Title:

CHAOS AND CLAIRVOYANCE:
APOLLO IN ASIA MINOR AND IN THE APOCALYPSE

Abstract:

In the Apocalypse interpreters acknowledge several overt references to Apollo. Although one or two Apollo references have received consistent attention, no one has provided a sustained consideration of the references as a whole and why they are there. In fact, Apollo is more present across the Apocalypse than has been recognized. Typically, interpreters regard these overt instances as slights against the emperor. However, this view does not properly consider the Jewish/Christian perception of pagan gods as actual demons, Apollo's role and prominence in the religion of Asia Minor, or the complexity of Apollo's role in imperial propaganda and its influence where Greek religion was well-established. Using Critical Spatiality and Social Memory Theory, this study provides a more comprehensive religious interpretation of the presence of Apollo in the Apocalypse. I conclude that John progressively inverts popular religious and imperial conceptions of Apollo, portraying him as an agent of chaos and the Dragon. John strips Apollo of his positive associations, while assigning those to Christ. Additionally, John's depiction of the god contributes to the invective against the Dragon and thus plays an important role to shape the social identity of the Christian audience away from the Dragon, the empire, and pagan religion and rather toward the one true God and the Lamb who conquers all.

ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CHAOS AND CLAIRVOYANCE:
APOLLO IN ASIA MINOR AND IN THE APOCALYPSE

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Dedicated to the Memory of Dr. M. Robert Mulholland Jr.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Except for the abbreviations listed below, all abbreviations follow § 8.4 of *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed.

AES – Archaeological Exploration of Sardis. Harvard University Press; Cornell University.

AMC – *Asia Minor Coins*. Online at www.asiaminorcoins.com. Item numbers are displayed as AMC + website reference number.

AGR – Aspects of Greek and Roman Life

AReG – Archiv für Religionsgeschichte

BBSci – Behavioral and Brain Sciences

BCAW – Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World

BibTS – Biblisch-theologische Studien

Bronze – Walters, H. B., *Catalogue of the Bronzes in the British Museum. Greek, Roman and Etruscan.* London: British Museum Publications, 1899.

CMe – Clio Medica

Com – Communication

CR – The Classical Review

CRJ – Collection de la Revue des études juives

DI – Albert Rehm and Richard Harder. *Didyma II: Die Inschriften*. Berlin: Mann, 1958.

ECHE – Early Christianity in Its Hellenistic Environment

GCRW – Greek Culture in the Roman World

GHAW – Gods and Heroes of the Ancient World

GRHSGCCA – Groningen-Royal Holloway Studies on the Greek City after the Classical Age

HAW – Handbuch der Altertumsweissenschaft

HesperiaSup – Hesperia Supplements

HH – Homeric Hymns

HHS – History of the Human Sciences

HoS – The Heritage of Sociology

HStS – Hellenic Studies Series

IAATSK – Internationale Archäologie Arbeitsgemeinschaft, Tagung, Symposium, Kongress

IE – Impact of Empire

IGRR – *Iscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes*, ed. R. Cagnat, al. 3 vols. Paris: Lafaye, 1906–1927, repr. Chicago: Ares, 1975.

IPA – International Political Anthropology

IVPNCS – The IVP New Testament Commentary Series

JP – Journal of Pragmatics

JARS – Journal of Archaeological Science

JRC – Journal of Religion and Culture

JSRC – Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture

Lamp – Bailey, Donald Michael. *Catalogue of the Lamps in the British Museum*, 4 vols. London: British Museum Publications, 1975.

LBD – Lexham Bible Dictionary

LBS – Linguistic Biblical Studies

LHR – Law and History Review

MHR – Mediterranean Historical Review

NER – New England Review

NHA – Notes in the History of Art

OP – Ordia Prima

ORCS – Oxford Readings in Classical Studies

OSAD – Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents

PH – *Searchable Greek Inscriptions: A Scholarly Tool in Progress*. Packard Humanities Institute. To reference, go to http://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/[insert PH# here]

PSPB – Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin

RIC – Sutherland, C.H.V., and R.A.G. Carson, eds. The Roman Imperial Coinage. Vol. 1. Revised Ed. London: Spink and Son, 1984. Mattingly, Harold, and Edward A. Syndenham, eds. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 2. Revised Ed. London: Spink and Son, 1926.

RUS – The Rice University Studies

SA – Sociological Analysis

Silver – Walters, H. B., *Catalogue of the Silver Plate (Greek, Etruscan And Roman) in the British Museum*. London: British Museum Publications, 1921.

SMR – Symbol, Myth, and Ritual Series

SBLSymbS – Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series

SBLWGRWSup – Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series

SuSIA8˚ – Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen, 8˚

TAZ – Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter

ThesCRA – Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum

WSC – Wisconsin Studies in Classics

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INTRODUCTION

Despite some differences of opinion on particulars, the majority of contemporary scholars approach the book of Revelation in the same way. John, it is argued, is combating a situation in the churches of Asia where they are either disloyal in their faith or on the receiving end of some sort of persecution.[1] At this point, some disagreements arise as to why these situations exist, but mostly they understand it as accommodation to financial and social pressure, the imperial cult, Rome, and the emperor in some churches and perhaps some limited official or unofficial persecution in others.[2] This major focus on the imperial cult, Rome, and the emperor is justified by readily apparent references and symbolism throughout the Apocalypse and provide an easily identifiable motif. In the history of interpretation, numerous scholars have agreed that several references may point to Apollo (2:18-29; 6:2; 9:11; 12). However, save for a few short studies, rigorous attempts to discern how these references to Apollo fit within the larger argument of Revelation or what they mean in light of local evidence have been lacking. Thus, the question remains: What is the deity Apollo doing in Revelation?

In short, Apollo is in Revelation because, like the empire, he is part of John's larger invective against the Dragon. John makes the invective as part of his larger goal to exalt God and the Lamb and to reinforce sectarian boundaries and identity. John's treatment of Apollo is one of

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[1] From the last thirty years, see Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, New Testament Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 15; G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999), 28–33; Ian Boxall, *The Revelation of Saint John* (Peabody: Hendrickson; London: Continuum, 2009), 12–13; Craig S. Keener, *Revelation*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 39; M. Robert Mulholland, *Revelation: Holy Living in an Unholy World* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury, 1990), 90–139; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World*, Proclamation Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 53; Ben Witherington, *Revelation*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 14–15.

[2] David A. deSilva, "The 'Image of the Beast' and the Christians in Asia Minor: Escalation of Sectarian Tension in Revelation 13," *TJ* 12.2 (1991): 185–208; *Seeing Things John's Way: The Rhetoric of the Book of Revelation*, Kindle Ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), chap. 2.

inversion and recharacterization: the references to Apollo in Revelation move from portraying him simply as a rival to Christ to portraying him as an abyssal chaos monster who makes war upon the saints in the service of the Dragon. This invective against Apollo is due both to his prominence in the religion of Asia Minor and in Roman imperial ideology, both of which had detrimental effects on the proper identity formation of John's recipients as Christ followers.

