to David and to Saul, and to Cyrus of Persia as liberator appointed/anointed by God.\(^{24}\) In all of the instances cited in note 24, and in most other cases, the LXX uses a form of χρίω or χριστός to translate the Hebrew Bible’s use of נֶשֶׁם or נֶשֶׁם (Grundmann et al. 1974: 510).\(^{25}\) On one hand, this bare lexical evidence is obviously insufficient to locate or describe the place or significance of cosmically significant mediator figures in the Hebrew Bible. On the other hand, the insufficiency itself is instructive in that it should provoke a more phenomenologically determined effort to conceive both the roots of messianic thought in the Hebrew Bible and the sense of the term in the first century.

In addition to the classical locations of a person, usually a king or priest, designated נֶשֶׁם, several texts in the Hebrew Bible have been understood as discussing messianic figures or providing a foundation for later messianic speculation without specifically employing the terms נֶשֶׁם or נֶשֶׁם. How wide an understanding of messianic figures and messianic speculation should inform the delineation of such a set of texts is a matter of scholarly debate and opinion, but even a relatively restricted set would include the vision of the one like a son of man coming on the clouds (Dan 7:13), the oracle of Balaam on the sceptre and the star (Num 24:15-19), the prophecies of a righteous branch from David (Jer 23:5; 33:15) and of a shoot from the stump of Jesse (Isa 11:1), and the various psalms that treat Israelite royalty and enthronement (notably Ps 2:2). Each of these texts is taken up as a

---

\(^{23}\) "χρίω • touch the surface of a body slightly, esp. of the human body, graze, hence, I. rub, anoint with scented unguents or oil, as was done after bathing. • Med., anoint oneself, II. wash with colour, coat, III. wound on the surface, puncture, prick, sting. χριστός • to be rubbed on, used as ointment or salve II. of persons, anointed, ὁ ἐρεσίς ὁ χ.” (LSJ). The subsections of the second definition contain only citations from the LXX and the New Testament.

\(^{24}\) High priest (Lev 4:3, 16; Dan 9:25, 26); altar (Exod 29:36); tabernacle (Exod 40:9-15); Saul (1 Sam 10:1; 26:11); David (2 Sam 19:21); Cyrus (Isa 45:1). This list is by no means complete, and in several of these cases many more examples could be added.

\(^{25}\) Johan Lust offers cautions against assuming a general “messianising” tendency in the LXX (1985).
foundation for speculation on a cosmological deliverer in Second Temple Judaism, including the materials concerning Jesus of Nazareth.26

In the Second Temple period, there are several Jewish documents or groups of documents that explicitly reflect belief in a messiah: the Psalms of Solomon, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, the Similitudes of Enoch, several of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and many of the materials concerning or dedicated to Jesus of Nazareth.27 The patterns of development of thought concerning an anointed figure or figures of cosmological significance during the Second Temple period are not clear in spite of huge scholarly efforts to schematize them.28

In addition to the LXX’s translation of texts from the Hebrew Bible—a massive witness in itself to the availability and utility of the term \(\chiριστός\)—the Psalms of Solomon offer some of the most concrete non-Christian discussions of a \(\chiριστός\). By wide agreement, there is clearly a messiah figure distinct from God but of suprahuman authority and significance (Davenport 1980). Several coincidences with the Messiah of the Apocalypse are noteworthy: the explicit concern for Jerusalem as it is “trampled” by the nations;29 the confluence in a messiah figure of

---

26 On the confluence of these texts in the Second Temple period, see Collins (1995). J. J. M. Roberts takes up these texts, and more, in their context in the Hebrew Bible (1992). For a treatment of the messiah question within apocalyptic literature, see Agus (1983), Hanson (1992), Müller (1972), and Stone (1987), and Villiers (1981). The “Son of Man” image has also occasioned several focused studies; see Collins (1992b), Emerton (1958), Slater (1995), and Yarbro Collins (1992).

27 For the first three of these five groups, see Charlesworth (1979). All of these texts are late within the Second Temple period; see Collins (1995: 29-31) on the possibilities of a messianic movement in the early portion of the Second Temple period, under Persian rule.

28 A continuum of efforts to systematize Jewish messianic expectation might run from the most highly organizing efforts of Emil Schürer et al. (1973-87: 2.488-554) on one end, through a middle ground such as that of Joseph Klausner (1956) and Gershom Scholem (1971), to minimalist positions such as that Marinus de Jonge (1992). Since the projects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has provided much new material for the pursuit of the messiah question in Second Temple Judaism. In addition to Collins (1995), see Brooke (1991), Brownlee (1956-57), Collins (1994), Donaldson (1981), Fitzmeyer (1993), and Puech (1992) on the Qumran corpus.

29 καθαρίσατε Ιερουσαλήμ ἀπὸ ἑθνῶν καταποτοῦντων ἐν ἀπωλείᾳ. ("purify Jerusalem of the nations which trample her down in destruction"; Ps. Sol. 17.22b; Gray 1984); καὶ τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἁγίαν πατήσουσιν μὴν ἔτοιμας τεσσάρακοντα δότο. ("and they [the nations] will trample over the holy city for forty-two months"; Rev 11.2).
subjugating the nations by the word of his mouth and a rod of iron;\textsuperscript{30} the eschatological organization of the people of Israel by tribes followed closely by the Gentiles attending the Lord in the renewed Zion.\textsuperscript{31} This is only the briefest sketch of a relationship that would take a great deal of effort to draw in detail, and certainly the motifs that the Apocalypse shares with the Psalms of Solomon are not held exclusively by those two documents. Nevertheless, the ease and richness of the comparison shows how firmly located within Second Temple Judaism the thought about a \textit{χριστός} contained in the Apocalypse may be.

Similar comparisons could be undertaken with the understanding of the Messiah in other Jewish texts of the Second Temple period. The Apocalypse’s lion messiah who avenges his people against Rome has no parallel in the New Testament but finds one in 4 Ezra.\textsuperscript{32} Looking to the Similitudes of Enoch, the relation of the Son of Man to the Gentiles and to the eschaton in that document is just as illuminating as the materials in the synoptic gospels and more so than than those of the Gospel of John. The evidence within the Christian canon, or even the Christian taxon, is not necessarily the most illuminating for the particular conceptions of a/the messiah in the Apocalypse.

Apart from the Jewish writings that use \textit{χριστός} or \textit{Πρωτόκολλο} within a complex of terms that refer to a messianic figure (referred to above), the two major Jewish writers in Greek—Philo and Josephus—also make oblique reference to messianic figures in an intellectual system and to messianic movements in the social world. Philo does not use the term \textit{χριστός}, but his discussion of Balaam’s oracle (Num 24:7) in Vit. Mos. 1.289-91 suggests a future messianic figure (Borgen 1992: 351-61; Hecht 1987). Here, Philo is interpreting a Hebrew Bible text that was put into the service of messianic

\textsuperscript{30} εν ράβδῳ σιδηρά συντρίψαι πάσαν ὑπόστασιν αὐτῶν, ὀλθερεύσαι θυν παράνομα εν λόγῳ στόματος αὐτοῦ. ("With a rod of iron may he break in pieces all their substance: may he destroy the lawless nations by the word of his mouth"; Pss. Sol. 17.24). και κέκληται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ . . . καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ρομφαία ὀξεία, ινα ἐν αὐτῇ πατάξῃ τὰ θύρα, καὶ αὐτός ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς ἐν ράβδῳ σιδηρᾷ. ("The name by which he is called is the Word of God. . . From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron"; Rev 19:13b,15a).

\textsuperscript{31} Pss. Sol. 17.28-31, 44 and Rev 7:4-8, 14:1-5, and 21:24.

\textsuperscript{32} Rev 5:5; 4 Ezra 11.37-12:1; 12:31-34.
speculation in several other streams of Second Temple Judaism (Collins 1995). Philo was not a Christian, but he did hold some form of messianic interpretation and expectation. Likewise, Josephus negatively describes several social movements in the period from the end of Herod's reign to the end of the Judean War that scholars have frequently characterized as messianic: the followings of Judas the Galilean and of Athronges, of Simon bar Giora and of Theudas the Egyptian Prophet-King. Josephus refrains from using the term χριστός for their leaders. It is widely agreed that Josephus's pro-Roman interests led him to portray in the most negative terms the Judean movements of social banditry that understood their leader to be a king anointed by God, and so the term χριστός, understood positively even by Josephus, was unsuited to his rhetorical objectives. The revolutionaries that Josephus depicts were not Christians, yet they probably did understand themselves as followers of God's anointed king. It is not surprising that these people are not understood as Christians. Instead, it is instructive that a χριστός does not make a Christian.

In his important article "The Use of the Word 'Anointed' in the Time of Jesus," Marinus de Jonge remarks that "we hardly find any occurrence of the absolute use of the term 'the Messiah,' i.e. without a following genitive or possessive pronoun" (1966: 134). He implies, it seems, that an "absolute" use would be the closest comparandum for the Christian use of χριστός. In general this may be so, but the Apocalypse provides two of the very few instances of the term's use within a document in the New Testament collection in which it is followed by a possessive pronoun. At a grammatical level, the constructions κυρίου ημῶν καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ ("the Lord and his Christ"; Rev 11:15) and η βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ημῶν καὶ η ἐξουσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ ("the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ"; Rev 12:10) have their only close parallels in the New Testament or the Apostolic fathers in Acts 3:18 (τόν Χριστόν αὐτοῦ, "his [God's] Christ") and 4:26 (κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, "against the Lord and against his anointed"). The former occurs in a Christian paraphrase of the Hebrew Bible; both occur in Luke's

34 In addition to Acts 3:18 and 4:26, discussed below, Luke 2:26, 9:20, and 23:35 pair Χριστοῦ with the possessives θεοῦ or κυρίου.
narration of the church in Jerusalem. The possessive construction does, however, find very close parallels in the Psalms of Solomon, in 2 Baruch, in 4 Ezra, in the Similitudes of Enoch, and in a messianic text from Qumran. In this case, the very language that the Apocalypse uses to discuss its Christ is best understood in comparison with Jewish texts that do not discuss Jesus of Nazareth.

Even within the Christian canon, the questions posed to John the Baptist (John 1:19-28; cf. Luke 3:15) indicate that the idea of a “Christ” was one that the followers of Jesus knew they could not fully control even if they wanted to. By making John the Baptist deny he was a “Christ,” and by making the question come from the Jews who are not followers of Jesus, the Gospel of John endeavours to gain control over a concept that other groups are using to describe figures other than Jesus.

The scholarly strategies, biases, and concerns for studying the configuration of messianic figures and ideas within Second Temple Judaism have varied widely. In the dominant study of the nineteenth century, Emil Schürer was particularly concerned with systematic thought concerning messiah figures, that is, with messianism. The penchant for systematizing remains in the current revision of Schürer (1973-87). Collins, on the other hand, has emphasized wide sharing and limited variation without any systematic or uniformly progressive character (1995).

The uses to which a position such as that of Collins may be put vary widely. In some contexts of interpretation, the breadth of speculation about messianic figures in Second Temple Judaism is understood teleologically as a

35 ἐτι τοῦ χριστοῦ κυρίου “again of the Lord’s Christ” (Pss. Sol. 18.title); εἰς ἡμέρα ἐκλογῆς ἐν ἀνα[δείξει χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ “for the day of election, at the manifestation of his Christ” (18.5); ὑπὸ ἰδίου παιδείας χριστοῦ κυρίου “under the rod of discipline of the Lord’s Christ” (18.7).
36 “Then will be revealed my Messiah’s kingdom” (2 Bar 39:7); “My messiah will charge him with all is iniquities” (40:1); “The time of my Messiah is come” (72:2); trans. Charles and Brockington (1984).
37 filius meus Christus “my son the Christ” (4 Ezra 7:29); filius meus Jesus “my son Jesus” (7:28) seems to be a Christian gloss. The Syriac and Armenian support “my son the Messiah” and the Ethiopic offers “my Messiah.” See Charlesworth (1979: 203) and the RSV’s notes to 4 Ezra 7:28.
38 “They have denied the Lord of the spirits and his Anointed” (1 En 48.8); “the dominion of his Anointed” (52.4; trans. Knibb 1984).
paratio evangelium, a holy background to a Christian foreground in which Christians, in a new revelation (new covenant, new testament), see clearly what Jews saw through a glass darkly. This apologetic history of messianism is perhaps as old as Christianity itself. The alternative to this apologetic context of interpretation sees the wide sharing and limited variation (Collins 1995: 12) within Second Temple Judaism as the field in which early thinkers about Jesus were players among many.

In this case, speculation about a messianic figure does not differentiate the followers or partisans of Jesus from Jews, but actually identifies them as participants in a Jewish arena of discourse. Although the status of Jesus became a topic of debate and division, the presence of a χριστός is not a significant differentia. It is clear that the Qumran writings that speculate over a messianic figure or figures are not sufficiently differentiated by such speculation to be removed from the category “Judaism.” It is also clear from the scholarly discussion of the Jewish revolutionaries of the first century that scholars do not consider a religious focus on an anointed king—that is, a χριστός or a μακαρίων—warrant for removing a group from the orbit of Judaism. When Akiba supposedly hailed Bar Kochba as the messiah, he did not thereby cease to be Jewish.40 These statements of the obvious bear on discussions of the Apocalypse by cautioning scholars against seeing a χριστός in the document and then portraying Christians as the audience and context of the document.

3. Judaism, Jewish, Jew (Ιουδαϊσμός, Ιουδαίος)

The terms “Judaism,” “Jewish,” and “Jew” (Ιουδαϊσμός, Ιουδαίος) are widely distributed in the ancient world and are increasingly widely construed in contemporary scholarship.41 In contemporary scholarly

40 Jerusalem Talmud, Tanit 4.5, quoted in Agus (1983), Neusner (1984: 95), and Vermes (1973: 134). Peter Schäfer (1980) provides a very cautious examination of whether Akiba actually did refer to Bar Kochba as the messiah. His limited conclusions regarding the historicity of the tradition are valuable, but the existence of the tradition and the fact Akiba that does not cease to be Jewish in the tradition equally support my contention.

41 There is no “debate” about the terms “Judaism,” “Jewish,” and “Jew” (Ιουδαϊσμός, Ιουδαίος) corresponding to the debate outlined in note 1 of this chapter. Ιουδαίος is a transliteration of תוש. The earliest occurrence in Greek is unclear but might be found in Hecataeus of Abdera (c. 500 BCE; Fragments no. 13, 14) referring to τους
discourse, the breadth of the concept "Judaism" is clearest in the proposal to speak of Judaisms in the plural. Turning to the communities and materials covered by that rubric, a remarkable variety of trajectories lie within the Judaisms of the ancient world. On the social axis, one might illustrate their scope by noting the Palestinian triad of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, as well as prophet-centred groups such as the followers of Theudas (Josephus, Ant. 1.97-98) or of John the Baptist, and non-sectarian (for lack of a better term) people such as the "common Jews" described by E. P. Sanders (1992). In the Diaspora, one could point to the range of Jews to which Philo of Alexandria witnesses, the military colonists of Asia Minor and Egypt, and the cosmopolitan communities in Sardis, Aphrodisias, Chersonesus, Cyrene, Stobi, and elsewhere. On the literary axis, works such as the Sibylline Oracles, 4 Ezra, the Damascus Rule, Jubilees, Psalms of Solomon, the Qumran Horoscopes, and Joseph and Aseneth (to name a few) imply a huge diversity of groups within Judaism. In many ways, the potential inclusion of some of the materials gathered into the New Testament in the third century does very little to stretch such a Judaism (or collection of Judaisms). My purpose here is simple: to emphasize for the case of a text usually considered Christian what is quite common in scholarship in Second Temple Judaism, namely, its rich variety.

4. Assembly (Εκκλησία)

Traditionally translated by "church" in the documents possessed by Christianity and by "assembly" or "congregation" in the documents possessed by Judaism, Εκκλησία is frequently used to designate the social structure in which the protagonists of the Apocalypse conduct their communal life. Suspending the traditional Christian translation and using

(continued)

Iουδαϊς. The abstract term Iουδαϊσμός is a Greek coinage that first occurs in 2 Macc 2:21; 8:1, and 14:38 and at the synagogue at Stobi (Lietzmann 1933).


44 See especially Cohen (1999).
“assembly” opens up important interpretive possibilities for the Apocalypse. There is nothing controversial in noting that the term ἐκκλεσία developed initially as the designation of a citizens’ political assembly in the Greek city, with no dominant religious or cultic connotations. In the LXX, ἄνευ is usually rendered by ἐκκλεσία, sometimes designating a religious or cultic assembly, sometimes an assembly without religious connotations. K. L. Schmidt’s TDNT article on ἐκκλεσία provides an able demonstration of how common and how non-religious ἐκκλεσία can be and of how anachronistic it is to understand it as a Christian term (Schmidt 1965).  

Anthony Saldarini takes a more radical view of the term ἐκκλεσία in his study of the Gospel of Matthew, concluding that ἐκκλεσία is there a counterclaim of Judaism in the face of a group that owns the term συναγωγή (1994: 119). I put forth a similar possibility for the Apocalypse. To be sure, ἐκκλεσία may have a different tone, perhaps a slightly more political or civic one, than συναγωγή, but if this is a differentiating characteristic, it is a thoroughly problematic characterization of Christianity vs. Judaism, and we could say, like Justin of Socrates, that the Maccabees were Christians. There is nothing in the usage of ἐκκλεσία in the first century that need connote a Christian gathering as opposed to a Jewish gathering.  

5. Gathering (Συναγωγή)  

The traditional binary complement of “church” is “synagogue.” Though “synagogue” is a transliteration of συναγωγή (“a group led together”), it

---

45 “This [the variety of usage, especially in Acts] leaves us with very little option but the simple rendering ‘assembly’ or ‘gathering’”; (1965: 505). Schmidt suggests that “a widespread, but superficial, view is that ἐκκλεσία is the Christian Church, συναγωγή the Jewish Synagogue. This clear-cut distinction only became normative in later centuries”; (518). In spite of these historical insights, Schmidt’s work—set in a theological dictionary—is beholden to questions driven by deutero-Pauline literature, especially Ephesians, concerning a distinction between the local congregation and the universal Church. Schmidt’s conclusion to the article lines up on one side Paul’s church connected to the primitive community ≈ primitive Christianity ≈ Protestantism and on the other side Speculation on the Cosmic Church ≈ early Catholicism ≈ Roman Catholicism. While works noted below use a church/synagogue distinction to work out Protestant/Catholic conflict, Schmidt uses his historical research in that conflict through a congregation/Church distinction.
functions in English as almost a proper name for a Jewish religious gathering. In antiquity, the term was not particularly Jewish (even if its reference in Rev 2:9 and 3:9 may be), and certainly it did not carry a particular opposition to εκκλησία. In the LXX, συναγωγή usually translates ἡ συναγωγή or, much less frequently, ἡ συναγωγή. Сυναγωγή can denote a gathering with or without religious connection, or even a group viewed negatively. In the literature gathered into the New Testament, it can denote a gathering of other Jews, a gathering of the author’s own community with an allegiance to Jesus Christ, or a gathering without religious connection. Contemporary usage in Judaism displays a similar flexibility. Pagans used συναγωγή for crowds as well as for the meetings of voluntary organizations. The term was used by Jews but not owned by Jews. It was used for religious gatherings, but was not restricted to religious gatherings.

Two examples—one from long before and one from long after John’s Apocalypse—illustrate the interpenetration of the terms εκκλησία and συναγωγή. Proverbs 5:14 (LXX) uses the two as parallels: “I was at the point of utter ruin in the assembled congregation [LXX the assembly, that is, the congregation].” In the fourth century, Epiphanius of Salamis tried to clear up the confusion that seems to adhere to the pair: “for they [the Jewish Christians of the Transjordan] have elders and synagogue governors; but they call their own churches synagogues and not churches” (Pan. 30.18.2).

As Epiphanius illustrates, in the proper context there is no significant difference between the institutions that are called “synagogue” and those that are called “church.” I repeat the suggestion (adapted from Saldarini 1994: 119) that εκκλησία could function as a claim of Jewish status in the face of other groups of Jews who may have laid claim to the term συναγωγή.

46 “The regular assembly or congregation of Jews for religious instruction or worship” (Oxford English Dictionary “Synagogue”). The first occurrence in English (ca. 1175) contrasts it with “church.”
47 See Schrage (1971) for examples of all of these usages.
48 ἔσχατον ἐν παντὶ κακῷ ἐν μέσῳ εκκλησίας καὶ συναγωγῆς.
49 Πρεσβυτερος γὰρ οὗτοι ἔχουσιν καὶ ἀρχισυναγωγοὺς: συναγωγῆς δὲ καλοῦσιν τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ οὕτι ἐκκλησίαν.
I have chosen to examine just a few of the key terms in the interpretation of the Apocalypse—"Christianity," "Christ," "Judaism," "church," and "synagogue"—but it would have been easy to extend the list. "The saints" as a translation of οἱ ἁγιοί, the dense usage of "son of God" in the exegesis of the Apocalypse in comparison to its insignificant occurrence in Rev 2:18, and the integration of "Jesus" and "Christ" in exegesis in comparison to "Jesus" and "Christ" used separately in the text might be the next line of investigation in order to understand the ahistorical qualities of the terms and categories on which the interpretation of the Apocalypse is founded. I address some of these issues in subsequent chapters of this study. The problem with contemporary interpretation is not that it employs anachronistic terms and categories—that is unavoidable, just as a theological dimension of communication might be unavoidable—but that the particular terms and categories are homogenous and un(der)examined. To understand the author and audience of the Apocalypse as "Christian," its communal structure as a "church," and its competitors as a (or even the) "Jewish synagogue" and to construe these as thoroughly natural or immanent to the text unjustifiably closes off important avenues of interpretation.

In many ways, I understand words to be bipedal creatures with one foot in heaven and one foot on the earth. Where chapter 3 treated words in heaven, this chapter has treated words on the ground. Its purpose is to show first how unstable words are if they are standing only in the heavens, and second how slippery the footing is on the ground of the first century for the term "Christianity." Conversely, the terms "Judaism" and "Christ" are firmly founded in the first century apart from Christianity or traditions concerning Jesus. Coming to the Apocalypse with new (understandings of) terms makes it possible to come to terms with the Apocalypse in a new way that addresses the aporias that are undigestable within previous paradigms of interpretation.

Specifically, taking the time to undermine the naturalness of the term "Christian" makes it possible to read Rev 2:9 and 3:9 with a different

---

50 "Jesus Christ" (1:1, 2, 5); "Jesus" (1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10 (2x); 20:4; 22:16, 20, 21); "Christ" (11:15; 12:10; 20:4, 6). All of these are dwarfed by the usage of "Lamb" in the Apocalypse of John.
dividing line in mind than that of Jew or Christian. Similarly, the term "synagogue" in Rev 2:9 and 3:9 need not call up the term ἐκκλησία as a Christian opposite. Relativizing the interpretive category "Christian" makes it possible to read the episode of the 144,000 from Israel (Rev 7:4ff.) or on Zion (Rev 14:1ff.) in the Jew/Gentile binary that those texts place in the foreground rather than in the Christian/non-Christian binary or the Christian/Jew/Pagan triadic structure that is so foreign to the Apocalypse and yet so integral to most interpretations of it. Finally, the opposition between Rome and Jerusalem that is so crucial to the interpretation of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 and so obvious in the Apocalypse as a whole is positioned to exert its proper force on the interpretation of Rev 11 as a tale of two cities: Jerusalem the holy city and Rome the great city. These reflections on the power of interpretive categories (on a theoretical level as well as in studies of particular crucial terms) for the aporetic texts of the Apocalypse and for the work as a whole lay the foundations for my rereadings of those aporetic texts. At this point, the study of the Apocalypse of John itself begins in earnest, with the basic question of its date being the first matter at hand.
DATE: THAT LONG YEAR

It is difficult to date the Apocalypse of John. Arguments in favour of a date during the last part of the reign of Domitian (81-96 CE) are common. Gregory Kraeling Beale (1999), Frederick J. Murphy (1998), and others have presented such arguments recently, but the contours of the current case were basically set in the cogent presentation by Yarbro Collins (1984a). J. Christian Wilson (1993) and Christopher Rowland (1982: 403-12; 1993) have set forth the most recent exposition in favour of a date during or immediately after Nero's reign (54-68 CE). The present discussion has frequent debts to these authors and to their predecessors; for the most part, both sides of the argument make use of the same data. The primary data involved in dating the Apocalypse of John are the seven kings of Rev 17:10, the use of the term “Babylon,” the 666 gematria in Rev 13:18, the episode of the two witnesses, and the testimony of Irenæus that the Apocalypse of John was written during the latter portion of Domitian's reign. The most significant pieces of internal and external evidence that Yarbro Collins adduces in favour of a Domitianic date (“Babylon” and the testimony of Irenæus) in fact have little force in establishing such a date. Irenæus's testimony does not identify its sources or its biases, and earlier Christian writers demonstrate the unfounded bias against Domitian. There is no reason to restrict John's use of the name “Babylon” to the time after the

---

1 It should be noted that Aune's commentary undertakes a detailed and original discussion of the date of the Apocalypse (1997-98: 1.lvi-lxx), but it is dependent on (or interdependent with) his theory of sequential composition (1.cv-cxxxiv). It posits a variety of dates for various portions of the Apocalypse of John, ranging from the reign of Nero to that of Trajan. My discussion of dating works from the position that the Apocalypse should be dated as a unified document and places it neither so early nor so late as Aune does.
Temple had been destroyed and after it had passed through other sources before reaching John. The interpretation of the seven heads as seven kings and the 666 gematria, however, point to Nero and the Nero redivivus/redex myth, as Yarbro Collins herself acknowledges (1984a: 59, 100). The episode of the two witnesses or prophets also points to the context of the Judean War. The external evidence, primarily the testimony of Irenaeus, is not reliable enough to overturn these indicators. The results of these investigations will suggest that the Apocalypse was written in 69 or 70 CE with echoes back to the reign of Nero which set the framing narrative, ("I was on Patmos . . .") in that time.

1. The Role of "Sources"

Several arguments on the date of the Apocalypse are accompanied by (or perhaps even preceded by) a stratification of the Apocalypse into various "sources." The use of "sources" as an explanatory strategy for what may appear as inconsistencies in the Apocalypse usually produces assertions rather than arguments. Even when seemingly disciplined arguments are marshalled, source theories rarely command agreement. The results of such a strategy are seen in the incompatible patchwork visions of the Apocalypse held by Charles (1920), Yarbro Collins (1984a), Ford (1975), and Aune (1997-98). In the hope of avoiding a similarly idiosyncratic vision of the Apocalypse, two criteria will guide the evaluation of interpretations of passages in this study: (1) interpretations that provide a cogent understanding of a text without resorting to positing a source are preferable to those that assign material to an outside source (e.g., a previous apocalypse of which we have no textual evidence, no manuscript evidence, no citations or testimonies) and (2) interpretations which understand source materials as purposefully chosen by the author and integrated into the work as a whole, and therefore as valid witnesses to the character of the work as a whole, are

---

2 Sources do not loom as large in the analyses by Yarbro Collins (see her denial of the importance of sources 1984a: 54). Nevertheless, naming certain texts as having proceeded from sources is a key factor in assigning priorities among evidence used in dating arguments. See, for example, Yarbro Collins (1984a: 65).

3 Ford has apparently revised her earlier views, though this has not yet appeared in print. Ford's Web site announces that "the professor has radically changed her views on the exegesis of Revelation since her Anchor Bible Commentary some twenty-five years ago" (http://www.nd.edu/~jford/Apocalypse/, accessed 1 February 2001).
preferable to those that do not. Avoiding hypothetical source understandings keeps the argument within the realm of shared evidence. The example of the way in which the author of the Apocalypse makes use of the Hebrew Bible should be instructive regarding his use of sources in general. Although John freely integrates ideas and motifs from earlier traditions, he always transforms them and takes ownership of them for his own purposes, so much so that he never directly quotes the Hebrew Bible. Given this example, it is unlikely that there are any other sources woven into the Apocalypse that have not been put into the service of John’s purpose with equal skill.

2. The Seven Kings of the Seven Mountains

17:9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; 17:10 they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes he must remain only a little while. 17:11 As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to perdition. 4

The interpretation in Rev 17:10 of the seven heads of the beast upon which the woman Babylon sits poses an irresistible temptation for most scholars who wish to date the Apocalypse. The temptation is understandable; at this point, the narrator appears to be speaking directly to his audience in order to explain the symbolic meaning of the seven heads. Here, one would think, is discourse that does not require hermeneutic contortions for its interpretation; here, one would think, the narrator (or even the author) is speaking plainly. The multiple scholarly interpretations of this interpretation, however, belie the simplicity that the text promises.

This multiplicity of interpretations stems from varying starting points to count the βασιλείς ("king" or "emperor") of the Roman Empire and from varying criteria for which βασιλείς are worthy of being counted. The most

4 ᾿οδὲ ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἔχων σοφίαν. Αἱ ἐπτὰ κεφαλαὶ ἐπτὰ δρῆ ἔστιν, ὅπου ἡ γυνὴ κάθηται ἐπ’ αὐτῶν. καὶ βασιλείς ἐπτὰ ἔστιν 17:10 οἱ πέντε ἐπέσαν, ὁ εἷς ἔστιν, ὁ ἄλλος ὡσα ἤλθεν, καὶ ὦν ἔλθη ὁ λίγος αὐτὸν δεῖ μεῖναι. 17:11 Καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὁ ἡ καὶ σῦκ ἔστιν, καὶ αὐτὸς διόδος ἔστιν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐπτὰ ἔστιν, καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὅπαγε.
relevant choices to be made are whether to start with Julius Caesar or Augustus and whether to include the three "soldier-emperors": Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. A continuous count starting with Julius Caesar arrives at Nero as the sixth (the one who is) and Galba as the seventh (the other who must remain only a little while). Starting with Augustus, the count produces Nero as the fifth (of those who have fallen), Galba as the sixth (the one who is), and Otho as the seventh (the other who must remain only a little while). The result is that either Nero or Galba is "the one who is" for the narrative present. If the demise of the "one who is" is thought of as an ex eventu prophecy, the historical present of the work is either the last half of 68 CE (Galba) or the first third of 69 CE (Otho). While the arguments for starting with either Julius or Augustus are more complex than convincing, the difference they yield for narrative present and the historical present of the one who is (ὁ εἶς ἐστιν) is a matter of a few months.

In order to arrive at a date in the reign of Domitian, Yarbro Collins starts counting at Caligula, omits Galba, Otho, and Vitellius as insignificant, and arrives at Domitian as the sixth "who is." Without offering any argument, Yarbro Collins deems this "the most likely hypothesis." Albert A. Bell's (1979) study, however, suggests strongly that there is no justification for omitting the three soldier-emperors from any list of emperors. More dubious is starting the count at Caligula.

Another strategy for counting involves seeking a principle of selectivity; R. B. Moerley, for example, places great emphasis on the term ἐπέσαν ("fallen") to suggest that only five emperors had "fallen": Julius Caesar, Gaius, Nero, Galba, and Otho (1992: 385). Like Charles, Yarbro Collins

---

5 Suetonius's Lives of the Caesars starts with Julius Caesar, but Tacitus starts his list of the emperors with Augustus. No list of emperors omits the three soldier-emperors (Wilson 1993: 602). In spite of this, several twentieth-century commentators, including Yarbro Collins (1984a: 64) and Schüssler Fiorenza (1991: 97), choose to omit these three emperors. Aune offers an even more extensive reprise of innovative techniques for counting emperors (1997-98: 2.947-49).

6 Wilson argues against understanding the Apocalypse of John as engaging in ex eventu prophecy in the manner of most pseudepigraphic apocalypses (1993: 603), but this does not treat the possibility of a much smaller scale "backdating" by the author himself.

7 Yarbro Collins offers only the following as a rationale: "Caligula would have been a natural starting point, given the close affinities between Revelation and contemporary Jewish anti-Roman literature and the probable Jewish origin of John" (1984a: 64).

8 By "fallen," Moerley means death by assassination or suicide. Schüssler Fiorenza also seems to think that "fallen" indicates that some emperors are to be included on the list and others are not. Working from an understanding of Trajan as the seventh, she
PARABLES OF THE WAR

(1984a: 63) moves to reduce the importance of Rev 17:10 by attributing it to "a source." This move—justified only by the fact that the text does not fit the historian's conception of it—unfairly reduces the effectiveness of any attempt to make a counter-argument based on the text itself. There is no indication that Rev 17:10 and the surrounding text are any less John's own composition than is the Apocalypse as a whole. Critics' scissors cut notoriously in favour of their own positions, and there seems to be no other reason to reduce the importance or contort the interpretation of Rev 17:10.

While the interpretation of the beasts does not prove to have the "plain" force for dating that its literary setting promises, it does have corroborative force. It is clear that there is no disciplined way to pick and choose among emperors "worth counting" and that starting at Julius or Augustus makes little difference in locating the narrative and historical present of the book. Rev 17:9-11 suggests strongly that the vision narrative is set in the period between June 68 and April 70 CE.

3. The Name "Babylon"

Yarbro Collins considers the use of the name "Babylon" for Rome to be the "clearest internal evidence" for the date of the Apocalypse, a "weighty internal indication" that "points decisively to a date after 70 CE" (1984a: 65). She suggests that the name "Babylon" could have been applied to Rome only after the temple had been destroyed by Titus. While this may be the situation of 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the fifth Sibylline Oracle, there is no reason to believe that John could not apply the name "Babylon" to a power that was in the midst of a war against the Jewish people in Judea and that may have had armies massed around the temple.10 Wilson (1994) has suggested that the name "Babylon" in Second Temple Jewish literature does not refer so much to the destroyer of the temple as to a place or source of exile and oppression and thus does not indicate a date after the destruction

--- (continued) ---

suggests that Caesar, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian are the (five?) emperors that have fallen, that is, who have suffered violent death (1991: 97). Thus, in spite of the violent deaths of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, she too omits them from a count of emperors.

9 Yarbro Collins hypothesizes that John has meaningfully integrated the source into his own composition (1984a: 63), but that it is not a reliable guide to dating the Apocalypse.

10 This was during the portion of the siege after Nero's death, while Vespasian's forces awaited a stable mandate from Rome.
of the city by Titus in 70 CE. In addition to the name "Babylon," and contrary to Yarbro Collins (1984a: 64-69), I would suggest that the names "Sodom" and "Egypt" in Rev 11:8 also apply to Rome. These other, and admittedly less central, names for Rome reduce the need for an extremely close correspondence between the historical roles of Rome and Babylon; "Babylon" is not the only name that John uses for Rome. Yarbro Collins's primary internal evidence has little power to distinguish whether the Apocalypse is set after the beginning or after the end of the Jewish War.

4. The Number of the Beast

13:17: ... so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 13:18 This calls for wisdom: let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number, its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

For reasons similar to those surrounding the interpretation of the seven Kings of Rev 17:10—especially the repeated phrase "this calls for . . . wisdom"—the number of the name of the beast raises expectations that it will point to a historical figure. In spite of the variety of interpretations that were plausible even by the time of Irenaeus, the solution "Nero" is well received by the majority of scholars, including Yarbro Collins. Put briefly, the solution Charles proposes is Nero Caesar = ῬΩΜΑ ΝΕΡΟ = 666, where Ν + Ρ + Ε + Σ = 600, Ο = 60, and Ν = 6 (1913: 27). The possibility of a Greek-Hebrew gematria is enhanced by the enigmatic text in Rev 21:17

11 See Haer. (50.30) for several interpretations, none of which uses the Greek-Hebrew transliteration gematria system employed by Charles's associate, J. A. Smith (Charles 1920: 1.366-67). This solution was also reached independently by four nineteenth-century scholars; see Charles (1913: 47) for discussion.

12 Yarbro Collins does not include the number of the beast in Rev 13:18 in her discussion of the dating of the Apocalypse, but where she does consider it, she agrees with Charles's conclusion that the "number of the name" refers to Nero (Charles 1920: 1.366-67; Yarbro Collins 1983: 59, 100).
that admits of a similar solution. The force of the Nero solution relates more to the narrative setting of the Apocalypse than to the actual historical setting of the author. Nevertheless, Bell has argued persuasively that the Nero redivivus/redux legend was at its height in the few years just after the death of Nero (1979: 98).

5. Testimonies

Though the earliest testimonies to the Apocalypse point to Domitian, they are not particularly early and, contrary to Yarbro Collins's reading (1984a: 56), there is reason to doubt that Irenaeus has accurate information about the date of the Apocalypse. Before Irenaeus, however, was the testimony of Melito of Sardis (through Eusebius, EH 4.26.9). Melito apparently wrote a petition to Marcus Aurelius protesting the persecutions of Nero and Domitian. The import of this is that the distorted notion of persecution under Domitian was current among Christians well before Irenaeus. Yarbro Collins takes Irenaeus's testimony as true because it in no way attributes persecution to or vilifies Domitian (1984a: 56). This is a forceful argument in favour of Irenaeus' testimony, but there are a few mitigating factors.

Most important, though Irenaeus states his opinion on the date without surrounding the pronouncement with any declamation on the terror of

---


15 Aune suggests that the legend would have attained wide currency later in the first century (1997-98: 1.lxi, citing Beckwith 1919: 207). His own extensive excursus on the Nero redivivus/redux legend helpfully details the ancient testimony and the locations of specific Neronic pretenders (737-40). They were concentrated in Asia and have enough public visibility to raise armies as early as 69 CE (738).

16 Charles suggests that this petition may be connected to the commentary on the Apocalypse that Eusebius (EH 4.26.2) lists among Melito's works, and thus Melito may be understood as a witness to a Domitianic date (1920: 1.xcii); this logic would point equally to a Neronic date.

17 Eusebius gives Irenæus's testimony: "But if it had been necessary to announce his name [the name of Domitian as Anti-Christ] plainly at the present time, it would have been spoken by him who saw the apocalypse. For it was not seen long ago but almost in our own time, at the end of the reign of Domitian" (ει δέ έδει άναφανδόν εν τω νυν καιρώ κηρύττεσθαι τόνομα αυτού, δι' έκείνου αν ερρέθη τού και την ἀποκάλυψιν εοράθη, ουδε γάρ πρό πολλού χρόνου κωράθη, ἀλλά σχεδον επι τῆς ήμετέρας γενεάς, πρός τῷ τέλει τῆς Δομετιανοῦ ἀρχῆς. EH 3.18.3).
Domitian, his silence may be explained more felicitously by the discursive circumstances surrounding the pronouncement than by a supposition about his opinion of the reign of Domitian. The statement about the date is set not in the context of describing the original circumstances of the Apocalypse (as Yarbro Collins's discussion of Domitian's testimony might imply), but of an extended meditation on the correct solution to the 666 gematria of Rev 13:18. It is a digression within which one would not expect a further digression on the character of Domitian's reign. The lack of comment on the character of Domitian's reign and of his relations with Christians in Haer. 5.30.3 does not provide information about what did or did not inform Irenæus as he assigned the Apocalypse of John to the reign of Domitian. Second, the proclamation of Melito in Eusebius demonstrates that the idea of a persecution under Domitian was informing Christians' understanding of their own history even before Irenæus. While Irenæus may not have understood Domitian to be a persecuting emperor, such a notion of Domitian may have informed the tradition Irenæus received. Given the topic and genre of Irenæus's testimony and the previous proclamation of Melito, Irenæus's information about the date of the Apocalypse is not reliably free of the mistaken biases created by the notion of a persecution under Domitian. Moreover, Irenæus's information on the first century is, as Yarbro Collins admits, generally unreliable (1984a: 26, 56).

6. Historical Circumstances

It seems that the external factor that was the original impetus for a Domitianic date no longer forms a valid argument in favour of such a date; notions of a "general persecution" in the time of Domitian, or even of an intensified imperial cult under Domitian's direction, have proved untenable. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix's argument that persecution was predominantly local and in response to popular animosity (1963) removes the particular association of persecution with Domitian. Even those who date the Apocalypse to the time of Domitian acknowledge that the historical circumstances of Domitian's reign offer little incentive to date the Apocalypse to that time (Yarbro Collins 1984a: 56).

18 The other side of the testimony coin might be the Old Syriac prefaces and the version of Theophylact, all of which assert that John was banished under Nero (see Wilson 1993: 598 and Charles 1920: 1.xcii).
Christopher Rowland’s contention that the Jewish war of 66 to 70 CE would have provoked many Jews to act in ways that angered John (1982: 410-13) points to a purpose for the work that makes sense of its historical context in 68 to 70 CE. In Rowland’s view, John wrote to dissuade his fellow Jews from participation in the political, economic, and religious systems of the Roman world that he saw as demonic. This is essentially the same argument that Leonard Thompson makes within the context of a Domitianic date, but it provides a more cogent historical rationale for both the assimilation and the anti-assimilation currents. Bell’s (1979) study of the dating of the Apocalypse suggests that the time immediately following the death of Nero was when the sort of speculation about the demise of the Empire that characterizes the Apocalypse would be most probable and most plausible. The historical circumstances surrounding the end of Nero’s reign and the Judean War provide the most suitable context for the writing of the Apocalypse.

7. The Two Witnesses

The episode of the two witnesses in Rev 11 was used by nineteenth-century scholars to assert that the earthly temple must be standing at the time of the command. While an angel’s command in apocalyptic literature is not a reliable guide to historical circumstance, the rationales offered by Yarbro Collins and Charles for disqualifying this text from any argument about the date of the Apocalypse are unsatisfactory. The most prominent argument is that the author is using a source here and therefore the passage does not reflect his circumstances or even his wishes. Chapter 11 offers an interpretation of the command to measure the temple and of the witnesses in the great city that resorts neither to the hypothesis of a source nor to the simplistic reading that assumes that the temple must be standing merely because there has been a command to measure it.

---

19 E.g., Bousset (1896). For others see Charles (1913) and J. A. T. Robinson (1976).
20 While Yarbro Collins’s arguments against a strictly literal and spatial interpretation of μετρέω (1984a: 65) are convincing, the conclusion that Rev 11:1-2 (as well as 11:3-13) was not written while the temple in Jerusalem stood does not follow.
The most significant pieces of internal and external evidence that Yarbro Collins gives in favour of a Domitianic date in fact have little force in establishing such a date. Irenaeus's testimony does not identify its sources or its biases, and earlier Christian writers demonstrate the unfounded bias against Domitian. There is no reason to insist that John's use of the name "Babylon" must have followed the destruction of the temple and have passed through other sources before reaching him. The interpretation of the seven heads as seven kings and the 666 gematria, however, point to Nero and the Nero redivivus/redux myth. The episode of the two witnesses or prophets also points to the context of the Judean War. The external evidence, primarily the testimony of Irenaeus, is not reliable enough to overturn these indicators. The results of these investigations suggest that the Apocalypse was written within the period roughly between the summer of 68 CE and the late spring of 70 CE, with echoes back to the reign of Nero that set the narrative in that time. Coming to a position regarding the date of the Apocalypse of John is, however, only a small part of forming a picture of its context. The next chapter examines the political and social environment that the combination of date, geographical context, and religious provenance suggests.

---

21 Chapter 11 provides the rationale for this assertion.
LOCATION: DIASPORA IN WAR

Turning to the still thornier matter of the social and cultural milieu of the Apocalypse of John, a question moves this chapter forward just as surely as the conditions of evidence threaten to halt it: What was the social and cultural predicament of Jews in the province of Asia during the Judean War of 66 to 74 CE? The conditions of evidence are these: there is no direct evidence—literary, epigraphic, or archaeological—for that specific confluence of time, culture, and location. Given this question and given this constraint, the method of this chapter is analogical rather than deductive, hypothetical rather than probative; it deals in possibility and probability rather than in demonstration and proof. This epistemological condition does not, however, actually differentiate my argument from other reconstructions of the situation that the author and audience of the Apocalypse of John faced. And my conclusions may be articulated in advance of their demonstration: (1) within the Diaspora, during the war in Judea, there were various patterns of intercourse between Jews and Gentiles, ranging from indifference through joint condemnation of the rebels to riots against Diaspora Jews; (2) these various patterns of interaction imply a variety of attitudes and dispositions on the part of Diaspora Jews, for example, comfortable assimilation, sophisticated distinctions among Jews, and resistance to the wider Greco-Roman cultural ensemble; (3) in western Asia Minor, the Apocalypse of John witnesses to a group of Jews undertaking a pattern of resistance to the wider Greco-Roman cultural ensemble.

To sharpen the question: What was the effect on Diaspora Jews of the war in Judea begun by Vespasian under Nero, suspended during the civil strife following Nero’s death and during the brief principates of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, begun again under the Emperor Vespasian, and undertaken directly by his son Titus? Did Diaspora Jews rally, and if so, to what extent,
to the cause of the rebels in Judea or did they distance themselves from the rebellion? Were their relations with their Gentile neighbours strained by the events in Judea? And did this strain proceed from Gentiles’ hostility to Jews over the war or from Jews’ hostility to Gentiles over it? What role, if any, did the Roman government play to stabilize or change patterns of interaction between Jews and non-Jews in the Diaspora during the war? Modern examples of ethnic diasporas facing hostility during international conflict are abundant\(^1\) but are sufficient only to prompt, rather than to answer, historical questions about the ancient world.

To elaborate the conditions of evidence: Josephus provides virtually the only direct witness to the events of the Judean War and the only commentary at all on the Jewish Diaspora during that war. Lester Grabbe remarks with candour that “it is difficult for any history of this [the Judean War] to be anything but some sort of paraphrase of Josephus, however critical one may be of his story” (1992: 2.454). Other Roman historians provide only the most meagre commentary, in many cases possibly dependent on Josephus. The witness of Josephus is of limited direct value, first of all because the obvious exaggerations within his portrayal of the Jewish Diaspora serve his interest of portraying the “mainline” of Judaism as a sensible, pro-Roman movement of good citizens and inhabitants of the Empire. Second, Josephus’s few mentions of the Diaspora focus on Antioch, Alexandria, Damascus, and “beyond the Euphrates,” with no mention of Judaism in Asia Minor.

To sketch the method: I offer a few proposals that might address the biases in Josephus’s record of the Judean War, as well as the scant attention to the Diaspora in all accounts of that conflict. First, I suggest reading Josephus with the possibility in mind that the responses to conflict he portrays do not exhaust the responses enacted in the Diaspora. Second, I recommend reconstructing the situation in the Diaspora with reference to the status of other ethnic diasporas during conflicts with Rome. These proposals make it possible to construct an argument for a Jewish Diaspora in which there was resistance to the Roman government or to the cultural ensemble of the Empire during the Judean War. Reading the Apocalypse of

---

\(^1\) For example, Japanese in North America during the Second World War, Germans in North America during both world wars, the German diaspora in Russia and Ukraine during the Second World War, and Arabs in the U.S. during the Persian Gulf War.
John with these proposals in mind makes it possible to locate precisely in time and place one such pocket of resistance.

1. **Josephus's Diaspora**

Josephus is, of course, the pre-eminent historian of the Judean War. His own direct account of the war, the *Jewish War*, published soon after the end of the conflict, and his later hints of the war in *Jewish Antiquities*, as well as scattered references in *Against Apion* and *Life*, are the only surviving textual accounts from a direct participant in the war. The “direct” dimensions of Josephus’s accounts, which increase their reliability, also, paradoxically, skew his accounts; as a participant who changed allegiances, he was constantly faced with a dual apology: to the Roman aristocratic, specifically Flavian, society into which he entered and also to the Jewish people that he either betrayed (in their view) or tried to save (in his view). With these two skeptical audiences facing him, Josephus attempts to please both of them by portraying the revolt as unrepresentative of Judaism and the brutality of the siege and the virulence of anti-Judaism in various cities of the Empire as uncharacteristic of the Roman Imperium, and specifically the Flavian house.

With these goals in mind, the Diaspora could pose a problem for Josephus; though he would not want to bring attention to otherwise forgotten or overlooked support in the Diaspora for the revolt, he cannot write a plausible history without making mention of widely known conflicts in the Diaspora. Faced with this delicate line to walk, Josephus treats the Diaspora with circumspection and with deliberate efforts to isolate any narrative of conflict in the Diaspora that he is forced to report.

1.1 **Help from “Beyond the Euphrates”**

Josephus begins his history of the Judean War by saying how important that war was for the destiny of the Roman Empire. His exaggeration is obvious, 

---

2 See note on the circumstances of publication, sources, editions, and so forth in Thackeray (1927: 12ff.).

3 “The war of the Jews against the Romans—the greatest not only of the wars of our time, but, so far as accounts have reached us, well nigh of all that ever broke out between cities or nations . . .” (Επειδὴ τὸν Ἰουδαίων πρὸς Ρωμαίους πόλεμον συστάντα μέγιστον οὐ μόνον τῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς, σχεδόν δὲ καὶ ὧν ἀκοῇ παρειλήφθησαμεν ἢ πόλεων πρὸς πόλεις ἢ ἕθνων ἔθνεσι συμφιλεῖσαν. Josephus, *War* 1.1).
but he suggests that the “Jews hoped that all their fellow-countrymen beyond the Euphrates would join them in revolt” (War 1.6). Several factors suggest that this was a plausible, if unfulfilled, hope. Josephus rightly sets the hope for help from beyond the Euphrates in the context of the instability of the Empire in the late sixties with ethnic revolts in Gaul (under Vindex) and in Germany (under Civilis). Just as Roman aristocracies in the late first century might fear aggression from the Parthian Empire “beyond the Euphrates” in a time when significant Roman military resources were devoted to securing the western and northern frontiers, so Jews in Judea might hope for help from the Diaspora outside the Roman Empire.

This theme of potential allies in the Diaspora “beyond the Euphrates” comes up again during Agrippa’s speech of dissuasion before the siege of Jerusalem and in Titus’s speech of rebuke after its capture, as well as in an off-hand reference to the sorry end of Hyrcanus (grandfather of Mariamme, executed in ca. 30 BCE). Moses Aberbach emphasizes that the Parthian invasion of 40 BCE, which briefly held control of Syria and Asia Minor, made a lasting impression on Jews and Romans alike. By straddling the eastern boundary of the Roman Empire, the Jewish Diaspora formed at least a straw threat to the Greco-Roman sense of security, but Josephus, by emphasizing

4 “What allies then do you expect for this war? Will you recruit from the uninhabited wilds? For in the habitable world all are Romans—unless, maybe, the hope of some of you soar beyond the Euphrates and you count on obtaining aid from your kinsmen in Abiaden.” (τίνας οὖν επί τον πόλεμον εκ τῆς ἀοικίητου παραλήψεσθε συμμάχους; οἱ μὲν γὰρ επὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης πάντες εἰσίν Ρωμαῖοι, εἰ μὴ τις ὑπὲρ Εὐφράτην ἐκτείνει τὰς ἑλπίδας καὶ τοὺς εκ τῆς Ἀδιαβηνῆς ομοφύλους οἶεται προσαμυνεῖν. Josephus, War 2.388).

5 “When the Empire found refuge in us, when throughout its length was universal tranquillity, and foreign nations were sending embassies of congratulations, once again the Jews were in arms. There were embassies from you to your friends beyond the Euphrates fostering revolt” (προσφυγούσης γούν ἡμῖν τῆς ἡγεμονίας, καὶ τῶν μὲν κατὰ ταῦτην ἡμερομίσθων πάντων, προσβεβεβεμένων δὲ καὶ συνε- δομένων τῶν ἐξωθεν εὐθύνων, πάλιν οἱ Ἰουδαίοι πολέμιοι, καὶ προσβεβεβεῖ οἱ ἦμων πρὸς τοὺς ὑπὲρ Εὐφράτην επὶ νεωτερισμῷ. Josephus, War 6.342-43).

6 “Hyrcanus . . . who had been taken prisoner by Barzaphames when the latter overran Syria, but had been liberated through the intercession of his compassionate countrymen beyond the Euphrates” (Υρκανόν . . . ὁ ἡμιμαλωσιατὸ μὲν Βαζαφράνης καταδραμὼν Συρίαν, ἐξητήσαντο δὲ κατὰ οἰκτόν όι ὑπὲρ Εὐφράτην οἰμοεθνεῖς. Josephus, War 1.432-34).

the portion of Jews beyond the Empire, distracts attention from potential support for the rebellion from the Diaspora within the Empire.

1.2 Agrippa’s Warning

Agrippa’s speech of warning begins with arguments about the futility of a war with the Romans and then moves through a catalogue of nations that submit to Roman rule—from Greeks and Macedonians, through Gauls and Germans, to Libyans, Cyrenians, and Egyptians—and ends with his comment that the Jews of Jerusalem must have a naive hope of help from “beyond the Euphrates” (see note 4 on page 101). His discussion of the Jewish Diaspora, however, does not end there. Though Josephus has Agrippa completely ignore the possibility of Jews in the Roman Diaspora supporting the revolt in Judea, he does have him raise the possibility of Gentiles in the Roman world being hostile to Diaspora Jews over a revolt:

The peril [of conflict with Rome], moreover, threatens not only us Jews here, but also all who inhabit foreign cities; for there is not a people in the world which does not contain a portion of our race. All these, if you go to war, will be butchered by your adversaries, and through the folly of a handful of men every city will be drenched with Jewish blood. (War 2.398-99)

Josephus, as usual, exaggerates. But as usual, what Josephus exaggerates is a real possibility: conflict between Gentiles and Diaspora Jews over the revolt taking place in Judea. As befits his rhetorical interests, Josephus is careful to restrict responsibility for the revolt to a small portion of the Jews of Judea and to portray Diaspora Jews as innocent in the conflict. He has Agrippa go on to exonerate the Gentile population, especially the Roman military, from any responsibility for the revolt or for conflicts in the Diaspora: “Such a massacre would be excusable; but, should it not take place, think what a crime it would be to take up arms against such humane opponents!” (War 2.398-99)

---

8 ὁ δὲ κίνδυνος οὐ τῶν ἐνθάδε μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὰς ἄλλας κατοικοῦντας πόλεις· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης δῆμος ὃ μὴ μοίραν ἡμέτέρον ἔχων. οὐς ἀπαντᾷς πολεμησάτων ἰμῶν κατασφάξουσιν οἱ διάφοροι, καὶ δι’ ἄλλων ἀνδρῶν κακοβουλίαν πάσα πλησθήσεται πόλις Ἰουδαϊκοῦ φόνου.
Agrippa’s warning of strife in foreign cities announces a pattern of interaction in the Diaspora that Josephus hints at periodically throughout his account of the Judean War. Placed on the lips of Agrippa, the warning, fulfilled in Josephus’s own narrative, also serves to enhance the position of the Jewish client king and further isolate the leaders of the rebellion in the eyes of Josephus’s contemporary Roman readers. Reading against the grain of Josephus’s rhetorical interests, we see him handling the possibility of support for the revolt from the Jewish Diaspora by writing around it.

1.3 Conflict in Caesarea and Chaos in Syria

Josephus points to a conflict between Jews and Greeks in Caesarea as one of the decisive points in the slide toward a full-blown revolt against Roman authority in Judea (War 2.284ff.). Again, his exaggeration of perfect reasonableness on the part of the Jewish community met by unappeasable contentiousness on the part of the Greek community and by complete incompetence and even duplicity on the part of Florus, the Roman procurator, need not be accepted at face value. Yet the issues he identifies can illustrate the problems that routinely arose for Jews (and several other religious groups) in Hellenistic cities. First, even if the matter of competition for converts remains a controversial subject, competition for space was a constant feature of the very crowded cities of the ancient world. Second, the triangulation of conflict between Greek citizens, Roman rulers, and Jewish community that Josephus narrates is paralleled in the conflicts in Alexandria that Philo notes. Third, local conflicts (e.g., land usage in Caesarea) could be interpreted in terms of broader movements in the Empire. Josephus jumps from the land-usage conflict in Caesarea to Florus’s abuses of the crowds in Jerusalem and the start of the revolt in earnest in Jerusalem.

---

9 καὶ συγγνώμη μὲν τοῖς τούτο πράξασιν ἃν δὲ μὴ πραχθῇ, λογίσασθε, πῶς πρὸς σβτὸ φιλανθρώπου ὑπλα κινεῖν ἄνθρωπον.

10 Martin Goodman (1994) offers one of the most recent treatments.

11 The constricted entrance to the synagogue that Josephus describes as the initial cause of the dispute in Caesarea could function well as an actual description of the entrance to the synagogue complex at Dura Europos (see Kraeling [1956] for basic maps and commentary). Several other religious sites in the city endured similar crowding.

The conflict in Caesarea is Josephus's main means of connecting the breadth of the revolt in Syria with the strife in Jerusalem without impugning the general civic virtue of the Jewish people. That is, he explains the breadth of the revolt in Syria by putting the blame on a small party of Gentiles in Caesarea, a corrupt Roman procurator, and a small party of radicals in Jerusalem. The following chain of events creates these three scapegoats: First, Gentiles harass Jews in Caesarea, and the “incompetent” Florus exacerbates the conflict (War 2.285ff.). Second, Jews in Jerusalem react against Florus’s duplicity and several events ensue: conflicts between parties of Jews and Roman cohorts abetted by Florus’s dissimulations (2.325ff.); Agrippa’s unsuccessful speech (2.388); the capture of Masada (2.408ff.); struggles among Jews over control of Jerusalem (2.422ff.); the burning of the temple archives, including debt records (2.426ff.); and the massacre of the remaining Roman garrison in Jerusalem (2.449ff.). Third, Gentiles massacre Jews in Caesarea (2.457) and conflict ensues between Jews and Gentiles throughout Syria (2.477ff.).

Josephus describes the killing of Jews in Caesarea as “by the hand of providence” (εκ δαιμονίου προνοίας) and states that “the inhabitants of Caesarea massacred the Jews who resided in their city: within one hour more than twenty thousand were slaughtered, and Caesarea was completely emptied of Jews” (2.457).13 This description of the events in Caesarea caps Josephus’s description of the massacre of the Roman garrison and raises the conflict in Caesarea not only to international dimensions, but even to cosmic dimensions (εκ δαιμονίου προνοίας).

Josephus follows the narrative of the massacre in Caesarea with reports of rampages by Jews in all the towns of Syria,14 with the result that that there

---

13 ἀνήρουν Καισαρείς τοὺς παρ’ εαυτοῖς Ἰουδαίους, ὡς ὑπὸ μίαν ἡμέραν ἀποσφαγῆναι μὲν ὑπὲρ δισμυρίους, κενωθῆναι δὲ πᾶσαι Ἰουδαίων τὴν Καισάρειαν.

14 “In the vicinity of each of these cities [Philadephia, Heshbon, Gerasa, Pella, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Gaulantis, Kedasa, Ptolemais, Gaba, Sebaaste, Ascalon, Anthedon, and Gaza] many villages were pillaged and immense numbers of the inhabitants captured and slaughtered” (πολλαὶ δὲ καθ’ εκάστην τούτων τῶν πόλεων ἀνηρπάζοντο κώμαι, καὶ τῶν ἀλισκομένων ἀνδρῶν φόνος ἦν ἀπειρός. Josephus, War 2.460).
is conflict in every city of Syria. The simple narrative of conflict between Jews and Gentiles in the cities of Syria, however, quickly abandons an easy course. Josephus mentions that the presence of Judaizers (τοὺς Ἰουδαίους) in each city undermined the confidence of both Jews and Gentiles that they knew their enemy (2.463). The ambiguity of loyalty (and/or ethnicity and/or religion) that Josephus introduces with the mention of Judaizers becomes even more of a problem for his protagonists when they rampage in Scythopolis:

Thus far the Jews had been faced with aliens only, but when they invaded Scythopolis they found their own nation in arms against them; for the Jews in this district ranged themselves on the side of the Scythopolitans, and, regarding their own security as more important than the ties of blood, met their own countrymen in battle. (2.466)

Having included in his narrative urban Jews of the cities of the Decapolis who actively—even violently—oppose the strife arising from incidents in Caesarea and Jerusalem, Josephus offers a broad portrait of the positions Jews might take in relation to their non-Jewish neighbours during episodes of conflict. Active conflict in support of compatriots in Judea or in support of local Gentile populations is one type of response. Tense watching and waiting, thinking and ruminating, is another. Josephus does not extend his description of conflicts arising from the initial problems in Caesarea and Jerusalem much beyond the territory that composed the actual theatre of war against the Romans, but his subsequent narrations of conflict in the wider Diaspora17 suggest that a similar range of responses was possible in the major centres of the Empire.

15 "The whole of Syria was a scene of frightful disorder; every city was divided into two camps" (δεινὴ δὲ ὅλην τὴν Συρίαν ἐπείχεν ταραχή, καὶ πάσα πόλις εἰς δύο διήρητο στρατόπεδα. Josephus, War 2.462).

16 Μέχρι μὲν δὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων πρὸς τὸ ἀλλόφυλον ἦσαν προσβολαὶ, κατατέχοντες δὲ εἰς Σκυθόπολιν τοὺς παρ' ἐκεῖνος Ἰουδαίους ἐπείρασαν πολέμιους· ταξάμενοι γὰρ μετὰ τῶν Σκυθοπολίτων καὶ τῆς ἐκατονθα ἀσφαλείας ἐν δεύτερῳ θέμενοι τὴν συγγενείαν ὁμόσε τοῖς ὀμφύλοις ἐχώρουν.

17 One might consider that life for Jews in the Hellenistic cities of Syria was significantly similar to life in many other urban centres further removed from Jerusalem. Certainly the challenges of and opportunities in living side by side with a large non-Jewish majority overlapped.
1.4 Strife in the Wide World

In the closing portion of book 2 of the Jewish War, Josephus describes conflicts in the Diaspora that resulted from the tensions brought on by war in Judea. To be sure, he does not mention Asia Minor, but the problems he details in Damascus and Alexandria are of a sort that could have occurred almost anywhere in the Empire. Following the rampage by Jews in Syria, Josephus describes another cycle of retaliation by Gentiles in the cities of Syria. After naming the animus against Jews in Tyre, Hippos, and Gadara, Josephus writes that "only Antioch, Sidon, and Apamea spared the residents and refused either to kill or imprison a single Jew; perhaps, with their own vast populations, these cities disdained the possibility of Jewish uprisings, but mainly what influenced them, in my opinion, was their pity for men who showed no revolutionary intentions" (War 2.479). With Josephus, it's all or nothing: a horrific massacre or not a single mistreatment, revolutionary incendiariism or total pacifism. It is more than likely that Jews did fare better in some cities than in others and that Jews were more (or less) supportive of the rebellion in Palestine in some cities than in others. Within large cities, an entire range of attitudes and dispositions were likely to be present within the Jewish and Gentile communities. What is relevant here is that the issue of "revolutionary intentions" is pressing for Jews hundreds of miles from Jerusalem.

In Alexandria, Josephus describes an intensification of the continuous friction between Jews and "Greeks" (i.e. non-Egyptians) in the city. From Josephus's summary of the preceding conflicts, it appears that the conflict in 66 CE was over rights of citizenship, including the right to take on the title "Macedonian" (War 2.487-90). The conflict Josephus describes culminated in an armed and (initially) orderly resistance to the Roman military in Alexandria that devolved into a rout and a massacre (War 2.494-98).

---

18 μόνοι δέ Αντιοχείς και Σιδώνιοι και Απαμείς ἐφείσαντο τῶν μετοικοῦντων καὶ οὕτως ἀνελείν τινας Ἰουδαίων ὑπεμείναν οὕτε δήσαι, τάχα μὲν καὶ διὰ τὸ σφέτερον πλήθος ὑπερορῶντες αὐτῶν πρὸς τὰ κυνήματα, τὸ πλέον δὲ ἐμοιγε δοκεῖν σφικτῷ πρὸς ὃς οὕς σωδεν ἑώρων νεατερζοῦντας.

19 John Barclay has provided the most recent overview of the tumultuous predicament of Alexandrian Jews from 30 BCE-117 CE (1996: 48-81). See also Tcherikover (1961: 320-27), Smallwood (1981: 221-55), and Schürer et al. (1973-87: 1.389-96).
In Damascus, Josephus says, the disastrous retreat of Cestius from Jerusalem was the impetus for a plan to kill all the Jews of the city. According to Josephus, the Jews of Damascus had been detained in the city’s gymnasium as a precaution, so the Damascenes expected the plan to exterminate the Jews to be quite attainable. Their only fear, however,

was of their own wives who, with few exceptions, had all become converts to the Jewish religion, and so their efforts were mainly directed to keeping the secret from them. In the end, they fell upon the Jews, cooped up as they were and unarmed, and within one hour slaughtered them with impunity, to the number of ten thousand five hundred. (War 2.560-61)

Josephus makes no mention of the explaining that the men of Damascus had to do when they got home from the gymnasium; as usual, he has exaggerated a phenomenon that is basically plausible and of grave importance even without his hyperbolic treatment. More important, Josephus provides another illustration of the complex web of loyalties in the Diaspora. Boundaries of ethnicity, politics, gender, and religion did not coincide neatly, nor were loyalties within these categories necessarily singular and exclusive. Finally, Josephus begins Book 3 of the Jewish War, in which Vespasian takes over the Roman campaign to quell the rebellion, with a portrait of Nero: the emperor is deliberating to whom he should assign the task of quelling the rebellion, because he fears that it will spread to neighbouring nations (3.3). Given the recent situation in the western portions of the Empire, Nero’s worry is quite understandable. More important, his worry for the stability of the Empire—whether or not Josephus is accurately recounting his disposition—is a plausible worry for any citizen of the Empire, a plausible cause of anti-Jewish sentiments. An environment of plausible worry, of anxiety, and of animosity against Jews—this, then, is the situation in which Jews of the Diaspora could have found themselves during the Judean War.

20 ἐδεδοίκεισαν δὲ τὰς εαυτῶν γυναίκας ἀπάσας πλὴν ὄλιγων ὑπηγμένας τῇ Ἰουδαϊκῇ θρησκείᾳ διὸ μέγιστος αὐτοῖς ἔγενετο λαθείν ἐκείνας. τοὺς δὲ Ιουδαίους ὡς ἄν ἐν στενῷ χώρῳ τὸν ἐρήμων μυρίους καὶ πεντακοσίους πάντας ἀνόπλους ἐπελθόντες ὑπὸ μίαν ὄραν ἀδεὼς ἀπέσφαξαν.

21 See Dyson (1975) and Wellesley (1975).
1.5 The Aftermath in Africa and Antioch

After the beginning of Book 3, Josephus concentrates almost exclusively on the prosecution of the war in Galilee and Judea, with only short excurses on matters of history or of imperial succession. Book 7 treats the aftermath of the Judean War, and its consequences extend far beyond Judea.\(^{22}\)

In spite of his assurance that Antioch held no unfriendliness to Jews during the war (War 2.479), Josephus later narrates conflicts between Jews and Gentiles, and also among Jewish factions, that began at the same time as Vespasian landed in Syria with a mandate from Nero to quell the nascent Jewish rebellion. Josephus describes this as the time when “hatred of the Jews was everywhere at its height” (τό δὲ κατὰ τῶν Ιουδαίων παρὰ πᾶσιν ἡμιαξε μίσος. War 7.47). The conflict starts in that atmosphere of hostility with a denunciation by an Antiochan Jew, named Antiochus, of other Jews as arsonists plotting to incinerate the whole city. Accordingly, Antiochus “delivered up some foreign Jews as accomplices to the plot” (καὶ παρεδίδου ξένους Ιουδαίους τιμᾶς ως κεκοινωνηκότας τῶν βεβουλευμένων. War 7.47). Antiochus makes a test of sacrificing after the manner of the Greeks, and this leads to reprisals against those Jews who refuse to perform the sacrifice. After the siege of Jerusalem is complete, a fire breaks out in Antioch and the Jews are blamed. As Titus approaches Antioch on his way from Jerusalem to Rome, Josephus says that “the Jews, with these charges hanging over them and still anxiously awaiting the issue, were thus in troubled waters and grave alarm” (7.62).\(^{23}\) Titus resolves the issue by refusing to expel the Jews from Antioch and by confirming their privileges in the city (7.108-11). But while a decree from Titus may have resolved the legal issue, it unlikely that it transformed the atmosphere in the city. The “grave alarm” that Josephus describes would characterize the disposition of many Jews in the Diaspora during the war.

The other element of the aftermath of the war that Josephus details is the predicament of the Sicarii in Egypt and Cyrene. These most fervent participants in the Judean War held the fortresses of Machærus and Masada

---

\(^{22}\) Nonetheless, none of the consequences in the Diaspora really compare with the level of displacement and destruction visited upon Jerusalem and its environs.

\(^{23}\) Ιουδαίοι μὲν σὺν ἐπὶ μετεώροις ταῖς αἰτίαις τὸ μέλλον ἔτι καραδοκούντες ἐν φόβοις χαλεποῖς ἀπεσάλευν.
for a substantial period after the conquest of Jerusalem. Some of them fled to Egypt, where Josephus says the local Jewish population, out of fear of being branded by the Greek population as supporters of the rebellion in Judea, turned the refugees over to the authorities (War 7.407ff.). In addition to torturing and executing the remnants of the Sicarii in Egypt, the governor, acting under imperial orders, closed down and later destroyed the Jewish temple at Leontopolis (7.421-36). Given the way in which the temple in Jerusalem served as a point of convergence for rebellion in Judea, the temple in Leontopolis also had the potential to focus unrest among Jews in Egypt (cf. 7.421). Subsequently, the last of the Sicarii found refuge in Cyrene, where Josephus suggests they were eventually rounded up and killed (7.43ff.). But, the events of 115 to 117 CE suggest otherwise.24 Josephus’s account of the reception of participant refugees from the Judean War in Egypt and Cyrene is repeatedly drawn along class lines, so that lower socio-economic classes of Jews are responsible for any positive response and “notable” or “wealthy” Jews are credited with ferreting out the last of the participant refugees. Though he emphasizes the negative reaction against them, Josephus’s own account of the fate of the participant refugees illustrates the sympathy for the Judean War that existed in the Diaspora even after the war’s failure. It seems likely that at least as much sympathy would have existed during the war itself.

Though Josephus spends very little energy addressing the question of the Diaspora during the Jewish war, it is clear from these readings that Jews in Jerusalem hoped for help from the Diaspora, that some Diaspora Jews were in sympathy with the participants in the rebellion in Judea, and that the cities of the empire could become quite uncomfortable for Jews if significant elements in the cities embarked on an effort to scapegoat their Jewish neighbours.

Other Roman historians offer very little in their accounts of the Judean War that would augment Josephus’s picture of the Diaspora during that conflict. Tacitus makes several mentions of the war but does not treat the Diaspora at all.25 Suetonius makes similarly cursory remarks in his lives of


25 Tacitus mentions the conflict in Judea briefly in Histories 5.1 and embarks on a narrative of some detail in Histories 5.10-13. It is frustrating that the sole manuscript of continued
Vespasian and Titus. One of the few salient comments on the Diaspora during the Judean War comes from Dio Cassius. After a brief mention of the composition of the Roman force besieging Jerusalem under Titus, as well as of the barbarian auxiliary units, Dio describes the defenders of Jerusalem thus: “The Jews also were assisted by many of their countrymen and many who professed the same religion, not only from the Roman Empire, but also from beyond the Euphrates” (Roman History 65.4.3). Dio contradicts Josephus (and most modern historians of the Judean War) by stating that the Jews of Jerusalem received help during the war from their co-religionists both within and without the Empire. Though Josephus consistently uses υπέρ Ευφράτην rather than πέραν Ευθράτου, the idea of help from beyond the Euphrates seems to be more than an invention of Josephus. And given Josephus’s interests in portraying Judaism within the Empire favourably, it seems likely that there actually was some help from beyond the Euphrates. Dio’s single notice does not justify any understanding of substantial assistance from the Diaspora affecting the course of the war, but it provides a witness for a diversity of attitudes and actions in the Diaspora. Dio’s testimony calls into suspicion on historical grounds what should already be suspect on methodological grounds: Josephus’s portrait of uniformly pacific Diaspora Judaism.

2. The Long Year

The historiography of 69 CE is political historiography, but my interest here is in the social tensions and negotiations that arise from political turmoil. For Jews in the Diaspora, 69 CE overflowed with political turmoil. Vespasian, who for two years had been prosecuting the war in Judea and whose son continued the effort in the spring of 70 CE, became the final holder of the principate in the “year of four emperors.” Rarely, however, are the history of the Judean War and the history of the struggles for the principate in the

---

(continued)

his Histories breaks off prematurely, just as his account is about to get underway. Fragments preserved in the Chronicle of Sulpicius Severus, included in the Loeb edition of Tacitus, seem to derive from the detailed account of the siege of Jerusalem.

26 Vespasian 4.5-6 and Titus 5.2.
27 καὶ οἱ Ιουδαῖοι πολλοὶ μὲν αὐτόθεν πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ παρὰ τῶν ὁμοίων, οἷς ὅτι ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς ἄλλα καὶ ἐκ τῶν πέραν Ευθράτου.
wake of Nero's death well integrated. The environment for Jews in Asia Minor during 69 CE was significantly affected by the related events in Judea and Rome. What follows, then, is a reconstruction of the news reaching western Asia Minor from Nero's appointment of Vespasian as governor of Judea in early 67 CE until Vespasian's entry into Rome in the summer of 70 CE.

After the start of the Judean War around 66 CE, with the expulsion of Florus and the routing of the troops of Cestius, Nero, in Greece at the time, appointed the eminently reliable Titus Flavius Vespasian to the governorship of Judea. Vespasian's mandate, however, was not so much to govern the province as to conquer it. Travelling from Greece through Asia Minor, he assembled his troops in Antioch and proceeded to Ptolemais, which formed the base of his operations in the early stages of the conflict. Here, in the spring of 67, what would the news from Judea be? That open conflict with the Roman rulers was underway, with initial success; that the emperor—by this point an emperor of dubious reputation—had shuffled his appointees in the hope of quelling the rebellion; that Vespasian, who had fought successfully in Britain and Germany, was travelling through Asia Minor with an army and a mandate to crush resistance in Judea.

In more or less detail, Vespasian's initial successes could be known or foreseen. By the beginning of the summer of 68 CE, he had largely pacified Galilee and much of the environs of Jerusalem. Moving with caution and deliberation, he had quite effectively constrained most of the rebellion to the fortified city of Jerusalem, the home of the temple of the Jewish god, the omphalos of the (Jewish) universe. In June 68, news of the death of Nero

28 A brief timeline may prove helpful:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dispatch of Vespasian</td>
<td>Feb. 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Nero / Ascension of Galba</td>
<td>9 June 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cessation of Hostilities / Beginning of Seige in Jerusalem</td>
<td>June 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Galba / Ascension of Otho</td>
<td>15 Jan. 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Otho / Ascension of Vitellius</td>
<td>16, 19 Apr. 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration by Vespasian at Alexandria</td>
<td>1 July 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucianus's March through Asia Minor (+15,000 troops)</td>
<td>1ff Aug. 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Vitellius / Ascension of Vespasian</td>
<td>ca. 21 Dec. 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vespasian in Rome</td>
<td>summer 70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29 This could be said equally for Alexandria and perhaps Italy, though the civil war on Italian soil would probably have reduced the attention given to the events in Judea.

30 See Moberly (1992) and Wellesley (1975: 13) for specific discussions of the speed at which news travelled in 69 CE.

31 Much smaller centres of resistance continued in Herodium, Machaerus, and Masada.
and the ascension of Galba reached Vespasian (Josephus, War 4.491-98). Though Vespasian swore an oath of allegiance to Galba, he suspended prosecution of the war. Around this time, in western Asia Minor, what would a Jewish resident of, for example, Ephesus have known of these events? News of Nero’s death travelled widely and quickly. The problem of succession would have been obvious to all, so a deep uncertainty about the future of the Empire would also be widespread; the ascension of Galba, a childless emperor entering his seventieth year, would scarcely squelch questions of succession. Since the beginning of the Judean War, there had been a full season of campaigning under Vespasian, in 67 CE, and the most general news of that season would have travelled to Asia Minor, that is, the news of Vespasian’s successes in Galilee, perhaps of the fall of Jotapata. By the time of the death of Nero, the second season of Vespasian’s campaign had achieved major gains against almost every facet of the rebellion. Vespasian’s cessation of hostilities in June 68 CE would only have increased the speed at which news of the predicament of Jerusalem—surrounded by troops, with little or no hope of help from across the Jordan, much less from “across the Euphrates”—would have reached Asia Minor. It is impossible to know whether news concerning the prophetic figures that Josephus describes as beguiling the populace of Jerusalem would have travelled, but one might speculate that anyone might speculate about “tokens of deliverance” for Jerusalem. Attention to such speculation would be conditioned less by the travel of specific information than by the religious dispositions of Diaspora Jews hearing of the predicament of Jerusalem.