The categorization of Revelation as a document concerning identity formation is a mainstream view on the part of interpreters, although normally the Roman Empire and the emperor are seen as the focus of incorrect self-identification on the part of John's readers.[3] Revelation at a fundamental level is a document about intentional identity formation on the part of John, who is concerned that the believers identify with God and the Lamb and not with the Dragon and his minions.[4] The marks of concern over identity are described throughout Revelation in terms of symbols and actions on the part of those involved in the vision.

John's recipients were constantly moving through pagan and imperial spaces. Social spaces are social constructs and these pagan and imperial spaces were full of ritual activity and social memories that reinforced pagan/imperial social identity. Even though his recipients had converted to Christianity, the effect of constantly moving through these spaces was that some of John's recipients had not formed a proper terminal identity. Because John is responding to the result of this pressure on Christian social identity by space and memory in Asia Minor (e.g., Christian accommodating pagan practice, imperial practice), the primary theoretical methods utilized by this study will be Critical Spatiality and Social Memory Theory. They allow us to answer the question: How does social memory or social space "X" affect identity formation? The

[3] E.g. Leonard L Thompson, *The Book of Revelation: Apocalypse and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 174–75.

[4] Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, HDR 9 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976), 185.

religion of Asia Minor in the first century CE will serve as a primary interpretive lens due to Apollo's status as a deity and religion being fully integrated into the cosmology and daily practice of the inhabitants of Anatolia.

Eventually this study will answer the question: How does John's use of Apollo affect identity formation? However, there are several issues that must be addressed before that question can be properly answered: (1) the *a priori* assumption of a Jewish background for Revelation (i.e., the burden of proof is for proving a non-Jewish background/referent); (2) an over-representation of the imperial cult; (3) an under-appreciation of the religion of Asia Minor and Apollo's place in it; (4) an uncritical application of the Panhellenic Apollo to a regional document. These issues will be addressed by reevaluating some aspects of John's personal identity (i.e. multiculturalism, cosmology, rhetorical training, etc.), the socio-cultural identity of his recipients and Apollo's place in it. Examining Apollo's role in the socio-religious milieu of Asia Minor will balance the over-representation of the imperial cut, give expression to his local character, and establish a context to evaluate his place in Revelation.

The issue of the *a priori* assumption of a Jewish background will be addressed immediately below, while the other issues will be addressed in chapters three and four. Prior to examining Apollo in the local socio-religious milieu, this study will review the history and current state of NT research on Revelation and Apollo (ch.1) as well as explain the methodology employed (ch. 2). We divide our discussion of Apollo into two parts. The first (ch. 3) looks at the Panhellenic Apollo, Apollo in Asia Minor, and the relationship between Apollo and the Roman Empire. The second (ch. 4) focuses the discussion upon Apollo's prominence in the seven cities of Revelation. After briefly examining evidence of his prominence in Ephesus, Thyatira, Smyrna, Philadelphia, and Pergamum, we focus especially on Sardis and the Lycus Valley.

Although Apollo is only mentioned once explicitly (9:11), the final chapter will demonstrate that John sustains an invective against him throughout the Apocalypse. It will also be shown that this invective fits naturally into his other invectives against the Dragon and the empire, as well as his aims for identity formation. Here we will utilize the methods for identifying the strengths of the intertextural allusions set forth in chapter two. We will revisit the traditionally proposed references using the methodology and considering the discussion of the previous chapters. Following this, we will propose alternate reading based the counter-Apollo motif present in the previously proposed allusions. However, before all this, we will first address the previously mentioned issues relating to John himself and discuss the question of "why Apollo?"

John's Multiculturalism and Revelation

John was not a one-dimensional person. He participated in a society marked by its multiculturalism, i.e. multiple cultures, including their practices, beliefs, etc. flourished and interacted constantly under Roman rule. Some places, such as Asia Minor, were focal points of multiculturalism because they were the nexus of trade and administration. Even backwater regions like Judea were affected by this multiculturalism and the influence of Hellenism. John's Jewish ethnicity does not preclude him being affected by multiculturalism. The following sections consider aspects of John's multiculturalism that are important for interpreting Revelation.

John's Judaism and Gentile paganism

One cannot debate the heavy use of Jewish themes and ideas in Revelation, but neither should one uncritically accept the *a priori* assumption that a Jewish background is usually the best explanation and best starting point for any particular reference. This simplistically reduces the multiculturalism of John, his recipients, and his society to unrealistic binaries.[5] If John is from Asia Minor or has at least lived there for an extended period of time, as the variety of local allusions in the messages to the seven churches suggest, then it would also more easily explain how he can seamlessly switch back and forth between or blend both pagan and Jewish themes and allusions, such as with Satan's inclusion in the Apollo-Leto-Python myth. Thus, it follows that the Greco-Roman socio-religious context of Asia Minor is just as important for understanding the symbolism and argument of Revelation.[6] Indeed, Revelation is a mixture of both Jewish and pagan themes combined into a cosmological narrative interpreted through the Christ event.[7]

Knowledge of pagan myth and practice and their use in Revelation does not imply syncretism on John's part. The message of the Apocalypse makes that clear. John's worldview,

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[5] Assigning Revelation to the genre of apocalypse can only take us so far. It certainly suggests that a Jewish perspective is in play, but this does not mandate that all references in Revelation refer to the OT. Indeed, the use of the Hellenistic Biography genre for Mark or the Hellenistic Historiography of Luke-Acts does not mandate that all external references be from Greek history. Furthermore, unlike the Jewish and OT apocalypses, Revelation was written in the Greek West of Asia Minor. Related to this, the Jewish Sibylline Oracles, although not apocalypses and composed in the eastern empire (i.e. Egypt and the Near East), demonstrate significant usage of pagan mythology.

[6] For example, the local allusions in the messages to the seven churches are necessary for understanding their meaning. Additionally, the importance of the allusions and other references to pagan religion makes sense in light of John's audience. As Craig Koester argues, the ethnic makeup of the Christian churches of Asia Minor was likely mixed between Jews and Gentiles, but "By the time Revelation was written, many members of the Christian community were of Gentile background. Churches connected to the Pauline mission in Asia Minor consisted mainly of non-Jews, and mixed congregations are evident in other sources linked to the region …The issue of eating what was offered to Greco-Roman deities would have been most pressing for Gentile Christians, who had eaten such food in the past (Rev 2:14, 20)" (Koester, *Revelation*, 87–88). John would have realized the importance of subverting the pagan religious message for his audience who would have grown up steeped in the Graeco-Roman religious context of Asia Minor and who still encountered its dominance every day, and his use of pagan religion in Revelation demonstrates this.