From June 68 CE to August 70, what news could have come from or concerning Jerusalem? That there were factions in the city? That there were signs in the heavens over the holy city and other “tokens of deliverance”? For almost two years, Jerusalem was a captive of the Flavian generals and of the turmoil of the long year. Even if no news could reliably leave the city,

---

32 That is, from the news of the death of Nero in June 68 CE to the resumption of an active siege under Titus in April 70 CE. There seems to have been some small-scale action against the towns of Bethel, Ephraim, and Hebron as Vespasian made preparations to siphon off some soldiers from the siege in order to support his force heading to Egypt and North Africa to cut off Rome’s Egyptian grain supply and to support the forces of Gaius Licinius Mucianus (governor of Syria), who were leaving in August to march across Asia Minor to Byzantium, across Thrace and Bosnia to the Adriatic, whence they would sail to Italy and march on Rome (even if the pro-Flavian legions of the Danube got there first).
its predicament was public knowledge and the struggles of the civil war would have heightened Jewish speculation about the fate of what had, before the death of Nero, looked like an ill-fated rebellion. The news of the assassination of Galba and the ascension of Marcus Salvius Otho, coming soon after the beginning of the year, could only fuel speculation about the future of the Empire. Following hard on the news of Otho’s rise came news of his fall. After only three months, there was again a new emperor: Aulus Vitellius, who had obtained the principate by violence on a much vaster scale than Otho’s, with a bloody battle at Cremona on the Po. By April, the instability of the principate had spread beyond the confines of the Roman elite (viewed from afar in Asia Minor) and encompassed the homeland of the Empire itself. There was civil war in Italy.

Two events of the summer and fall of 69 would have increased tensions in the Diaspora during the siege of Jerusalem. First, Tacitus notes that in the early summer a Neronic pretender arose in Achaia and gathered armies in Asia Minor. He reports: “About this time Achaia and Asia were terrified by a false rumour of Nero’s arrival. The reports with regard to his death had been varied and therefore many people imagined and believed he was alive” (Histories 2.8). Bell notes that impostors claiming to be Nero, revived or never dead, also arose in 79 and 88 but that they seemed less influential than the earliest pretender. John takes pains to allude to Nero in Rev 17:9-11 and 13:18. Tacitus’s comment on the mood in Achaia and Asia in general applies specifically to John in the province of Asia.

Second, the governor of Syria, Gaius Licinius Mucianus, led an expeditionary force of about fifteen thousand soldiers and auxiliaries in support of the Flavian bid for the principate. They marched from Syria toward Rome through Asia Minor. Though Tacitus is not clear about the exact route of the force, fifteen thousand soldiers passing through the usually ungarrisoned province of Asia on their way to continue the civil strife in Italy would not go unnoticed, or at least not unrumoured. These were the soldiers (or could pass for them in eyes of Asian Jews) who had

33 Otho’s relative youth, however, might have allayed some fears about succession.
34 Sub idem tempus Achaia atque Asia falsa exterritae velut Nero adventaret, vario super exitu eius rumore coque pluribus vivere eum fungentibus credentibusque.
35 Bell (1979: 98); Dio Cassius, Roman History 66.19; Suetonius, Nero 57.2.
prosecuted the war on the Jewish people in Judea, and they were being turned on Rome itself. Was the Empire consuming itself? Was this the end of the ruler of the world? Was the blood on the streets of the great city a sign of the end of the age, of the New Jerusalem soon to be released from its bondage and lifted to a resplendent glory?

No—these things did not happen. But the stability and prosperity that the Flavian line brought was by no means a given from the point of view of the long year. Vespasian's precautions in Judea were quite competent, and Jerusalem was in no danger of glorious triumph; but if one were to conceive of a victory for Jerusalem, divine intervention was the most sensible possibility in such dire circumstances. The questions outlined above made sense within the context of Diaspora Judaism in 69 CE. I suggest that they were generative for the Apocalypse of John.

3. Other Wars, Other Diasporas

Another approach to the difficult question of the situation in the Jewish Diaspora during the Judean War is to look at the experience of other ethnic diasporas in the course of other conflicts. The configuration of the ancient world and the conditions under which evidence from the ancient world has been preserved make it difficult to find a close analogy to the situation of Judaism in the period from 66 to 70 CE, but four examples from the Republic and the Empire may provide some illumination: (1) Asian peoples in the Republic during the conflict with Antiochus the Great of Syria (191 BCE); (2) Macedonians in Italy during the conflicts with Perseus of Macedon (171 BCE); (3) Romans in central Asia Minor and Greece during the Mithridatic Wars (88-66 BCE); and (4) Goths in Byzantium during the conflicts on the borders of the Empire (fourth century CE). The experience of these diasporic populations helps flesh out the situation faced by Diaspora Jews in 66 to 70 CE.

36 Or even well into 70 CE. Titus did not reopen the campaign until at least April 70, and the stability of the Flavian line, even though it had Vespasian's personal qualities as well as his quite suitable heir Titus going for it, would not have been a given from the perspective of the first few months of his reign. Galba had reigned longer and had come to naught, and Vespasian did not even enter Rome itself until the summer of 70 CE.
3.1 The Syrian Wars

Appian’s account of the Syrian Wars describes Roman leaders’ deep fear of resistance in the provinces as well as in Italy at the commencement of actual war with Antiochus the Great. After detailing the complicated relations between Antiochus, the great Carthaginian general in exile Hannibal, and Hannibal’s allies in Carthage, Appian says that the Romans were suspicious of Philip (V) of Macedon and of the Carthaginians and that “they also suspected their other subjects, lest they too should rebel in consequence of the fame of Antiochus” (Roman History 11.15). More alarmingly, the Romans also feared rebellion even in Italy. As a result of their suspicions and fears, military and governing forces in the provinces and in Italy were strengthened to deal with threats within the possessions of the Republic as preparations continued for war on the borders of those possessions. The mix of ethnicities and diasporas here was complex. Antiochus was the leader of a Greek and Macedonian population dispersed under Alexander the Great, and so the Romans feared rebellion not of a diaspora, but of a homeland in support of its diaspora, namely Macedonia. Their concern, however, was not limited to the homeland, but extended to “all the provinces” and to Italy itself, that is, to the extent of the Greek diaspora within the possessions of the Roman Republic.

3.2 Greek Diaspora in Italy

Twenty years later, in 171 BCE, in the course of repeated conflict with the client king Perseus of Macedon, a similar situation recurred on a smaller scale but with more specificity. After ambassadors from the ambitious client king failed to make the case that the expansionist actions of Perseus were of no concern to the Romans, the Senate not only declared war and expelled the ambassadors from Italy, but issued the same order to all the Macedonian residents of Italy. Appian mentions, but does not detail, the hardships of the Macedonians in Italy. Instead, he merely writes that: “everything happened that was likely to follow such an unexpected decree” (Roman History 9.11.9). Appian does not spell out what “everything” might be, but only

37 τούς τε ἄλλους σφών ὑπηκόους ὑπονοοῦντες, μὴ καὶ παρὰ τῶν τινῶν τι νεώτερον ἐς τὴν Ἀντιόχου δόξαν γένοιτο.
38 πάντα τε ἐγγίνετο δοσα εἰκός ἐν αἰσθήματι καὶ τοιῶδε χρυσάματι.
because such unexpected decrees were to be expected in the course of international conflict in the ancient world. Even if the Macedonians in Italy were caught by surprise, Appian expects his readers to know the drill well: ethnic hostility, economic deprivation, and insecurity during conflict. An attentive reading of Appian can remind us that two of the greatest diasporas of the ancient world were those of Greece and Rome. The conflict between Rome and the Seleucid Empire shows the difficult position of the Greek diaspora during Roman expansion.

3.3 The Mithridatic Wars

The next example, from the Mithridatic Wars, illustrates the difficult position of the Roman diaspora during the expansion of the Republic in the first century BCE. One tactic of Roman expansion was to set local rulers against one another in order eventually to create a frontier of client kingdoms. When a conflict between Mithridates Eupator (with claims on Cappodocia and Bithynia) and Nicomedes (claiming to have been given Cappodocia by Rome) developed into a direct war between Rome and Mithridates, the forces of Mithridates initially prevailed and soon made a significant incursion into Ionia. In the course of gathering funds for the war effort, Mithridates had all the Romans and Italians in the cities of Asia killed by the native inhabitants of the cities and their property confiscated (Appian, Roman History 12.22-23). Though the completeness of the action is surely exaggerated, the Roman diaspora in Ionia was identifiable and subject to hostilities.

Later in the first Mithridatic War (86 BCE), the city of Chios came under the particular suspicion of Mithridates because of what might be termed “reciprocal diasporas” with Rome. After taking the city, Mithridates’ general Zenobius told the citizens of Chios, assembled apart from “the foreigners” (τοὺς ξένους), that they were still under Mithridates’ suspicion because of the “Roman faction” (τοὺς ρωμαίζοντας) within the city (Appian, Roman History 12.46). Soon after, a letter came from Mithridates complaining that “you favour the Romans even now, and many of your citizens are still sojourning with them. You are reaping the fruits of Roman lands in
Chios, on which you pay us no percentage" (12.47). Romans were living in Chios. Chians were living in Rome. More galling to Mithridates, Chians were retaining and profiting from Roman holdings. Again, ethnic diasporas were complexly interwoven, and ties of loyalty and of money crossed the lines of battle. It should come as no surprise that these extensions of loyalty and interest were sufficient pretext for harassment by ruling powers that would have political loyalty, economic interests, and political boundaries coincide.

3.4 Scythians in Greece

A much later example, from the fourth century, illustrates the complex competitions for land, economic opportunity, and political position that characterized Rome’s multi-ethnic empire. Zosimus’s sixth-century New History details the four-way struggle among Roman regular armies, Saracen auxiliaries, Scythians, and Huns that led to the death of the Emperor Valens in 378 CE and subsequently to the massacre of a Scythian hostage diaspora. The westward movement of the Huns pushed Scythian tribes on the border of the Empire to cross into the Roman possessions on the Danube (New History 4.20.3). Valens dispersed into the east a large number of hostages drawn from the children of Scythian leaders (4.26.1) and made it his policy to disarm the Scythians as they entered the Empire, but this policy was not effectively carried out and Thrace found itself beset by Scythian brigandage (4.20.7). The emperor sent Saracen auxiliaries against the Scythians. Misjudging both the Scythians and his own troops, Valens set out for an easy victory against the Scythians. The immediate result was the death of Valens and the massacre of his army (4.24.2). In the longer term, the Scythians in Thrace were slaughtered in revenge. This in turn roused the anger, and presumably the fear, of the Scythian hostage population dispersed in the East. Zosimus relates a conspiracy by the hostages to avenge the deaths of their parents and kin, which was in turn foiled by a “sting” operation. The hostages were gathered in the marketplaces of various cities on a set day to receive gifts from the emperor. According to Zosimus, “on the arranged signal, the soldiers, who had occupied the roofs overlooking the marketplaces, fired stones and arrows down on the barbarians until they were

39 εὖνοι καὶ νῦν ἐστὲ Ῥωμαῖοις, ὧ ἐτὶ πολλοὶ παρ’ ἐκεῖνος ἔσι, καὶ τὰ

continued
wiped out, thus the cities in the east were freed from danger" (4.26.9). The hostages were clearly a diaspora held responsible for the conflict undertaken by the homeland population.

The practice of a dominant power taking hostages from a subordinate ethnic group can be thought of as an institutionalization of diaspora. Its effectiveness in constraining populations and restraining rebellion proceeds from distilling diasporas into the most valuable populations for restraining client rulers and from formalizing the pressures that diasporas always face. The plight of hostages shows in high relief the plight of diasporas more generally.

Scholars of the Judean War consistently dissociate the Diaspora from the actions and effects of that conflict. Witness the following comments on the Diaspora and the Judean War: “There was no coordination even with the Hellenistic Diaspora which remained virtually inactive throughout the war” (Aberbach 1966: 8); “The Jews of the Diaspora stood aside virtually completely from the revolt of the province of Judea in 66-70” (Smallwood 1981: 356); “The Jews of the Diaspora did not join in the revolt of 66-70, but there was trouble in Alexandria in 66 CE” (Collins 1983: 117); “The Jews of the Diaspora did not support the Jews of Palestine to any significant degree in the war of 66-70 CE” (Trebilco 1991: 32); “The fact that, as far as we know, the Asian Jews gave no support either to the Jewish revolts in Palestine or to the ‘Diaspora Revolt’ of 116-117 CE may be an indication that their mood was far removed from the antagonistic spirit which came to dominate in Judea, Egypt and Cyrene” (Barclay 1996: 281).

This list could be extended almost indefinitely with similar comments from other synthetic accounts of Second Temple Judaism. In a sense these comments are quite accurate. There is no evidence that the Diaspora

---

(continued)

εγκτήματα Ῥωμαίων καρπούσθε, ἡμῖν οὐκ ἀναφέρουστες.

40 εἰδοτες δὲ καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται τὸ σύνθημα, καταλαβόντες τὰ ταῖς ἀγοραῖς ἐπικείμενα τέγη τοὺς βαρβάρους ἐσούστες λίθοις καὶ βέλεσι κατηκόντισαν, ἕως ἄκαντος πανωλεθρία διαφθείραντες τὰς τῆς ἑώρα πόλεις τῶν ἐπικειμένων ἥλευθρωσον φόβων.

41 By “formalizing pressures,” I mean that this practice regularizes the combination of connection and distance that makes a diaspora vulnerable, that for the hostages it intensifies the status of foreigner and makes explicit the power of the native population over the sojourner.

42 See Boccaccini (1991), Cohen (1987), Grabbe (1992), Otzen (1990), Sanders (1992), and Schürer et al. (1973-87).
provided support that influenced the course of the conflict in Judea, but the range of relevant questions for the study of Judaism in the Diaspora is much broader than the narrow issue of military relevance; important topics for the study of the Diaspora during the Judean War encompass the clashes of culture, nationality, and class that a war situation brings, seen in the historical record of ethnic diasporas and in the difficulties of reconciliation after the conflict (see Josephus). Exploring the presence or absence of effective support for the Judean War by Diaspora Jews is only the first step in analyzing the effect of the war on those communities.

Because of the difficulty of directly addressing the situation in Asia Minor during the Judean War, I have approached the problem obliquely—reading against the grain of Josephus, attempting to flesh out speculatively the implications of the Roman civil wars of 69 CE for Diaspora Jews trying to interpret the events in Judea, and drawing analogies from the experiences of other ethnic diasporas in the context of the Roman Republic and Empire. I have not overturned scholarly opinion about the military (ir)relevance of the Diaspora during the Judean War, nor have I sought to, but I have endeavoured to sketch a cultural milieu in which some Diaspora Jews could quite plausibly have had high expectations for the city of Jerusalem in its conflict with the Roman army and could quite easily have been instigators of strife with or targets of harassment by their neighbours in the Hellenistic cities of the Roman Empire.

Without detailed attention to the cultural milieu of a document, locations in time and space are bones lacking flesh. Either they tell no story about the document in question or worse, they leave the story to be told by unexamined presuppositions that may or may not be justified in terms of historical study. This is the case with the Apocalypse. The range of places and dates I have suggested is undoubtedly within the existent canons of historical-critical evaluation of the Apocalypse, but the cultural location in the Jewish Diaspora during the Judean War provides a new perspective for interpreting the Apocalypse of John. The crisis John understood himself and his community to face is thoroughly plausible and in some sense thoroughly common in the ancient world. The series of coins depicted on page 121 and the scene from Arch of Titus on the cover illustrate what a
Diaspora population could expect from a war against the Romans. John's fears were apparently more reasonable than his hopes.

What follows is an exposition and analysis of the four text complexes understood within the chronological, geographical, political, and religious context for which I have argued. John's text addresses the crisis he understands his audience to face, and the four text complexes upon which I focus my reading form parables that urge the audience to maintain their distinctiveness from the surrounding nations and thereby to participate in the defence of God's holy city—Jerusalem.

The bronze sestertius issued by Vespasian illustrates the victorious general on the obverse and a warrior standing over a defeated, mourning Judea on the reverse. The inscription on the reverse is IVDAEA CAPTA ("Judea Captive"). Vespasian's son, Titus, issued similar coins during his reign. The Jewish coins of the revolt, with their inscriptions πβπρπ ΰ^ΖΠΤ ("Jerusalem the holy"), and pX ΠΊΠ ("Deliverance of Zion") illustrate the hopes John shared with those active in the war in Judea. Tellingly, the Jewish coins mirror two of John's own locutions, namely, those describing Jerusalem as the holy city and portraying the 144,000 warriors as deliverers of Zion. The Arch of Titus in the Forum Romanum depicts the triumphal procession of 71 CE. Legionnaires bear the spoils of Jerusalem's temple: the menorah, the silver trumpets, and the altar of the shew-bread. See Josephus (War 7.132-57) for an account of the procession.

---

43 The bronze sestertius issued by Vespasian illustrates the victorious general on the obverse and a warrior standing over a defeated, mourning Judea on the reverse. The inscription on the reverse is IVDAEA CAPTA ("Judea Captive"). Vespasian's son, Titus, issued similar coins during his reign. The Jewish coins of the revolt, with their inscriptions πβπρπ ΰ^ΖΠΤ ("Jerusalem the holy"), and pX ΠΊΠ ("Deliverance of Zion") illustrate the hopes John shared with those active in the war in Judea. Tellingly, the Jewish coins mirror two of John's own locutions, namely, those describing Jerusalem as the holy city and portraying the 144,000 warriors as deliverers of Zion. The Arch of Titus in the Forum Romanum depicts the triumphal procession of 71 CE. Legionnaires bear the spoils of Jerusalem's temple: the menorah, the silver trumpets, and the altar of the shew-bread. See Josephus (War 7.132-57) for an account of the procession.
"Judaea Captive" (Reverse)
IVDAEA CAPTA
(see Costán and Fuster 1996: 77)

"Jerusalem the Holy" (Reverse)
דוֹרֶשׁ הָיוָה
(see Kadman 1960: 126-29)

"Deliverence of Zion" (Reverse)
נְדָרָה צִיון
(see Kadman 1960: 124-27)

Coins illustrating the Judean War
“What a difference a difference makes.” This aphorism, serving as the title of Jonathan Z. Smith’s provocative 1985 essay on taxonomy and alterity, articulates the promise of this chapter and also the problem it faces. The promise is that the preceding reflections on the framework within which scholars interpret the Apocalypse of John will indeed make a positive difference; the problem is the impossibility of fully treating difference as difference. In Smith’s essay, two dimensions of difference are at issue. First, there is the commonplace that the proximate other is more interesting and more problematic than the radically other; Smith labels this an essentially political theory of otherness (1985: 15). Second, Smith examines the desperate attempts of Europeans in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries to reconcile their new-found knowledge of the American continents with the geographic structures inherited typically from Ovid and Genesis. Columbus was always certain that he was in Asia, that the animals and trees he came upon were basically those he knew from Castille, that he was only a short distance from the river Ganges, and that in just a few days he would reach the court of the great Khan. Even when he realized that Venezuela was not India, Columbus could not posit a place previously unknown to him but assumed that because he was not in the territory of Japeth (Europe), Shem (Asia), or Ham (Africa), he must be in God’s terrestrial paradise, a divine nipple on the otherwise spherical earth (Smith 1985: 31).1 Smith characterizes these dogged interpretive efforts as endeavours “to see

---

1 Smith cites Columbus’s papers in the Major (1961) text and translation.
others as we see ourselves” and labels them as the practice of a linguistic theory of the other, that is, interpretive efforts that exemplify the inescapable effect of the position of the interpreter.

The problem of this chapter concerns first the political dimension of otherness. The usefulness of this commonplace in explaining the venom of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 has not been lost on commentators whose interpretation I contest. I propose, however, that the axis of difference that provokes John to call his adversaries a “synagogue of Satan” is not adherence or non-adherence to propositions about Jesus as Lamb or Christ, but disposition toward the wider cultural ensemble of the Roman Empire, specifically of the province of Asia, in the context of the Judean War; this is the political dimension of alterity. The linguistic dimension of difference, the not fully suppressible urge “to see others as we see ourselves,” poses a more complex problem. By eschewing an analytical category “Christian” for the Apocalypse of John, I am not escaping the problematic condition of the interpretation of difference that Smith highlights, but I can relativize the apparent naturalness of a binary opposition between Jews and Christians in the interpretation of that document. In general terms, this is the promise of this chapter. While the remaining three text complexes do not address the issue of the other as directly as Rev 2:9 and 3:9 do, the different interpretive conditions that I have argued for in previous chapters also make a vast difference in interpreting these texts, in moving beyond the aporetic limits of previous interpretations. By suspending the category “Christian,” it is possible to bring a certain closure to the text complexes that bedevil the interpreters of the Apocalypse of John: Israel can be Israel, Zion can be Zion, the non-Jews are non-Jews, keeping the commandments means keeping the commandments. And, especially in the context of the Judean War, Jerusalem is not Rome. Here, in more specific terms, is the promise of this chapter and the next.

2 Smith deliberately inverts the title of the conference for which his essay formed the keynote address: To See Ourselves as Others See Us: Christians, Jews, and “Others” in Late Antiquity.

3 Here Smith draws upon linguistic theories of the ultimate circularity of reference and understanding. We have no choice but to understand the unknown in terms of the known—the other in terms of the self—but the ways in which we draw these circles can be more or less fit to specific purposes. As it turns out, Columbus’s characterization of Venezuela as God’s terrestrial paradise does not fit the purposes of modern geography.
This chapter treats two sets of texts: John's accusations that his opponents are a "synagogue of Satan" (Rev 2:9 and 3:9) and his suggestion that his community keeps the commandments of God and the witness or faith of Jesus (Rev 12:17 and 14:12). In these sets of texts, John alludes to his understanding of proper conduct for a member of his community. In the case of the "synagogue of Satan" texts, I suggest that the axis of differentiation along which John divides his community from that of his enemies is not beliefs about Jesus but dispositions toward the Roman Empire and the larger Greco-Roman cultural complex, especially with regard to the consumption of food offered to idols. In the case of the "commandments of God" texts, I make the simple suggestion that the phrase held all of its common meaning (and controversy) in first-century Judaism and that the value of a new orientation when reading these texts is to recognize this and, moreover, to understand the phrases "witness of Jesus" and "faith of Jesus" in support of this simple understanding of "commandments of God."

1. The Not-Jews and the Synagogue of Satan

More than any other particular portion of the Apocalypse of John, the accusations of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 that John's adversaries are a "synagogue of Satan" form the basis of interpretations that understand the Apocalypse of John to be in active conflict with Jews and Judaism. The question of the identity of John's adversaries has traditionally been answered first along a continuum of Jew and Christian, with other axes of differentiation, such as economic status and political disposition, functioning only as secondary attributes of the group after they have been classified within a Jewish/Christian binary. My strategy in rereading John's accusations (his own slanders or βλασφημίαι) is to ask first, "What is the axis of differentiation along which John himself is conducting his argument?" This leads me to examine the characteristics of other opponents in the messages to the seven assemblies (ἐκκλησίαι) and also "Satan" and parallel figures in John's vision. The Martyrdom of Polycarp has no special authority for me in understanding Rev 2:9 and 3:9; that is to say, I consider conditions of

---

enmity between Jews and Christians that may (or may not) have obtained in Smyrna many decades after John wrote his Apocalypse of little use in interpreting details of communication between angels in John's vision.

These accusations in Rev 2:9 and 3:9 come within the messages to the seven assemblies that follow the introduction to the Apocalypse of John (Rev 1) and that precede the throne vision (Rev 4-5) that inaugurates the eschatological catastrophes filling the bulk of the vision (Rev 4-18). Because of the specific geographical locations mentioned in the messages and the affinities to traditional epistolary forms, the messages are often mined more extensively than other portions of the Apocalypse of John in order to reconstruct the social situation of the document. Unfortunately, what look like concrete references and discrete literary forms promise more than they deliver regarding the historical context of the Apocalypse.

The key to the inflated promise of Rev 2:1-3:22 is the complex and perhaps contradictory genre clues that the text offers. Are the units of Rev 2:1-3:22 best understood as letters, oracles, edicts, or some other genre? And if we can arrive at an understanding of the "primary" genre of the units, what does it mean to have letters, oracles, or edicts within the Apocalypse of John as a whole? Genres suggest reading strategies, but mixed genres subvert traditional reading strategies. The melange of genres to which the Apocalypse of John lays claim confounds any attempt to read the writings to the seven assemblies for the sort of direct references to historical circumstances that stand-alone letters might provide.

The question at hand is not whether or not the writings are letters—they are not—but whether their generic similarities to letters permit the kinds of historical extrapolation that genuine letters seem to. It is important to realize that there is no evidence that the writings ever had an independent existence as letters or that they had independence in the sense of being added in a separate stage of the development of the Apocalypse. Ernst Bernard Allo has argued convincingly for the integral connections between the messages and the rest of the Apocalypse in terms of the titles

---

5 E.g., Hemer (1986), Murphy (1895), Ramsay (1904).
6 On the genre of the Apocalypse, see Collins (1979) and Aune (1986; 1991; 1997-98).
7 The introduction to the Apocalypse lays claim to a variety of genres (prophecy, letter, apocalypse, liturgy) appropriating the ethos associated with those genres.
8 Contrary to Aune (1997-98), Charles (1920: 1.43-44), Ford (1973: 55-56), Schmidt (1891), Vischer (1886), and Völter (1911).
used by the sender in the messages and the themes and images they employ (1921). David Aune has made an extensive argument that the writings to the seven churches are not best understood as letters or as modelled on letters, but as patterned on royal proclamations in the ancient near east (1990; 1997-98). Aune's 1990 article is most valuable in that it shows the many ways in which the messages differ from epistolary conventions. Contrary to Aune's arguments on behalf of royal proclamation as the most appropriate model, however, stands Rev 1:4. The appropriation of the traditional letter opening and the mention of the seven assemblies skew the generic reference of the message toward the letter. The interpretive implications of this generic reference are more rhetorical than historical; the messages make nods toward the epistolary genre in order to lend authority to the command of the sender and to draw the audience into the vision. The appropriation of the epistolary genre changes a human report from John ("I saw . . .").) to a direct accusation from Jesus Christ ("I have this against you . . .").

The historical results are minimal in comparison. The seven cities named are of course probable communities of reception for John's visionary text, but the coincidences of seven in the Apocalypse make it unlikely that seven "just happens" to be the number of communities that John wants to reach. Given the tight literary and rhetorical integration of the messages with the rest of the vision (the messages too are received εν πνεύματι), what seem to be references to local circumstances should be interpreted primarily in terms of the entire narrative of the Apocalypse and the complex of symbols in the book as a whole rather than in terms of local detail of the individual cities in which the assemblies to whose angels the messages are addressed reside. Thus, the method of my exegesis will not be to pay primary attention to the specific realities of the cities mentioned in the message.

What look like local references in the messages may well be intended as

9 Such as Rev 2:13, which names Pergamum as the place "where Satan dwells," or the reconstruction of the specific relations of Jews and Christians in Smyrna on the basis of the Martyrdom of Polycarp.

10 This tradition is well represented by Ramsay (1904) and Hemer (1986). C. H. Scobie (1993) offers some evaluation and critique. Steven Friesen attempts a broader understanding of the Apocalypse on the basis of cultic activity in Asia Minor (1993). At the opposite end of the scale, Pierre Prigent denies almost any possibility of local reference in the seven messages (1988).
such in order to add verisimilitude to the imitation of the epistolary genre. They do not thereby change portions of an Apocalypse into letters, nor do they justify detailed portraits of individual congregations about which we otherwise would know very little. Even within the messages, the audience is directed not to listen only to what happens to coincide with their particular geography, but to "listen to what the spirit says to the assemblies," where "assemblies" is always in the plural.

The messages of Rev 2 and 3 are frustratingly vague with regard to the specific positions or groups they seek to combat. The first message praises its recipients for bearing "evil men" and promises retribution for "those who have said they are apostles and are not." It also names "the Nicolaitans" as another adversary. The second message mentions the "synagogue of Satan" as well as "the devil which is about to throw some of you in prison." The third message describes the city of the angel to which it is addressed as "where the throne of Satan is" and "where Satan dwells." It also describes its antagonists as Balaam and Balak and equates the teaching it ascribes to these two figures from the Hebrew Bible with the teaching of the Nicolaitans, namely, eating food offered to idols and committing sexual immorality. The fourth message ascribes the same teaching to a woman it calls "Jezebel" and also reproves those who seek to know "the deep things of Satan." Like the second, the sixth message calls its adversaries the "synagogue of Satan." These characterizations of adversaries do not immediately generate a precise description of the objects of John's polemic. Given the vitriol that animates the messages, one might call John himself ὁ διάβολος, the Accuser.

1.1 Balaam, Jezebel, and the Nicolaitans

John names his opponents in terms of three "schools": that of the Nicolaitans (Rev 2:4, 16), that of Balaam (Rev 2:14), and that of Jezebel (Rev 2:20). Balaam and Jezebel are surely symbolic names employed by John to associate his adversaries with negative figures in the Hebrew Bible. Jezebel's association with false prophecy is clear in the Hebrew Bible as well
as in Josephus\textsuperscript{11} and the Talmud.\textsuperscript{12} 1 Kings 18 to 21 treats the evils of Ahab, the ruler of the northern kingdom, and his wife Jezebel, daughter of Ethba'\textsuperscript{11} al king of the Sido'\textsuperscript{nians (1 Kgs 16:31). In these narratives, Jezebel is notable for leading Ahab to worship Baal and idols (1 Kgs 16:31; 18:18; 21:25-26), for opposing and killing the prophets of the Lord (1 Kgs 18:4, 13; 19:2ff.), for supporting the prophets of Baal and Asherah (1 Kgs 18:19), for sorcery, and for inciting, if not practising, sexually immoral relations (2 Kgs 9:22). Idolatry and opposition to true prophets make Jezebel an apt representative of John's opponents.\textsuperscript{13}

The texts of the Hebrew Bible that treat Balaam provide a rich set of connections with the other qualities associated with those whom John opposes. In Num 22-24, Balaam, son of Beor, is retained by Balak, the king of Moab, to curse Israel. While in Num 22-24 Balaam blesses rather than curses, the mentions of Balaam in Deut 23 construe Balaam to have cursed Israel though the Lord turned the curse to blessing. The references to Balaam in Philo\textsuperscript{14} and Josephus\textsuperscript{15} and in 2 Peter 2:15-16 and Jude 11, as well as in later Rabbinic literature,\textsuperscript{16} all suggest that in the Second Temple period and its aftermath, Balaam was viewed negatively as one who led the people of Israel astray. Several elements of the characterization of Balaam in Numbers form links between the Nicolaitans, the adversaries of the Jewish people, and the synagogue of Satan: (1) Balaam is from Pethor on the Euphrates, that is, Babylonia; (2) Balaam is duped by the angel of the Lord standing as his (Balaam's) adversary, his satan (\textsuperscript{17}και ἀνέστη ὁ ἄγγελος του θεού ένδιαβάλλειν αίπον. (Num 22:22, LXX); καί ιδου εγώ εξήλθον εϊς διαβολήν σου. (Num 22:32, LXX))

\textsuperscript{11} Ant. 8.317, 330, 334, 356; 9.47, 109, 122, 124.
\textsuperscript{12} Jerusalem Talmud, Sanhedrin 10.2ff.
\textsuperscript{13} Jezebel's position as a negative character in the Hebrew Bible and the Apocalypse of John is bound up with her gender. See Pippin (1992a; 1992b; 1992c; 1995), Schüssler Fiorenza (1983; 1991), and Yarbro Collins (1987; 1993).
\textsuperscript{14} Cher. 32.1; 33.1; Det. 71.1; Immut. 181.1; Conf. 159.2; Migr. 113.1; 115.2; Mut. 202.4.
\textsuperscript{15} Ant. 4.104, 107-11, 126, 157.
\textsuperscript{16} See, for example, in the Mishnah, Sanhedrin 10.2; Aboth 5.19.
\textsuperscript{17} καὶ ἀνέστη ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ ενδιαβάλλειν αἳτον. (Num 22:22, LXX); καί ἰδον εγὼ εξήλθον εἷς διαβολήν σου. (Num 22:32, LXX)
the Midianite women who have lain with men, strongly implies that the sons of Israel became apostate by having sexual relations outside of their community, i.e., with the women of Midian). Admittedly, in the Hebrew Bible, the connection between Balaam and the sexual relations with the women of Midian is one of juxtaposition rather than cause. Later interpreters (see notes 14, 15, and 16), however, clearly read a causal link into the text, and that is what is most relevant to reading Balaam in the Apocalypse. These elements of the reading of the Balaam stories of the Hebrew Bible tie together all the qualities of John’s enemies: associated with Babylon ≈ Rome, duped by Satan, leading the people of Israel to forsake their religious heritage through sexual immorality.

These stories from the Hebrew Bible associate sexual immorality and idolatry and place the blame for these negative practices on liminal figures in the history of Israel. This is probably a quality that John desires to highlight in his opponents; naming them as followers of Balaam and Jezebel names them as people beyond the horizon of legitimate Judaism as understood by John.

Perhaps frustrated by the obvious metaphorical status of the names “Jezebel” and “Balaam,” scholars have expended great effort to come to more precise identifications of the Nicolaitans. Following heresiologists from the late second century and beyond, several have posited a group of libertine Gnostics that looked to, or was ascribed to, Nicolaus of Acts 6:5. In all cases it is clear that the apologists are striving to make sense of Rev 2:6 and 2:15, and occasionally other data, within a canonical cast of characters. Charles identified the Nicolaitans and those who hold the teaching of Balaam by positing that they have similar etymologies in Greek and Hebrew (Charles 1920: 1.52). Charles’s suggestion fits well John’s

18 Irenæus, Haer. 1.26.3; 3.11.1; Hippolytus, Haer. 7.24; Epiphanius, Pan. 25.
19 See Fox (1994) for a reprise of the early patristic efforts to identify the Nicolaitans.
20 I.e., Νικολαος ≈ Νικηφόρος λαόν ≈ “conquer the people” and בצלול בנתן ≈ “he has consumed the people.” Schüssler Fiorenza (1973: 567) concurs cautiously with Charles. Cf. Farrer (1964). Adolph von Harnack (1923: 413) disagrees, charging that if this were so, John should have named the group the “Laoborites” or the “Laophagites”. I disagree with Harnack and understand the widespread existence of the name “Nicolaus” as sufficient justification for departing from the very literal translations that Harnack suggests are the only possibilities. Aune, concurring with Räisänen (1996: 1068), understands the Nicolaitans to be an “actual” name and justifies that literalism by stating that “Rev 2-3 is only apocalyptic because it is linked to Rev 4:1-22:5” (1997-98: 1.148). Given that the messages are received εν πνεύματι and that
habit of juxtaposing Greek and Hebrew equivalents as well as the possibly that John created Greek/Hebrew gematrias. Under this hypothesis, the name "Nicolaitans" is no more literal than "Balaam" or "Jezebel."

The most concrete element of John's description of these opponents is that they eat food offered to idols. That is, they do not have the same religious scruples about their food supply as John does. Their more liberal attitude might consist of buying meat in the public market from Pagans in ignorance of whether the meat had been sacrificed to a Gentile god, or it might actually imply that they willing participated in Pagan cult meals (in the course of civic life, business practice, voluntary associations, etc.). Certainly, the complaint that John's adversaries ate such food is a synecdoche for the more general matter of participation in foreign cults. The associated mention in both verses of committing sexual immorality, a common metaphor used to censure participation in foreign cults, further indicates that this is the issue. This reading of Rev 2:14 and 2:20 is uncontroversial.

John's portrait of his adversaries is typically flat. What is clear in his portrayal is the reason for his disdain and the criterion by which he differentiates himself from his enemies: they have a more flexible attitude to the polyreligious milieu of the Greco-Roman world. His description of his enemies in terms of idolatry and as figures from beyond the pale of (continued)

they are communications to heavenly angels, it is peculiar to deny that there is anything revelatory about them.

21 ναὶ / ἀμήν (1:7); Ἀβαδδών / Απολλύων (9:11); Διάβολος / Σατανᾶς (12:9, 20:2).
23 See Aune (1997-98: 1.191-94) on the breadth of the practice. Pliny the younger puts it pithily: "flesh of sacrificial victims is on sale everywhere" (Letters 10.96.10).
24 Fox provides an overview of the discussion of whether πορνεύσαι represents sexual immorality or foreign cultic practice (1994). Numbers 25 is an obvious example. Seeing the term πορνεύσαι as a metaphor for crossing religious boundaries, however, does not remove its force as a condemnation of crossing the boundaries of legitimate sexual activity. It depends on such a condemnation. And so the disagreement that Fox sketches and participates in concerns whether John's straightforward condemnation of sexual immorality includes a condemnation of participation across religious boundaries. In trying to paraphrase John's use of πορνεύσαι, it can be difficult to avoid metaphors: John condemns religious promiscuity. Alternatively, religious terms are unavoidably coloured by their metaphorical use in describing sexual immorality: John condemns religious infidelity. It is difficult to argue that in the context of the Apocalypse of John, φαγεῖν εἴδωλοθύτα καὶ πορνεύσαι are discrete rather than parallel formations.
legitimate Judaism makes it clear that the opponents he characterizes as followers of Balaam, Jezebel, or the Nicolaitans are defined not by being Jews, but by their relations to non-Jews and non-Jewish practice.

1.2 The Adversary and John's Adversaries

In the third message, addressed to the angel of the assembly of Thyateira, John praises the community because they do not hold to Jezebel's teaching and "do not know the deep things of Satan" (Rev 2:24). The role and reference of "Satan" in the messages as well as in the rest of the Apocalypse of John is the second element of my argument that "synagogue of Satan" is not a slander against Jews as such.

Translating names is always a problem. Translating translations or transliterations of names is more difficult still. And so συναγωγή τοῦ Σατανᾶ poses problems at every level. Modern translations translate only the article, and even in the Greek original, ὁ Σατανᾶ is a transliteration of שן, the adversary (which often looks like a proper name in the Hebrew Bible). The question here is who is ὁ Σατανᾶ or ὁ διάβολος in the messages to the seven assemblies and who does John seem to be talking about when he refers to ὁ Σατανᾶ or ὁ διάβολος in the wider context of his vision? In both of these cases, Rome is at the centre of the answer.

Commentary on "the deep things of Satan" (τὰ βαθέα του Σατανᾶ) exhibits a curious inner division. Most commentators acknowledge that the formulation "deep things of Satan" may well be John's polemical inversion of what his enemies might call "the deep things of God." And most commentators look to Paul's employment of the term "depth" (βάθος) in Rom 8:39 and 11:33 and 1 Cor 2:10 for illuminating intertexts, but with the result that the followers of Jezebel (and the followers of Balaam and the Nicolaitans) are labelled as Gnostic or proto-Gnostic and Paul remains the trustworthy and orthodox Paul. Adolph von Harnack's comment that language of "depths" was common to contemporary philosophical and

---

25 The promise of the proper name, "reference of a pure signifier to a single being," is exactly what impedes the translation of proper names (Derrida 1985: 166).

26 Allo (1921); Aune (1997-98); Beckwith (1919); Bousset (1906); Caird (1984); Charles (1920); Harrington (1969); Prigent (1988).

27 Harnack (1923) and most in note 26, above. Harnack goes on to cite characterizations of Gnostics by Irenæus and Hippolytus.
religious discourse (especially the so-called mystery religions; 1923: 414) should serve to set the Nicolaitans of the Apocalypse of John within that context rather than throw them forward in time and make them into the Gnostics of the late second and early third centuries. Instead, the condemnation of the Nicolaitans should be understood first in relation to the particular complaint John makes in association with the name: eating food offered to idols.

In the rest of the Apocalypse, John’s enemies exist on two planes. In the heavenly realm, the enemy is the dragon, the serpent, the devil, satan, the woman riding the great beast. In the earthly realm, the antagonists of John’s story are “those who dwell on the earth,” the beasts from the sea and the earth, those who profit from the patronage of the woman on the beast, those whose moral character does not measure up to John’s standard: “the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars” (Rev 21:8). Elucidating such a sketch of John’s enemies is a separate task, but suffice it to say here that the groups he opposes are defined by their moral actions and by their relation to Babylon/Rome.

1.3 Naming the Synagogue of Satan

My reading of the messages to the angels of the seven assemblies has argued that John’s opponents raise his ire by having less stringent scruples than he does about participating in the polyreligious milieu of the Greco-Roman world. For example, they care less than John about making sure their food has no connection to foreign deities. Given the heated polemic of the message, it is impossible to move beyond these relative characterizations of John’s opponents. They may have felt free to participate in other religious communities, voluntary associations that entailed cultic or religious duties, or Roman civic religious observances; John’s polemic witness provides no justification for assuming that they engaged in notable sexual debauchery or satan-worship. It is clear that John cares deeply about “works” (έργα) or practices, and even when he complains about holding to the wrong teaching, his criticism moves quickly to the practices that he associates with the teachings.

Turning specifically to the passages in which John uses the phrase “synagogue of Satan,” the repeated pairing of the devil and satan in the latter half of the Apocalypse of John is of particular interest for the
interpretation of Rev 2:9-10. In the episode of the woman and the dragon (Rev 12), which inaugurates the second series of calamities befalling Rome, John equates the dragon with the devil and satan (Rev 12:9). Similarly, when the angel confines the dragon to the Abyss, John takes care to correlate the character from the vision, the dragon, with the Greek and Hebrew names of God’s (and John’s) evil opponent: the devil and satan (Rev 20:1-2). These two instances make clear how closely related the terms of “satan” and “devil” are in the Apocalypse of John. Even the other instances of the term “devil” (Rev 12:12 and 20:10) are situated so close to these equivalencies as to make it clear that “devil” and “satan” are pointing in the same direction.

It is curious, then, that commentary on Rev 2:9-10 interprets “synagogue of Satan” as referring to Jews who do not believe in Jesus and “the devil” as referring to the Roman authorities, and that when a commentator feels uncomfortable about the quick transition from satanic Jews to diabolical Romans, the Martyrdom of Polycarp travels back in time to fill the gap. Here, the residue of mid-second-century conflicts between Jews and Christians, which became fodder for centuries of Christian anti-Semitism, is read backwards onto the Apocalypse of John in order to justify reading the terms satan and devil in opposition to their sense elsewhere in the Apocalypse of John.

And so I read the “synagogue of Satan” as referring to a group of people who do not stand in opposition to Rome and the wider Greco-Roman culture in the way John does. Given the problems of translating names, I could justifiably translate συναγωγή του Σατάνα as “gathering of the adversary.” The questions of Jew and Christian that interpreters ask of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 are not the questions that occupy John in the messages to the angels of the seven assemblies. This makes it difficult to say who his adversaries are in terms of a Jew/Christian/Pagan/Godfearer scheme. But to press forward with the question here in spite of John’s evident lack of

28 Beckwith (1919); Boring (1989); Caird (1984); Charles (1920); Ellul (1977); Kraft (1974).
29 The Martyrdom of Polycarp depicts Jews as characteristically zealous in putting Polycarp to death as well as in destroying his body after death; (12.2; 13.1; 17.2; 18.2).
interest in it, it seems that John’s concerns about integration with Greco-Roman religion and culture as well as his concerns about using the term “Jew” suggest that the group he opposes consists of a mixture of Pagan Godfearers and comfortably Hellenizing Jews who welcome the Godfearers without requiring a substantial (in John’s eyes) separation from Greco-Roman culture in either themselves or their adherents. It would be a mistake to translate the broad religious affiliation of this hypothetical audience into the designation of a group John opposes: he is opposed not to Jews or to Gentiles, but to giving allegiance and worship to the non-Jewish gods. It would also be a mistake to translate this hypothetical audience into a broad group that John opposes on the basis of their relation to Judaism or to Jesus. He is opposed not to Jews or Gentiles who undertake Jewish practice, but to people who participate in Greco-Roman religious cultural life in a way that he understands as overly accommodating. It is startling to realize how readily scholars of the New Testament and early Christianity read John as writing about people who are not Jews but are a “synagogue of Satan” and interpret this, without supporting evidence, as people who are Jews but do not believe in Jesus.

2. Those Who Keep the Commandments

After the partial destruction of the great city in Rev 11:13-19, John’s vision turns to “a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” (Rev 12:1). His vision of this woman and of the dragon who strives to devour her and the messianic child she brings forth concludes with a description of the “rest of her offspring” and their conflict with the dragon: “Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and witness of Jesus. And he stood on

30 As noted, the exceptions are Gager (1983: 132), Shepherd (1971), and Wilson (1992: 614-15; 1995: 163). Kraft suggests that John’s polemic in Rev 2:9 and 3:9 is undertaken within the “church” over issues of syncretism (1974: 60-61). Stephen G. Wilson’s quotation of Dio Cassius provides a very concrete example of the judaizing phenomenon: “This title [Ιουδαίος] is also borne by other persons who, although they are of other ethnicity, live by their laws” (φέρει δε και άλλους ἄνθρωπους δοσι τα νόμιμα αυτών, καιπερ ἄλλοθενείς δυτες, ζηλούσι. Roman History 37.16.4) The unreliability to which Dio witnesses for the title “Jew” would apply even more to the less specific term συναγωγή.
the sand of the sea."

Rev 13 details the war of the dragon, through its terrestrial surrogates, with the offspring of the woman. It emphasizes the impropriety of political and religious allegiance to the beasts that make war on the saints and it concludes with the Nero gematria. Rev 14 inaugurates the defeat of the dragon and its beasts on earth by means of the celestial worship of the followers of the lamb. This promise of eventual defeat of the antagonists constitutes an exhortation to the audience of the Apocalypse of John that they should stand fast in their present predicament: "Here [is a call] for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev 14.12). I have made it clear that scholars consistently ignore the keeping of the commandments of God in favour of addressing the Christian theological questions generated by the peculiar use of τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ. The question here is what it means to keep the commandments of God and how these identifications fit into their context in the Apocalypse of John.

The summary of chapters 12 through 14 of the Apocalypse given above is purposely general and should not be controversial in its outlines. Since Herman Gunkel's Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit (1895), Rev 12 in particular has been the subject of detailed investigation of its relations to ancient mythologies. My efforts in rereading this text are directed not to positing and defending new positions in the discussion of John's mythological resources, but to illustrating how his deployment of those resources can be understood as effective in the context of the Judean War.

2.1 Chasing the Queen of Heaven

The woman is the people of God—Israel on the earth. The dragon is the cosmic adversary of God—Rome and its dominion on the earth. The male

---

32 RSV, NRSV.
33 Ἡ ὁμοιομοίωσις τὰς ἀγίων κατίν, οἱ πηγόται τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ.
child is Jesus understood by John as Lamb of God and Christ. Critical opinion supports these statements, but the difficulty they pose lies in the connective verb “is.” The questions that lie within “is” are an abyss deep enough to hold an interpreter or an adversary for a thousand years. No matter how much interpreters wriggle away from the vulnerable position of saying “this is that,” interpreting Rev 12—or any visionary text, or perhaps any text—involves paralleling events in the narrative with events or circumstances in the Apocalypse of John’s historical setting.

Without a doubt, the woman clothed with the sun stands in a field of celestial mothers stretching before her and behind her in time as well as all around her in terms of culture. The understanding that the woman is Israel proceeds from similar usage of the figure in Jewish texts as well as from elements of the image in Rev 12, such as the crown of twelve stars with its association with the twelve patriarchs of Israel and the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The figure of the woman is both a sign of and a comment on Israel: in addition to gesturing toward Israel within the context of John’s vision, it asserts that Israel in some sense dwells in heaven and is honoured there. The dragon is similarly situated in the broad ancient near-eastern and Mediterranean tradition of representations of personified evil and chaos. It is also a sign of and a comment on Rome: for John, Rome is an instantiation of cosmic evil historically analogous to Babylon as an oppressor of Israel, locus of exile, and destroyer of the temple (Wilson 1994) and anagogically analogous to Leviathan or Tiamat in the broad tradition of the ancient near east. The dominant characters of Rev 12 intersect with the dominant political entities of John’s world (view).

35 Most commentators, however, understand the woman to refer in John’s perspective to the Christian community as a new Israel.
36 Derrida meditates on “the third person present of the present indicative” (1974: 23), and on Heidegger’s treatment of it, suggesting that this word, struck through (“is”), encompasses the beginning and end of writing (and all that writing encompasses for him).
37 E.g., Mic 5:3, 4 Ezra 10:44.
38 Charles (1920: 1.315); Yarbro Collins (1984b: 1269). The possibility of correspondence between the houses of the zodiac and the patriarchs of Israel was also employed elsewhere in ancient Judaism; see, for example, Schürer et al. (1973-87: 2.443) on the mosaic floors of the synagogues of Beth Alpha and Hammath, or TNaph 5.4-5, in which the celestial phenomena are a metaphor for the patriarchs.
39 See again Gunkel (1895) and Charles (1920: 310-14).
The action of the chapter is similarly significant both in the mythology of the ancient near east and the Hellenistic Mediterranean and in the specific situation of the Judean War. In a heavenly struggle, the dragon strives to consume the offspring of the woman, but divine agency protects her and her offspring (in different ways). The conflict is worked out on earth, where the protagonists are those descended from the woman and the antagonists are the community of the dragon. Because of, not in spite of, the associations of the characters and their actions with preceding literary and mythological traditions, the story of the woman and the dragon forms a parable of the situation of Judaism and Rome (in John’s view of these) in the context of the Judean War.

I interpret the parable of Rev 12 thus: Israel as heavenly entity labours to bring forth the messiah, and the adversary of Israel strives to thwart the coming of the messiah. The messiah is born and then taken up to God, while the woman struggles with her fate on earth under the protection of God. That is, the coming of Jesus functions as an inaugurating event of the culmination of the struggle between good and evil. This struggle occurs both among powers in heaven and among the followers of the lamb on earth, who conquer through the lamb’s blood (12.11). The treatment of the birth of the messiah, with no direct discussion of his earthly life and violent death, indicates to Charles that a Jew wrote the source of Rev 12.\textsuperscript{40} That is, Charles’s conception of what a Christian text must be is prior to his interpretation of the Apocalypse of John in any historical circumstance.\textsuperscript{41} In spite of Charles’s objections, this understanding of Jesus as a cosmic initiator rather than a teacher or healer is thoroughly consistent with the function of the lamb in Rev 4-5. With the birth and ascension of the messiah, Israel enters a provisional time of mixed persecution and protection. With the birth and ascension of the messiah, the conflict in heaven is resolved in

\textsuperscript{40} Charles’s commentary on Rev 12 (1920) struggles with the tension between his conviction that the Apocalypse of John is a fully Christian text and his observations that it makes claims and tells stories that in his view no Christian could ever claim or tell. Charles also takes little note of the allusion to the death of the lamb by the voice from heaven in 12.11, though the world-ruling child does not undergo a violent death.

\textsuperscript{41} With a different set of lines along which she cuts the text, Yarbro Collins sees Rev 12 as a combination of two Jewish sources that have undergone a Christian combination and redaction (1976: 101-16). The coherence of the chapter in relation to a seemingly well-formed conception of appropriate Christian doctrine is a major criterion in shaping her source proposals. See especially Yarbro Collins (1976: 106-7).
heaven by the power of the angel Michael and has only to be worked out on earth by the steadfast witness of the followers of the lamb.\(^2\) This is in effect announced by the loud voice of Rev 12:10.

The dragon’s earthly prosecution of the conflict with the woman over her offspring (Rev 12:13ff.) is especially intense because of the dragon’s own consciousness of its imminent demise. Here I understand John to be gesturing toward the fear (or hope) that the events of the long year were a sign of the demise of the Empire. John shared in this widespread speculation and employed circumlocutions derived from Dan 7:25 to indicate the span of the central provisional period of protection and persecution that he understood to be visited upon the people of God because of the cosmic conflict in which they were central. And so the woman is nourished and protected from the dragon for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (Rev 12:6), or “a time and times and a half a time” (Rev 12:14), and later the dragon exercises authority for forty-two months (Rev 13:5). Similarly, the holy city is given over to the Gentiles for forty-two months (Rev 11:2), and the two witnesses prophesy in the great city for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (Rev 11:3). The identity of these measures of time (1260 days = 42 months of 30 days = 3\( \frac{1}{2} \) “times” or years) is well known but worth mentioning.\(^3\) The provisional time period need not imply that John literally thought that the Judean War or the apparent suspension of the war that began in the early summer of 68 CE would last exactly three and a half years, but that the situation in which he found himself and his initial audience could be understood as such a divinely ordained time of steadfast waiting with assurance of victory. When the natural world protects the woman (as perhaps the topography of Jerusalem protected the city?),\(^4\) the dragon redirects its anger and its aggression against “the rest of her offspring, those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus” (Rev 12.17).

For the present, I will defer an examination of those characterizations of the offspring of the woman (see pp. 141ff.), but this interpretation of the

\(^2\) Charles also finds it inconceivable that a Christian could attribute the defeat of satan to Michael rather than to Jesus (1920: 1.300).

\(^3\) Most commentators note that three and a half is half of seven, indicating a limited and circumscribed period as opposed to a cyclical or whole period as described by units of seven. See Yarbro Collins (1984b).

\(^4\) See, for example, Tacitus, *Histories* 5.11-13, and Josephus, *War* 5.143-206.
chase scene that inaugurates the second grand section of the Apocalypse of John is thoroughly consistent with an understanding that keeping the commandments of God meant everything that first-century Jews understood it to mean: maintaining appropriate distinction from Gentiles, worshipping only the God of Israel, following the commandments as given in the Torah, circumcising male children, observing the sabbath, maintaining appropriate purity. Of course, such a general description begs for specificity, and Jews of the first century contended, sometimes bitterly, over how to act out these generalities. John's interpretation may have been quite idiosyncratic in some areas and thoroughly conventional in others; this does not mean, however, that "keeping the commandments of God" means being a good Christian, implies a distinction between ritual and moral commandments, or depends on a radical revision of the status of God's commandments in light of the messianic status of Jesus—or apparently means nothing at all.

2.2 The Beasts Run Amok

Rev 13 works out the details of the war on earth between the beasts that exercise the authority of the dragon and the people of God, named as "those who dwell in heaven," and "the holy ones" (Rev 13:6, 7, 10). Common to most contemporary interpretations is the identification of the beasts with Rome, of the holy ones with the protagonist community of the Apocalypse of John, and of the worship of the beast with the imperial cult or with Pagan cults more generally. With all of these identifications I concur. Interpreters who understand the Apocalypse of John to be written in the last years of Domitian tend to understand the description of war between the beasts and the protagonist community as a persecution (local or general) or fear of persecution (well-founded or ill-founded). Those who date the Apocalypse of John between the last years of Nero and the first years of Vespasian (65-75 CE) usually look to Nero's supposed persecution of Christians. Finally, and most helpfully, there are commentators who locate the Apocalypse of John at the end of Domitian's reign but who understand the generative circumstances of Rev 13 to be the Judean War. For these interpreters, the

45 The general trend has been away from understandings of general persecution to local harassment and from a naive acceptance of John's fear to a somewhat more skeptical attitude that emphasizes the perception of crisis; see Yarbro Collins (1984a: 84-107) and, most radically, Thompson (1990a).
key to such an understanding is conceiving Rev 13 as a source from a Jewish apocalyptic work that John has pasted into his own creation. This is the first appearance of what will be a series of backhanded allies to the position I espouse regarding the Apocalypse of John; commentators who freely chop John’s work into a pile of sources often do so by recognizing the Jewishness of the text and using the contradiction between this Jewishness and their own conception of what a Christian text can be to justify excising what does not fit their definition of Christianity. I understand them to be correct in seeing reference to the Judean War in Rev 13 and incorrect in insulating the rest of the Apocalypse of John from such an insight.

Rev 13, then, is the second part of John’s parable on Roman religious and cultural domination of the circum-Mediterranean world before and during the Judean War. In John’s view, the result of such domination, such immense δύναμις (power) and εξουσία (authority), is a corruption of worship life (Rev 13:4, 15) and of cultural and economic life (Rev 13:17). And—John knows, thinks, or fears—those who do not submit to the domination of religious and cultural life by the beast may suffer death at its hand. This fear of religious and cultural oppression during a period described as war (Rev 13:7) fits well into the situation of Jewish Diaspora communities during the Judean War. The problem at issue is not the status of Jesus as Lamb of God, Christ, or anything else, but the relation of John and his community to the broader Greco-Roman religious and cultural complex during a period of intense strife.

2.3 The Warriors’ Secret Chorus

The third portion of John’s parable concerning the conflict of Jerusalem and Rome (or of good and evil, for in John’s view the correlation is nearly perfect) treats the inauguration of the destruction on earth of the legates of the beast. In narratological terms, the fabula worked out in Rev 14:1-12 is quite simple: (1) a party stands on Zion and sings a secret song together with a voice or sound from heaven; (2) an angel proclaims a gospel; (3) another angel announces the fall of Babylon; (4) another angel announces the fate of those who worship the beast. Although the Apocalypse of John is filled with hymns sung in heaven and on earth, John does not write down the hymn that the 144,000 warriors sing. Like the curiously anticlimactic breaking of the seventh seal in Rev 8:1, which results only in a half hour of silence, or the seven thunders whose sound John is forbidden to record (Rev
10:4), the song of the 144,000 is a key element in the plot of John's vision, but one that hardly makes an appearance in his text.

The secret chorus brings on the announcements of the angels, and John's comment on the third announcement in Rev 14:12 is "Here is [RSV: a call for] the endurance of the holy ones [RSV: saints], those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Both elements of John's comment—endurance and keeping commandments—are present in the description of the 144,000. First, the 144,000 do nothing but stand fast and sing; that is, they endure. The specific situation and location of the warriors on Zion is also relevant in light of the situation of the defenders of Jerusalem. With several Roman legions surrounding the city, its defenders could do little more than worship God and hope for divine assistance. Second, the characterization of the warriors' moral conduct (Rev 14:4-5) specifies (however slightly) what keeping the commandments might mean. In a certain way, the witnesses of John and Josephus agree here: the Diaspora did nothing to lift the siege of Jerusalem. The difference is that John understands his community to be called to endurance, faithfulness, and obedience as active means of participating in the community of God's creatures in heaven as well as on earth, while Josephus sought to portray a Diaspora pacific out of sensible distaste for rebellion.

2.4 ἐντολή and νομός and Jesus in the Dock

The narrative of the woman and the dragon, the beasts on earth, and the chorus announcing the downfall of Babylon is the wider innertextural context within which the designations "those who keep the commandments of God and the witness or faith of Jesus" lie. John's vision of heavenly and earthly conflict may be understood as a parable on the historical situation of Asian Jews during the Judean War. The question at hand is what would it mean for John's audience to keep the commandments of God and the "witness" or "faith" of Jesus. Quotations insulate these translations precisely because the terms ἐντολή and μαρτυρία are up for grabs in this investigation.

46 Ὡδε ἡ ὑπομονὴ τῶν ἁγίων ἔστιν, οἱ τηροῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ.
47 I.e., the context within the Apocalypse itself as a literary text. See Robbins (1996).
Thanks to Paul, or at least to Paul’s readers, νομός ("law") rather than ἐντολή ("commandment") has been the bugbear of Christian, particularly Protestant and especially Lutheran, theological self-identification and polemic. From a traditional Protestant point of view, Catholics, Jews, or both are “under the yoke of the law.” In spite of the misrepresentation of Judaism (and Catholicism) that such a polemic entails, it has drawn scholarly attention away from the term ἐντολή as a marker of specific Jewish practice. The case has been made that the term νομός (as well as the Hebrew term הֶרֶם that it most commonly translates in the Septuagint) has a wider semantic range than does ἐντολή (commonly translating ח nestled), which makes νομός more suited to broad applications, such as its use in the metaphysical speculations of Philo of Alexandria48 or Paul’s dialectics in Romans. One might also compare the use of הֶרֶם to designate the Pentateuch or even the whole Hebrew Bible. Conversely, ἐντολή retains a more restricted reference to specific practices or prohibitions. The use of νομός (especially in its speculative sense) and “Law” (in its Christian theological sense, with a capital “L”) as ordering principles for theological reflection and distinction should not blind us to the power of ἑντολαί or enjoined practices to characterize and differentiate religion understood polyadically. Krister Stendahl’s powerful argument that when Christians read Paul they face the danger of wearing Luther’s glasses (1963) should warn us of the danger of reading Luther’s Recht when we read νομός and, conversely, of the danger of reading nothing in particular when we read ἐντολή.

Vast scholarly resources have been spent on explaining the terms τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦν and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦν. I do not expect that οἱ τηροῦντες τὰς ἑντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ should generate the same amount of commentary—it is a simple phrase that should yield almost immediately an intelligible understanding: keeping the commandments of God means doing the things that God commanded in the covenant with Israel. The use of ἑντολή, in the Septuagint makes this abundantly clear. What is required is not that volumes of ink be spilt in agony over the term ἐντολή but that

interpreters face up to the implications of John’s expectation that his audience keep the commandments of God: they are to practise the practices entailed by the covenant between God and Israel. The details of what this might mean were of course a matter of debate for Jews in the first century as in any other century, including our own, but the Apocalypse of John gives every indication that its first-century debate was not with Judaism but within Judaism.

My interpretation, then, of the more enigmatic phrases τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ proceeds first on the understanding that keeping the commandments of God means Jewish practice. Second, I take the subjective genitive that is obviously the sense of τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ as the proper understanding of the genitives τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ.49 Third, I read μαρτυρία on the basis of its usage elsewhere in the Apocalypse of John and in the Septuagint (especially its uses in conjunction with ἐντολή). Πίστις is a more difficult case, because it rarely occurs in conjunction with ἐντολή, so I depend on parallelism with τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ to make a proposal within the semantic field of πίστις.

The implications of the subjective genitive are straightforward: the ἐντολαί of God are the commandments that God commands, that is, they proceed from God; the μαρτυρία of Jesus is the testimony that proceeds from Jesus; the πίστις of Jesus is the “faith” or “faithfulness” that proceeds from Jesus.50 Taking seriously the subjective genitive character of these phrases closes off two of the most simple “Christian” explanations of τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ: the former is not

49 τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ is widely understood as a subjective genitive. This insight is less frequently applied to τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ. John’s characterization of Jesus as a witness, a μάρτυς, in Rev 3:14 also lends support to the interpretation of τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ as a subjective genitive.

50 See Hays (1983). Parallel phrases in Paul’s letters (e.g., ἐξ ἐργῶν νόμου) have also received radical reinterpretation as subjective genitives by Gaston (1984) and Stowers (1994).
witness to Jesus\textsuperscript{51} (much less “martyr” for Jesus), and the latter is not faith in Jesus.\textsuperscript{52}

To take the first instance first, Rev 12:17 describes the offspring of the woman as τῶν τηρούντων τὰς ἑντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἕχοντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ (“those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus”). Several times in the Septuagint, μαρτυρία stands as a parallel to ἑντολὴ.\textsuperscript{53} In these instances, μαρτυρία usually translates ἡμῖν. The sense of μαρτυρία here is of a testimony or proclamation from God of essential information, that is, πρᾶξις (“the revelation of divine commandments”). Carl Schneider’s formulation of μαρτυρία in the Septuagint as “the revelation of divine commandments” (1967: 485)\textsuperscript{54} fits its context in Rev 12:17 better than his direct treatment of that text, where he considers it a subjective genitive but can do no more than apply Bousset’s broad characterization of Rev 1:2 as a “plerophoric expression for the Christian revelation in general”\textsuperscript{55} to Rev 12:17. The use of μαρτυρία in combination with ἑντολὴ in the Septuagint suggests a much more specific notion of μαρτυρία than “the Christian revelation in general.” It suggests that keeping τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ implies comporting oneself according

\textsuperscript{51} Contra Allo (1921); Aune (1997-98); Harrington (1969); Prigent (1988). J. P. M. Sweet offers a more subtle Christianizing interpretation, which interprets ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ as an objective genitive but understands it by harmonizing it with 1 Timothy so that it means witness to/by Jesus’ crucifixion and “commandments” mean “the rule of faith and life enjoined by the gospel” (1981: 104). Such watery formulations are the result of harmonizing such disparate, even antithetical, documents and traditions. See also Dehandschutter (1980) for another specific study of “witness” in the Apocalypse that minimizes any hard connection with the commandments or covenant of God and Israel.

\textsuperscript{52} Contra Allo (1921); Aune (1997-98); Beale (1999); Beckwith (1919); Caird (1984); Garrow (1997); Harrington (1969); Lohse (1979); Rowland (1993).

\textsuperscript{53} E.g., Deut 6:17; 2 Kgs 23:3; 1 Chr 29:19; 2 Chr 34:31; 2 Esdr 19:34 (LXX) = Neh 9:34; Ps 118 (LXX); Sir 45:17. In its Herculean efforts to find new ways of discussing πρᾶξις, Ps 118 (LXX) parallels ἑντολὴ and μαρτυρία—as well as several other terms—in the following sets of verses: 21-22, 35-36, 45-47, 78-79, 87-88, 110-11, 128-29, 143-44, 151-52, 166-68.

\textsuperscript{54} In greater detail, Schneider suggests that “Yahweh himself is the subject of the μαρτυρεῖν contained in μαρτύριον. But this μαρτυρεῖν is worked out in the revelation imparted to Moses. The commandments are its content.” (1967: 486).

\textsuperscript{55} Schneider (1967: 500) quoting Bousset (1906: 183).
to the covenant of allegiance and practice between God and Israel to which Jesus is, for John and his community, a paradigmatic witness.

Such an interpretation of μαρτυρία in Rev 12:17 raises the question of John’s use of μαρτυρία and related terms in the rest of his Apocalypse as well as the question of how Ἰησοῦ relates to the μαρτυρία as “the revelation of divine commandments.” There is no question as to whether all of John’s uses of μαρτυρία and related terms connote fidelity to divine commandments—they do not. In a few cases, they mean “bear witness” in the sense of transmitting or guaranteeing information concerning some matter or other. The phrase την μαρτυριαν Ἰησοῦ occurs (with minor variations) at several instances in the text. Every instance of μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ admits an interpretation based on a subjective genitive and may perhaps be paraphrased generally as “Jesus’ paradigmatic testimony to the covenant of allegiance and practice between God and Israel.” The assertion within the Apocalypse of John that the author and members of his community suffered because of their maintenance of the covenant—articulated as that to which Jesus bears witness—is clear in Rev 1:9 and 20:4. These two instances of την μαρτυριαν Ἰησοῦ fill in the blanks of the more abbreviated phrases, which suggest people suffering for the witness they bore (Rev 6:9 and 12:11). Here, the chain of witness that John draws in the initial sentences of the Apocalypse of John is worked out in his vision of social conduct. In the difficult circumstances of the Jewish Diaspora during the Judean War, John understands it as incumbent upon him and upon members of his community to stand as witnesses in the way Jesus stood as a witness to God’s covenant with Israel: they are to keep the commandments of God, fulfill the practices enjoined, refrain from those prohibited, seek purity through means provided in the covenant. The “two witnesses” of Rev 11:3, who prophesy before the Lord of earth in the great city, can then be understood as minor types of Jesus who bear the witness

59 The common identification of the two witnesses are with, for example, Joshua and Zerubbabel, Elijah and Moses, or Peter and Paul. It is not clear that such correlative explications of the two witnesses can ever be illuminating or convincing. The fact that the witnesses lie dead for three and a half days before being raised associates them with continued
that Jesus bore and who announce the partial destruction of the great city as Jesus inaugurated the resolution of the cosmic conflict between good and evil that takes place in Rev 12 through 14. This understanding of John’s use of terms based on the μαρτυ- root places John squarely within first-century Judaism and avoids the Christian theological hand-wringing (and tail-chasing) that the interpretation of Rev 12:17 and 14:12 usually evoke.

The one set of terms based on μαρτυ- left to discuss consists of instances where John pairs μάρτυς with πιστις.60 John’s obvious connection between these terms makes some sense of the fact that in Rev 12:17 the protagonists keep the commandments of God and the μαρτυρίαν of Jesus, whereas in Rev 14:12 they keep the commandments of God and the πιστὶν of Jesus. The consistent translation of ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός (Rev 1:5), with its attendant interpretation, is “faithful witness.” The frequent relationship between μαρτυ- roots and πιστις—not only in the pairings offered here in note 60, but also in their parallel positioning relative to τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεου—suggests, however, that πιστὶς functions as a parallel to more than a modifier of μαρτυ- roots. First of all, the πίστιν Ἰησοῦ that the protagonist community keeps is a subjective genitive, the πιστὶς constituted by or put forth by Jesus. Second, the semantic insight that frees πιστὶς in the Apocalypse of John from an automatic integration into Christian theologies of “faith” lies within James L. Kinneavy’s research into the key role of πιστὶς in Greek rhetorical traditions (1987).

Summarized briefly, Kinneavy criticizes the lack of inquiry into the role of πιστὶς in pre-Christian Greek usage whenever scholars strive to elucidate the concept as it operates in the development of Christianity. In rhetorical theory, πιστὶς designated (1) means or techniques of persuading and (2) states of belief or the state of having been persuaded. LSJ lists these

as the primary meanings of πιστίς.

While Kinneavy's argument is broader than the specific questions generated by Rev 12:17 and 14:12, the particular association of μάρτυς and πιστίς is clear: a witness is a means of proof. A μάρτυς is a πίστις. Aristotle states this clearly when he introduces his discussion of extrinsic proofs: "As for proofs [πίστεων], some are inartificial, others artificial. By the former I understand all those which have not been furnished by ourselves but were already in existence, such as witnesses (μάρτυρες), tortures, contracts, and the like" (Rhetoric 1.2). The burden of Kinneavy's argument is not to demonstrate the rhetorical character of πιστίς, but to criticize understandings of early Christianity that ignore it and to illustrate how embedded in first-century uses of the term this rhetorical sense of the word is. Aristotle disdains inartificial proofs and devotes the bulk of his work to exploring artificial proofs (pre-eminently enthymemes), but in his cursory treatment of inartificial proofs, he says what anyone knows whether they have studied rhetoric or not: "A witness is in every case likely to induce belief" (ο δε μάρτυς πανταχού πιθανός. Rhetoric 2.20.9). A witness (μάρτυς) is the most basic means of persuasion (πίστις).

And so Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός of Rev 1:5 is more than Jesus Christ the faithful witness: it is "Jesus Christ the persuasive testimony." That is, πιστός concerns Jesus' role as powerful sign of God's covenant, rather than the Christian theological problematic of the personal quality of "faith." And, addressing the angel of the assembly of Pergamum in Rev 2:13, Jesus calls Antipas ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστός μου ("my witness, my proof"). So too the one who addresses the angel of the assembly at Laodicea in Rev 3:14 is ὁ Ἀμήν, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός ("the amen, the trustworthy and true witness"). Even the "amen" has new rhetorical resonance here. So too when John claims in the closing sections of the Apocalypse that his words are πιστοί καὶ ἀληθινοί (Rev 21:5; 22:21).
22:6), he is making both a claim about their (desired) persuasive effect and a claim designed to achieve or consolidate that effect.

In the hope of making detailed sense of John's characterization of his audience as "those who keep the ἐντολαῖς of God," "the μαρτυρίαν of Jesus," and the "πίστιν of Jesus," I have reversed the traditional strategy of interpretation. That to which John has given first place, I have considered first. I have interpreted the repeated phrase τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ before moving to the varied τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ. The result has been a firm conviction, consistent with my interpretation of Rev 2:9 and 3:9, that John cares first about practice and that the practices he cares about are those given in God's covenant with Israel. This understanding of τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ has formed the basis for my understanding of τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ and τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ. Jesus is, for John, the witness (μάρτυς) of the covenant or the proof (πίστιν) of the covenant, the guarantor and inaugurator of the fulfillment of God's promises and God's justice. Taken together with his accusations that his enemies are a "synagogue of Satan" (and his clear polemic against idolatry), John's claim that his community does (and should) obey the commandments of God articulates his concern for their conduct in the context of the Judean War. They are to remove themselves from the wider Greco-Roman cultural complex and hold fast to the specific practices entailed by God's covenant with his people. This is a new picture of the Jewish Diaspora during the Judean War—even if they were of no military relevance to the proceedings of war, they were, in a sense, supporters. John's call to stand fast among the nations belies the homogeneity of disdain for the war that Josephus depicts in the Diaspora. The next chapter treats a promise even more audacious than John's call to stand fast: John's promise that God will defend the holy city Jerusalem.
In the previous chapter, I developed the notion of parables of the Judean War and focused on two text groups that emphasize proper conduct in the context of the Diaspora, particularly the Diaspora during the Judean War. The two text complexes under examination in this chapter are specifically concerned with the role and status of Jerusalem for John's Jewish community in the context of the Judean War. Regarding the 144,000 from Israel or on Zion, I suggest that these episodes are expressions of confidence on John's part of God's protection of the Jewish people and of the city of Jerusalem. Regarding the two witnesses episode, I argue that Rev 11 treats two cities and foresees the preservation of Jerusalem and then gives an initial glimpse of the destruction of Rome.

1. The 144,000 from Israel or on Zion

Twice in his vision, John sees a group of 144,000 individuals sealed on their forehead with the seal of God, presumably the name of God. In the first instance (Rev 7:4-8), the people are drawn from every tribe of the children of Israel (ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς υἱῶν Ισραήλ). Occurring after the breaking of the sixth seal and before the breaking of the seventh, the sealing with the name of God protects the people from the presumably catastrophic consequences of the final seal. The immediate consequence of the breaking of the seventh seal, however, is only a half-hour of silence. The second instance of a group of 144,000 (Rev 14:1) offers a portrait in somewhat
more detail. They are standing on Zion with the lamb; they too have the name of God written on their foreheads; they have kept themselves from being defiled with women and are "virgins" (οὐτοὶ εἶσιν οἱ μετὰ γυναικῶν οὐκ ἐμολύνθησαν, παρθένοι γάρ εἰσιν). Like the children of Israel who precede the thirty minutes of silence, these followers of the lamb learn a secret song that inaugurates the fall of Babylon. Several features group these two parties: their number, their association with Israel or Zion, their marking with the name of God, their position in the narrative preceding a passive climax, and so forth.2

The traditional question that interpreters of Rev 7:4 and 14:1 pose for themselves is the question that John faces, and dodges, regarding the innumerable multitude of Rev 7:9: "7:13Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, ‘who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come?’ 7:14I said to him, ‘Lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘these are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb.’ "3 The answer the angel gives to his own question is not cast in terms of the Jew/Christian/Gentile triad that governs most interpretation of the Apocalypse of John. Nor is the identity of the 144,000 "sealed" in question—they are children of Israel, that is, Jews.

André Feuillet’s work on Rev 7:4-17 (1967) chronicles the dizzying array of baroque proposals scholars have offered to identify the 144,000. Feuillet’s initial sentence describes the condition under which previous interpretations, as well as Feuillet’s intended novel solution, labour: “Chapter 7 of the Apocalypse is by all evidence a vision directed to the consolation of Christians: it seeks to convince them that, in their difficult struggles, they

[2] By "passive climax," I mean to describe the structure of the seventh seal, which, even though it is the climax of the seals, consists only of a half-hour of silence (Rev 8:1), and of the climax, in a secret song that the narrator will not narrate, of the events leading up to the announcement of Babylon’s destruction.

are assured of victory" (1967: 191). And so, after dismissing out of hand critics who look to the idea of an external source to provide a sufficient explanation of any perceived overlap between the 144,000 and the innumerable multitude (e.g., Vischer 1886; Völter 1885), Feuillet evaluates negatively interpretations that understand the 144,000 to be Christians in general as well as those that understand them to be Jewish-Christians. Instead, Feuillet proposes that the 144,000 are a remnant of Israel constituted by Jews not hostile to "la nouvelle religion" (1967: 211). Feuillet's conclusion—that "the first party of chapter 7 of the Apocalypse presents the commentator with a substantial difficulty" (220)—is dependent on his, and others', starting principle that the 144,000 are protagonists within a Christian document. The discourse between John and the angel in Rev 7:9 does not treat the identity of the "first party" precisely because, in a framework that does not employ the category "Christian," their identity does not pose any "substantial difficulty": the children of Israel are Jews.

The appearance of the 144,000 standing on Zion in Rev 14:1, described in 14:3-5, does not occasion the same questions of identity that interpreters wrestle with when reading Rev 7:4-8. In the case of Rev 7:4-8, the problems are largely created by trying to map a binary division between those from Israel and those from "every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues" onto a tripartite division of Jews/Pagans/Christians. Because Rev 14:3-5 offers some description of the 144,000 that exegetes can chew on (e.g., sexual continence), little notice is given to the larger binary structure of Rev 14:1-12. Just as the 144,000 drawn from the tribes of Israel are complemented by the innumerable multitude from "every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues," the 144,000 standing with the lamb on Zion are complemented by "every nation and tribe and tongue and people," to which the angel of Rev 14:6 announces its eternal gospel (εἰκαγγέλιον

4 Le chapitre vii de l'Apocalypse est de toute évidence une vision destinée à la consolation des chrétiens: elle doit les convaincre que, dans leurs rudes combats, ils sont assurés du triomphe.

5 La première partie du chapitre vii de l'Apocalypse met le commentateur en présence d'une difficulté redoutable.


**PARABLES OF THE WAR**

ἄιὼν εἰκαγγελίσαι). Just as surely as the parties of Rev 7:4-9 are Jews and Gentiles, so also are the parties of Rev 14:1-12.

Without striving to change a binary division into a trinity, without trying to insert Christianity into a picture that makes more sense without it, we can see these parties of 144,000 as what John portrays them to be: Jews within Judaism, warriors during wartime. And then John's visions of those Jewish warriors fits into his parable on the Judean War in Rev 12-14 and into the exhortation and promise of Rev 7.