[7] This necessarily implies that John is also interpreting the Christ event itself.

like that of the apostles, was thoroughly Jewish.[8] Yet this worldview, steeped as it was in monotheism and sacred literary tradition, was a foreign way of thinking for the gentile converts.[9] The evidence of the counter-cultural thinking of Judaism and Christianity in their Greco-Roman context is abundant. First Corinthians speaks strongly to this reality.[10] Despite the work of the bishops, early Christians were often prone to directly incorporating pagan practices into Christian practices (e.g. venerating sacred vessels).[11] This is seen in such things as early Christian saint day celebrations and magic. One should add to this as well the popular inclination in Greco-Roman paganism, and especially Anatolia, to identify newly encountered gods with those whom they most resembled.[12] In Revelation, it is telling that the monikers of both Balaam and Jezebel are used—both are gentiles who sought to introduce idolatry to Israel.[13]

John's Cosmology

Shane Wood has convincingly argued that the scholarly focus on the empire in Revelation has skewed John's intent.[14] Wood argues that in John's mind, the main enemy was not Rome, but rather the Dragon. The Roman Empire and pagan religion are merely the Dragon's

[8] Even with all the varieties of Judaism, they still were agreed in many of their cosmological assumptions.

[9] This would also apply to the Jews of Asia Minor, who as Kraabel and Trebilco have shown were still distinct as a social and religious group, even though they had achieved various levels of integration.

[10] In I Corinthians Paul contends with issues of toxic patronage, sophism, classism, and idolatry.

[11] Ramsay MacMullen, *The Second Church: Popular Christianity A.D. 200-400*, SBLWGRWSup 1 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009), 29–30.

[12] Arthur Darby Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933), 19.

[13] The supposition that Gentile Christians would not know these names because they were not familiar with the OT is problematic. At the point in time when Revelation was written, it is quite reasonable to suppose that a significant number of Christians, especially the teachers and elders, would have more than a passing familiarity with the OT. For instance, 1 Clement makes prodigious use of OT allusions and quotations. This of course only becomes more widespread as earlier Christian literature is written. Some of the churches in Revelation had been in existence for several decades. It stands to reason that they would have learned their scriptures when they had given up so much to join the Jesus movement.

[14] Shane J. Wood, *The Alter-Imperial Paradigm: Empire Studies & the Book of Revelation*, BibInt 140 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

tools. Apollo and his worship fits very well into this matrix, as he has strong ties to both the Roman Empire and pagan religion. Is Apollo then simply a literary device that has significant meaning in the pagan culture of John's recipients? This view is possible, but it would seriously discount prominent Jewish and early Christian views that pagan gods were in fact demonic beings, which John also believed (e.g. 9:20).

As is generally acknowledged, Jewish angelology and demonology heavily developed during the 2nd temple period.[15] In addition to the extrabiblical literary and rabbinic developments, in the LXX we see the development played out in several places where "idols" are replaced with "demons," or "demons" is added to complete a thought or replace a pagan deity.[16] Thus we should not be surprised that this view became part of the Jewish polemic against idolatry.[17] A further pertinent development was that of the angels having rule or responsibility over the various nations of the earth.[18] This vein of thought is likely built upon the Song of Moses from Deut 32:8–9, wherein the rule of the earth is divided among the divine beings.[19] However, the later writers, especially of apocalyptic literature, were to introduce the element of malevolent ruling angels, such as in the *Animal Apocalypse* (1 Enoch 83–90) or Daniel (Dan 10:12–13, 20), but the belief in the governance of good angels also persisted (3 Baruch 12-13).[20]

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[15] Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 42.

[16] See Ps 96:5 (95:5 LXX); 106:37 (105:37 LXX); Isa 65:3, 11 (LXX), Bar 4:7; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 472 n. 49.

[17] deSilva, "The 'Image of the Beast' and the Christians in Asia Minor," 204.

[18] See Beale, *Revelation*, 650; Isbon T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John* (New York: Macmillan, 1919), 70–71; Carol A. Newsom and Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 332, 335.

[19] Newsom notes how the MT amends the text to say "sons of Israel" instead of "sons of God," but convincingly demonstrates that the original reading of "sons of God" or a similar meaning (i.e. "angels of God") is preserved by the various traditions of 4QDeut^{j} = 4Q37 and Deut 32:8 (LXX) (Newsom and Breed, *Daniel*, 332).

[20] Patrick Tiller, "Israel at the Mercy of Demonic Powers: An Enochic Interpretation of Postexilic Imperialism," in *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism*, ed. Lawrence M. Wills and Benjamin G. Wright, SBLSymS 35 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2005), 113–22.

Early Christianity also espoused a similar view. In the NT, the most notable reference is from 1 Corinthians, where Paul states quite explicitly that when pagans are sacrificing to their gods, they are actually sacrificing to demons (10:20–21).[21] Andrew Lincoln also argues that the Jewish belief in angels and demons with authority over nations is behind Eph 1:21.[22] Familiarity with the Watchers and their spheres of authority is clearly evident in Jude 6.[23] Further examples of "cosmic powers," whether good or bad, can be found in Rom 8:38, Col 1:16, 2:15, and 2 Pet 1:4.[24] Also notable is the explicit association of Apollo with demonic activity in Acts 16:16 where a slave girl had a "spirit of python" (ἔχουσαν πνεῦμα πύθωνα) that was driven out by Paul.[25] The continuation of these beliefs, especially the association of pagan deities with demons, continued to be held into Late Antiquity (cf. *Apos. Con.* 5.11; Athenagoras, *Leg.* 26; Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 2.36; Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 2; Lactantius *Epit.* 4.27, *Acts and Martyrdom of Andrew*; Pseudo-Clement *Recognitions* 5.31 and *Homily* 10.25; *Mart. Bart.*).[26] Unsurprisingly, with its close relationship to apocalyptic literature, and the clear influence and dependence upon Daniel, Revelation evidences these beliefs as well, such as with the angels of the seven churches,

[21] This view of 1 Cor 10:20–21 is a standard interpretation (Fee, *Corinthians*, 471–73); against it see Bruce W. Winter, "Identifying the Offering, the Cup and the Table of the 'Demons' in 1 Cor 10:20-21," in *Saint Paul and Corinth: International Scientific Conference Proceedings, Corinth, 23-25 September, 2007*, ed. C. Belezos, S. Despotis, and C. Karakolis (Athens: Psychogios, 2009), 847–68.

[22] See Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, WBC 42 (Waco: Word, 1990), 62–63. Fredrick Long has also further distinguished in Ephesians and other Pauline texts that ἐξουσία can mean "spiritual forces" (Fredrick J. Long, "Roman Imperial Rule Under the Authority of Jupiter-Zeus: Political-Religious Contexts and the Interpretation of 'the Ruler of the Authority of the Air' in Ephesians 2:2," in *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History and Development*, ed. S. E. Porter and A. W. Pitts, LBS 6; ECHE 3 [Leiden: Brill, 2013], 113–54, 127).

[23] Richard Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco: Word, 1983), 52.

[24] Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 52, 248–49.

[25] Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary.* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 3:2422–23 & n. 1256.