1.1 **Allies in the Source Critics**

In proposing that the 144,000 marked with a seal in Rev 7:4-8 and the 144,000 standing on Zion with the lamb in Rev 14:1-5 are Jews within a binary division marked by John between Jews and Gentiles rather than a party within a tripartite arrangement of Jews/Gentiles/Christians, I find somewhat ambivalent allies in those critics who use scissors to interpret the Apocalypse of John. Though there is neither manuscript evidence nor any evidence in the form of independent and closely parallel materials to support a division of the Apocalypse of John into a patchwork of sources, the freedom to posit such a composition history has often created space for interpreters to comment on, or at least identify, particular parts of the Apocalypse of John as if those parts were of Jewish rather than Christian origin. And so interpreters of the Apocalypse of John such as Stanislaw Giet (1952a; 1952b; 1957) have been able to speak simply about the meaning of passages such as Rev 7:4-8 and 14:1-5 without having (anachronistically) to wedge Christianity into the picture.

In the late nineteenth century, Daniel Völter, Eberhard Vischer (backed by his mentor, Adolph Harnack), and Friedrich Spitta engaged in a heated controversy over the composition history of the Apocalypse of John.6 Völter's first proposal (1882) was a single reworking of an "Urapokalypse"

---

6 Völter (1885; 1886; 1911); Vischer (1886); Spitta (1889). The titles of Vischer's and Völter's brief 1886 monographs illustrate the tenor of the controversy: Die Offenbarung Johan, eine jüdische Apokalypse in christlicher Bearbeitung. Mit einem Nachwort von Adolf Harnack and Bearbeitung Die Offenbarung Johannis, keine Ursprünglich jüdische Apokalypse: eine Streitschrift gegen die Herren Harnack und Vischer, respectively.
from John the Apostle\(^7\) undertaken by a Christian redactor. Soon after, Vischer suggested that if one merely excised the messages to the assemblies (Rev 2-3), the final section (Rev 22:6-21), as well as any other reference that looked Christian,\(^8\) the underlying Jewish apocalypse would become clear. Völter responded over and over again, culminating in his complex 1911 hypothesis of five sources (see note 7). In the period from Völter's initial proposal of 1882 to Charles's massive commentary of 1920, scholars contended over myriad proposals regarding the composition history of the Apocalypse of John.\(^9\)

In spite of their disagreements about the composition history of the Apocalypse of John, Völter and Vischer agree on assigning Rev 7:1-8 to the earliest stratum of the Apocalypse of John—in Völter's view, a Christian stratum, in Vischer's, a Jewish stratum. Furthermore, they agree on a differentiation between Rev 7:1-8 and the description of the innumerable multitude that follows in Rev 7:9-17—Völter assigns the account of the innumerable multitude to a Christian redactor under Domitian, Vischer to a "John" after the Judean War. Most other nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century source critics of the Apocalypse of John join them in assigning

---


8 I.e., all or most of Rev 1-3; 5:6, 8, 9-14; 6:1, 16; 7:9-17; 9:11; 11:8, 15; 12:11, 17; 13:8, 9-10; 14:1-5, 10, 12-13; 15:3; 16:15, 16; 17:6, 14; 18:20; 19:7, 9-10, 11, 13; 20:4, 6; 21:5-8, 9, 12, 14, 22, 27; 22:1, 3 as well as several individual words.

9 In addition to the works of Völter and Vischer, see also Bousset (1906); Erbes (1891); Rauch (1894); Sabatier (1887); Schmidt (1891); Schoen (1887); Spitta (1889); Weiss (1904); Weizsäcker (1882; 1886; 1892); Wellhausen (1907); Weyland (1888).
Rev 7:1-8 to a stratum of the Apocalypse of John before 70 CE; all of these but Erbes assign it to an author they designate Jewish. The appearance of the 144,000 on Zion in Rev 14:1ff. is less commonly assigned to an early or Jewish source, largely because of the mention of the lamb in Rev 14:4. The place of sexual continence in Rev 14:4 is also at odds with most nineteenth-century constructions of Second Temple Judaism. Moreover, within the mindset characteristic of the nineteenth-century source-critical enterprises, parallel episodes such as Rev 7:4-8 and 14:1-5 provoke hypotheses of redaction, and so Rev 14:1-5 is frequently seen as a Christianizing rewriting of Rev 7:4-8. The significance for my argument here is that the work of the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century source critics suggests a common agreement on the problems that Rev 7:4-8 and 14:1-5 pose for an interpretation of the Apocalypse of John when it is understood as a thoroughly Christian document. Rigid and anachronistic conceptions of Judaism and Christianity drove these critics to solve the problems with scissors.

Though the commentaries of Charles and Bousset made some admissions of the use of sources by John, their emphasis on the unity and purposiveness of John as primary author reduced the attractiveness of source hypotheses for most of the twentieth century. The only significant exceptions to this are the articles and commentaries of Marie-Émile Boismard, Ford, and Aune. Though their proposals do not coincide on a large scale,

10 Namely Weizsäcker, Weyland, Spitta, Erbes, Rauch, and Schmidt.
11 Völter assigns Rev 14:1-3 to the earliest (Christian) stratum and dates it to the mid-sixties CE. Spitta breaks up 14:1-5, assigning 14:1-2a and 4b-7 to a middle stratum under Pompey and 14:2b-4a to the final Christian redactor. Rauch assigns all of 14:1-5 to a Jewish apocalypse of 62 CE. Schmidt places 14:1-5 in a Jewish "Book of the Messiah" dated to Vespasian's reign, but later than the "Vision of the Seals," which include 7:1-8 and which Schmidt dates to before 70 CE.
12 See Erbes; Sabatier; Schoen; Vischer; Weiss; Weizsäcker; and Weyland.
these scholars date Rev 14:1-5 to 60 to 70 CE. In this, they reverse the common nineteenth-century position that saw Rev 7:4-8 as the earlier of the parallel passages.

More than a century of source criticism—from Völter to Aune—has produced no compelling theory, no wide agreement. In its most common use in the 1980s and early 1990s (Yarbro Collins 1984a: 65; Roloff 1993: 127-35), source criticism functioned only as a hedge against exegetical difficulties. It is a weak hedge and poor protection. The value of dwelling on this trajectory of scholarship, however, lies in the problems it faces rather than the solutions it offers. As the source critics faced the Apocalypse with all its challenges, with all the aporias outlined above, they juggled two variables: (1) textual integrity and (2) the hermeneutic framework that accompanied their conception of Christianity and its application to the Apocalypse of John. They squarely faced the incompatibility of these variables and chose to hold onto the latter. Textual integrity was the ball they dropped, but the text of the Apocalypse of John seemed to shatter along different lines each time a new critic dropped it. My suggestion is that they dropped the wrong ball. Turning specifically to the instances of the 144,000, the source critics are valuable in their frequent willingness to locate these instances in a pre-Christian context, often in the context of the Judean War.14 It is only the Christian framework of value that prevents most of the source critics from taking an extensive historical-critical interest in the circumstances of the sources they discern.

1.2 Clean from Women

The common interpretation of the nineteenth century—that the phrase “it is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins” definitely indicated a Christian rather than a Jewish provenance for this

__________ (continued)


14 The common strategy of assigning Rev 7:4-8 and 14:1-5 to different redactions proceeds largely from the internal tendencies of source criticism. For interpreters writing before the wide dissemination of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the value placed on sexual continence in Rev 14:4 distanced the text from Judaism.
The preference for source solutions has largely passed, and the valuation of sexual continence that Rev 14:4 indicates is now frequently set within the range of attitudes to sexual activity, sexual inactivity, and purity within Second Temple Judaism. With regard to Rev 14:4, Yarbro Collins has undertaken comprehensive analyses (1984a; 1987). With regard to Second Temple Judaism most widely, Gabriele Boccaccini has provided a broad discussion of the ideals of virginity and sexual restraint (1991: 204-12). The most momentous change since the nineteenth century has, of course, been the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Elisha Qimron (1992) and Joseph Baumgarten (1989) have treated sexual ethics and practice there in detail. My task here is only to make the barest synthesis of these investigations and then to suggest in the next sections what bearing the Judean War might have on the motif of sexual continence in the Apocalypse of John.

In several instances, Jewish literature of the Second Temple period proclaims sexual morality as a point of significant differentiation between Judaism and other nations. This may take the form of condemnations of promiscuity, homosexuality, or pederasty. The set of values that underlies these condemnations valorizes a structure of monogamy with procreative potential. Moreover, the long entanglement of the metaphor of adultery, the practice of worship of other gods, and the mixture of sexual activity and cultic practice in surrounding Syrian religions infuses such a monogamous structure with explicitly religious values. The metaphorical sexual accusations in the Psalms of Solomon show a similar set of concerns in the Second Temple period. Finally, the systems of purity that characterized...

15 And so has the justification for considering Rev 14:1-5 a Christianizing redaction of Rev 7:4-8. The works of Ford and Yarbro Collins (discussed below) have been influential in this matter.

16 Aune (1997-98), Ford (1975), Thompson (1990a), and Yarbro Collins (1984a) all make some measure of reference to tendencies to sexual renunciation in Second Temple Judaism. Though Schüssler Fiorenza (1986: 133) refers in a note to Yarbro Collins (1979), she does not take up Jewish parallels as an explanatory strategy. In her 1991 commentary, Schüssler Fiorenza ignores entirely the possibility of situating the sexual renunciation alluded to in Rev 14:4 in a Jewish context.

17 For ethical advice that treats some or all of these practices, see Aristeas, Letter 150-52; Pseudo-Phocylides, Sentences 175-206; Sib. Or. 3.185-86, 596-600, 764-66.

18 The advice in Pseudo-Phocylides, Sentences 175-206 is particularly clear in its concern with procreative potential in marriage and sexual activity.
Israelite and Jewish life served to maintain boundaries between religious insiders and outsiders, but also have had the effect of highlighting the boundary crossings that sexual activity entails—on a physical level, the transfer of bodily fluids and eventual birth of a child from the womb to the world, and on a social level, the transfer of people and power between families and generations (see Douglas 1984). The nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century conception of Jewish sexual morality, which formed the background in contrast to which Rev 14:4 was read, emphasized the positive attitude toward procreative marriage.

However, on the basis of the purity systems that made properly restricted and procreative sexual alliance a powerful religious differentia, the idea of more extensive (though not necessarily lifelong) sexual continence became an attractive means of expressing and attaining holiness for Philo of Alexandria, for the Therapeutae and Therapeutrides he describes, and for the Essenes at Qumran. 19 Philo certainly lauded procreative monogamy, 20 but Boccaccini (1991: 207) has traced the trajectory in Philo’s writings that moves from the joint conception of flight-from-evil ≈ flight-from-women (seen in Philo’s readings of the order of creation [e.g., Opf. 152, 165-66] and in his description of the Essenes [Hyp. 11.14-17]) to a conception of virginity that has positive value in itself (e.g., Cher. 50). Philo does not conceive of a lifelong virginity but of continence after having engaged in a divinely sanctioned sexual relationship. Philo’s idealized, if not almost entirely fabricated, description of the Therapeutae and Therapeutrides, given in De Vita Contemplativa, portrays a community of celibate men and women who in their life of ascetic devotion attain the “best and most divine part of philosophy”: contemplation. Two elements of Philo’s description suggest that the celibacy of the Therapeutae and Therapeutrides was not

19 The formulation “Essenes at Qumran” is highly contestable within current debates over the identity of the group that produced the Dead Sea Scrolls. See Collins (1989, especially note 12) and Schürer et al. (1973-87: 2.554-85) for the debate.

20 Perhaps one of the clearest examples is the statement of Philo’s Joseph: “Before the lawful union we know no mating with other women, but come as virgin men to virgin maidens. The end we seek in wedlock is not pleasure but the begetting of lawful children (πρό δὴ συνόδων νομίμων ομίλων έτέρας γυναικός ούκ ἴσμεν, ἀλλ’ ἁγνοὶ γάμων ἁγναίς παρθένοις προσερχόμεθα προτεθειμένοι τέλος σου ἡδονήν ἀλλὰ γνησίων παιδῶν σποράν. Jos. 43-44 [trans. Boccacini 1991]).
lifelong: he indicates that they give up their families and that most of the women are “elderly virgins” (Vit. Cont. 68). Philo’s description of a state of sexual restraint that enables people to attain an exalted spiritual status illuminates John’s description of the 144,000 followers of the lamb.

In a milieu very different from Philo’s cosmopolitan Diaspora Judaism, the Essene community at Qumran appears, by most evidence, to have valued sexual restraint highly. The exterior testimonies to the Essene movement make frequent reference to the value of sexual renunciation, but often imply that it is not a lifelong celibacy (as is the case in some later Christian ideals). Documents from within the library of the sect at Qumran do not explicitly advocate celibacy, but in a few cases they imply it. Qimron (1992) has undertaken to relate the practice of sexual renunciation attributed to the sectarians at Qumran to the concerns that loomed large in their religious reflections for the purity of Jerusalem and its temple. The relation is simple: as part of their rejection of the current custodians of the temple in Jerusalem, a subset of the Essenes sought to keep in their “exile” the purity practices that were normally incumbent upon priests in the temple. Among these practices was the renunciation of sexual activity on the premises of the temple or the holy city; to live in the exiled (but true) community of the people of God was to live in the temple. Here the renunciation of sexual activity is a performance of purity.

Finally, it is quite possible to derive an ethic of sexual renunciation from speculative texts, such as the Book of the Watchers (1 En 1-36) or Jubilees,

21 I understand γηραΐαί παρθένοι to be women who have committed to continence after having previously engaged in a divinely and socially sanctioned sexual relationship, terminated most probably through the death of a husband or joint entry into the continent community. Vit. Cont. 13 clearly states that the members of the community have often given up their property to sons or daughters.

22 Josephus Ant. 18.18-22; War 2.119-61; Philo Liber. 75-91, Hyp. 11.1-18; Pliny Natural History 5.15.

23 E.g., the special provision for childless old men that Philo records in Hyp. 11.13 suggests that many or most members of the Essenes were not childless. In describing why (his) Essenes eschew marriage, Philo gives both social and ascetic reasons.

24 Notably in the distinction in Damascus Covenant between those who dwell in camps and those who walk in the perfection of holiness. The former take wives and marry, while the latter receive a guarantee that they will live, by God’s power, for a thousand generations (CD 7.4-8). The clear implication is that those who walk in the perfection of holiness do not take wives and marry. Qimron finds further support for these notions in the designation of Jerusalem as “the camp of holiness” in 4QMMT b 29-30, 59-62.
or from speculative discourses, such as that on levirate marriage attributed to Jesus (in which Jesus indicates that there is no marriage in heaven, but that those who are resurrected are like the angels). The description of the fall of the Watchers in 1 Enoch, with its constant refrain that the Watchers defiled themselves by having sexual relations with women, and Enoch's dialogue with the Lord depend on an underlying conception of sexual relations as defiling and unsuited to spiritual life. With specific concern for the analogy of the Garden of Eden to the Temple of God, Jubilees envisions no sexual relations within the Garden (Anderson 1989: 148). Though certainly not dominant in Second Temple Judaism, or even within a specific sect such as the Essenes, sexual renunciation was by no means unknown in Second Temple Judaism, nor can it be employed as a criteria of differentiation between Judaism and Christianity in the first century.

When one turns specifically to the relevance for the Apocalypse of John of the trajectory within Judaism that understood sexual renunciation as a means of cultivating purity or holiness, the work of Yarbro Collins stands out as the most comprehensive treatment. In Crisis and Catharsis, and more extensively in her 1987 Society of Biblical Literature seminar paper, Yarbro Collins discusses several aspects of the sexual renunciation that Rev 14:4 implies. First, she notes that Rev 14:4 does not imply lifelong celibacy or virginity in the way that later Christian ideals of priestly or monastic life did (1984a: 129). Second, she draws positive analogies to the sexual asceticism implied by the Qumran documents and by external testimonies to the Essenes (129-30). Third, she attributes this concern about sexual practice to desires on the part of sectarians at Qumran to take on the practices incumbent on priests and those incumbent upon participants in holy war (1984a: 130; 1987: 87-88). Finally, she sets this concern for sexual renunciation within the appropriation of priesthood in Rev 1:6 and 5:10 and the broader concern with sexual renunciation in 1 Cor 7, Matt 19:12, and

26 1 En 7.1 (Gk); 9.8; 10.11; 12.4; 15.3, 4.
27 Ford (1975) briefly mentions the sexual economy of Qumran (perhaps construing it too simply) but does not develop the comparison. This is all the more surprising, given that Ford attributes this section of the text to a follower of John the Baptist, and therefore to one who might be supposed to have valuable knowledge or experience of the Jewish sectarian movements that coexisted in the Judean desert.
the Apocryphal Acts (1984a: 130-31). In all these matters, I am happy to benefit from and concur with the results of Yarbro Collins's research. Excepting of course her location of the Apocalypse of John in a tradition of sexual asceticism conceived of as Christian even as far back as Paul, and in a community conceived of as Christian,\(^28\) I suggest only that Yarbro Collins's conclusions be intensified.

1.3 Priests in the Temple, Warriors in Wartime

The particular axes of intensification that I have in mind might be understood as spatial and temporal. Yarbro Collins rightly understands that the 144,000 are cast as priests\(^29\) by John's description of them as unblemished (ἀμωμοί) and as first fruits (ἀπαρχῆ), but their sexual purity is also a function of their location on the Temple Mount. The description of their location as "on Mount Zion" is only the most obvious instance of John's conception that his protagonist community dwells in heaven, and that heaven is well understood as temple.\(^30\) Chapter 11 of this book takes up this theme in more detail, but two examples from the literature of the Second Temple period make it clear (1) that the purity that characterizes heaven might be understood to preclude marital relations and (2) that the idea of the sexual purity properly due to the temple could be extended with sectarian self-understanding. First, in Enoch's dialogue with the Lord over the sins of the Watchers, the Lord dictates to Enoch what he is to say to the Watchers and explains, "but you [the Watchers] formerly were spiritual, living an eternal, immortal life for all the generations of the world. For this reason I did not arrange wives for you because the dwelling

\(^{28}\) "... there was, therefore, a recognizable early Christian tendency towards continence, one with which John was likely familiar" (Yarbro Collins 1984a: 131).

\(^{29}\) Or as sacrifices—the metaphor is perhaps confused. The description of Israel itself as "first fruits" in Jer 2:3 (עַתָּחָה, ἀρχὴ γενημάτων) and the understanding of Israel as priests in relation to humanity as a whole in Jubilees bring the two categories, priest and sacrifice, together (see Himmelfarb 1997).

\(^{30}\) The relation should, of course, go the other way: the quality of the temple that requires purity is its imitation or instantiation of heaven. Purity is required in the temple precisely because it is an essential characteristic of heaven.
place of the spiritual ones is in heaven” (1 En 15:6-7). Clearly, marital relations and heaven do not mix in this view, which I think John may share. More interestingly, “the spiritual” dwell in heaven—a view that, again, I think John shares. Second, the Qumran documents emphasize broadly that the religious observances once called for by Jerusalem or the temple are now, for the sectarians, incumbent upon them in their retreat from Jerusalem. In John’s case, it may be that sexual purity, understood literally, figuratively, or both, was a condition of participation in the people of God who dwelt in heaven.

The temporal axis of intensification I want to undertake is simply to argue for a closer connection of the warriors on Zion with the Judean War. I have elucidated Rev 12-14 as John’s parable of the situation of Judaism and Rome in the context of the Judean War (pp. 134ff.). In spite of the war of the beast on the holy ones (Rev 13:7), there stands on Zion a company of righteous warriors, led by the Lamb of God. In the face of the impurity of the beast and its followers, they are pure; in the face of the corrupt worship of images offered to the beast on earth, they worship alongside the angels in heaven, offering an ineffable hymn to God. Their worship brings God’s

---

31 ις δε υπήρχετε πνεύματα ζώντα αιώνια και ούκ ἀποθνήσκοντα εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰώνος. 15, καὶ διὰ τούτο σὺκ ἐποίησες κην ημῖν θηλείας παρθένων τὰ πνεύματα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ κατοίκησας αὐτῶν.

32 Bernard Lang (1985) discusses at some length the Jewish and Christian conceptions of heaven that clearly exclude any sexual activity there.

33 Schürer et al. (1973-87: 2.579-83) and Vermes (1981: 180-82).

34 Schüssler Fiorenza helpfully connects the sexual purity that characterizes the 144,000 to John’s other metaphors of refraining from sexual immorality and his concern that his community avoid meat offered to idols and participation in Pagan religion more generally (1986: 133). She goes on, however, to claim that John placed no value on sexual renunciation in a literal sense and that no androcentrism that would characterize his community inheres in his use of the metaphor of avoiding pollution by women. Yarbrough Collins disputes this interpretation directly (1987: 86). Philo, Vit. Cont. 68, makes it clear that παρθένοι need not connote lifelong sexual inactivity. The status of παρθένοι seems to be a status that one can attain rather than one that can merely be lost. The other factor that cautions against an overly rigid interpretation of παρθένοι in Rev 14:4 is the hyperbolic expression and intensification of moral norms that accompanies John’s eschatological expectation. The RSV’s translation “they are chaste” might be quite accurate.

35 See Yarbrough Collins (1976) on the theme of Holy War in the Apocalypse of John.
judgement upon Babylon (Rev 14:8). The notion that brings together the
two axes of purity I have discussed is the idea of the wartime camp. From
the Hebrew Bible\(^\text{36}\) to the scrolls at Qumran,\(^\text{37}\) a properly pure camp is
crucial to the practice of holy war. John’s description of the 144,000 from
Israel and standing on Zion appears, especially in the latter case, to be a
description of a group of properly pure warriors for God. In the context of
the Diaspora during the Judean War, purity itself may have been the
essential task John envisioned for his community.

Yarbro Collins has made an immensely important contribution to the study
of the Apocalypse of John with her development of the idea of “perceived
crisis,”\(^\text{38}\) and it is certainly a relevant notion in imagining John’s situation as
a Jew in Asia Minor during the Judean War. Nevertheless, conceiving the
Apocalypse of John as a Jewish document makes clear the direct relevance
of the Judean War to the picture of the 144,000 on Zion in Rev 14:1-5 and
avoids completely the problematic mapping of a social division of Jews,

\(^{36}\) Exhortations to maintain the purity of the camp (דַּעַת וּמַעֲרֹת) are extensive in the
Pentateuch. Lev 14:1-8 and Num 5:1-4 treat issues of skin disease, bodily discharge,
and corpse impurity as impurities that ought not to contaminate the camp. Num
31:17-24 prescribes a rigorous purification after the sexual contact with the Midianite
women that, it is implied, was had by the warriors of Israel following the counsel of
Balaam. Without this purification, the warriors cannot re-enter the camp. Deut 23:9-14
is perhaps the clearest example of the purity proper to the war-camp. It may be that
Deut 23:10 includes impurity through sexual relations or nocturnal emission.

\(^{37}\) Among the Qumran materials, the importance of the metaphor of “camp” (דַּעַת וּמַעֲרֹת) and
the need for purity, including purity from defilement that sexual relations might entail,
is quite clear in the Damascus Document, in the War Scroll, and in the Halachic
Letter. In the War Scroll, the purity of the wartime camps that sally out from Jerusalem
can admit no women (1QM 7.3-4). In the Halachic Letter, the “temple [is the place of
the tent of meeting and Jerusalem is the camp; and outside the camp is [outside
Jerusalem]]” (4QMMT 32-35); similarly, in the midst of extensive prescriptions on the
purity of the camp, the Halachic Letter states: “Jerusalem is the holy camp” (4QMMT
62-65). In the Damascus Document, the city of the temple is not to be defiled by
sexual relations, even between husband and wife (CD 12.1-2). Finally, the Purification
Rules mandate that menstruating women must not defile the camps of the holy ones of
Israel (4Q274 frag. 1, col. 1, 4-6).

\(^{38}\) Yarbro Collins’s first debt in her chapter on “perceived crisis” is to John Gager (1975;
Yarbro Collins 1984a: 84 n. 1).
Christians, and Pagans onto the literary division of Jews and Gentiles depicted in Rev 7:4-9. Instead, the sealing of the 144,000 drawn from Israel may be understood as a promise of protection for faithful Jews and for those Gentiles who stand by them through the coming judgement of “kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free” (Rev 6:15).

2. The Great City and the Holy City

In Rev 11:1, John is commanded to measure the temple of God in the holy city. By Rev 11:8, the two witnesses of God are lying dead in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. My purpose is to present the thesis that the holy city “is” Jerusalem and the great city “is” Rome, without recourse to speculations about poorly spliced sources. Furthermore, it is my task to argue for the historical setting of this interpretation within the Judean War.

As in many settings, arguments for one interpretation or another depend largely on agreement over what is the first-order understanding of terms and over which elements of a text to interpret “spiritually” and which “literally.”39 John’s reference to “the great city which is spiritually [πνευματικώς] called Sodom and Egypt” only raises the stakes in such a decision. John consistently uses the phrase ἡ πόλις μεγάλη to designate the antagonist city Babylon/Rome and ἡ πόλις ή ἁγία to discuss Jerusalem.40 References to ἡ πόλις without any descriptive modifiers are set clearly within a broader discussion of the protagonist city or the antagonist city. On the basis of John’s deployment of the term “city” and the consistency with

39 The quotation marks that insulate phrases such as “literal” and “spiritual” are a gesture toward the broad body of literature dedicated to the problems of signification. The simplest word, “is,” suffers the problem most acutely.

40 See Rev 16:19; 17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21. Even as he identifies the “great city” of Rev 11:8 as Jerusalem, Aune notes, “elsewhere in Revelation the phrase ‘the great city’ refers to Rome” (1997-98: 2.619) and also “in all other references to the ‘the great city’ in Revelation, Rome is meant” (620). Finally, Aune notes in his comment on Rev 11:9a that “the international origin of the people present would actually be more appropriate for Rome” (621).
which other occurrences of the term are modified negatively or positively to refer to Rome or Jerusalem, it is not unproblematic to identify the holy city and the great city in Rev 11. The first-order uses of the designations “holy city” and “great city” are Jerusalem and Rome respectively.

Several traditional assumptions, all of which I strive to subvert, undergird the identification of the holy city and the great city in Rev 11. The first, which I have contested throughout this study, is that the Apocalypse of John is a Christian document and is thus likely to have a negative view of Jerusalem such as that which Rev 11:3-13 implies of the “great city.” There is no need, at this point, to enter into a detailed critique of the first part of this view. The second part—the assumption that a Christian document might freely denigrate Jerusalem—is problematic, and secondary scholarship that is not directly concerned with the Apocalypse of John argues against such an idea.\footnote{See Walker (1996). The destruction of Jerusalem was, of course, immensely significant for later Christian attitudes, but the implications of the destruction were not necessarily understood immediately.}

Turning more specifically to the Apocalypse of John, many commentators suggest that the author values a “heavenly” or a “new” Jerusalem but devalues an “earthly” or “old” Jerusalem. Here, commentators frequently confuse distinction and opposition. John distinguishes between heavenly and earthly phenomena but, simultaneously, understands them as analogous. So he sees in Rome the earthly analogue of the cosmic entity Babylon; in the saints for whom he writes, the earthly analogue of the saints who are under the altar in the heavenly temple; in the children of the woman clothed with the sun, the earthly analogue of the army of Michael that defeats the dragon in heaven. In Jerusalem—the earthly Jerusalem—John sees the earthly analogue of the heavenly city of which he considers his companions on earth already citizens.

There are several ways to portray the conflict that is fundamental to the Apocalypse of John: satan versus God, the beast versus the saints, Rome versus Jerusalem. It is always an act of choice, of selection, and even of reduction to distill a literary work and to state what it is about. John’s own usage, however, suggests that the conflict of cities, Rome/Babylon versus Jerusalem, is one perspective on the Apocalypse to which the author seems eager to lead us. Thus, it is both possible and profitable to understand the
Apocalypse of John as a narrative about the conflict of two cities: Jerusalem and Rome. The persuasive project of the Apocalypse may be understood as revealing Rome—the centre of economic, political, and ritual power—as negative in every sense and replacing orientation to that centre with orientation to the New Jerusalem. Phrased in more anthropological terms, the question at issue in the Apocalypse of John is the audience's relation to the dominant Hellenistic/Roman culture. John's project is to ensure that the relation is countercultural rather than subcultural (with the promise that the audience will be the dominant culture in the eschaton, if they maintain their countercultural relation). His primary means of accomplishing this is the metaphor of city and citizenship.

My proposal is that Rev 11:1-13 is to be read as a parable on the Judean War set in two scenes: the first is set in Jerusalem during the Judean War, the second in Rome at the same time. In this parable of the war, John admits the dire situation of Jerusalem, but he promises that its vulnerability is only partial and temporary and he offers a vision of the destruction of Rome as punishment for its rejection of God's message and, more surprisingly, for its crucifixion of Jesus in Rome (understood "spiritually"; cf. Rev 11:8).

42 David L. Barr discusses the Apocalypse as a symbolic transformation without particular reference to cities (1984). Celia Deutsch focuses on the symbolic transformation of the New Jerusalem but does not treat the transformation as a rhetorical event with social consequences (1987). Edith M. Humphrey concentrates on the relations among female figures and cities in four apocalyptic works, including John's Apocalypse, with the question of identity in mind; though she does not treat historical and political circumstances in detail, she notes the potential for social analyses of these images (1995: 174-75).

43 For this four-part taxonomy of cultures, see Robbins (1993) and Yinger (1960; 1982). A counterculture differs from a subculture in its self-conscious effort to hold different values than the dominant culture, whereas a subculture shares the same broad value system, but understands itself as fulfilling those values more fully than the dominant culture does.

44 Jonathon Z. Smith suggests that this enterprise of orientation is the central project of religion: "Religion is the quest, within the bounds of the human, historical condition, for the power to manipulate one's 'situation' so as to have 'space' in which to meaningfully dwell. It is the power to relate one's domain to the plurality of environmental and social spheres in such a way as to guarantee the conviction that one's existence 'matters' " (1978: 291).

45 Feuillet is actually the source of the "scene" terminology: "Trois scènes sont à expliquer la mensuration du temple (vv. 1-2), les deux témoins (vv. 3-13), le dernier malheur et la septième trompette (vv. 14-19)" (1957-58: 184).
2.1 Sources and Critics

It would be possible to investigate at great length the various identifications of the holy city and the great city in Rev 11 and the sources proposed for the chapter. A few selections will represent the origin and development of these possibilities. In reading Rev 11:1-13, just as with the texts of the 144,000, interpreters weigh textual integrity, broad conceptions of Christianity, and the problems specific to the texts being interpreted. Reading the aporetic text complexes I have focused on, it seems clear that one of these factors must be modified in order to produce a valid or valuable interpretation of the text's problems. In the case of Rev 11 and the problem of the relation of the holy city to the great city, several scholars have been willing to compromise textual integrity in order to solve or remove problems. Julius Wellhausen was the first to propose a source-based solution to deal with the relation of Rev 11:1-2 to 11:3-13. He suggested that Rev 11:1-2 constituted "an oracle from one of the zealot prophets" (1907: 15).46 Others, such as Yarbro Collins (1984a: 65-69), have posited that in Rev 11:1-13, John employs two sources, perhaps from the Judean War. Many commentators who take this line also suggest that the phrase "where their Lord was crucified" is a later Christian gloss.47 These suggestions reflect an understanding of Christianity and Judaism in which the former cannot value Jerusalem and the latter cannot revere a "Christ."

Changing the shape of the source question, it is clear that the contents of the prophetic book of Zechariah provide John's primary source material for Rev 11:1-13—not in the sense of something to be pasted surreptitiously into his text, such as Q in Matthew and Luke, but as the pre-eminent reservoir of material that John takes up and fits to his place and purpose. It is important to realize how John uses Zechariah. Like his use of materials and motifs from the Hebrew Bible more generally, his use of Zechariah is oblique, without citation or quotation.48 The common observation that John considers himself a prophet in continuity with the prophets of the Hebrew

---

46 Ein Orakel von einem der zelotischen Propheten.
48 Most commentators note the lack of citation formulae in the Apocalypse of John. In addition to the commentaries, see Beale (1984; 1998), Jenkins (1972), Moyise (1995), and Ruiz (1989) for further studies on John's use of the Hebrew Bible.
Bible needs to be extended to note that he develops, rather than inverts, the materials that he draws from the prophetic (and proto-apocalyptic) trajectory of the Hebrew Bible. It is worth stating simply: John develops rather than inverts prophetic materials. That is, he does not take a view like Marcion's, for example, which reads the Hebrew Bible as a narrative of the deception of dupes by an evil demon rather than of covenant between God and a chosen people. In the case of Rev 11:1-13 and the prophecies gathered under the name of Zechariah, John owes clear debts in four areas:

1. God’s reaffirmation of his commitment to Jerusalem and its temple;
2. the process of measuring Jerusalem in preparation for its restoration;
3. the two olive trees/lampstands; (4) the promised destruction of Babylon and the nations. In the Apocalypse of John as a whole, John’s debts to Zechariah are much wider, but there is never a clear reversal of God’s favour to Jerusalem, to the temple, to Israel. John’s appropriation of Zechariah is positive, with no overtones of inversion or supercession.

2.2 Measuring the Temple

The first scene of John’s parable, Rev 11:1-2, is a reworking and combination of Zech 2:2-8 and Ezek 40:2ff. As I have indicated, John does not invert the positive disposition toward Jerusalem that Zech 1-8 exemplifies. He transforms it, or uses it as a platform for his own visionary portrait, but he does not invert its values. In Rev 11:1-2, the command to measure the temple and its worshippers stands in a tradition of discussing the value, fate, and future of the temple by depicting a scene in which God commands the visionary to travel to or measure it. In the case of Zech 2:2-8, the rebuilding of the Second Temple was underway in 520 to 518 BCE. In the case of Ezek 40-48, the First Temple was destroyed with no clear prospect of rebuilding. In the historical context of Rev 11:1-2, the temple and the city were surrounded by a substantial Roman force, and there was

49 The scholarly division of the book of Zechariah into 1, 2, and 3 Zechariah does not seem relevant to John’s use of those materials, though I will only speak with any specificity of the historical context of materials drawn from 1 Zechariah (1-8).

50 To the list above, I would add only the most significant and obvious motifs: the priesthood of Joshua/Jesus, the four horsemen, the motif of the Lord dwelling in the midst of the people, the gathering of the Gentiles to Jerusalem in the end time, and several others. These debts are, of course, not owed exclusively to Zechariah.
little reason for confidence in a Jewish victory by military means. Within the context of the period of the cessation of hostilities, from late 68 to early 70 CE, Rev 11:1-2 communicates the expectation that although the city and the outer courts of the Temple might may fall, such a defeat would only be temporary.