[26] Despina Iosif, "'The Present and Future Worlds Are Enemies to Each Other'. Early Christian Aloofness and Participation in the Pagan World," in *Cults, Creeds and Identities in the Greek City after the Classical Age*, ed. Richard Alston, Onno van Nijf, and Christina G. Williamson, GRHSGCCA 3 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 289–308, esp. 294–95.

Michael, evil spirit frogs, and with demonic beings given authority over the earth and its inhabitants.[27]

In Revelation John uses the term demon (δαίμων) three times (9:20; 16:14; 18:2). His use is in keeping with Jewish tradition and early Christian tradition. Revelation 9:20 is especially informative in this regard. Here, unrepentant humanity refuses to give up the worship of demons and idols. In this pairing John associates pagan gods with demons. Revelation depicts limited options for objects of worship: rightful worship belongs to God and the Lamb and improper worship is given to the Dragon, his agents, and idols. The pairing of demons and idols reveals John's view of the Dragon and his agents (including Apollo) fall within this general category.

John, Myth, and Rhetoric

John demonstrates a surprising amount of familiarity with myth and mythic literature. For example, it is almost universally agreed that Rev 12 is an adaption of the Apollo-Leto-Python myth. He also evidences familiarity with themes of imperial propaganda evidenced in the Augustan poets, such as the Golden Age of rule in the Fourth Eclogue. We will examine other examples in chapter five, but notable among these are John's apparent familiarity with the poetry of both Homer and Vergil. As far as Homer is concerned, one should not be surprised that John knew it; Homer had remained widespread and popular into the Roman period. However, what about such things as the Homeric Hymns or the Greek poets? There are two options: John had rhetorical training and thus knew Greek literature, or he had help in writing the Apocalypse from someone who did.

[27] Gregory K Beale, "The Influence of Daniel upon the Structure and Theology of John's Apocalypse," *JETS* 27.4 (1984): 413–23.

There is no mention of a helper or anyone else with John, but the fact that he expected the Apocalypse to be sent to the seven churches at least suggests he was not alone or at least expected visitors. Apocalypses as a genre usually claim authorship from a single individual, but with the letter structures we should not expect strict adherence to this. So, the possibility remains open.

Contrary to the denials of Stanley E. Porter, John is an excellent rhetorician and writer.[28] The superb construction and intricacies present in the Apocalypse point to rhetorical training.[29] Multiple interpreters have argued that John was familiar with classical rhetoric and used its styles to shape Revelation.[30] John could have been familiar with the *Aeneid's* story and Vergil's other poetry simply through cultural exposure, since Vergil's poetry featured in Imperial propaganda. However, he would have encountered it during his rhetorical training, as the *Aeneid* was a standard text. Although it is unlikely John could speak or write Latin, Aune has plausibly argued John was familiar with woodenly translated Latin-to-Greek sources.[31] Indeed John would have

[28] Porter has argued that John's Greek is "vulgar" and not a good representation of Classical forms—that John "was not particularly competent in Greek" (Stanley E. Porter, "The Language of the Apocalypse in Recent Discussion," *NTS* 35 (1989): 582–603, esp. 600). This is unconvincing, because, as Beale observed above, John follows the rules of grammar most of the time (*Revelation*, 102–3). R. H. Charles unconvincingly posited a Greek editor to explain John's command of language (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, vol. 1, *ICC* [New York: Scribner's Sons, 1920], l–li). The old theory of John constructing a special dialect to subvert the language of empire has not received much of a following, yet the research currently happening in performance criticism suggests that aural dissonance of the Apocalypse is intentional. Pronunciation, rhythm, and grammar counted in ancient performance (Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.4), thus it follows that an author could intentionally create aural dissonance for performance impact.

[29] M. Karrer argues in favor of John's mastery of the Greek language and labels the Apocalypse "high rhetoric" (Martin Karrer, "Hellenistische und frükaiserzeitliche Motive in der Johannesapokalypse," in *Die Offenbarung des Johannes Kommunikation im Konflikt.*, ed. Thomas Schmeller, Martin Ebner, and Rudolf Hoppe, QD 253 [Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2016], 32–73, esp. 44). John then is more advanced than Mark, who had a *progymnasta* elementary education (Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 9–10), but not as sophisticated as Paul, who, to be fair, used amanuenses.

[30] Schüssler Fiorenza, *Revelation*, 26; Annette Weissenrieder, "Images to See, Images to Hear? On the Limitation of Visual Art and Language as Ekphrasis in Revelation 12 and 17," in *Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity* (presented at the Annual Meeting of SBL, Baltimore, 2013); Witherington, *Revelation*, 15.

[31] David E. Aune, "A Latinism in Revelation 15:2," *JBL*, *Latinism* 110 (1991): 691–92.

used Polybius' Greek translation of the *Aeneid*.[32] Beyond Homer and Vergil, it should be assumed that John would at least be familiar with many of the myths of paganism, both regional to Asia Minor and Panhellenic, as well as the more popular literature (e.g. Horace, Aeschylus).

Why Apollo?

Although John believed the pagan gods were demons, why does Apollo receive John's attention? There are two interrelated reasons. One is the imminence, to borrow a theological term, of Apollo. Zeus may be the one in whom the Greeks lived and moved and had their being, but Apollo diverted plagues and evils, and was available to those who sought divine guidance—whether through oracle, *mantis*, or magician. In other words, he was not simply a demon who was worshiped at temples and festivals, but one who played an active social, religious, and political role in the lives of those in Asia Minor.[33] It is also notable that Artemis/Hecate is referenced in Revelation: the phrase "I am coming quickly" in 1:18 and "I am the Alpha and Omega" from 1:8.[34] She is the other major deity of Asia Minor apart from Zeus and Apollo. The references to her in Revelation are related to that of power, as well as apotropaic and revelatory magic.[35] The familial relationship of these two Apollo and Artemis, as well as the overlap of their respective domains in Asia Minor (i.e. prophecy, magic, apotropaic power), and their

[32] Marianne Palmer Bonz, *The Past as Legacy: Luke-Acts and Ancient Epic* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 64–65, 64 n. 19.

[33] It should be telling that the longest chapter in Robin Lane Fox's seminal *Pagans and Christians* is mostly concerned with Apollo's place in Greco-Roman religion (Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* [San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995], 168–261).

[34] Both Aune and Arnold have adduced evidence for the association of Artemis and Hecate in general and in Asia Minor; Aune discusses the references in revelation (Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of Its Historical Setting* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992], 22–26; David E. Aune, "The Apocalypse of John and Graeco-Roman Revelatory Magic," *NTS* 33 [1987]: 481–501).

[35] Aune, "Magic"; Rodney L. Thomas, *Magical Motifs in the Book of Revelation*, LNTS 416 (London: T&T Clark, 2010).

inclusion in Revelation certainly suggests that they perhaps play a larger role in understanding the social situations of the seven churches and motivations of John for writing them.

Apollo was a fundamental part of the Roman propaganda machine and imperial identity. It was a longstanding relationship and certainly provides John with ammunition to make slights against the emperor, which is generally how interpreters have been content to take the references. However, Apollo was already deeply rooted in the social and psychological structures of Asia Minor well before the empire came along.

Even after Asia Minor fell under Roman control, Apollo remained a deity grounded in the Greek practices of religion. In conception and practice, he represented the Greek and indigenous cultures of Asia Minor more than Roman Imperialism that in fact had adopted the Hellenic Apollo. Yet, because of Augustus', Nero's, and even Domitian's programs of public self-identification with Apollo, as well as the popularity of Vergil's *Aeneid* in propagating Roman identity in Imperial ideology, Apollo also took on the additional role of guarantor and protector of the empire—especially through the person of the emperor. What this means is despite his associations with the emperor, Apollo still remained Apollo and was not a cipher taken to mean the emperor. The emperors were known for their *pietas* and defense of traditional religion. They safeguarded the worship of the gods and so the gods safeguarded them.[36] Thus, in the minds of most people and also John, Apollo stood behind the emperor, but was not the emperor himself and this is an important distinction.

What John saw was that Apollo had his hands in both the pagan culture of Asia Minor as well as the Roman Imperial system, both of which exerted influence on the social identity of his

[36] Although true in the propaganda, this was not always true in practice, as Nero's looting of Delphi shows, (Pausanius, *Descr.* 10.7.1; Dio Chrysostom, *Rhod.* 148; Edward Champlin, *Nero* [Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003], 133).

recipients. This would be cause enough for a Christian invective against Apollo from John's perspective, but there may be more. While some have questioned the nature and extent of historical martyrdom and persecution relayed by John, they are nevertheless a major theme in Revelation.[37] Part of John's hostility towards Apollo may come not only from the socio-religious context of Asia Minor, but also from Apollo's role in the Neronian persecution. Edward Champlin has perceptively noted that Nero's various kinds of "punishments" for Christians for the fire in Rome were styled in such a way as to be payback for the fire damaging the temple of the Palatine Apollo, a fact, as Champlin points out, most likely verified by Clement's recall of the persecutions (1 Clem. 6).[38] Since the stories of these martyrdoms were still fresh in Clement's mind, who wrote around the same time as John, it is reasonable to think that John too would have known of them and the style in which they happened. Indeed, Nero himself and his *redivivus* myth appear to be singled out by John. Nero was heavily associated with Apollo/Sol, so John may have seen Apollo not only a cultural and religious threat, but one who through the emperor, martyred Christians. Thus, Nero and Apollo serve as examples *par excellence* of servants of the Dragon who both claimed for themselves the titles and prerogatives of Christ as well as the allegiance of his followers.

[37] For a survey of the discussion, see Paul Brooks Duff, *Who Rides the Beast?: Prophetic Rivalry and the Rhetoric of Crisis in the Churches of the Apocalypse* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 4–16.

[38] Champlin, *Nero*, 123–24. Champlin builds on the work of K. M. Coleman and argues that Nero had the Christian women represent the Danaids so that it would indicate Apollo was punishing them, since it is a mythological story about Apollo the Avenger and because the myth was represented large scale at the temple of the Palatine Apollo; see also K. M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments," *JRS* 80 (1990): 44–73..

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

Interpreters have noted links to Apollo within the Apocalypse since at least the time of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). However, most of the discussion has occurred from near the end of the 19th century up to the present time. These discussions have primarily focused upon four points within Revelation: the title "Son of God" in Rev 2:18; the identity of the first horseman of the Apocalypse in 6:2; the Angel of the Abyss Apollyon in 9:11; and the flight of the woman and her child from the Dragon in 12:1-6. While consensus has been elusive as to whether these passages allude to Apollo, the assertions nevertheless remain widespread among prominent interpreters. In this chapter we will review the history of interpretation of Apollo and the Apocalypse.

The History of Interpretation of Apollo in the Apocalypse

Revelation interpreters have interacted with the idea of influence from Apollo traditions in several ways. They see John using myths or social memories of Apollo to insult the emperor (e.g. Nero, Domitian, or Augustus) or to dispute the claims of the empire.[39] Some scholars also understand John to be using allusions to Apollo to disparage local religion. Related to this, some see John claiming that Christ is the true fulfilment of what was claimed by or for Apollo, such as prophecy or bringing the age of peace. Finally, some put forward Apollo as an exemplar of local and imperial religion that was influencing the churches in Asia Minor. These categories are not always mutually exclusive within the secondary literature. Therefore, this review will divide

[39] E.g. Adela Yarbro Collins uses John's reaction to Nero's association with Apollo and the growth of emperor worship in the East as part her effort to date the Apocalypse. See Adela Yarbro Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 71.

these interactions within two broad categories: Apollo as general background or local contextual material; and instances where Apollo is used as a major interpretive lens for a specific passage.

Apollo in the Background and Local Context Material

As background and context material, the secondary literature features Apollo mainly by using him as an example of local pagan religion or an analogue for what appears in the text. The secondary literature demonstrates this by noting Apollo's importance in the region generally and within several of the seven cities of Revelation particularly. In this sense, the secondary literature recognizes Apollo and his cults as an important part of Anatolian society and Greco-Roman religion.

Apollo and Prophecy

In describing the setting of Revelation, Craig R. Koester, among others, notes Apollo's role as the locus of Greco-Roman prophecy, citing Apollo's major oracles at Claros and Didyma, as well as the presence of individual prophets.[40] Although he does not engage the biblical text, Thomas L. Robinson's 1991 *Semeia* article detailing the religious activity of the two oracle sites during the imperial period provides a notable contribution from a biblical scholar to understanding Apollo in Asia Minor.[41] In addition to demonstrating the popularity of Apollo in the Lycus valley and the strong ties between Laodicea and Apollo at Claros, Ulrich Huttner also remarks on the difference in conception and function between John the Seer's understanding of

[40] Koester, *Revelation*, 214, 241–42. See also Boxall, *Revelation*, 10–11, 145.; others who mention the oracles are discussed in various sections below. For pagan prophecy in general and how it relates to the Apocalypse, see Ben Witherington, *Jesus the Seer: The Progress of Prophecy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 353–57.

[41] Thomas L. Robinson, "Oracles and Their Society: Social Realities as Reflected in the Oracles of Claros and Didyma," *Semeia* 56 (1991): 59–77.

prophecy and that of Greek religion.[42] David E. Aune notes Apollo is associated with the "Tripartite Prophecy Formula" (i.e. what was, is, and will be) in Ovid *Metam.* 1.517–18.[43] In discussing the unidentified voice of Rev 10:4, Aune adduces examples of Greco-Roman analogs that only feature Apollo.[44] He notes further Apollonian analogs for the revelation of the Holy City to John on the mountain (21:10), the integrity formula (22:18-19), and the promise and invocation of 22:20.[45] Examining the use of lambs in the Greco-Roman environment, Loren L. Johns notes that lambs were especially valuable in divination and often used in sacrifices to Apollo.[46]

Apollo and the Cities of Revelation

Apart from Thyatira, Apollo's role in the cities of Revelation mostly receive only a brief mention as relevant background material. Koester notes Apollo's prominence in Ephesus, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Sardis.[47] Craig S. Keener, following Edwin M. Yamauchi, notes his prominence in Laodicea and his ancient association with healing in Pergamum alongside Asclepius.[48] Colin J. Hemer recalls a story about the defeat of Croesus at Sardis by Cyrus, wherein Apollo delivers Croesus from a fiery death by sending a rainstorm.[49] Mark W. Wilson

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[42] Ulrich Huttner, *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley*, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 85 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 42–49, 149–50.