The clearest pretext for Rev 11:1-2 is Zech 2:2ff. In Zech 2:2, the prophet looks up to see a figure with a measuring instrument and asks, "Where are you going?" The figure replies, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its breadth and what is its length." What follows in Zechariah's third vision is the restoration of Jerusalem under God's protection, with predictions of God's vengeance on the oppressor nations, typified by Babylon. This is the same perspective that John conveys in his vision.\footnote{There are, of course, other materials that contribute to, or at least clarify by parallelism, Rev 11:1-2; see 1 En 61.1-5 for measuring the righteous; and Dan 7:25 and 12:7 for the duration of three and a half years.}

Wellhausen's identification of an earlier source for Rev 11:1-2 proceeds from his clearly articulated working hypothesis that "without decomposition, no clarification of the Apocalypse is possible" (1907: 15).\footnote{Ohne Dekomposition keine Erklärung der Apokalypse möglich ist.} Holding to my working hypothesis that the Apocalypse of John ought to be understood first, and probably only, without recourse to conjectural sources, it is possible to reappropriate Wellhausen's historical observations on Rev 11:1-2 and to connect them more closely to the rest of the Apocalypse of John by considering it a Jewish document. Wellhausen suggests that Rev 11:1-2 was composed while the Roman army surrounded Jerusalem, that it was based on a broadly distributed belief that God would protect the temple and those who worshipped there, and that it is not a Christian document (as he considers the Apocalypse of John as a whole to be 1907: 15). Following Wellhausen in his identification of the holy city of Rev 11:2 as Jerusalem need not require one to follow him in identifying a Zealot source for the piece, but the anti-Roman political disposition that undergirds Wellhausen's identification of the Zealot provenance of the text in question is worth retaining. Making sense of the great city, however, depends on following through, with attention to the anti-Roman politics of the Apocalypse of John in the rest of chapter 11.
2.3 Two Witnesses Before the Lord of the Earth

The second scene of Rev 11:1-13, namely 11.3-6, begins with the reference to the two witnesses. The short speech that begins in Rev 11:1 with ἐγείρε καὶ μέτρησον τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ continues to the end of 11:3, but the explication of the speech that begins in 11:4 with οὗτοί εἰσιν αἱ δύο ἑλαῖαι καὶ αἱ δύο λυχνίαι αἱ ἐνώπιον τοῦ κυρίου τῆς γῆς ἔστωτες suggests that the two witnesses are to be understood as giving their prophecy in the great city as an indictment of that city. The first portions of the speech, which refer to Jerusalem, apparently need no explication within the Apocalypse of John. Again, the raw materials that John employs in Rev 11:3-6 are drawn primarily from Zechariah. The fifth vision of Zechariah (4:1-14) offers the main materials that John develops initially in Rev 11:3-6: the olive trees and lampstands before the Lord of the earth. John transforms one lampstand, which the olive trees flank, into two lampstands, which seems to be another way of understanding the olive trees. In Zech 4:14, the revealing angel answers his own question, turned back on him by Zechariah: "Then he said, 'These [the two olive trees] are the two anointed who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.'" In the context of Zech 4, these two "sons of oil" are obviously Zerubbabel and Joshua understood as royal and priestly messianic figures (see Collins 1995: 30-31, including 30 n. 60). It may also be so in the Apocalypse of John. Though in Zechariah it refers clearly to God, the "Lord of the earth" is a problematic locution within the contrast John consistently draws between those who dwell on earth and those who dwell in heaven. On one hand, "the Lord of the earth" might plausibly refer to the Roman emperor within John's nomenclature. On the other hand, given its use in Zechariah and given John's use of Zechariah, it seems more likely that the phrase "Lord of the earth" is just one more element of John's near-citation of Zechariah as he identifies the two witnesses of Rev 11:3. At this point, there is little information identifying the location of the two witnesses and thus the recipients of their indicting prophecy.
2.4 Literal and Spiritual Geography: Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon

It is not until Rev 11:7-10 that John begins to offer several indicators that might help flesh out an audience for the two prophets: (1) Rev 11:7 might imply that the prophets prophesy in the place where the beast dwells; (2) Rev 11:8 names the city in which the prophets prophesy: τῆς πόλεως τῆς μεγάλης, ἣτις καλεῖται πνευματικῶς Σόδομα καὶ Αἴγυπτος, ὅπου καὶ ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν ἐσταυρώθη (“the great city which is allegorically called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified”); 55 (3) the place where the prophets prophesy is the place where the “peoples and tribes and tongues and nations” dwell (Rev 11:9); and (4) the audience of the prophets is characterized as “those who dwell on the earth” (Rev 11:10). Two paths characterize scholarly interpretation of this data. Either indicators one, three, and four are set aside and only the phrase “where their Lord was crucified” within indicator two is used to govern the interpretation the rest of the data, 56 or the phrase “where their Lord was crucified” is written off as a Christian gloss that completely changes the reference of what was previously a pointer to Rome. 57 Third, an exegete may elect, in Chevalier’s anagogical mode, 58 not to suggest any positive connection to a historical city at all. 59 I have grouped together all of the information from Rev 11:8 into one item in order to highlight the ambiguous range of the term πνευματικῶς. 60 Even without this term actively encouraging interpretive agency, it is clear that in such an identification of a

55 The RSV does not translate the καὶ of ὅπου καὶ ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν ἐσταυρώθη. The καὶ makes the identity of the four places (great city, Sodom, Egypt, where . . .) even clearer.
56 Aune (1997-98); Bauckham (1993a: 172); Beasley-Murray (1974); Beckwith (1919); Case (1919); Court (1979: 83; 1994: 50); Glasson (1965); Ladd (1972); Swete (1911); Walker (1996); Weiss (1904).
57 E.g., Charles (1920); Spitta (1889); Vischer (1886); Wellhausen (1907). This approach is most common among the source critics.
58 Chevalier (1997: 129-35); Frigent (1988); Roloff (1993). Several of the commentators in note 56, p. 170, above, suggest that there is also a universal dimension to the great city of Rev 11:8.
59 Interestingly, Chevalier himself posits a double identification: “The city in question is Jerusalem turned sinful, but also Rome identified with Sodom and Egypt” (1997: 319).
60 πνευματικῶς may be accurately translated “spiritually” or, with more specific association to the interpretive process, “allegorically.”
city any reader must go beyond first-order meanings: how could one city be Sodom and Egypt in any literal sense? The phrase ὅπου καὶ ὁ Κύριος αὐτῶν ἐσταυρώθη is also put forth for allegorical interpretation. If we give John's general polemic against Rome its due, if we give John's indications that the two witnesses are portrayed at work in the place where the "peoples and tribes and tongues and nations" dwell and in the place of "those who dwell on the earth" their due, it becomes clear that the great city in which the beast from the abyss slays the two witnesses is Rome.\(^{61}\)

The question of the identification of the great city of Rev 11:8 is made difficult mainly by factors that historical-critical investigation should be able to control, first of all the unwarranted supposition that no one could speak allegorically about the crucifixion of Jesus if that meant placing the blame on the Romans. More simply, however, the later Christian chapter divisions of the Apocalypse of John apparently eviscerate the force of Rev 10:11: "And I was told, 'You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.' " The topic of the prophecy that follows is Gentiles (Schüssler Fiorenza 1991): how they will surround but not capture God's temple in the holy city and how they will be afflicted by God's witnesses in their own capital.\(^{62}\) Construed thus, the prophecies are failures. In the aftermath of the Judean War, the temple is destroyed and Rome is not. The inability to understand the prophecy of the Apocalypse of John as so clearly and fundamentally mistaken is perhaps the most egregious factor that inhibits the interpretation I am advancing. Clearing aside these factors,

---

61 Garrow also concludes that the great city of Rev 11:8 "is" Rome but by indicating that it is to be understood prophetically, allegorically, spiritually (1997: 74). This is an interesting complement to the way I have portrayed the matter: that Rome is portrayed here allegorically as Sodom, Egypt, and the city of the crucifixion. Caird finds some support for his interpretation, and a recognition that the consistent use of "great city" for Rome should bear primary weight in interpreting the phrase in Rev 11:8 (1984). Several scholars note how strange it is to understand John as denigrating Jerusalem. In most cases, they suggest that it is most important to understand a transhistorical symbol of evil, in which Jerusalem and Rome are assimilated into one signifier of the evil city, much in the way "Babylon" operates in the Apocalypse. There is certainly sense in understanding that Babylon encompasses more than the historical Rome, and so also does the great city of Rev 11:8, but this does not justify the understanding that John has contradicted here his uniformly positive presentation of Jerusalem.

62 Yarbro Collins dissociates Rev 11 from Rev 10, saying that the latter is not a continuation of the former but that the content of the little scroll begins in Rev 12:1 (1976: 27).
however, makes it possible to recognize the only literature in the Christian
canon that places the blame for the crucifixion of Jesus squarely on Rome.63
When interpreting in literal terms the geography that John expresses in
spiritual terms, there is no reason to privilege "where their Lord was
crucified." An unreflecting homage to that phrase actually obscures its
unique position in the literature of the followers of Jesus.

The remainder of the parable of the two cities is a relatively simple
matter. The defeat of the witnesses is not final. They are resurrected and
ascend to heaven: "And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a
teninth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake,
and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven" (Rev
11:13). It is important, however, to understand this (failed) prophecy of
destruction within the historical context of the Judean War and within the
broader literary arrangement of the Apocalypse of John. In the historical
context, this image of partial destruction forms the conclusion to this
parable of the war: though it looks as if Jerusalem is in trouble, it is actually
Rome that will see which group has the God of heaven on its side, and
Rome that will suffer the consequence of rejecting the emissaries of God. In
the literary context, Rev 11:1-13 forms the climax of the first great cycle of
God's wrath against Rome and against the earth (Rev 4-11). The remainder
of Rev 11 celebrates the proleptic triumph that the witnesses achieved and
anticipates the broader political triumph that Rev 12-16 portrays.

Taken together, the four text complexes that I have discussed as parables of
the war argue for a comprehensive program of resistance to the Greco-
Roman cultural complex within which John's community of Asian Jews
lived their lives. His accusation that those who ate food offered to idols were
"a synagogue of Satan" constitutes the harshest condemnation of cultural

63 John Dominic Crossan (1995) does not deal at all with Rev 11 but does provide a
compelling description of the early or pre-Christian endeavours to shift blame from the
Roman government to the Jews. In his lack of attention to Rev 11, Crossan does not
differ at all from other studies of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus (e.g., Brandon 1968;
integration. His repeated exhortation to "keep the commandments of God" reiterates the foundations for the conduct he considers proper and the standards to which he wants his audience to adhere. It is especially noteworthy that keeping "the witness of Jesus" and "the faith of Jesus" make good sense in this context; these phrases support the exhortation to keep the commandments of God, and there is no justification for diluting the meaning of "commandments" from that which any other first-century Jew would understand. This accusation and this exhortation are John's parables instructing his audience to maintain their purity in the face of the nations. Regarding the progress of the war in Judea, John depicts, with his visions of the 144,000 drawn from the tribes of Israel and gathered on Zion, a force of pure warriors led by the lamb. And in the parable of the holy city and the great city, John promises that the destruction that appears imminent for Jerusalem will actually be visited on Rome. Though John does envision the lamb and the crucified Lord as central forces in the resolution of the conflicts he addresses, he speaks in these parables as a Jew moving within Judaism and fully loyal to Judaism.
RESULTS: JUDAISM IN ASIA AND DEVOTION TO JESUS

Considered squarely within the framework of Second Temple Judaism, the Apocalypse of John presents with greater clarity its overall message and function, illuminates a poorly known stage in the prehistory of Christianity, and illustrates an important movement in Second Temple Judaism. In chapters 2 through 7, I strove to analyze the problems that arise from a Christian framework of interpretation for the Apocalypse. In chapters 8 through 11, I suggested in detail a new cultural context for the Apocalypse and reread four previously aporetic text complexes within that new context. The result has been an understanding of those texts that avoids the circularities and related impasses that result when they are designated "Christian" prior to the explicit interpretive endeavour.

Thus, the preceding chapters have been exercises in reading old material with new eyes. By resisting the temptation to read the conflict that generates John's accusations that his adversaries are a "synagogue of Satan" as a conflict over the status of Jesus, it has been possible to understand a different axis of distinction underlying that conflict. By taking seriously John's indication that his audience and ideal protagonist community keep the commandments of God, it has been possible, on a social level, to gain some insight into the practical dimension of their religious life and, on a literary level, to understand the accompanying mentions of the witness of Jesus and the faith or proof of Jesus as elements that support the practice of keeping the commandments. By viewing the parties of 144,000 that John sees gathered from Israel and standing on Zion as distinct parties, from the "tribes, tongues, peoples, and nations," it has been possible to elucidate his response to the ongoing conflict in Judea and to identify the categories of people through which John understands the world and their relation to the divine economy of salvation of which he writes. And finally, by reading the
“prophecy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings” as a prophecy about Gentiles and by avoiding the temptation to read the last clause of Rev 11:8 as a literal Christian key to deciphering John’s spiritual geography, it has been possible to understand Rev 11:1-13 as a failed prophecy within the context of the Judean War and to clarify Rev 11:8 as an indictment of Rome for the crucifixion of Jesus.

In each case, these readings depend on the interpretive space opened up by suspending the initial urge to classify the Apocalypse as a Christian document with the accompanying clichés that what looks like conflict with Jews must be conflict over Jesus, that what looks like a positive Israel must be Christianity as a “New” or “True” Israel, that commandments of God must be little more than a vague conception of ethical conduct, and that the earthly Jerusalem must be the opposite of the heavenly Jerusalem rather than its analogue. The understanding of religion that makes such clichés plausible is the monothetic privileging of belief in Jesus as the essence of Christianity and of belief in general as the *sine qua non* of a taxonomy of religions. The story within which these clichés cohere is Christianity’s narrative of its own history and essence synthesized in the canonical Acts of the Apostles, in the work of Eusebius, in the factors that guided the selection and assembly of the Christian canon, and in the metanarrative of Christianity that shapes much commentary on the Apocalypse within scholarship today.

Standing apart from such an understanding of religion and apart from the Christian metanarrative makes new interpretations of the Apocalypse possible, interpretations that have their value, their foundational assumptions, and their persuasive potential within the historical-critical study of religion. The early gestures toward this stance apart from Christianity’s narrative of its own history appear in those source critics who distance the Apocalypse from the Christian metanarrative by cutting the text into rags and scattering the pieces over the prehistory of Christianity. I have taken an alternative approach, treating the text as a whole and letting the story of its setting deviate from the canonical metanarrative. The result is the (preliminary) reconstruction of a Judaism that honours Jesus and that understands its Judaism, in the context of the Judean War, in stark opposition to the wider Greco-Roman cultural complex. It is also worth noting that the first and last texts I reread (Rev 2:9, 3:9, and 11:1-14) are
the only pillars of the mistaken view that John is undertaking a conflict with the Jews, and that it is largely Christian strategies of reading that enable these texts to function as a foundation for anti-Semitism.

My goal in this final chapter is to step back from the minutiae of exegesis and to present my reflection on three broader subjects. The first is the relation among the wartime context of the Apocalypse, the values and dispositions evidenced by the four text complexes that have been the focus of my investigations, the Jewish provenance of the document, and the broader themes and aims of John's Apocalypse; that is, how does one understand the persuasive project of the Apocalypse within this new approach to the document? The second topic concerns the place of the Apocalypse in relation to other materials concerning Jesus; that is, what specifically do we learn about the prehistory of Christianity from the Apocalypse? And the third topic pertains to the place of the Apocalypse in relation to Second Temple Judaism more widely; that is, what can understanding the Apocalypse as Jewish contribute to the study of Second Temple Judaism in the province of Asia?

1. The Persuasive Apocalypse

"Rhetoric" may connote a systematic reflection on the persuasive endeavour. The Apocalypse of John manifests little acquaintance with Greco-Roman rhetorical theory; nevertheless, the rhetorical or persuasive dimension of the Apocalypse is clear in its explicit efforts to dissuade the audience from particular practices (eating food offered to idols, practising magic, etc.) and to encourage specific dispositions (adherence to the commandments of God, allegiance to the God of Israel and his anointed lamb, etc.). Though uncontroversial, this characterization of John's persuasive objectives is inadequate. Most descriptions of the Apocalypse's purpose and function go beyond these simple enumerations of prescribed and proscribed practices to delineate an exigence and the action of a world view in response to that exigence. I have laboured at length in previous chapters to redescribe the exigence of the Apocalypse and now hope to elucidate the larger endeavour that John undertakes: to explain the present
conflict with Rome in the context of God's care for his people and for the nations, and to provide guidance for his community with regard to their relations to the broader Greco-Roman world.

1.1 The Structure of the Apocalypse

Efforts to schematize the Apocalypse of John are notoriously subjective and rarely command significant agreement. With clear awareness of the danger of offering what Schüssler Fiorenza calls "just one more subjectivist enterprise in the analysis of the plan of Rev[elation]" (1985: 176) Schüssler Fiorenza, Yarbro Collins, Aune, and Vanni have all offered their enterprises. The endeavours of the previous chapters enable a fresh approach to the Apocalypse as a whole, and what follows is not so much an outline of structure as an outline of a reading involved in an inevitably circular relation with my studies of smaller text complexes within the Apocalypse. I have made no attempt, and have no desire, to schematize the Apocalypse as a multi-layered hierarchy or to argue for an elaborate analysis in terms of Greco-Roman rhetoric or epistolary theory. Some, such as Aune, provide an analysis of the Apocalypse through up to nine levels of hierarchy, so that, for example, the names of those who accompany the lamb in Rev 17:14—those "called" "elect" and "faithful"—fit into the hierarchy of the Apocalypse as II.D.2.b.(2).{a}.{c}.{2}.{b}.<1>, <2>, and <3>, respectively (Aune 1997-98: 3.914). The very broad structure that I offer has almost nothing to do with such enterprises but does aim to sketch the overall movement of the narrative when it is understood as a Jewish text in the situation for which I have argued. There are, of course, many more structuring devices employed by John—messages, bowls, woes, visions, and so forth—that I have not attempted to integrate into this sketch.

Introduction (1:1-20): This section of course introduces the work, but more specifically it makes explicit claims to a variety of genres, namely revelation (1:1), prophecy (1:3), and letter (1:4). The first genre—revelation, or ἀποκάλυψις—of course gave the text its name. For each

---

of these genres, the writer creates a framework for the body of his text that places him in a position of authority, or, in rhetorical terms, that builds for him an ethos that supports his persuasive endeavour. The Apocalypse starts off by claiming to be an apocalypse; a revelation was a known religious experience, even if it did not quite designate a literary genre. Quickly, the text moves to designate itself as prophecy. In addition, Rev 1:3 also sets the book in the context of communal worship; there is a reader and an audience. Immediately after implying that it is prophecy, the text positions itself as a letter. The three genres are complemented by a threefold intertextual pedigree: a doxology that may be a hymn developed within the Jesus movement, a configuration of two prophecies seen also in Matt 24:30, and a self-identification of the Lord. Like the threefold genre claim, this threefold pedigree creates a context of shared values and authority.

Messages to the Seven Assemblies (2:1-3:22): This section is a set of units that are made to look like letters, or perhaps imperial proclamations, but are not. Frustrating the common impulse to treat them as simpler versions of the rest of the Apocalypse, these messages are not letters in any normal sense: they are addressed by a heavenly figure to an angel. They begin with an address to a single person—a singular “you,” presumably an angel in charge of a church—yet all conclude with “let whoever has ears listen to what the spirit says to the assemblies” (the plural “assemblies” [ἐκκλησίαι] is consistent). They are, just as much as any other part of the

(continued)

recent discussions of the genre “apocalypse” and of the Apocalypse of John as an apocalypse.

3 See Barr (1986) for a very influential argument on the possibility of the oral delivery of the Apocalypse of John within a worship setting. Most recently, Alan Garrow has made a very cogent proposal for understanding the Apocalypse of John as a work serialized, that is, read in specific portions over several meetings, within a community’s worship life (1997).


5 Rev 1:7 and Matt 24:30 both combine, in slightly different ways, Zech 12:10 and Dan 7:13.


7 Yarbro Collins treats the implications of the epistolary framework at greater length (1976: 3-8). She emphasizes the probable liturgical setting of the Apocalypse of John where I emphasize the relation among genre claims and their rhetorical effects.

8 See p. 126.
Apocalypse, set "in the spirit" (ἐν πνεύματι. 1:10; cf. 4:2, 17:3, and 21:10). Nevertheless, the letters lay out some of the practices that the author is most concerned about: eating food offered to idols, following false prophets, and committing sexual immorality (which is often a metaphor for engaging in the wrong kind of relations with a religiously, socially, or politically different group). The letters also pose most starkly the question of group identity. John writes, "I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and learn that I have loved you" (Rev 3.9). Who's who? I have argued that the line dividing insiders and outsiders is based primarily on disposition toward the Roman Empire and the larger Greco-Roman cultural complex. Finally, the letters are a technique of drawing the audience into the plot of the Apocalypse. By having the text say "I have this against you . . ." and by making the threats and promises that characterize the letters more intensely than any other part of the Apocalypse, the narrator draws the audience into the plot. The connections with the letter genre change the report from John ("I saw . . .") to a direct address from Jesus Christ ("I have this against you . . .") and lend force to the threats and promises. In this way, the messages lay out some of the primary issues with which the rest of the Apocalypse concerns itself.

First Cycle: Stating the Problem, Starting the Solution (4:1-11:19): This part of the Apocalypse begins what I see as the primary dramatic program of the Apocalypse: the destruction of Rome and the resolution of humanity into two categories: those marked with the name of the city of the beast and those marked with the name of the city of God, that is, those who dwell on earth and those who dwell in heaven. The opening scene of the section is set in the heavenly throne room, where four fantastic creatures praise God continuously. John adapts most of the material for this depiction of the throne room of God from prophets of the Hebrew Bible. The central problem of the scene is how to initiate the eschaton, how to unleash the end times in which God and his servants will rule. An angel states the problem at the beginning of Rev 5:

---

9 See Hurtado (1985) and Davis (1992) for details.
And I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it.\(^{10}\)

The Apocalypse of John is not a book of suspense. Therefore, soon after the angel asks the question that sets out the problem of the Apocalypse, there is a hymn in the heavenly court that provides the answer (5:9-14). The lamb is able to get the eschaton going because the lamb has already started it. The key action is buying people for God from a group that appears repeatedly throughout the Apocalypse: “every tribe and tongue and people and nation.” The section proceeds with horrible things happening, usually in groups of seven, until in chapter 11 Rome is partially destroyed by an earthquake.

Second Cycle: Rome Fully Destroyed (12:1-16:21): I understand the section running from 12:1 to 16:21 to be a recapitulation and intensification of the previous section. Rather than using the metaphor of breaking seals on a scroll, however, it depicts parallel wars in heaven and on earth to show the conflict between the in-group and the out-group. More intensely than the first cycle of trouble, the second describes the situation in terms of competing cities, competing worship communities, and competing cosmic leaders. The coming of the “son of man,” under the direction of an angel, prepares the way for a series of seven bowls of God’s wrath which culminates in an earthquake that destroys Rome.

Rome Condemned (17:1-18:24): Focusing on sexual (and therefore religious) and economic matters, Rev 17 and 18 pronounce judgement on Rome—directly through the songs and pronouncements of angels in heaven, indirectly through description and the ironic laments of the kings, merchants, and sailors of the earth.

\(^{10}\) Καί εἶδον ἐπὶ τὴν δεξιὰν τοῦ καθημένου ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου βιβλίον γεγραμμένον ἑσωθεν καὶ ὀπίσθεν, κατεσφραγισμένον σφραγίσιν ἑπτά. Καί εἶδον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν κηρύσσοντα ἐν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ. Τίς ἄξιος ἁνοίξαι τὸ βιβλίον καὶ λύσαι τὰς σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ; Καί οὐδεὶς ἔδωκεν ἐν τῷ ὁμόχωρῳ οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς ἁνοίξαι τὸ βιβλίον οὔτε βλέπειν αὐτό.
Jerusalem Vindicated (19:1-22:5): In deliberate contrast to the condemnation of Rome, the rest of the vision depicts the vindication of Jerusalem. Songs, pronouncements, descriptions, and feasts celebrate the triumph of Jerusalem. It is a picture in which “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away” (Rev 21:4), and there is a river flowing with the water of life and twelve trees bearing leaves for the healing of the nations (Rev 22:2). In contrast to the economic complaints against Rome for hoarding wealth in the hands of a few, economic enfranchisement and redistribution is a key theme of this section. But the triumph is also celebrated by describing how bad it will be for the losers: the “great supper of God” is a horrific banquet where the enemies who are not eaten by the birds and their leaders are thrown into a lake of burning sulphur.

Coming out of the Vision (22:6-21): The last twenty-seven verses end the Apocalypse of John in a manner similar to that in which it began: by claiming the genre of prophecy (22:6, 10, 18, 19) and by a series of threats and promises that urge the audience to follow John’s directives.

1.2 Problems and Responses

Lloyd F. Bitzer’s definition of the rhetorical exigence as “an imperfection marked by an urgency; ... a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be” (1968: 6) pushes for specification of the problem John addressed. While I have suggested at length that the problem John faced is the Judean War and the uncomfortable relations between Jews and Gentiles in the Diaspora that the war could create, the problems that a document can attempt to solve are much more limited. Winning is the most commonly desired solution to the problem of war, but John does not attempt to win the war by writing his vision. Neither does he attempt to broker harmonious relations between Jews and Gentiles in the Diaspora. Instead, he addresses more limited questions that the Judean War forces upon him and his community: How will the war turn out, and what logic is behind it? How should we relate to Rome/the world in the meantime? And who is “us,” and how do individuals enter “us”? The answers he offers to these questions certainly depend on the action of a crucial figure in his world view: the lamb, which he less
frequently calls "Jesus" or "Christ." John's answers to these questions might be summarized as follows:

God is in control through his anointed lamb and will save his people from harm and eventually punish those who oppose them. In the meantime, the people of God must extract themselves from religious, economic, and cultural investment in the world. As a defining feature of the eschaton, God has recalled the nations to himself through the action of his lamb, who by blood has bought people from "every tribe and tongue and people and nation" for God; the people of God, the "us," are those who stand in a covenantal relation with God, whether by membership in the people of Israel or by accepting and acting in accordance with their purchase by the lamb.

The dryness and awkwardness of these formulations are obvious indications of the diminuation of visionary and literary power that accompanies any short paraphrase of a work like John's. And problem solving by no means exhausts the power and purpose of John's Apocalypse. Nevertheless, focusing on these problems and on John's responses is a necessary beginning to understanding his Apocalypse.

John's interest in illustrating the controlling power of God and his lamb is evident throughout the Apocalypse. The first sentence of the Apocalypse claims that its subject matter is "things which will necessarily come to be soon" (δει γενεσθαι εν ταχει. Rev 1:1). In the messages to the assemblies, the conquering to which the messages urge their recipients has already been accomplished by the one who sends the messages (Rev 3:21).

The liturgy of the heavenly throne room describes God as the almighty, the παντοκράτωρ (Rev 4:8), and the first cycle of troubles closes with a liturgy praising the παντοκράτωρ for executing judgement, dispensing reward, and "destroying the destroyers of the earth" (Rev 11:18). The second cycle starts with a description of God's victory accomplished in heaven by "Michael and his angels" (Rev 12.7) and the news that the aftermath of the heavenly conflict will be worked out on earth for a short

11 In the case of the final message, the sender is described as "the amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation [RSV]" (ο άμην, ο μάρτυς ο πιστός και αληθινός, η άρχη της κτίσεως του θεου. Rev 3:14) Note the understanding of πιστός advocated on p. 146.
RESULTS

183

time (Rev 12:8-12); those who have died for their witness on earth seem to share in the victory accomplished already in heaven (Rev 12:11). The cycle ends with the “battle on the great day of God the Almighty [παντοκράτωρ]” in which God fully destroys the “great city,” “the cities of the nations,” and the “great Babylon” (Rev 16:14-19). The judgement of Babylon and the vindication of Jerusalem (Rev 17:1-18:24; 19:1-22:5) emphasize God’s power to punish and to reward, commencing with the announcement of Babylon’s judgement and the review of its crimes (Rev 17:1ff.) and concluding with the bestowal upon the servants of God the right to “reign for ever and ever” (βασιλεύσουσιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Rev 22:5).

The call to religious and cultural divestment is similarly extensive. In the messages to the assemblies, it is clearest in the condemnation of eating food offered to idols (Rev 2:14, 20; and, by implication, 2:6). The call to divestment also operates in the description of the imprisoning authority as “the devil” in Rev 2:10 and in the distinction between the audience and “those who dwell on the earth” in Rev 3:10. In the first cycle of troubles (Rev 4:1-11:19), this call to divestment is clearest in the sealing of the 144,000 from Israel and in the purification of the innumerable multitude of Gentiles (Rev 7:4-17). In the second cycle of troubles, the call becomes more explicit. The combination of the description of the mark of the beast without which one cannot participate in economic life (Rev 13:17)—with the consequence that such a mark results in being “tormented with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the lamb” (Rev 14:10)—constitutes an admonition against economic and cultural integration. The calls to divestment reach their peak in the condemnation of Babylon/Rome: “18:4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.’”12 The call to come out is followed by a

12 Καὶ ήκουσα ἄλλην φωνήν ἐκ τοῦ οἴρανου λέγουσαν, Ἐξέλθατε, ὦ λαός μου, ἐκ αὐτῆς, ἵνα μὴ συγκοινωνήσητε ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐκ τῶν πληγῶν αὐτῆς ἵνα μὴ λάβητε· ὁ θεὸς τὰ ἀδικήματα αὐτῆς.
catalogue of sins phrased as the laments of “kings of the earth” (Rev 18:9), “merchants of the earth” (Rev 18:11), and “all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea” (Rev 18:17). The primary focus of the catalogue is economic, specifically targeting commodities available only to the wealthy or by the trade of which wealth was gained (Bauckham 1991). After a description of the extent of its desolation, Babylon’s ultimate sin concludes the condemnation: “And in her was found the blood of prophets and of the holy ones, and of all who have been slain on earth” (Rev 18:24). The call to divest from Babylon does not appear in the narrative again—there is no longer any Babylon from which to divest. But the descriptions of the vindication of Jerusalem and of the holy ones constitute a call to the audience to take action to ensure a seat at the table rather than a place on the table at the “great supper of God,” where the menu consists of “the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great” (Rev 19:17-18). So also with the lake of fire, which is the “second death” (Rev 21:8; cf. 2:12, 20:6, 14).

In light of the goals of this study, it is worth emphasizing the conspicuous absence of any identifiably Jewish party in the groups portrayed negatively in the closing sections of the Apocalypse. In spite of myriad scholarly efforts to reconstruct a “conflict with Jews” as a constitutive element of the Apocalypse, the conflict in the last sections lends no support to such a theory. Take note of the end of the Apocalypse of John: Who are the losers? Who gets thrown into the lake of burning sulphur or eaten by the birds of heaven? Not Jews. It is the kings of the earth and their followers. It is murderers, sorcerers, thieves, and the like. When the flesh hits the fire, the “conflict with the Jews” that crops up in so many accounts of the Apocalypse is nowhere to be seen. Consistently, the line of conflict is drawn on economic grounds and on religious grounds that distinguish John’s ideal worship from the worship of the beast. The latter seems to allude to Pagan religious practice, and perhaps to the imperial cult, but never to Judaism.

13 καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ αἷμα προφητῶν καὶ ἁγίων εὑρέθη καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐσφαγμένων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. The RSV translates ἁγίων as “saints.”
1.3 Parties in Conflict, Shuffling Categories

The third major item on John's persuasive agenda is perhaps the most idiosyncratic: he envisions a transformation of the people of God by means of a massive infusion of Gentiles. Within the narrative program of the Apocalypse, this transformation may be understood as movement among initial and final anthropological categories. The starting categories are (a) Jews or Israel and (b) the tribes, tongues, peoples, and nations. The final categories are (a) those who dwell in heaven and (b) those who dwell on the earth. Between these initial and final categories, four movements are logically possible:

![Diagram of Categories and Transformations in the Apocalypse]

The first and fourth movements receive some attention but are not treated as problems. Jews move into, or more properly retain their status within, the people of God by virtue of their covenant of election with God and their participation in that covenant; by these means, they dwell in heaven. Gentiles confirm their status as those who dwell on the earth by means of their characteristic (from many Jewish points of view) impiety and immorality, that is, by worshipping idols, by sexual promiscuity, by dishonesty, by the practice of magic, by murder, by impurity (see Rev 21:8). The interesting movement is the entry of Gentiles into the people of God,
the people who dwell in heaven; and the absent movement is the entry of Jews into the people who experience “the second death,” the people who dwell on earth. Each of these categories and each of these transformations requires a more detailed treatment.

The Jews, or Israel, make a direct appearance in John’s vision only infrequently. I have contended at length that three of these appearances (Rev 2:9; 3:9; 7:4) have been persistently and grossly misunderstood. The two instances of “Israel” to which I have not devoted sustained attention apparently refer well back into Israel’s history, to the blessing/cursing of Balaam (Rev 2:14) and to the general place of the twelvefold structure of tribes as a common means of referring to the foundation of Israel’s culture (Rev 21:12). It is important to note where these references to Jews and to Israel do not occur. As mentioned, they do not occur within pronouncements of judgement, censure, or punishment. They do not occur within discussions of the death of Jesus. They do not occur in a description of the predecessor of a new people. They are consistently positive terms, consistently denoting a positive relation to God and a positive status within a covenant with God.

The second initial category, the “tribes tongues, people, and nations,” is actually a composite name I suggest to refer to a pattern of naming of which John makes frequent, and subtly varied, use. The connection of this formula to the use of “nations and regions, peoples and tongues” in Daniel is well known. No one, to my knowledge, has observed the connection to the Seleucid formula “kings, dynasts, cities, peoples” (see Briant 1990: 333). It


John’s use is, not surprisingly, not fully parallel to either version but is perhaps closest to the Theodotian version. Charles speculates on possible sources for John and ends up positing either an unknown Greek translation of Daniel or the independent use of a divergent Aramaic Daniel (1920: 1.147-48). These are possible; divergence by John himself is perhaps the most likely.
may be that John had a wider set of potential inspirations for such a formula than just the Hebrew Bible. In any case, the function of this formula in the Apocalypse is to denote a group from which people may be extracted and moved into a favoured relation with God. It is equally clear from the phrase itself, from its intertexts in Daniel and in Seleucid proclamations, that the group it designates are Gentiles, not Jews.

Rev 5:9 is programmatic for the work as a whole: the drama of the Apocalypse is made possible by the lamb’s action of buying people for God “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” with its blood. In Rev 7:9, “a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands” praise God and the lamb for the salvation they have received. Rev 10:11 announces the subject of the prophecy that follows—Gentiles—and Rev 11:9 describes the group that faces the testimony of God’s witnesses; by Rev 11:13, a transformation is underway, and many of them “give glory to the God of Heaven.” During the war between the dragon on earth and the remainder of the celestial woman’s offspring, the beast makes war on the holy ones and is given power over “every tribe and people and tongue and nation” (Rev 13:7). By Rev 14:6, however, “those who dwell on earth, . . . every nation and tribe and tongue and people” receive “an eternal gospel” proclaimed by an angel. This proclamation is perhaps the last chance for “tribes, tongues, peoples, and nations,” because in their last appearance, in Rev 17:15, they are the foundation upon which the harlot is seated. Nevertheless, from Rev 5:9 to 14:6, the text is full of opportunity for people to move from the nations into a favoured relation with God.

Turning to what I have called “final categories,” the positive category is obviously “those who dwell in heaven.” The phrase is actually drawn from Rev 13:6: “and it [the beast] opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.” The concept that the protagonist community dwells truly in heaven is widespread in the Apocalypse. The messages to the seven

17 καὶ ἤνοιξεν τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ εἰς βλασφημίας πρὸς τὸν θεόν, βλασφημήσα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν σκηνὴν αὐτοῦ, τοὺς ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ σκηνοῦσας.
assemblies frequently make promises that imply dwelling in heaven (e.g., Rev 2:7; 3:12, 21), but the most striking assertion of a heavenly dwelling is the suggestion in Rev 5:8 that the prayers of the saints form the incense that adorns God's heavenly throne room. Soon after, Rev 6:9-10 depicts the holy ones who have been slain for the word of God dwelling beneath the altar in God's heavenly temple. They ask for vengeance. The war on earth with the dragon in Rev 12:1-16:21 begins with the proclamation of victory in Rev 12:10-12, which calls on “heaven and you that dwell therein” to rejoice in the victory that has already taken place in heaven. The call to rejoice summons and comforts the saints in light of John’s contention that they already dwell in heaven. The final sections of the Apocalypse, of course, depict dwelling in heaven much more directly. That is the reward promised and due to the holy ones; Rev 21:3 makes this most clear.

The corresponding negative status is dwelling on the earth. The message to the angel of the assembly at Philadelphia speaks of the “hour of testing which is about to come on the whole inhabited world to test those who dwell on the earth” (Rev 3:11). In terms of the narrative of the Apocalypse, the period of testing lasts through the two cycles of destruction, Rev 6:1-11:19 and 12:1-16:21. And in large measure, the people of God are protected from the worst of such testing. The cry of the holy ones in Rev 6:10 asks specifically, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?” There is no exit depicted from the status of being “one who dwells upon the earth.” Among those “from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations” who gaze at the dead bodies of God’s witnesses, “those who dwell on the earth” celebrate their death, for the “two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth” (Rev 11:9-10). Likewise, in Rev 13:7-8, the beast is given power over the saints and every tribe and people and tongue and nation, but it is “all who dwell on earth” who actually worship the beast. In both of these cases, those who dwell on the earth are juxtaposed with the tribes, tongues, peoples, and nations, and no hope is portrayed for the former group. The last two mentions of those who dwell on the earth are set

18 Cf. Rev 8:3, 4.
19 "Εώς πότε, ο δεσπότης ο άγιος και άληθινός, ού κρίνεις και έκδικείς τό αίμα ήμών εκ τών κατοικούντων επί τής γῆς;
within the judgment against Babylon/Rome (Rev 17:2 and 17:8) and are uniformly negative. In the latter case, they are described as those “whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.” It is these who dwell on the earth, who follow the kings of the earth (Rev 19:19), who receive the mark of the beast (Rev 13:14-16; cf. Rev 19:20), whom Jesus himself will kill by the sword, and upon whose flesh the birds of heaven will gorge themselves (Rev 19:15-17, 21).

Such a presentation of initial and final categories is more systematic than John’s own presentation. The final categories could also be described as those who receive the name of God or of Jerusalem written upon their foreheads (Rev 3.12; 7:3; 9:4; 14:4; 22:4) and those who receive the name of the beast upon their foreheads or forearms (Rev 13:16-17; 14:9, 11; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). 20 It is worth noting that the two parties of 144,000 from Israel or on Zion (Rev 7:3-8; 14:1-5) are clearly depicted as being sealed on their foreheads with the name of God. The reward of the righteous is clear: those who “had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands” (Rev 20:4) receive the word of millennial dominion with Christ and the privilege of having God’s name put on their foreheads (Rev 22:4). The binary arrangement of the conflict within the Apocalypse is clear in the initial and final categories that dominate the narrative movement. There is no need for, nor room for, a three-way conflict in which Christians face distinct Jews and Pagans. The category “Israel” is stable and positive in the Apocalypse of John; it is the nations that may change.

1.4 Other Elements of John’s Program

The three major items on John’s persuasive agenda—reassuring the audience of God’s sovereignty, calling for a divestment from “Babylon,” and specifying group identity by illustrating the entry of Gentiles into the people of God—are surrounded and supported by several minor themes in John’s persuasive program. These minor themes are helpful in fleshing out the picture of John’s community. As minor themes I would name moral norms,

20 The beast and the harlot are also identified by the names on their foreheads (Rev 13:1 and 17:5).
worship norms, resurrection, and priestly reform. To suggest that these are
minor themes in his persuasive project is not to say that they are of minor
importance to him. Instead, it may be that in these areas John perceives
large agreement with his audience and is satisfied with their disposition on
these matters. What follows is more a list of directions for further research
than the results of comprehensive study.

On the matter of moral norms, there can be no doubt of the intensity of
John’s concern. The particular moral failing to which John understands his
community to be vulnerable—religious syncretism or openness, exemplified
by eating food offered to idols—has received treatment already. John’s moral
concerns are more extensive than this, and lists such as that in Rev 21:8
make them clear. The particular character of such lists does not function
in any significant way to differentiate John’s moral reflection from that of
other first-century Jews.

Slightly more distinctive is John’s concern over resurrection. The motif
appears frequently at key points in the narrative and functions as a
paradigmatic mark of Jesus’ authority to inaugurate a new age of vindication
for God’s people. That the topic of resurrection had some breadth and
currency in first-century Judaism is evidenced not only by its use as a
differentia for sects of Judaism by Josephus (War 2.8.11-14; Ant. 18.1.3-5; cf.
Mark 12:18-23; Acts 23:6-8), but also in the presentation of continued
existence by the textual sources (1 En 22; Dan 12:1-3; Pss. Sol. 13), of
immortality (4 Macc 12-19; Wis 13), and of bodily restoration (2 Macc 7).
John’s particular understanding of resurrection revolves, of course, around
the resurrection of Jesus.

It has been well noted (and well studied) that the Apocalypse of John is
a book of hymns. Source-critical endeavours have produced little research
that has been broadly persuasive, but few deny a substantial connection to

21 “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators,
sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and
sulphur, which is the second death” (Rev 21.8).
23 To name only specific studies of the hymns and liturgy of the Apocalypse of John, see
Barr (1986); Bauckham (1993b); Carnegie (1982); Farrer (1970); Jörns (1971);
Läuchli (1960); Meynet (1992); Mowry (1952); Nielsen (1992); O’Rourke (1968);
Piper (1951); Prigent (1964); Shepherd (1960); Thompson (1969; 1973); Vanni
(1991); Yarbro Collins (1980).
Jewish worship practices. One of the most interesting avenues of inquiry might be the relationship among meal traditions associated with the death of Jesus (gospels; Paul; the Didache), sacred meal traditions in Second Temple Judaism (Pharisees; Qumran;24 Therapeutae/Therapeutrides), meal traditions in the context of Greco-Roman voluntary organizations,25 and the eschatological banquet of the Apocalypse of John, in which Jesus is not symbolically consumed, but instead the enemies of the people of God are slain by Jesus (the rider on the horse with the sword issuing from his mouth) and consumed by the birds of heaven in the "great supper of God" (Rev 19:17-21).26 It is absolutely necessary to understand the meal tradition in the Apocalypse of John in this broader context rather than primarily in the context of a Christian meal in memory of Jesus.