[43] David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, WBC 52A (Dallas: Word, 1997), 113.

[44] David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, WBC 52B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 561–62.

[45] David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, WBC 52C (Dallas: Word, 1998), 1152, 1212, 1215–16.

[46] Loren L. Johns, "Atonement and Sacrifice in the Book of Revelation," in *The Work of Jesus Christ in Anabaptist Perspective: Essays in Honor of J. Denny Weaver*, ed. J. Denny Weaver, Alain Epp Weaver, and Gerald J. Mast (Telford: Cascadia; Scottdale: Herald Press, 2008), 58–59.

[47] Koester, *Revelation*, 256, 322, 334, 378.

[48] Keener, *Revelation*, 123 nn. 4; 160; Edwin M. Yamauchi, *The Archaeology of New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor*, Baker Studies in Biblical Archaeology (Grand Rapids, 1980), 145.

[49] Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*, JSOTSup 11 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1986), 132.

notes in his discussion of the phrase "Paradise of God" in the message to Ephesus that the lodging built around the temple of Apollo at Didyma was called *paradeisos*.[50]

Scholars have noted Apollo's prominence in Thyatira since William M. Ramsay and usually follow his observations.[51] These are mainly that Apollo Tyrimnaios was the patron deity of Thyatira—a syncretistic mix between the Thytiaran hero Tyrimnaios and Apollo—and trade guilds, who paid Apollo Tyrimnaios particular reverence, were a prominent feature of the city. Reactions to his application of these observations of Thyatira to the text of Revelation have had a mixed reception,[52] although interpreters generally agree that the local context of Thyatira is the appropriate background for understanding the message.[53] Ramsay's interpretations featuring Apollo and subsequent interaction by other scholars will be discussed below in the section on 2:18-28.

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[50] Mark W Wilson, *The Victor Sayings in the Book of Revelation* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 110.

[51] For Ramsay's discussion, see William M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* (Grand Rapids: Baker House, 1979; repr., London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), 316–53. Whether or not they cite him, most interpreters follow a similar course to Ramsay by reiterating and sometimes updating his comments on the local context of Thyatira. For examples, see Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999), 259–60; Ian Boxall, *The Revelation of Saint John* (Peabody: Hendrickson; London: Continuum, 2009), 62–63; George B. Caird, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine*, HNTC (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 43; R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, *ICC* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1920), 1:68; Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*, JSOTSup 11 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1986), 106–28; Craig S. Keener, *Revelation*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 133; Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John*, MNTC (New York: Harper, 1941), 37; Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, Rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 85; Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 152–53; Pierre Prigent, *L'Apocalypse de Saint Jean*, 1re éd., CNT 14 (Lausanne: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1981), 56; Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John*, 3rd ed. (London: MacMillan, 1911), 41.

[52] E.g. Beckwith, *Apocalypse*, 465.

[53] Koester is a notable exception. He does not regard the local contexts of individual cities as having any real bearing on the interpretation of the messages. See Koester, *Revelation*, 266–67. See also Charles H. H. Scobie, "Local References in the Letters to the Seven Churches," *NTS* 39.4 (1993): 606–24.

Apollo and Patmos

Koester notes that Apollo had an active cult on Patmos along with Artemis and Hermes, and that John faced a situation like that of his recipients in trying to maintain "a distinctive Christian identity in a social context that did not support it."[54] H. D. Saffrey argued Patmos was sacred to Apollo Delphinios in general because it was a territory of Miletus and that at least one section in particular was sacred to Apollo.[55] Ian Boxall follows Saffrey in noting the prominence of Apollo, as well as Artemis on Patmos, and the island's link to Miletus.[56] Boxall suggests that the cultic activity of Apollo and Artemis on Patmos and in Miletus influenced the symbolism used in Revelation, particularly in the first horseman (6:2), Apollyon and the demonic locusts (9:1-11), the heavenly woman (12:1-2), and the beast from the sea (13:11-18).[57] He argues that the point of these references is to subvert the "rival symbolic world" of pagan worship and to reclaim for Christ Apollo's association with prophecy.[58]

The Exalted Christ of Revelation 1:12-20

Aside from the term χαλκολίβανος, which we will discuss in the section below on 2:18-26, several interpreters have noted background analogs or possible intentional referents to Apollo in image of the exalted Christ. Aune suggests that 1:16 may be intended to recall the Colossus of Nero, which was fashioned in the image of Apollo/Sol, while Martin Karrer suggests the imagery

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[54] Koester, *Revelation*, 241–42, 251.

[55] Saffrey argued the former based on an inscription from Artia that claimed all territory of Miletus was sacred to Apollo Didymeus and another from Patmos that demarcated a section as sacred to "the god" (τοῦ θεοῦ). See H. D. Saffrey, "Relire l'Apocalypse à Patmos," *RB* 82.3 (1975): 385–417, esp. 391–92.

[56] Ian Boxall, "Reading the Apocalypse on the Island of Patmos," *ScrB* 40.1 (2010): 22–33, esp. 26; Ian Boxall, *Patmos in the Reception History of the Apocalypse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 110.

[57] Boxall, "Reading," 27–29; Boxall, *Revelation*, 10–11.

[58] Boxall, "Reading," 27–29.

may simply be intended to recall associations with Helios.[59] Keener notes that "the beginning and the end belong to Apollo in *Orphic Hymns* 34.15" and adduces Apollo as an example of deity's sometimes carrying swords (in response to the sword in Christ's mouth).[60] Similarly, Koester provides the example of Apollo holding his bow.[61]

Cithara and Bowls in Revelation 5:8

Several images of Apollo holding both a cithara and a bowl (φιάλη) are adduced by multiple scholars.[62] Despite using several examples from different media featuring only Apollo holding both a cithara and bowl to demonstrate analogs, he draws no significant connection to the god. Karrer on the other hand suggests that the music and ritual of the heavenly worship disputes the musical dominion of Apollo and subordinates them to God and the Lamb.[63]

Hymns of Revelation

Aune notes that the invocation to sing to God in Rev 19:5 finds an analog in Callimachus *Hymns* 2.25–31, wherein the choir is directed to sings paean to Apollo.[64]

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[59] David E. Aune, "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial on the Apocalypse of John," *BR* 28 (1983): 5–26, esp. 11; Karrer, "Hellenistische," 32–73, esp. 58–59.

[60] Keener, *Revelation*, 73 nn. 28; 96 13.

[61] Koester, *Revelation*, 246.