Finally, priesthood is one of John’s concerns that assumes a distinctive shape within Second Temple Judaism. Martha Himmelfarb has recently emphasized the positive role of priesthood in the Apocalypse of John and set it in fruitful comparison with other Jewish endeavours to extend or transform the category of priesthood.27 She asks the question of Rev 21:22, “Is this rejection of temple ideology or its culmination?” (Himmelfarb 1997: 100).28 My cautious answer, from a historical perspective, is neither rejection nor culmination, but sincere transformation. (From John’s perspective, it may have been culmination, and from that of some other Jews, it may well have been rejection.) John’s extension of priesthood is certainly more extensive than most of the endeavours with which Himmelfarb sets it in comparison, but if the transformation that John

26 Apart from this explicit depiction of a banquet, in which Jesus is the procurer rather than the procured, the later chapters emphasize the “water of life” flowing in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:6) from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev 22:1-3) and offered freely by the Spirit and the bride (22:17). A meal in remembrance of crucifixion is not in view here.
27 Himmelfarb outlines the idea of all Israel as priests in relation to humanity as a whole in Jubilees, of the Pharisees’ extension of priestly purity to non-priests, and of the Rabbinic substitution of table and prayer for temple and sacrifice (1997).
28 “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb” (Καὶ ναὸν οὐκ εἶδον ἐν αὐτῇ, ὁ γὰρ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ναὸς αὐτῆς ἐστὶν, καὶ τὸ ἁρνιόν. Rev 21:22).
expects of Gentiles is rightly understood, he is perhaps asking for more transformation from Gentiles than he is offering of Judaism.

What I have pictured here is a not an author or a community "alienated from the Judaism of [its] time to a significant degree" (Yarbro Collins 1984b: 1278), but an author and a community deeply invested in one of the Judaisms of its time. The effects of such an understanding of the setting of the Apocalypse of John are immense. With such a hypothesis, the unavoidable blanks in a picture of John's social practice are filled in a way opposite to that of traditional Christian exegesis. And so, in the absence of direct discussion of sabbath in the Apocalypse of John, the conclusion that John's religious convictions "probably involved the rejection of traditional observance of the sabbath" (Yarbro Collins 1984b: 1278) is reversed, and the prominence of the number seven, the pattern of rest after six events, and so forth, serve to indicate the basic status of sabbath as a foundation of John's speculative understanding of the cosmos.29 This is but one example of what follows from the understanding of the Apocalypse of John as a Jewish document.

2. The Apocalypse of John and Other Jesus Literature

My intent to read the Apocalypse as a Jewish rather than as a Christian document in no way requires dissociating the Apocalypse from bodies of tradition concerning Jesus of Nazareth. Even though my understanding of religion dissuades me from understanding the Apocalypse as Christian, there is no denying that it has been immensely influential within later Christianity and that it remains a valuable source for understanding the historical and cultural processes that led to the formation of Christianity as a distinct religion. My intent here, then, is to explore briefly the contours and concerns of the Apocalypse in relation to two movements or bodies of literature.

29 See Farrer (1970), as well as all the data on the number seven in Yarbro Collins (1984b). This return of sabbath to the portrait of John's values emphatically does not undo Yarbro Collins's insights into the value of the seven planets in John's thought and the broader movement integrating Hellenistic astrology that many have drawn (e.g., Chevalier 1997; Loisy 1923; Malina 1995).
from the history and prehistory of Christianity: Paul's Gentile mission and letters, lying chronologically prior to the Apocalypse, and the canonical gospels, being chronologically posterior to the Apocalypse.

As I undertake these brief comparative readings, my concern is to delineate axes of solidarity and axes of conflict or anxiety. To summarize in advance, Paul directs his work and energy toward Gentiles and strives to bring them into a new and positive relationship to the God of Israel; his commitment is to Gentiles and his solidarity is with them. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John focus their resources on a conflict with or within Judaism; they strive to manage a problematic relationship to Jewish tradition and to (other) first-century Jews. The Gospel of Luke, together with its companion volume, Acts, strives to position Christianity—named as such—as a Gentile movement that is the legitimate successor of Judaism. In contrast to all of these dispositions and rhetorical objectives, the Apocalypse's primary social commitment is to Judaism, and its rhetorical efforts are spent on behalf of Judaism in relation to the wider Greco-Roman cultural complex rather than on behalf of a sect of Judaism in relation to the wider whole.

2.1 Paul's Anxiety over Gentiles

The letters of Paul are perhaps the only documents in the New Testament that predate the Apocalypse.\(^{30}\) It is a matter of intense and sometimes bitter debate what sort of new religious entity Paul understood his apostolate to the Gentiles to be creating.\(^{31}\) Even if Paul did understand his assemblies of

\(^{30}\) The Gospel of Mark may also predate the Apocalypse, but by as little as a few months.

\(^{31}\) Paul's statement in 1 Cor 10:32 ("Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God"; ἀπρόσκοποι καὶ Ιουδαίοις γίνεσθε καὶ "Ελλησίων καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ) perhaps suggests such a notion, but there is little other support for it. The earliest unambiguous statement of a "third race" is from the third century Kerygymata Petrou (KPet 6.5.41: "For the Greeks and the Jews are the old, but we who worship as Christians are a new thing, a third race"; τὰ γὰρ ἐλληνῶν καὶ Ιουδαίων παλαιά, ἤμεις δὲ οἱ καινῶν αὐτῶν τρίτω γένει σεβόμενοι χριστιανοὶ). For cautions on a rigid understanding of γένος as "race," see Richardson (1969: 23) and Harnack (1961: 177ff.). In the middle of the second century, Justin clearly understood Christianity as a "New" or "True" Israel: "for we are the true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham . . ." (Ἰσραηλιτικόν γὰρ τὸ ἀληθινὸν, πνευματικόν, καὶ Ἰουδαίον γένος καὶ Ἰακώβ καὶ Ἰσαάκ καὶ Αβραάμ . . . ἤμεις ἰσημεν. DTryph 11.15). See Richardson (1969).
Gentiles to be a *tertium quid*, it is a distinct, though related and equally vexing, question whether he thought that Jews were obligated to join this new entity (perhaps forsaking many of the practices and propositions that characterized their religious life) or that their only obligation was to allow Paul to undertake his mission without harassment and with a proper (in Paul's view) understanding of its eschatological significance. Adequate discussion of these matters exceeds the scope of this study. Nevertheless, Paul's description of his mission portrays an endeavour overwhelmingly directed toward Gentiles.32

Several questions concerning Paul's missionary purposes are pertinent. What relation to Judaism did Paul imagine for the communities he founded? How would he characterize his own religious position? How did others view his work? Regarding the communities themselves, there can be no doubt that they were composed of people with little or no ethnic heritage in Judaism. Gal 4:8 and the surrounding description make it clear that the assemblies of Galatia were composed of people whose religious past was in the Pagan world. While it is possible that Paul drew much of the membership for his communities from Pagans who adhered to Jewish communities as "Godfearers," such a scenario is more plausible in some instances than in others. The complex allegories of Galatians depend on an acquaintance with the Hebrew Bible (perhaps through the LXX), but Paul's letter to the Philippians, for example, makes no explicit links to the Hebrew Bible, presumes no knowledge of Judaism.33 Paul apparently fears those who will follow him and who will suggest to the community he has founded that "servants of Jesus Christ" must take on the breadth of Jewish observance, pre-eminently circumcision (Phil 3:2-3). There is no evidence, however, of a Jewish community in Philippi before Paul's time;34 even Luke depicts only a

---

32 Rom 15:15-16; Gal 1:16; 2:2, 9; 1 Thess 2:7 are among the clearest examples of Paul's primary, if not exclusive, focus on Gentiles. "To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews" (καὶ ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαίος, ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κέρδησο. 1 Cor 9:20) might be the strongest counterexample, but it need not refer to more than Paul's flexibility regarding food regulations.

33 Phil 3:4-11 may, in fact, be an effort of Paul's to overcome such relative ignorance, to build up a picture of Judaism's worth before he claims to have given it up for Jesus Christ (Marshall 1993: 366).

34 Davorin Peterlin tracks the lack of evidence, especially with regard to inscriptions in Macedonia (1995: 165-66).
group of women meeting outside the city gates. There is no reason to suggest that the community that Paul founded at Philippi was at all Jewish or that Paul wanted them to become Jewish in any recognizable sense.

Paul’s own religious identity is a much thornier issue. Though he writes “I wish that all were as I am” (θέλω δὲ πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἶναι ὡς καὶ ἐμαυτόν. 1 Cor 7:7), it is not clear what interpreters can base upon such a statement beyond Paul’s obvious concern over sexual activity. As an example, Paul functions as an exemplary Israelite and also as an exemplary Gentile. In Gal 1:15, Paul characterizes his own position in God’s plan for Jews and Gentiles, drawing upon Jer 1:4-5 and Isa 49:1-6. Here, and elsewhere, Paul understands himself in the most exalted terms. Like the servant of Isa 49:1-6, Paul understands himself to be a representative of Israel bringing light to the nations and gathering Israel back to the Lord (Donaldson 1997: 254-56). In Rom 15:15-16, and elsewhere, Paul understands himself to be a priest on a cosmic scale (Donaldson 1997: 254-56). Clearly there are limits to the use of Paul’s self-understanding as a tool for understanding the attitude toward Judaism that he attempted to imbue in the communities he founded. And yet—failing the sophisticated understanding of the diatribe that Stowers brings to Romans (1981; 1994)—such is precisely the way that exegetes have tended to read the dialogical format of Rom 2-3.

Paul’s attitude to Israel is, similarly, a matter of intense debate. What exactly does Paul in Rom 11 understand Israel to have rejected? Christ, presumably; but Christ as what, or Christ for whom? The most common interpretation of Israel’s rejection of Christ is a rejection of Christ as arbiter of membership for all in the people of God, that is, rejection of Christ for all people. A minority position understands Paul to be describing Israel’s rejection of Christ as means of Gentile entry into the people of God, that is, a

35 “I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin” (Λέγω θέν, μή ἀπώσατο θεός τόν λαόν αὐτοῦ; μή γένοιτο καὶ γὰρ εὖ Ἰσραηλίτης εἰμί, ἐκ σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ, φυλῆς Βενιαμείν. Rom 11:1).

36 “Brethren, I beseech you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are” (Γίνεσθε ώς εγώ, ὃτι κἀγὼ ώς ὑμεῖς. Δέομαι δὲ θερμαμεν. Gal 4:12a). Cf. 1 Thes 1:6; Phil 3:17; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1 for Paul urging Gentiles to imitate him.

rejection of Christ as a means of salvation for Gentiles. In this view, Israel's rejection of Christ, its stumbling, does not compromise its membership in the people of God, even if a rejection of Paul's mission practice does raise his ire to a feverish pitch. Some Jews rejected Paul, but Paul did not reject Judaism. So Terry L. Donaldson's seemingly mild formulation—"any rejection of Israel was only partial and only temporary (Rom 11:1-32)" (1997: 253)—turns around the action of rejection. Israel is not rejected; Paul makes that clear. Israel is chastised and criticized, some of Israel is hardened and separated from the tree, but "all Israel will be saved," though paradoxically by the salvation of Gentiles (Rom 11:25-26). Paul makes it clear from the beginning that there is no rejection of Israel: "Has God rejected his people? By no means!" (Rom 11.1).

These sketches of Paul emphasize the role of the categories "Jew" and "Gentile" for the Apostle in order to facilitate comparison with the function of such categories in the Apocalypse. Other topics of comparison could have been chosen: food, gender, eschatology, mysticism, and so forth. Paul operated from within Judaism with a view to the broadest horizons of humanity. There is certainly evidence of tension and conflict with Jews over the work Paul undertook, but his energies were directed to Gentiles and his problem-solving efforts were not concentrated on pacifying relations with Jews or "Jewish Christians." In addition to many specific differences in the areas listed above, the Apocalypse differs substantially from Paul in its orientation toward a Jewish readership, its preoccupation with Jewish relations to Pagan religion and culture. Paul and John share a conviction that Gentiles will enter God's people as a significant element of the end times. They differ in the location from which they observe, comment upon, and facilitate such a phenomenon and in the conditions they understand as applicable to Gentile entry. The metaphor of an expatriate may describe Paul aptly: he is a Jew living outside of Judaism for the sake of Gentiles and, in a longer perspective, for the sake of Jews. John, on the other hand, lives within Judaism, even if it is within a Diaspora Judaism, and strives to separate himself and his community from the broader Greco-Roman cultural complex, convinced that Gentiles will join in such a retreat.

39 E.g., 1 Thess 1:14-16.
2.2 The Gospels' Anxieties with(in) Judaism

One of the obvious modes of undertaking a comparison of the Apocalypse and the Gospels is to examine the particular configurations of traditions regarding Jesus that they share and to produce and defend hypotheses concerning the development of Jesus traditions and the relative positions of the Apocalypse and the Gospels in that development. This work has been done with considerable skill by several scholars. The details of that work are scarcely affected by reconceiving the religious provenance of the Apocalypse. The broad view of the relation of particular mythologemes and taxonomic orderings of religion are of course at stake, but the framework within which the history of traditions concerning Jesus found in the Apocalypse may be analyzed is perhaps best sketched by considering and comparing the particular attitudes to and locations in relation to Judaism.

In a certain way, the simple proposition that the Apocalypse of John is a Jewish document does little to differentiate it from, for example, the Gospel of Matthew, but the task of this study has been precisely to take that proposition and work out its implications, with the result that the particular contours of John’s Judaism and their value in illuminating some of the document’s most aporetic passages become clear. Scholarly arguments have been made that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John can profitably be understood as Jewish documents. My task here is to differentiate the Jewishness of the Apocalypse from that which might characterize each of those Gospels. I find such difference between the Apocalypse and the Gospels mainly in their varying horizons of discourse or axes of solidarity.

The exigence that, on a political level, provokes the Gospel of Mark is widely agreed to be the Judean War. The Gospel is usually dated to the period immediately after the war, and the war figures prominently in its understanding of the definition and future of its audience community. For the writer of Mark, the Judean War functions as a sifting mechanism that vindicated the followers of Jesus and punished those who impeded the movement. Specifically, the Jewish leaders are distinguished from the Jewish

---

40 Charles (1920: lxxxiii-vi) is still one of the most comprehensive treatments.
41 See, for example, Theissen (1991: 258-71). Martin Hengel makes the strongest case for setting the Gospel of Mark before the conclusion of the Judean War (1985: 1-30).
people; the former are characterized as increasingly active adversaries of Jesus and his associates, the latter as initially favourable to Jesus but eventually incapable of understanding his mission or of resisting the influence of their leaders. The Gospel of Mark’s attitude to the temple is part of this negative disposition toward Jewish leadership: it will be torn down and there will be “no stone left upon stone” (οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῇ ὡδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον. Mark 13:2). Stephen Wilson suggests that although the Gospel of Mark does not undertake “reflection on the long-term relationship between Christians and Jews” (1995: 46), the Judean War is decisive in Mark’s understanding of Christian identity in the end times; he also suggests that there is an undeveloped, but undeniable, animus against Judaism in the particular formation of Christian identity that Mark facilitates (1995: 26-46; also Pagels 1995: 6-34).

Between the Gospel of Mark and the Apocalypse of John, there are many points of significant contact and comparison. Like the Gospel of Mark, John’s Apocalypse treats the Judean War as a mechanism of sifting and shuffling. The decisive difference between the two documents may be their position relative to the outcome of the war. The author of the Gospel of Mark writes after the failure of the revolt and understands the war to signal the demise of the basic structures of Jewish piety. John, on the other hand, writing before the disastrous conclusion of the war, never undertakes the strategy seen in Mark of differentiating Jewish leaders and people. The emerging group identity that the Gospel of Mark nurtures (even if eschatological expectations foreshorten the author’s vision of that community’s future) depends significantly on criticism of and differentiation from (other?) Jewish piety and practice and on understanding the Judean

42 The tradition history of the “synoptic apocalypse” is an important one; see, for example, Beale (1984).
43 Gentiles are perhaps another matter in the Apocalypse of John. See, for example, the condemnation of negative reference to kings in Rev 1:5; 6:15; 9:11; 16:12, 14; 17:2, 10, 12, 18; 18:3, 9; 19:18, 19. In several cases, however, kings are only one element of a broader list.
44 The ethnic identity of the author of the Gospel of Mark and of his audience is a matter of argument. Wilson understands that the author and audience of the Gospel of Mark were Gentiles with a “limited view of Judaism” (1995: 42), while the intra-Jewish context of conflict that Mark works out suggests a closer tie to or a setting within Judaism.
War and its outcome as a judgement from God in support of such criticism and differentiation.

The Gospel of Matthew, much more than the Gospel of Mark, is deeply preoccupied with its community’s status within Judaism, even if it is on the verge of rejecting Judaism. This concern translates directly into a preoccupation with Jesus’ status within Jewish tradition. Of course, these concerns and this approach toward the cliff of rejection may be provoked by active repudiation by other Jews. As Wilson suggests, “the abiding impression of the Gospel [of Matthew] is that the shots were being called by the other side” (1995: 56; cf. Stanton 1991: 157). Anthony Saldarini argues that a sociology of deviance is necessary to understand the Matthean community’s position within Judaism Saldarini (1994; 1995). It is important, however, to recognize that the Matthean community seems conscious of its own marginal status and that its efforts are devoted to carving out a place within Judaism.

The Gospel of John is a strange case because its virulent animus against “the Jews” is contained within a discourse whose horizons do not extend substantially beyond Judaism. The Johannine community rejects and is rejected by a community that it calls “the Jews,” and the rejecting community would apparently agree with that designation. The Johannine community has given up all but the Jewish horizon itself. When the Gentiles appear in the Gospel of John, nothing is made of their entreaty to Jesus. It is not clear how long such a perspective of animus against Jews and indifference toward Gentiles could be maintained. Nevertheless, the Gospel of John seems to balance in that delicate position.

With the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, the movement outside of Judaism is well defined. Rather than striving to win the status of

---

45 The picture of the Gospel of Matthew as the product of a sectarian community within Judaism has its origins well before Saldarini (even if Saldarini develops such a thesis most radically). See Bornkamm, Barth, and Held (1963); Kilpatrick (1946); Overman (1990); and Stanton (1984; 1991).
47 Meeks puts it thus: for John, “the boundaries of the story are the boundaries of Israel” (1985: 97).
the proper Judaism (like the Gospel of Matthew), Luke-Acts strives to position Christianity as the legitimate successor to Judaism.48

None of the various perspectives that the Gospels evince—strife against a party in Judaism, competition to be the proper Judaism, obsessive rejection of “the Jews,” and struggle to succeed Judaism—helpfully describe the situation of the Apocalypse. It attempts to speak from within Judaism and on the issue of relation to the Gentile world. It does not share the Gospels’ anxieties with (in) Judaism.

The sketch I have started here and will work out in the next section is distinct from the sectarian theory of the Apocalypse of John that Yarbro Collins expresses clearly in her 1985 essay “Insiders and Outsiders”:

It is anachronistic and misleading with regard to the book of Revelation, as with much of the New Testament, to assume the author thought of the Church as a new religion and a new institution replacing Judaism. It is more appropriate to see a certain analogy between the perspective of Revelation and that of the writings of the community at Qumran. In both cases, there is a kind of sectarian thinking which views the beliefs and way of life of a particular group to be the only legitimate heir of the great tradition, namely the Jewish heritage. The polemic against “the synagogue of Satan” in Rev 2:9 must be seen not as a rejection of a religious and ethnic Judaism viewed from a distance, but as a passionate polemic against a sibling or parent faith, like the attacks of the Qumran community on all other Jews as virtual apostates. (1985: 208)

There are important and valuable insights in this statement, and the approach to the Apocalypse of John as the product of a particular strand of Judaism deserves to be carried much further. I hope to have done some of that work. It is necessary, however, to see where the term “sectarian” coupled with a traditional reading of Rev 2:9 and 3:9 leads Yarbro Collins. She understands the Apocalypse of John to be a Judaism against Judaism; that is she understands much of its energy to be directed toward intra-Jewish vilification and polemic. The position I have argued understands instead

48 This is usually expressed in phrases such as Kraabel’s; for Luke “Christianity had become a Gentile religion legitimately and without losing its Old Testament roots” (1981: 120).
that the energy of the Apocalypse of John directs its energy and its polemic beyond the border of Judaism. Of course, John wants other Jews to behave and believe as he does, and of course he would have no trouble finding other Jews who do not. Nevertheless, his Apocalypse is not devoted to polemic against them. In its application to other Jews, then, the phrase “congregation of Belial” is no parallel to “synagogue of Satan.” Instead of setting the Apocalypse of John against the Judaisms of its time, I endeavour to set it within them.

3. The Apocalypse of John in Asian Judaism of the Second Temple Period

To do a thorough job of setting the Apocalypse within Asian Judaism of the Second Temple period would require a volume in itself, and yet I am allocating less than a chapter to the task. What follows then is selective, rather than comprehensive, and concentrates on interactions with Gentiles.

3.1 Living in Asia

It is worth noting that standard scholarly treatments of the Jewish Diaspora in Asia Minor make no positive use of the Apocalypse. Paul Trebilco declares, in fact, that the Jewish substratum of the first and second Sibylline Oracles “is the only document to have survived from Jews of Asia Minor in this period” (1991: 95). Similarly, Barclay writes, “there is only one piece of Jewish literature in our period, Sibyline Oracles 1-2, which could be linked to Asia Minor” (1996: 259). It is necessary to understand these assessments of the available evidence in order to understand how significant a renewed understanding of the Apocalypse can be, not in overturning old

49 IQH 2.22, contra Yarbro Collins (1985: 209).
50 Barclay (1996); Overman and MacLennan (1992); Safrai et al. (1974); Schürer et al. (1973-87: vol. 3); Trebilco (1991). Several of these use the Apocalypse of John negatively, particularly Rev 2:9 and 3:9, to found discussions of conflict between Jews and Christians. See, for example, Trebilco (1991: 27, 35).
51 Trebilco is quite vague about the limits of “this period,” but the range of dates he offers for the document itself encompasses the date I have proposed for the Apocalypse of John.
52 For Barclay, “our period” is 323 BCE to 117 CE.
interpretations of data, but in addressing the gaps that have plagued synthetic efforts to describe Judaism in Asia Minor.

Philo suggests that "the Jews are very numerous in every city of Asia" (Ἰουδαίοι καθ’ ἐκάστην πόλιν εἰσὶ πολυπληθεῖς Ἀσίας. Leg. 245), and the combination of reports (largely from Josephus) and inscriptive evidence seems to support such an claim. Nevertheless, the evidence that the Apocalypse adds to a picture of Judaism in Asia Minor counterbalances rather than confirms the prevailing consensus on its character. The most recent comprehensive treatments of Judaism in Asia Minor by Trebilco and Barclay have, with different emphases, stressed Judaism's productive integration into the Roman world of Asia Minor. For his part, Trebilco inclines toward formulations such as "reasonable relations," "peaceful existence," and "modus vivendi" and portrays a pacific Judaism that sought to live according to Jewish traditions, keep sabbath, circumcise sons, keep kosher, and pay the temple tax and that sought support from Rome in maintaining these practices (1991: 5-36, especially p. 34). That is, Trebilco depicts a Judaism that viewed the Roman government as a likely ally. Barclay largely agrees with such a characterization of the practices valued by Asian Jews but tends to portray a somewhat more agonistic process by which they sought to maintain them. Both agree that Judaism in Asia Minor in the Second Temple period was vital and prosperous. The Apocalypse does not contradict such a characterization, but it does provide a counterexample to the suggestion that Jews of Asia Minor characteristically sought a close and prosperous integration with the Greco-Roman cultural complex and that they saw the Roman government as their ally in such an endeavour. Trebilco describes a Judaism that is (paradoxically) "at home" in Diaspora (1991: 83); the writer of the Apocalypse warns his readers not be at home anywhere on the earth.

---

53 Collected in CIJ (1936-52) and commented on in Schürer et al. (1973-87: 3.17-36).
54 E.g., "How do we explain these long-running disputes and the recurrent opposition which Jews encountered regarding such basic rights as synagogue assembly, self-adjudication and Sabbath observance?" (Barclay 1996: 271; see 259-81 more widely).
3.2 Money and Cult

Barclay and Trebilco depict two arenas of conflict that confronted Jews in Asia Minor: financial integration and obligation, and cultic participation. Barclay lays out in some detail the troubled financial history of Asia Minor in the period from the Mithridatic Wars until the second century CE (1996: 264ff.). The frustrations of Asian cities with their disadvantageous financial situation under Roman rule led to resentment over the moneys that Jews exported to the temple in Jerusalem that could instead have supported liturgies in the cities of Asia. Economic resentment looms large in the Apocalypse, but the configuration of conflict is different from that portrayed by Barclay: John “dualizes” a phenomenon that is usually triangulated. With strong evidence behind him, Barclay suggests that “to gain redress [for harassment by Greeks over the matter of liturgies], the Jews repeatedly appealed to Roman authorities, who alone could overrule the decisions of Greek city councils in Asia” (1996: 277). Such a triangulation—in this case, among Jews, Greeks, and Romans—is common in ethnic rivalries and perhaps explains Trebilco’s less guarded statements, but John’s Apocalypse does not participate in such a triangulation. Instead, John amalgamates and demonizes the surrounding non-Jewish culture in which his community exists and from which he expects to attract some Gentiles. This is, of course, related to his imminent eschatological expectations. When God is about to end the present age and bring down the new one, what use is there in playing one group of Pagans off against another? The very endeavour of triangulation is a self-consciously worldly strategy that is foreign to John’s eschatological disposition.

With regard to the second major conflict, cultic participation, Trebilco and Barclay both suggest that accommodations were reached, even if there was frequent tension. John’s Apocalypse represents a situation that could only most generously be described as “unresolved tension.” More candidly, the messages to the assemblies, the polemic against the worship of the beast, and the condemnation of Babylon/Rome in the latter half of the Apocalypse make it clear that John’s attitude to Gentile religious observance was uncompromisingly negative and admitted no substantial accommodation or resolution. The particular situation of the synagogue in Acmonia, constructed under the patronage of Julia Severa, represents an “accom-
modation" in which John obviously could not participate. John could certainly not accept as the lifelong head of a Jewish synagogue (διά βίου ἀρχισυνάγωγος) a woman who was high priestess (ἀρχιέρα) of the imperial cult at Acmonia and presider over the athletic games (ἀγωνοθέτης). Moreover, it is not clear that John could have accepted even a Jewish woman as ἀρχισυνάγωγος. The accommodations that were often reached left out the sort of Jews to which the Apocalypse of John provides a valuable witness.

The other dimension of cultic participation, namely Gentile participation in Jewish practices of piety, was not so much a matter of conflict, though the example of Julia Severa makes it clear that agreement on what obligations participation in Jewish life place upon Gentiles would be difficult to attain. The Jewish substratum of the first and second Sibylline oracle depicts Noah as a preacher of repentance to Gentiles, and Trebilco has suggested that the Jews of Apamea were similarly interested in finding a positive place for Gentiles in their Jewish world view (1991: 98). The very phenomenon of "Godfearers" also attests to an openness to Gentiles. John shared in this characteristic of Asian Judaism, but with an apparently rigorous understanding of the obligations and an intensity of expectation that the other literary and epigraphic sources do not match (see, for example, Rev 7:9-16).

High hopes and strict requirements might be characteristic of the apocalyptic genre, but seeing them in John's Apocalypse can help us gain some perspective on the ways in which the conditions of evidence have restricted the scholarly endeavour to imagine Judaism in Asia Minor. For example, Josephus's function as a two-way apologist between Rome and Judaism leads him to portray a Jewish community in Asia Minor that has

55 See Trebilco (1991: 58-60), Brooten (1982: 144, 158), and Schürer et al. (1973-87: 3.30-31) for a discussion of the dedication inscription for the synagogue and the other evidence for the career of Julia Severa.
56 Pippin (1992a; 1992b; 1994; 1995) and Yarbro Collins (1987; 1993) have made important contributions to illuminating John's attitude toward women.
58 See Donaldson (1997: 51-78) for a survey of positive Jewish attitudes to Gentiles.
both deserved and obtained the favour of the Roman authorities. Inscriptional evidence, by its very public nature, has some bias toward groups or individuals who are active in public life. Barclay’s statement that “no single piece of literature can be taken as ‘typical’ of Asian Jews” is surely correct (1996: 259). Given Barclay’s stated opinion that only a single piece of Asian Jewish literature exists, he is asserting, sensibly, that the Jewish substratum of the first and second Sibylline Oracles cannot be taken as typical of Asian Jews. Neither is there any warrant for suggesting that the Apocalypse of John is “typical” of Asian Jews, yet this is precisely its value. The Apocalypse witnesses to a strand of Judaism in Asia Minor that has escaped scholarly attention and that relativizes the “typical” scholarly reconstruction of Judaism in Asia Minor.59

This brief retreat from the close reading of the Apocalypse of John in order to assess the effects of repositioning it within the field of Second Temple Judaism has led to several insights. First, the Apocalypse exhibits a coherent rhetorical program set within the needs of a Diaspora Jewish community during the Judean War. Second, it illuminates a phase in the prehistory of Christianity in which Jews who participated in communities whose worship gave central place to Jesus still adopted a stance of solidarity with Judaism as a whole and could direct their energies to advocacy on behalf of Judaism rather than to sectarian conflict on behalf of their subgroup within Judaism. Third, the Apocalypse provides a valuable contribution to the data available for the study of Judaism in Asia Minor, counterbalancing the apparent tendency of the archaeological, epigraphic, and historiographic data toward the forms of Judaism that most actively sought integration into the Gentile social world. Regarding the major issues of accommodation to the Diaspora cultural environment, obligations within the Greco-Roman economy of

59 The synagogue at Sardis and the communal inscription from Aphrodisias are dominant data in scholarly reconstructions of Judaism in Asia Minor. And they are immensely helpful in envisioning the prosperous, well-integrated, non-rabbinic Judaism that thrived in Asia Minor. The Apocalypse of John does not contradict the picture of Judaism that they found, but it provides an entree into forms of Asian Judaism to which they do not testify. See Reynolds and Tannenbaum (1987) on the Aphrodisias inscription and Kraabel (1979) on the Diaspora synagogue.
Asia, Jewish participation in Gentile religious life, and Gentile participation in Jewish life, the Apocalypse of John provides a new voice that enriches the picture of Judaism in Asia Minor.
"Let us figuratively call Marrano anyone who remains faithful to a secret he has not chosen, in the very place where he lives, in the home of the inhabitant or the occupant, in the home of the first or of the second arrivant, in the very place where he stays without saying no but without identifying himself as belonging to" (Derrida 1993: 81). Jacques Derrida employs the figurative language of "Marrano" to describe the human condition of living in the presence of death. If I may be permitted the refuge of metaphor, and debt to the Jews of Spain, I would figure the Apocalypse of John as a Marrano Jewish text. Like the Jews of Spain, John's Apocalypse has seen its Judaism hidden due to forces beyond its control. Like some of the Marranos, it has risen to a position of great influence that depends upon a denial of its origins. Like people, texts do not choose their origins or their afterlives, and when interpreters change the rules of the language games, texts and authors cannot say no from the grave. This is the history of the Apocalypse of John.

The name of the genre of John's work is a summary of its metanarrative: ἀποκάλυψις—revelation—unveiling. It is also the metanarrative of my own reading as I attempt to uncover the formerly hidden Jewishness of John's own Revelation. John's Apocalypse explicitly undertakes to reveal "the things which are to come," but it also evinces a specific pattern of unveiling that is perhaps most indicative of the depth of its Judaism. The story of the Apocalypse is the story of coming to see the face of God. In a certain way, John's Apocalypse is a Merkabah text that moves from an early vision of the heavenly throne and the one who sits upon it that can only be described in terms of clear substances—glass, jewels, waters, things that in some way cannot be seen (Rev 4)—to a vision of the ark of the covenant in the heavenly temple (Rev 11:9), to the text's climax of actually seeing him who sits upon the throne and a promise that those who serve him will see his face (Rev 20:11; 22:4). This is a narrative and a promise made fully within Judaism—and so also is John's whole Apocalypse.
## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Editions and Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Eusebius


Hecaetus of Abdera


Hippolytus


Commentary on Daniel


Ignatius


Irenaeus


Jerome


Josephus

**Parables of the War**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publication Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Philo of Alexandria


*All Works of Philo are taken from this set. The information below lists titles, abbreviations, traditional Latin titles, and volumes.*

- The Contemplative Life
- Every Good Man is Free
- Flaccus
  - [Flacc.] *In Flaccum*. Vol. 9.
- Hypothetica
- Life of Moses
- On the Change of Names
  - [Mut.] *De Mutatione Nominum*. Vol. 5.
- On the Cherubim
  - [Cher.] *De Cherubim*. Vol. 2.
- On the Creation of the World
- On the Embassy to Gaius
  - [Leg.] *De Legatio ad Gaium*. Vol. 10.
- On Joseph
- On the Migration of Abraham
  - [Migr.] *De Migratione Abrahami*. Vol. 4.
- On the Unchangeableness of God
  - [Immut.] *Quod Deus immutabilis sit*. Vol. 3.
- The Worse Attacks the Better

Pliny the Younger Letters

Pliny the Elder
Natural History

Polycarp, Martyrdom of
[Mat. Pol.]

Phocylides (Pseudo-)
Sentences

Qumran Documents
Damascus Covenant
[CD]

Halachic Letter
[4QMMT]

Hymns
[1QH]

Messianic Apocalypse
[4Q521]

Purity Rules
[4Q274]

War Scroll
[1QM]

Sibylline Oracles
[Sib. Or.]

**Solomon, Psalms of [Pss. Sol.]**


**Suetonius Lives of the Caesars [abbreviated by name]**


**Tacitus Annals**


**Dialogus**


**Histories**


**Talmud, Jerusalem**


**Tertullian Apology**


**Antidote Against the Scorpion’s Stings [Scorp.]**


Secondary Sources


Aberbach, Moses

Agus, Jacob B.

Allo, Ernest Bernard

Anderson, Gary

Ashton, John

Aune, David E.
1990 "The Form and Function of the Proclamations to the Seven Churches (Revelation 2-3)." NTS 36: 182-204.
1991 "Intertextuality and the Genre of the Apocalypse." SBLSP 142-60.

Aus, Roger D.

Bal, Mieke
Barclay, John M. G.

Barnes, Timothy D.

Barnett, Paul W.

Barr, David L.

Barthes, Roland

Bauckham, Richard J.

Bauer, Walter

Baumgarten, Joseph M.

Beale, Gregory Kraeling

Beasley-Murray, G. R.
Beckner, M.  
1959  

Beckwith, Isbon Thaddeus  
1919  

Bell, Albert A.  
1979  

Betz, Hans Dieter  
1979  
1991  
"Christianity as Religion: Paul’s Attempt at Definition in Romans.” JR 71: 315-44.

Bickermann, Elias J.  
1949  

Bitzer, Lloyd F.  
1968  

Boccaccini, Gabriele  
1991  
Middle Judaism: Jewish Thought, 300 B.C.E. to 200 C.E. Minneapolis: Fortress.

Boismard, Marie-Émile  
1949  

Böcher, Otto  
1988a  
1988b  

Bohak, Gideon  
1990  
1996  

Borgen, Peder  
1992  

Boring, M. Eugene  
1989  
Revelation. Louisville: John Knox.

Bornkamm, Günther, G. Barth and H. J. Held, eds.  
1963  
Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew. London: SCM.

Bousset, Wilhelm  
1896  

Brandon, S. G. F.

Briant, Pierre

Brooke, George J.

Brooten, Bernadette J.

Brownlee, W. H.

Bultmann, Rudolph

Byrne, Peter

Caird, George Bradford

Carnegie, David

Case, Shirley Jackson
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Castán, Carlos and Carlos Fuster

Charles, Robert Henry

Charles, R. H. and L. H. Brockington [reviser]

Charlesworth, James H.

Chevalier, Jacques M.

Cohen, Shaye J. D.

Collins, John J.

Court, John M.
1979 Myth and History in the Book of Revelation. London: SPCK.

Croix, G. E. M. de Ste.


Crossan, John Dominic


Culler, Jonathan


Danielou, Jean


Davenport, G. L.


Davis, R. Dean


Dehandschutter, B.


Derrida, Jacques


Deutsch, Celia


Dieterich, Albrecht

Donaldson, Terry L.

Douglas, Mary

Downey, Glanville

Dyson, Stephen L.
1975 "Native Revolt Patterns in the Roman Empire." ANRW II.3: 138-75.

Elliot, John H.

Ellul, Jacques

Emerton, J. A.

Erbes, Karl

Farrer, Austin

Feuillet, André

Fitzmeyer, Joseph A.

Ford, Josephine Massyngberd
Fox, Kenneth A.


Frey, Jean Baptiste


Friesen, Steven


Frye, Northrop


Fuchs, Harald

1958  "Tacitus über die Christen." VC 4: 5-93.

Gager, John G.


García Martínez, Florentino


Garrow, Alan John Philip


Gaston, Lloyd


Geertz, Clifford


Georgi, Dieter


Giet, Stanislaw


Glasson, T. F.

Gooch, Peter D.

Goodenough, Erwin R.

Goodman, Martin

Grabbe, Lester L.

Gray, G. B.

Grundmann, Walter, Franz Hesse, Marinus de Jonge and Adam Simon van der Woude

Gunkel, Hermann

Gutbrod, Walter

Hann, Robert R.

Hanson, Paul D.

Harnack, Adolph von
1923  “The Sect of the Nicolaitans and Nicolaus, the Deacon in Jerusalem.” *JR* 3: 413-22.


Harrington, Wilfrid J.
Hartman, Lars

Hays, R. B.

Hecht, Richard D.

Hellholm, David

Hemer, Colin J.

Hendricks, Obery M.

Hengel, Martin

Himmelfarb, Martha

Horsley, Richard A.

Humphrey, Edith M.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Kadman, Leo  

Kasher, A.  

Kilpatrick, G. D.  

Kim, Seyoon  

Kinneavy, James L.  

Klausner, Joseph  

Klijn, A. F. J.  

Kloppenborg, John S.  

Kloppenborg, John S. and Stephen G. Wilson, eds.  

Knibb, Michael Anthony  

Koester, Helmut  

Kraabel, A. Thomas  
Kraeling, Carl H.  