[62] Aune, "Influence," 355; Koester, *Revelation*, 378; Osborne, *Revelation*, 258; Gregory Stevenson, *Power and Place: Temple and Identity in the Book of Revelation*, BZNW 107 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 234.

[63] Karrer, "Hellenistische," 47.

[64] Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1027.

Apollo as a Major Interpretive Lens

Revelation 2:18-28

The conversation about Apollo and the message to the church at Thyatira involves the application of Thyatira's local setting to the message's interpretation. Interpreters generally understand Jezebel's teaching as encouraging active participation in local religion, which includes both Apollo Tyrimnaios' cult and the imperial cult. Using this approach, discussion involving Apollo usually revolves around the phrase "Son of God" and the term χαλκολίβανος.

Ramsay regarded the local contexts as the key for understanding the obscurity of the messages to the seven churches. He applied a military motif for understanding the message based on Thyatira's prior history as a military colony and supposed continued self-understanding as such.[65] He noted that Apollo Tyrimnaios was regarded as a marshal deity, often represented as riding a horse and carrying a double axe.[66] Ramsay also noted that both local and imperial religion had a "closer relation" under the later empire.[67] He used these to understand the reference to ruling with a rod of iron (Rev 2:27), which he understood as referring to ruling through raw power versus formal authority. The reference had the purpose of associating the power and glory of Apollo Tyrimnaios with Christ—an antithesis to the military power of Rome.[68] His application of Apollo to the passage is not followed by interpreters.

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[65] Ramsay, *Letters*, 324.
[66] Ramsay, *Letters*, 321.
[67] Ramsay, *Letters*, 322.
[68] Ramsay, *Letters*, 330–31.

Prior to Ramsay, Emil Schürer argued that Jezebel was a prophetess from the Sambatheion in Thyatira.[69] Although not the focus of any discussion in the secondary literature, this would nevertheless have meant she was in the service of Apollo. However, Schürer attempted to remove the focus from the pagan nature of the oracle by heavily advocate for a Jewish influence.[70] He did this to justify his theory that the Christians of Thyatira consulted her as an oracle, which apparently would have only been morally acceptable to them if she had Jewish connections.[71]

This view never gained any strong adherents and is rarely mentioned at all among modern commentators—the circumstantial connection was just too tenuous to sustain this view in the long run.[72] Both Henry B. Swete and Hemer afford Schürer's hypothesis serious consideration, but ultimately cannot move beyond the hypothetical nature of the argument.[73]There is also more recent debate about whether the inscription mentioning the Sambatheion (*CIG* 3509) refers to a synagogue or to an actual pagan sanctuary.[74] Still, Wilhelm Bousset states the main issue succinctly: "Es ist gar nicht einzusehen, mit welchem Recht man die christliche Prophetin Isabel mit der heidnischen Prophetin des Sambatheions identifizieren

[69] Emil Schürer, "Die Prophetin Isabel in Thyatira, Offenb. Joh. II, 20," in *Theologische Abhandlungen: Carl von Weizsäcker Zu Seinem Siebzigsten Geburtstage, 11 December 1892*, ed. Adolf von Harnack (Freiburg: J.C.B. Mohr, 1892), 37–59.

[70] This was not altogether problematic as this sibyl, Sambathe, is sometimes called Jewish or Persian. This led Joseph W. Blakesley to suggest the same connection as Schürer. Hemer records that Blakesley's suggestion arose independent of Schürer (see Hemer, *Letters*, 117). Hemer provides an incomplete and possibly wrong citation for Blakesley (*Letters*, 250 n. 51). A verified reference may be found at Joseph W. Blakesley, "Thyatira," *Dictionary of the Bible* 4:3241–42.

[71] Schürer, "Isabel," 55–57.

[72] Charles, *Revelation*, 70; Beckwith, *Apocalypse*, 466; Mounce, *Revelation*, 87; Osborne, *Revelation*, 156; Ramsay, *Letters*, 337.

[73] Hemer, *Letters*, 117–19; Swete, *Apocalypse*, 42–43.

[74] Alf Thomas Kraabel, "Judaism in Western Asia Minor and the Roman Empire, with a Preliminary Study of the Jewish Community at Sardis, Lydia" (PhD Diss., Harvard University, 1968), 163–68.

darf....”[75] Most likely the issue of an over-precise identification along with Bousset's criticism have been enough to discourage widespread discussion.

Several notable interpreters have argued that “Son of God” in Rev 2:18 is a counter-claim for Christ against Apollo. Almost without exception, however, Apollo is considered part of a dual interpretation that includes the emperors, who, it is argued, were associated with Apollo and called ‘son of the divine.’ This interpretation of the Son of God phrase gained traction in the mid-20th century with George B. Caird and Martin Kiddle.[76] This view is also followed by several contemporary scholars.[77] Boxall understands the title as a counterclaim to Apollo Tyrimnaios or Helios, with John emphasizing that Christ is the true patron deity.[78] Similarly, Grant R. Osborne argues solely for a counter-claim against Apollo, holding that there was “little if any emperor worship” in Thyatira, while the cult of Apollo Tyrimnaios was central.[79] However, Osborne’s view concerning the imperial cult and Thyatira is not altogether correct. Koester has presented epigraphic evidence showing that Thyatira had an active municipal imperial cult and that several of its prominent citizens served in the provincial imperial cults.[80] Even so, the above view espoused by other interpreters mainly rests on Ramsay’s view of a close mixing of local and imperial religion. However, the evidence adduced by Ramsay is far too late to make this kind of assumption and the evidence presented by Koester does not support it either.[81]

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[75] Wilhelm Bousset, *Offenbarung Johannis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1906), 217.
[76] Caird, *Revelation*, 43; Kiddle, *Revelation*, 37.
[77] Beale, *Revelation*, 259; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 193; Keener, *Revelation*, 133; Mounce, *Revelation*, 85.
[78] Boxall, *Revelation*, 63.
[79] Osborne, *Revelation*, 152–53.
[80] Koester, *Revelation*, 296.
[81] Ramsay, *Letters*, 321–22.

In the mid-20th century Kiddle suggested that the term χαλκολίβανος was meant to refer to metalworking guilds, as well as their patron Apollo Tyrimnaios' cult statue.[82] This rose out of the assumption that this rare word would have needed to be intelligible to its audience and that description of the exalted Christ of Rev 1:12-16 as based on the local historical contexts. Hemer also argued for a similar view concerning the cult statue of Apollo and the guilds but gave a lengthier discussion on the nature of χαλκολίβανος.[83] Reactions have been mixed on this proposal, but notable adherents include Gregory K. Beale, Boxall, and Osborne.[84] Beale disagrees slightly and argues that Apollo is a dual background with Dan 10. Osborne focuses on the military aspect Hemer ascribed to χαλκολίβανος' manufacture and suggests the term ascribes military might to Christ in opposition to the militaristic Apollo Tyrimnaios.