Kraemer, Ross Shepard  

Kraft, Heinrich  

Kraft, Robert  

Ladd, George Eldon  

Lang, Bernard  

Läuchli, S.  

Lietzmann, Hans  
1933  “Notizen [on the Stobi synagogue inscription].” ZNW 32: 93-95.

Lifshitz, Baruch  

Lissarrague, François  

Lohse, Eduard  

Loisy, Alfred F.  

Lust, Johan  
Lyotard, Jean François  

Major, R. H., ed.  

Malina, Bruce J.  

Marshall, John W.  

Mathewson, Dave  

Mattingly, Harold B.  

Meeks, Wayne A.  

Meynet, Roland  

Mimouni, Simon C.  

Moberly, R. B.  

Moreau, J.  

Mowry, Lucetta  
Moyise, Steve

Müller, Ulrich B.

Munck, Johannes

Murphy, Fredrick J.

Murphy, Thomas
1895  *The Messages to the Seven Churches of Asia, Being the Inaugural of the Enthroned King, a Beacon on Oriental Shores.* Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work.

Muse, Robert L.

Nanos, Mark D.

Neusner, Jacob

Nielsen, Kirsten

Nodet, Etienne and Justin Taylor

O'Neill, J. C.
O'Rourke, John J.

Orzen, Benedikt

Overman, J. Andrew
Overman, J. Andrew and Robert S. MacLennan, eds.

Pagels, Elaine

Peterlin, Davorin

Peterson, Erik

Pines, Shlomo

Piper, Otto

Pippin, Tina
1995 "'And I Will Strike Her Children Dead': Death and the Deconstruction of Social Location." In F. Segovia and M. A. Tolbert (eds.), Reading from This Place, 191-98. Minneapolis: Fortress.
Prigent, Pierre

Pucci Ben Ze’ev, Maria

Puech, Emile

Qimron, Elisha

Quispel, Gilles

Räisänen, Heikki

Ramsay, W. M.
1904  Letters to the Seven Churches and Their Place in the Plan of the Apocalypse. London: Hodden & Stoughton.

Rauch, Christian

Reynolds, Joyce and Robert Tannenbaum

Richardson, Peter

Riegel, Stanley K.

Robbins, Vernon K.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Saussure, Ferdinand de

Schäfer, Peter

Schmidt, Karl Ludwig

Schmidt, Paul Wilhelm
1891 *Anmerkung über die Composition der Offenbarung Johannis*. Freiburg: Mohr.

Schneider, Carl

Schoedel, William R.

Schoen, Henri

Scholem, Gershom

Schrage, Wolfgang

Schrenk, Gottlob
Schürer, Emil, Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar  

Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth  

Scobie, C. H. H.  
1993  "Local References in the Letters to the Seven Churches." *NTS* 39: 606-624.

Segal, Alan  

Shepherd, Massey  

Slater, Thomas B.  
1995  "One Like a Son of Man in First-Century Judaism." *NTS* 41: 183-98.

Sloyan, Gerard S.  

Smallwood, E. Mary  
Smith, Jonathan Z.

Sokol, R. R. and P. H. A. Sneath

Spitta, Friedrich
1889 *Die Offenbarung des Johannes.* Halle: Verlag der Buchh. des Waisenhauses.

Stanton, Graham N.

Stendahl, Krister

Stone, Michael E.

Stowers, Stanley K.

Sweet, J. P. M.

Swete, Henry Barclay
Taylor, Justin

Tcherikover, Victor

Thackeray, Henry St. John

Theissen, Gerd

Thompson, Leonard L.

Tillich, Paul

Trebilco, Paul

Trocmé, Etienne

Vanni, Ugo

Vermes, Geza
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Villiers, P. G. R. de

Vischer, Eberhard

Völter, Daniel

Walker, Peter W. L.

Weiss, Johannes

Weizsäcker, Carl Heinrich von

Wellesley, Kenneth

Wellhausen, Julius
Weyland, Gerard Johan

Wilson, J. Christian

Wilson, Stephen G.

Wilson, William Riley

Winter, Paul

Yarbro Collins, Adela
1992   "The 'Son of Man' Tradition and the Book of Revelation." In J. H.
       Charlesworth (ed.), The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism
       and Christianity, 536-68. Minneapolis: Fortress.

Yinger, J. Milton
1960   "Contraculture and Subculture." American Sociological Review 25:
       625-35.
1982   Counterculture: The Promise and the Peril of a World Turned Upside
SUBJECT INDEX

144,000 from Israel / on Zion, 3, 5, 13, 8-21, 87, 141, 150-63, 174, 183, 189

Abraham, as a Christian, 58, 59
Accuser, the, 127. See also Satan
Achaia, 1, 113
Adam, as a Christian, 58, 59
Adversary, the. See Satan
Agrippa, 101-104
Akiba, 54, 82
Alexander, 115
Alexandria, 99, 103, 106
Anthedon, 104
Antioch, 99, 106, 108, 111
Antiochus (Jew of Antioch), 108
Antiochus the Great, 114-15
Aphrodisias, 83
Apocalypse, date, 88-97
Apocalypse, structure, 177-81
Apollos, 64
Archives, Temple, 104
Ascalon, 104
Asia Minor, 1, 83, 111-13. See also Judaism in Asia Minor
Assemblies, messages to the seven: 124-25, 178-79, as letters, 125-26, as royal proclamations, 126, 178
Assembly, origin of the term, 69, 83-84
Athronges, 80
Augustus, 64, 65, 91

Baal, 128
Babylon, 2, 23, 72, 88, 92-93, 97, 140, 163, 170-72, judgement of, 140-41, 150, 162, 167, 183-84, 189, 203
Balaam, 63, 127-31
Banquet, eschatological. See Meal traditions
Bar Giora, Simon, 80
Bar Kochba, Simon, 82
Beast, 139-41: number of the, 93-94, 97, 183, 189, worship of the, 139-40, 184, 188-89, 203
Bethel, 112
Birds of heaven, 181, 184, 189, 191
Bithynia, 116
Bosnia, 112
Britain, 111

Caesarea, 103-105
Caligula, 91, 92
Camp, wartime, 162
Cappodocia, 116
Carthage, 115
Celibacy. See Continence, sexual
Cestius, 107, 111
Chersonessus, 83
Chios, 116
Christ, history and development of the term, 76-82
Christian: history and development of the term, 69-75
Christianity: as "new Israel", 175, 193, as new race, 24, 58, 193, complement to Judaism, 37, 40-41, history and development of the term, 69-75, interpretive category, 3-6, 8, 10-12, 17, 19, 24-25, 28, 31, 68, supplement to Judaism, 37-39
Church. See Assembly
SUBJECT INDEX

Circumcision, 47
City, Great, 1, 3, 5, 22-24, 87, 163-72: destruction of, 3, 134, 146, 173, 179-80, 183
City, Holy, 1, 3, 5, 22-24, 87, 121, 148, 163-72
Civilis, 101
Coins, 119, 121
Columbus, Christopher, 122
Commandments of God, 2, 16-18, 124, 134-43, 174
Continence, sexual, 21, 42, 151, 154-61
Creed, Apostles, 58
Cremona, 113
Cult, Imperial, 14, 61, 95, 139, 184, 204
Cyrene, 83, 108-109
Damascus, 99, 106-107
Deconstruction, 34
Diaspora: Asian and
Greek/Macedonian in Roman
Republic, 114-15, Chian in Rome, 116-17, Jewish, 1, 4, 98-121, 201-206, modern, 99, Roman on
Chios, 116-17, Scythian in Greece
Domitian, 88, 92, 94-97, 139
Dragon, 132, 135-38, 141, 164, 187-88, confined to the abyss, 133
Dura Europas, 103
Ebionites, 8
Economic critique. See Immorality, economic
Egypt, 22, 83, 93, 108-109, 163, 170-72
Ekklesia. See Church
Election, 185
Emperor Worship. See Imperial Cult
Enthymemes, 147
Ephesus, 112
Ephraim
Eschatological, as interpretive category, 20
Essenes, 41, 75, 83
Ethos, rhetorical, 178
Euphrates, help from beyond the, 99-102, 110, 112
Firstfruits, 21
Florus, 103-104
Food offered to idols. See Idolatry
Gaba, 104
Gadara, 104, 106
Gaius Licinius Mucianus, 1, 112
Galba I, 91, 98, 111, 113-14
Gathering. See Synagogue
Galilee, 111
Gaul, 101
Gaulantis, 104
Gaza, 104
Gematria, 88, 93-95, 135
Gender, 47
Genre: apocalyptic, 51, within the Apocalypse, 177-79
Gentiles, 23, hostility to Diaspora Jews during the Judean War, 99
Gerasa, 104
Germany, 111
Gnostics, 131
Godfearers, 133-34, 194
Hadrian, 15
Hannibal, 115
Hebron, 112
Heraclitus, 10, as a Christian, 10
Herod, 80
Herodium, 111
Heshbon, 104
Hippos, 104, 106
Homogeneity, 28, 35
Homosexuality, 156
Hostages, 117-18
Household codes, 73
Hymns. See Liturgy

Idolatry, 42, 124, 127-32, 148, 172, 176, 179, 183-85, 190
Ignatius, 60, 70, 73
Immorality, economic, 180-81, 183-84
Immorality, sexual, 62, 127-30, 132, 179-80, 185
Ionia, 116
Irenaeus, 88-89, 94-95
Israel, heavenly, 136-37, new, 43
Italy, 113, Greek/Macedonian diaspora in, 114, 115
James, brother of Jesus, 8
Jesus, as Christ, 24, 48, 123, 140, as Lamb, 48, 72, 123, 140, 180-82, death of, 165, 170-73, 175, 186, 191, faith of, 16-17, 124, 134-35, 141-43, 146-48, 173, status of, 12, 82, 139-40, 174, 199, witness of, 16, 124, 141-46, 173
Jew, origin and development of the term, 82-83
Jewish Christianity, 7, 8
Jezebel, 62, 63, 127-31
John the Baptist, 48-49, 80, 83, 159
Josephus, 42, 99, 100. See also entries under his name in the ancient sources index
Jotapata, 112
Judaism: as "background" to Christianity, 26, in Asia Minor, 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 40, 49, 66, 67, 98-99, 175, 201-206, origin and development of the term, 82-83
Judaizers, 105
Judas the Galilean, 80
Julius Caesar, 91, 92
Justin Martyr, 10, 39. See also entries under his name in the ancient sources index
Kedasa, 104
Lamb. See Jesus, as Lamb
Law, 17, 59, 142
Leontopolis, 109
Liturgies, civic, 204
Liturgy, 44, 61, 135, 139, 141, 178, 180, 182, 184, 189-91, 205, heavenly, 61, 161, 182
Logocentrism, 28
Lord of the earth, 169
Luther, 49, 54
Macedonia, 114
Machaerus, 108, 111
Marcus Aurelius
Marrano Jews, 207
Masada, 104, 108, 111
Meal, ritual, 52, 103, 191
Merkabah visions, 207
Messiah, expectations of in Judaism, 21, 76-82, 169
Metanarrative, 56, 57, 58, 175
Michael, 138-39, 164, 182-83
Mithridates Eupator, 116
Monogamy, 156
Mucianus, Gaius Licinius. See Gaius Licinius Mucianus
Multitude, innumerable. See "tribes tongues peoples and nations"
Myth, 56, 65
Narrative, 55-67
SUBJECT INDEX

Nations. See Gentiles

Object, path of the, 27
Olive trees. See two witnesses
Otho, 1, 91, 98, 113
Ovid, 122

Parable, 2, 3, 4
Parthia, 1, 101
Patmos, 1
Patriarchs, 136
Paul of Tarsus, 6-8, 15-17, 20-21, 48, 59-64, 71, 131, 142, 193-96. See also letters of Paul in ancient sources index
Pecans, 45, 46
Pederasty, 156
Pella, 104
Pergamum, 126
Persecution, 15, 95, 137-39
Perseus of Macedon, 114-15
Pharisees, 10, 40, 41, 83
Philadelphia, 104, 188
Philip (V) of Macedon, 115
Philo of Alexandria, 80, 83, 103. See also works of Philo in ancient sources index
Pliny the Younger, 43
Priesthood, 40, 72, 77, 159-62, 191
Proper name, the, 29, 30, 32, 33, 36
Prophets, blood of the, 184
Ptolomaus, 104, 111

Purity, 156-57. See also sexual continence
Qumran, 40, 42, 82, 158. See also literature listed under Qumran in the ancient sources index

Rabbis, 75
Resurrection, 159, 172, 190
Revolts, Jewish. See War, Judean
Revolts, ethnic in the Roman Empire
Rhetoric, 176-92
Rome, 1, 22-24, 72, 87, 108, 113, 131, 163-64, 175, 179

Sabbath, 139, 192, 202
Sacrifice, 40
Sadducees, 75, 83
Sardis, 41, 83
Satan, 131-32
Satan, Synagogue of. See Synagogue of Satan as well as Rev 2:9 and Rev 3:9 in ancient sources index
Scythians in Thrace, 117-18
Scythopolis, 104, 105
Sebaste, 104
Sects, 200-201
Seleucid Empire, 114-15
Seven kings, 88, 90-93
Severa, Julia, 203-204
Sexual continence. See continence, sexual
Sexual immorality. See immorality, sexual
Sicarii, 108-109
Sidon, 106
Sign, age of the, 35
Smyrna, 14, 15, 125-26
Socrates, as a Christian, 10, 39, 58, 84
Sodom, 22, 93, 163, 170-72
Sources in the analysis of Rev, 7, 19, 89-90, 92, 96, 137, 140, 151-55, 166-68, 175, 190
Stobi, 83
Subject, path of the, 27, 28
Symbol, 52
Synagogue, origin and development of the term, 69, 84-85, 87
Synagogue of Satan, 2, 4, 12-16, 38, 43, 62, 123-34, 148, 174
Syria, 104-106, 108, 113
Taxonomy, 25, 37, 45-54, 122, monothetic, 45, 46, 47-51, 175, polythetic, 46-54
Teleology, 8, 28, 80
Temple, 22, 40, 89, 92, 96-97, 111, 160-62, 167-68, heavenly, 164, 188
Therapeutae, 157
Theudas the Egyptian, 80, 83
Thrace, 112, 117-18
Throne: God’s, 125, 179-80, 182, 187-88, 207, Satan’s, 127
Tiberius 64, 65
Titus, arch of, 119
Titus, emperor, 93, 98, 101, 108, 109, 112
Topos noetos, 28, 30, 31, 32, 36, 50, 55, 66, 75
Trajan, 88, 91
"Tribes, tongues, peoples, and nations", 18, 21, 150-51, 153, 170-71, 174-75, 183, 185-89
Two ways, 73
Two witnesses, 22, 88-89, 96-97, 138, 145, 149-63, 169-72, 175
Tyre, 106
Utopia of the signified, 30
Valens, 117
Vespasian, 2, 92, 98, 107-12, 139
Vindex, 101
Virginity. See Continence, sexual
Vitellius, 1, 91, 113
Voluntary organizations, 85, 130, 132
Walsnut, 45, 46
Mithridatic, 114, 116-17, of the dragon against the children of the celestial woman, 135-41, 188
Syrian, 115
Woman: riding on the Beast, 90, 132, standing on the sun, 135-39
Worship. See liturgy
Year, the Long (69 C.E.), 1, 88-97, 110-14
Yodefat. See Jotapata
Zealots, 166
Zenobius, 116
Zodiac, 136
# ANCIENT SOURCES INDEX

## CANONICAL TEXTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Chapter(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exodus</td>
<td>29:36</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40:9-15</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leviticus</td>
<td>4:3</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:16</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14:1-8</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>5:1-4</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22:22 (LXX)</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22:32 (LXX)</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24:7</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24:15-19</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31:17-24</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy</td>
<td>6:17</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:9-14</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:10</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Samuel</td>
<td>10:1</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26:11</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Kings</td>
<td>16:31</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18:4</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18:13</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18:16</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18:19</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18:21</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:2ff</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21:25-26</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kings</td>
<td>9:22</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22:3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chronicles</td>
<td>29:19</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Chapter(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Chronicles</td>
<td>34:31</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehemiah (2 Esdr LXX)</td>
<td>9:34 (19:34)</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psalms</td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>118 (LXX)</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs</td>
<td>5:14</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45:1</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49:1-6</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>1:4-5</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:3</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:5</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33:15</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezekiel</td>
<td>40:48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40:2ff</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>3:4</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:7</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:1</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:13</td>
<td>77, 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:14</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:25</td>
<td>138, 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:25-26</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:1-3</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:7</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micah</td>
<td>5:3</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zechariah</td>
<td>1:8</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>Verses</td>
<td>References</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zechariah</td>
<td>2:2-8</td>
<td>167, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:14</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>7, 8, 83, 197, 199</td>
<td>63, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:17</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:12</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20:28</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:7</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24:30</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>197, 198</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:45</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:18-23</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:25</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13:9</td>
<td>63-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>7, 70, 199</td>
<td>80, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:26</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:36</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:43</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:11</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20:35</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21:12</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:35</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>7, 199</td>
<td>80, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>7, 70, 199-200</td>
<td>80, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:18</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:26</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:5</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:26</td>
<td>69, 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:6-8</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26:28</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romans</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:28-29</td>
<td>15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8:39</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corinthians</td>
<td>2:10</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:16</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:7</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:20</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:32</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15:20-23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatians</td>
<td>1:12</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:16</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:9</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:12a</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:16</td>
<td>16, 18, 20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephesians</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians</td>
<td>2:6-11</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:2-3</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:17</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Thessalonians</td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:7</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:14-16</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy</td>
<td>2:6</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrews</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>8, 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Verse Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Peter</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:7</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:14</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:16</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:18</td>
<td>72-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:24-25</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:5</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:6-8</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:9</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:13-14</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:18-3:7</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:10-12</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5:5</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5:13</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 John</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>76, 86, 182, 177, 182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:1-3</td>
<td>153, 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>76, 86, 144-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>177-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>126, 177-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:4-6</td>
<td>153, 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>76, 86, 145-47, 190, 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:5b-6</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:7</td>
<td>130, 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:7-8</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:7-12a</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:8</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:9</td>
<td>76, 86, 88, 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:9-3:22</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:12b-3:22</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
<td>11:2</td>
<td>22-23, 24, 78, 138, 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:8</td>
<td>21, 153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:9</td>
<td>72, 153, 186-87, 190</td>
<td>12, 138, 145, 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:9-14</td>
<td>153, 180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:10</td>
<td>72, 153, 159</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:10b</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:11-14</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:9-10</td>
<td>188</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:15</td>
<td>163, 198</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:16</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:17</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:1-8</td>
<td>19, 153-54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:3</td>
<td>189</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:4</td>
<td>13, 19, 150, 186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:4ff</td>
<td>3, 87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:4-8</td>
<td>18-21, 79, 149, 151, 154-56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:4-9</td>
<td>152, 163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:4-17</td>
<td>150, 183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:9</td>
<td>18, 150, 186-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:9-17</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:13-14</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:14</td>
<td>21, 41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:1-9:21</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:3</td>
<td>21, 188</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:4</td>
<td>188</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:4</td>
<td>189</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:11</td>
<td>130, 153, 198</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>153, 171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:1-11</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:11</td>
<td>23, 171, 186-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:11-11:2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>22-23, 87, 96, 164, 166, 171-72</td>
<td>2, 16-18, 76, 86, 138, 144-47, 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>23, 163, 169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:1-14</td>
<td>3, 175</td>
<td>13:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:5</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>16:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:6</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>16:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:7</td>
<td>21, 140, 161, 186-87</td>
<td>16:14-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:7-8</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>16:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:8</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>16:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:9-10</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>16:18-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:14-16</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:15</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>17:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:17</td>
<td>140, 149, 183</td>
<td>17:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:17-18</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>17:1ff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:18</td>
<td>88, 93, 95</td>
<td>17:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>135, 140-41, 154</td>
<td>17:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:1</td>
<td>20, 24, 149-51, 153</td>
<td>17:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:1ff</td>
<td>3, 87, 154</td>
<td>17:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:1-2a</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>17:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:1-3</td>
<td>153-54</td>
<td>17:9-17:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:1-5</td>
<td>18-21, 79, 152-56, 162</td>
<td>17:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:1-12</td>
<td>140, 151-52</td>
<td>17:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:2b-4a</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>17:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:3-5</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>17:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:4</td>
<td>21, 154-56, 161, 189</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:4-5</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>18:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:4b-7</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>18:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:6</td>
<td>18, 186-87</td>
<td>18:4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:6-8</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>18:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:8</td>
<td>72, 162</td>
<td>18:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:9-11</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>18:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:9-12</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>18:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:10</td>
<td>153, 183</td>
<td>18:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:11</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>18:18-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:12</td>
<td>2, 16-18, 21, 86, 135, 141, 145-47</td>
<td>18:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:12-13</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>18:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:13</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>18:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:14-20</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>19:1-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:3</td>
<td>41, 153</td>
<td>19:2b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:4</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>19:3b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:5</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>19:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19:7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revelation
19:8 21
19:9-10 153
19:10 86, 145, 153
19:11 153
19:11-16 154
19:11-21:8 153
19:13 79, 153
19:15 79
19:15-17 189
19:17-18 184
19:17-21 154, 191
19:18 198
19:19 189, 198
19:20 189
19:21 189
20:1-2 133
20:1-10 154
20:2 130
20:4 76, 86, 145, 153
20:5 190
20:6 76, 86, 153, 184, 190
20:9 21
20:10 133
20:11 207
20:12-14 190
20:14 184
21:1-8 154
21:4 181
21:5 147-48
21:5-8 153
21:6 191
21:8 132, 184-85, 190
21:9 153
21:9-22:5 154
21:9-22:21 153
21:10 x179
21:12 153, 186
21:14 153
21:16 145
21:17 93-94, 130
21:22 153, 191
21:24 79
21:27 153
22:1 153
22:1-3 190
22:2 181
22:3 153
22:4 149, 189, 207
22:5 183
22:6 147-48, 181
22:6-21 153, 155, 181
22:7 153
22:10 20, 181
22:12 20, 153
22:13 153
22:14 17
22:16 86, 145
22:16-20 153
22:17 190
22:18 145, 181
22:19 181
22:20 86
22:21 21, 76, 86

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN
NON-CANONICAL TEXTS

Aristeas, Letter of
150-52 156

Barnabas, Letter of 17

2 Baruch 72, 78, 92
39.7 81
40.1 81
72.2 81

3 Baruch 94

Clement of Alexandria, Miscellany

Clement of Rome, First Letter of 70

Didache 70
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ancient Sources Index</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Enoch</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 (Gk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-71 (Similitudes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61.1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epiphanius, Medicine Chest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.22-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Ezra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.37-12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.31-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hebrews, Gospel of the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hermas, Shepherd of</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hippolytus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Refutation of All Heresies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commentary on Daniel</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ignatius</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Romans,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magnesians</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philadelphians</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Irenæus, Against Heresies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>James, Apocryphon of</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jerome, De viris illustribus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joseph and Aseneth</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Josephus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Against Apion</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jewish War</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.432-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.119-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.154-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.284ff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.285-460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.398-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.399-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.463-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.479-498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melito, Paschal Homily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mishnah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanhedrin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarchs, Testaments of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naphtali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter, Apocalypse of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter, Preaching of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philo of Alexandria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Change of Names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Cherubim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Confusion of Tongues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Creation of the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Contemplative Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Good Man is Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin Martyr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue with Trypho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Maccabees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melito, Paschal Homily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mishnah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanhedrin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarchs, Testaments of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naphtali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter, Apocalypse of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter, Preaching of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philo of Alexandria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Change of Names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Cherubim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Confusion of Tongues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Creation of the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Contemplative Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Good Man is Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source/Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaccus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothetica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Joseph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Migration of Abraham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life of Moses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Unchangeableness of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Worse Attacks the Better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pliny, Natural History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polycarp, Martyrdom of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymns (1QH22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messianic Apocalypse (4Q521)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purity Rules (4Q274)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Scroll (1QM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibylline Oracles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon, Odes of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon, Psalms of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon, Wisdom of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talmud, Jerusalem Taanit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertullian, Apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antidote Against the Scorpion’s Stings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Modesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas, Gospel of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorinus, Commentary on the Apocalypse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGAN TEXTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appian, Roman History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.11 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.22-23 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.46 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.47 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aristotle, Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dio Cassius, Roman History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.16 134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.4.3 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.19 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hecaetous of Abdera, Fragments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pliny the Elder, Natural History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.15 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pliny the Younger, Letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96 70, 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberbach, M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agus, J. B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allo, E. B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashton, J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aus, R. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bal, M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barclay, J. M. G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnes, T. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnett, P. W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barr, D. L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barthes, R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bauckham, R. J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bauer, W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baumgarten, J. M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beale, C. K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beasley-Murray, G. R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckner, M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckwith, I. T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell, A. A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betz, H. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bickermann, E. J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitzer, L. F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boccaccini, G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Böcher, O.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohak, G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boismard, M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgen, P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring, M. E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bornkamm, G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bousset, W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon, S. G. F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briant, P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brockington, L. H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooke, G. J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooten, B. J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownlee, W. H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullmann, R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byrne, P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caird, G. B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnegie, D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case, S. J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castán, C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlesworth, J. H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chevalier, J. M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohen, S. J. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collins, J. J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court, J. M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croix, G. E. M. de Ste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossan, J. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culler, J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielou, J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davenport, G. L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis, R. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dehandschutter, B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derrida, J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deutsch, C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dieterich, A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donaldson, T. L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas, M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downey, G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyson, S. L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliot, J. H.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ellul, J., 133
Emerton, J. A., 78
Erbes, K., 153-54

Farrer, A., 129, 190-92
Feuillet, A., 27, 135, 151, 165
Fitzmeyer, J. A., 78
Ford, J. M., 42, 48, 49, 89, 124-25, 154, 156, 159
Fox, K. A., 129
Friesen, S., 126
Frye, N., 28
Fuchs, H., 16
Fuster, C., 121

Gager, J. G., 13, 102, 134, 162, 196
Garcia Martinez, F., 81
Garrow, A. J. P., 144, 171
Gaston, L., 143, 196
Geertz, C., 52-53
Georgi, D., 20
Giet, S., 152
Glasson, T. F., 170
Gooch, P. D., 191
Goodenough, E. R., 52, 83
Goodman, M., 102
Grabbe, L. L., 67, 99, 109, 118
Gray, G. B., 78
Grimes, R., 53
Grundmann, W., 69, 77
Gunkel, H., 135-36
Gutbrod, W., 142

Hann, R. R., 11
Hanson, P. D., 78
Harnack, A. von, 129, 131, 193
Harrington, W. J., 124, 131, 144
Hartman, L., 177
Hausleiter, J., 13
Hays, R. B., 143
Hecht, R. D., 79
Hellholm, D., 177

Hemer, C. J., 125-26
Hendricks, O. M., 199
Hengel, M., 197
Hesse, F., 69, 77
Himmelfarb, M., 191
Horsley, R. A., 80
Humphrey, E. M., 83, 165, 177
Hurtado, L. W., 179

Jaffee, M., 67
Jameson, F., 25-27, 35-36, 57, 59-60
Jefford, C. N., 71
Jenkins, F., 166
Jeremias, J., 20
Johnson, B., 44
Jonge, M. de, 69, 77-78, 80
Jörns, K., 190

Kadman, L., 121
Kasher, A., 109
Kilpatrick, G. D., 199
Kim, S., 195
Kinneavy, J. L., 146-47
Klausner, J., 78
Klijn, A. F. J., 8
Kloppenborg, J. S., 75, 191
Knibb, M. A., 81
Koester, H., 8, 70
Kraabel, A. T., 200, 204
Kraefling, C. H., 102
Kraeling, R. S., 83
Kraft, H., 124, 133, 134
Kraft, R., 71

Ladd, G. E., 170
Lang, B., 161
Läuchli, S., 190
Lietzmann, H., 83
Lifshitz, B., 69
Lissarrague, F. 191
Lohse, E., 144
Loisy, A. F., 192
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lust, J.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyotard, J. F.</td>
<td>55-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacLennan, R. S.</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major, R. H.</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malina, B. J.</td>
<td>8, 177, 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall, J. W.</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathewson, D.</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattingly, H. B.</td>
<td>69, 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeks, W. A.</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meynet, R.</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimouni, S. C.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moberly, R. B.</td>
<td>91, 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreau, J.</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowry, L.</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moyise, S.</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Müller, U. B.</td>
<td>78, 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munck, J.</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murphy, F. J.</td>
<td>14, 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murphy, T.</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muse, R. L.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanos, M. D.</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neusner, J.</td>
<td>67, 82, 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nielsen, K.</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nodet, E.</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Neill, J. C.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Rourke, J. J.</td>
<td>178, 190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otzen, B.</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overman, J. A.</td>
<td>199, 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pagels, E.</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterlin, D.</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterson, E.</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pines, S.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piper, O.</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pippin, T.</td>
<td>128, 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prigent, P.</td>
<td>126, 131, 144, 170, 190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pucci Ben Ze'ev, M.</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puech, E.</td>
<td>78, 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qimron, E.</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quispel, G.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Räisänen, H.</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsay, W. M.</td>
<td>125-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rauch, C.</td>
<td>153-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds, J.</td>
<td>204-205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richardson, P.</td>
<td>19, 193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riegel, S. K.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbins, V. K.</td>
<td>141, 165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts, J. J. M.</td>
<td>26, 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson, J. A. T.</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson, J. M.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roloff, J.</td>
<td>155, 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowland, C.</td>
<td>88, 96, 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruiz, J.</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabatier, A.</td>
<td>153-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safral, S.</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saldarini, A. J.</td>
<td>84-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders, E. P.</td>
<td>18, 48, 118, 177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandmel, S.</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saussure, F. de</td>
<td>29, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schäfer, P.</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schmidt, K. L.</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schmidt, P. W.</td>
<td>125, 153-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schneider, C.</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoedel, W. R.</td>
<td>71, 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoen, H.</td>
<td>153-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholem, G.</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schrage, W.</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schrenk, G.</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schürer, E.</td>
<td>78, 81, 106, 109, 118, 157, 161, 201-202, 203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schüssler Fiorenza, E.</td>
<td>14, 19-27, 39-41, 44, 48, 50, 60-65, 91, 124, 128-29, 156, 161, 171, 177-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scobie, C. H. H.</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segal, A.</td>
<td>8, 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherd, M.</td>
<td>13, 134, 190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slater, T. B.</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloyan, G. S.</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Smallwood, E. M., 106, 109
Smith, J. A., 93
Smith, J. Z., 45, 46, 47, 51, 122-23, 165
Sneath, P. H. A., 46
Sokol, R. R., 46
Spitta, F., 152-54, 170
Stanton, G. N., 199
Stendahl, K., 142
Stone, M. E., 78
Stowers, S. K., 5, 6, 143, 195
Sweet, J. P. M., 144
Swete, H. B., 170

Tannenbaum, R., 204-205
Taylor, J., 69, 191
Tcherikover, V., 67, 106
Thackeray, H. St. J., 100
Theissen, G., 197
Thompson, L. L., 23, 38-41, 44, 48, 50, 60, 62, 64, 65, 139, 156, 190
Tillich, P., 59
Trebilco, P., 201-204
Trocmé, E., 5, 6

Vanni, U., 27, 135, 178, 190
Vermes, G., 82, 161
Villiers, P. G. R. de, 78
Vischer, E., 125, 151-54, 170
Völter, D., 125, 151-55

Walker, P. W. L., 164, 170
Weiss, J., 153-54, 170
Weizsäcker, C. H. von, 153-54
Wellesley, K., 107, 111
Wellhausen, J., 153, 166, 168, 170
Weyland, G. J., 153-54
Wilson, J. C., 88, 91-92, 95
Wilson, S. G., 13, 134, 172, 191, 198
Wilson, W. R., 172
Winter, P., 1974
Woude, A. S. van der, 69, 77

Yinger, J. M., 165
Editions SR

1. La langue de Ya’udi : description et classement de l’ancien parler de Zencirci dans le cadre des langues sémitiques du nord-ouest
   Paul-Eugène Dion, O.P. / 1974 / viii + 511 p. / OUT OF PRINT
2. The Conception of Punishment in Early Indian Literature
3. Traditions in Contact and Change: Selected Proceedings of the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions
   Edited by Peter Slater and Donald Wiebe with Maurice Boutin and Harold Coward / 1983 / x + 758 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
4. Le messianisme de Louis Riel
5. Mythologies and Philosophies of Salvation in the Theistic Traditions of India
   Klaus K. Klostermaier / 1984 / xvi + 549 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
   Ovey N. Mohammed / 1984 / vi + 202 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
7. L'étude des religions dans les écoles : l'expérience américaine, anglaise et canadienne
9. A Victorian Missionary and Canadian Indian Policy: Cultural Synthesis vs Cultural Replacement
   David A. Nock / 1988 / x + 194 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
10. Prometheus Rebound: The Irony of Atheism
11. Competition in Religious Life
12. The Huguenots and French Opinion, 1685-1787: The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration
13. Religion in History: The Word, the Idea, the Reality / La religion dans l’histoire : le mot, l’idée, la réalité
14. Sharing Without Reckoning: Imperfect Right and the Norms of Reciprocity
15. Love and the Soul: Psychological Interpretations of the Eros and Psyche Myth
16. The Promise of Critical Theology: Essays in Honour of Charles Davis
    Edited by Marc P. Lalonde / 1995 / xii + 146 pp.
17. The Five Aggregates: Understanding Theravada Psychology and Soteriology
    Mathieu Boisvert / 1995 / xii + 166 pp.
18. Mysticism and Vocation
19. Memory and Hope: Strands of Canadian Baptist History  

20. The Concept of Equity in Calvin’s Ethics*  
   * Available in the United Kingdom and Europe from Paternoster Press.


22. Clinical Pastoral Supervision and the Theology of Charles Gerkin  

23. Faith and Fiction: A Theological Critique of the Narrative Strategies of Hugh MacLennan and Morley Callaghan  

24. God and the Chip: Religion and the Culture of Technology  

25. The Religious Dreamworld of Apuleius’ Metamorphoses: Recovering a Forgotten Hermeneutic  


27. Radical Difference: A Defence of Hendrik Kraemer’s Theology of Religions  

Comparative Ethics Series /  
Collection d’Éthique Comparée  

1. Muslim Ethics and Modernity: A Comparative Study of the Ethical Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Mawlana Mawdudi  
   Sheila McDonough / 1984 / x + 130 pp. / OUT OF PRINT


3. Prophets, Pastors and Public Choices: Canadian Churches and the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Debate  
   Roger Hutchinson / 1992 / xiv + 142 pp. / OUT OF PRINT

4. In Good Faith: Canadian Churches Against Apartheid  

5. Towards an Ethics of Community: Negotiations of Difference in a Pluralist Society  

Dissertations SR  

1. The Social Setting of the Ministry as Reflected in the Writings of Hermas, Clement and Ignatius  

2. Literature as Pulpit: The Christian Social Activism of Nellie L. McClung  
   Randi R. Warne / 1993 / viii + 236 pp. / OUT OF PRINT

Studies in Christianity and Judaism /  
Études sur le christianisme et le judaïsme  

1. A Study in Anti-Gnostic Polemics: Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius  
   Gérard Vallée / 1981 / xii + 114 pp. / OUT OF PRINT

2. Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity  
   Vol. 1. Paul and the Gospels  
   Edited by Peter Richardson with David Granskou / 1986 / x + 232 pp.  
   Vol. 2. Separation and Polemic  
3. Society, the Sacred, and Scripture in Ancient Judaism: A Sociology of Knowledge

4. Law in Religious Communities in the Roman Period: The Debate Over Torah and Nomos in Post-Biblical Judaism and Early Christianity

5. Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8-10 in Its Context

6. The Rhetoric of the Babylonian Talmud, Its Social Meaning and Context

7. Whose Historical Jesus?

8. Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima

9. Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity

10. Parables of War: Reading John's Jewish Apocalypse

The Study of Religion in Canada / Sciences Religieuses au Canada


2. Les sciences religieuses au Québec depuis 1972


Studies in Women and Religion / Études sur les femmes et la religion

1. Femmes et religions*
   * Only available from Les Presses de l'Université Laval

2. The Work of Their Hands: Mennonite Women's Societies in Canada

3. Profiles of Anabaptist Women: Sixteenth-Century Reforming Pioneers

4. Voices and Echoes: Canadian Women's Spirituality

5. Obedience, Suspicion and the Gospel of Mark: A Mennonite-Feminist Exploration of Biblical Authority

6. Clothed in Integrity: Weaving Just Cultural Relations and the Garment Industry
1. Footnotes to a Theology: The Karl Barth Colloquium of 1972
   Edited and Introduced by Martin Rumscheidt / 1974 / viii + 151 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
2. Martin Heidegger’s Philosophy of Religion
   John R. Williams / 1977 / x + 190 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
   Edited by Harold Coward and Terence Penelhum / 1977 / viii + 121 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
4. God’s Intention for Man: Essays in Christian Anthropology
   William O. Fennell / 1977 / xii + 56 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
5. “Language” in Indian Philosophy and Religion
   Edited and Introduced by Harold G. Coward / 1978 / x + 98 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
6. Beyond Mysticism
7. The Religious Dimension of Socrates’ Thought
   James Beckman / 1979 / xii + 276 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
8. Native Religious Traditions
   Edited by Earle H. Waugh and K. Dad Prithipaul / 1979 / xii + 244 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
9. Developments in Buddhist Thought: Canadian Contributions to Buddhist Studies
   Edited by Roy C. Amore / 1979 / iv + 196 pp.
10. The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhism
    Edited and Introduced by Leslie S. Kawamura / 1981 / xxii + 274 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
11. Political Theology in the Canadian Context
    Edited by Benjamin G. Smillie / 1982 / xii + 260 pp.
12. Truth and Compassion: Essays on Judaism and Religion in Memory of Rabbi Dr. Solomon Frank
13. Craving and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Soteriology
    Bruce Matthews / 1983 / xiv + 138 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
14. The Moral Mystic
15. Ignatian Spirituality in a Secular Age
    Edited by George P. Schaer / 1984 / viii + 128 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
17. Christ and Modernity: Christian Self-Understanding in a Technological Age
18. Young Man Shinran: A Reappraisal of Shinran’s Life
    Takamichi Takahatake / 1987 / xvi + 228 pp. / OUT OF PRINT
19. Modernity and Religion
    Brian J. Fraser / 1988 / xvi + 212 pp. / OUT OF PRINT

Series discontinued

Available from:

Wilfrid Laurier University Press
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3C5
Telephone: (519) 884-0710, ext. 6124
Fax: (519) 725-1399
E-mail: press@wlu.ca
World Wide Web: http://www.wlu.ca/wwwpress/