Apollo as the First Rider of the Apocalypse

In his 1993 *JBL* article, Allen Kerkeslager argued that the rider on the white horse (Rev 6:2) should be understood as Apollo.[85] His argument is based on both the inadequacy of prior interpretations, the specific social-cultural context of the recipients, and other accepted Apollo references in Revelation. Ultimately, Kerkeslager's argument rests on two proofs, namely the symbolism associated with the rider and a polemic against "false prophets and values of pagan society."[86] In support, he points to a variety of classical texts, as well as Philo (*Legat.* 95-96), that describe Apollo's widespread association with both crown and bow.[87] He also notes the

[82] Kiddle, *Revelation*, 37.
[83] Hemer, *Letters*, 111–17.
[84] Beale, *Revelation*, 260; Boxall, *Revelation*, 62–63; Osborne, *Revelation*, 153–54.
[85] Allen Kerkeslager, "Apollo, Greco-Roman Prophecy, and the Rider on the White Horse in Rev 6:2," *JBL* 112 (1993): 116–21.
[86] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 119.
[87] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 118–19.

prominence of the Apollo cult in Asia Minor, the importance of the Apollo cult for trade guilds in Thyatira, the oracle at Didyma, the general familiarity of the populace with Apollonian imagery, and Apollo's role in pagan prophecy as evidence for their probable negative influence on the Christians of Asia Minor. As supplementary support, Kerkeslager also points to the personification of other pagan deities (Death and Hades of Rev 6:8), the familiarity of John with the Apollo-Leto-Python combat myth present in Rev 12, and the play on Apollo's name in Rev 9:11.[88] There are a few other points, but these are the most salient.

Of the variety of scholars to publish on this passage since 1993, only a few have interacted with Kerkeslager and their interaction lacks consensus. Aune presents the view, although at the very end of a list of options, and offers no opinion.[89] Beale stops short of endorsing it, but adds that his own interpretation of the passage would not exclude its inclusion.[90] Boxall presents it as a legitimate option, but also adds that it could be understood as an insult to the emperor.[91] J. Ramsay Michaels believes it to be a legitimate interpretation.[92] Robert H. Mounce may give implicit endorsement in that he acknowledges that the false prophecy aspect might be in the passage.[93] Ben Witherington opts for a multivalent understanding, saying that the imagery evokes all sorts of allusions and thus the allusion to Apollo is a definite possibility.[94] Keener acknowledges that Kerkeslager's argument is "brilliant," but claims the allusion is too subtle.[95] His objections are that there are not enough allusions present in the pericope and that other deities carried bows. Osborne also disagrees with Kerkeslager.[96] His remarks are close to

[88] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 119–20.
[89] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 394.
[90] Beale, *Revelation*, 378.
[91] Boxall, *Revelation*, 108–9.
[92] J. Ramsey Michaels, *Revelation*, IVPNCS 20 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997), 101.
[93] Mounce, *Revelation*, 143 n.12.
[94] Witherington, *Revelation*, 172.
[95] Keener, *Revelation*, 201.
[96] Osborne, *Revelation*, 276, see also notes 6 and 7.

Keener's regarding the lack of allusions, but he contends that a simpler interpretation of the images in terms of war makes for better continuity of the passage, and that an anti-false-prophecy and anti-false-messiah aspect is too allegorical.

In more recent years, M. Karrer and Thomas Witulksi have revived the discussion.[97] Karrer takes an integrative approach to the riders in terms of OT and Greco-Roman influences, arguing that the Apocalypse uses the OT as its underlying and thematic framework, while the Greco-Roman allusions serve as points of critique and contrast against the prevailing culture.[98] He argues that John uses silence and contrast to make theological statements that assimilate and absorb the historical claims and associations of the culture's deities and of the empire.[99] He argues this is case for the pericope of the four riders.

Before Karrer addresses Apollo and the riders, he first discusses part of the larger context of Apollo and the Apocalypse. With regard to the imperial invective in Revelation, Karrer recalls the popularity of Apollo with the emperors and the flattery of the poets comparing Domitian to Sol and Apollo.[100] He contends that Revelation directly contradicted the worship of Apollo by the use of silence over explicit contradiction (e.g. John never mentions the Apollonian laurel by name, never spells Apollo's name correctly, earth's kitharas are silent while God's play in heaven), because there were too many similarities between God and Apollo.[101] The result of this silence and absorption of positive attributes to God is that Revelation only leaves Apollo his

[97] Martin Karrer, "Apoll und die apokalyptischen Reiter," in *Die Johannesoffenbarung: ihr Text und ihre Auslegung*, ed. Michael Labahn and Martin Karrer, ABG 38 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012), 223–51; Thomas Witulski, *Die Vier "Apokalyptischen Reiter" Apk 6,1-8: Ein Versuch Ihrer Zeitgeschichtlichen (Neu-)Interpretation*, BibTS 154 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Theologie, 2015). Karrer has recently reiterated his argument in part of another article (see Karrer, "Hellenistische," 65–67).

[98] Karrer, "Apoll," 248–49.

[99] Karrer, "Apoll," 228.

[100] Karrer, "Apoll," 223–25.

[101] Karrer, "Apoll," 226.

aspect of the Destroyer and god of the wild animals.[102] However, even these are filtered through the OT (e.g. Apollo is the god of locusts, but John uses ἀκρίς from Ex^{LXX} 10 instead of πάρνοψ).[103]

Karrer suggests John uses multiple backgrounds to achieve his ends in the pericope of the riders.[104] He holds that Zech. 1 is a major background, but that the material in Revelation goes beyond it. Even so, he argues that the OT prophets used the language of the sword, hunger, death, and animals in their criticisms of sinners. He adduces Pss. Sol. 13.2-3 as a contemporary writing that uses the sword, famine, death, and wild animals. Karrer also suggests that John uses the rider gods of Asia Minor to combine both the chariots and horses of Zechariah.

Karrer posits that a major theme of the pericope is countering the Golden Age of Apollo and the Roman *Pax*.[105] He argues that John is capitalizing on an ancient prophecy in the Hymn to Apollo and reiterated in the *Aeneid* by Vergil, that war will come even during the hope of the golden age. He suggests, while making a point that he is following traditional interpretations, that the first rider is crowned a conqueror without having actually conquered anything, which, he argues, may recall the triumph of Nero after his so-called victories in the games and over the Parthians (e.g. the crown and white horses of Nero's triumph). Instead, the bow represents war from without, the sword represents war from within, the scales represent the failure of Roman Justice, and Apollo is powerless to stop it. The message of this pericope is that Apollo is a fraud.

In his discussion of the identity of the riders, Karrer argues that the first rider is a Christ figure, but that the other three are pagan deities. He suggests the identification of Christ based on the lack of an arrow, i.e. a means of attack, and a variant reading of codex Alexandrinus. The

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[102] Karrer, "Apoll," 228–29.
[103] Karrer, "Apoll," 230.
[104] Karrer, "Apoll," 230–32.
[105] Karrer, "Apoll," 235.

bow is instead intended to recall the covenant rainbow of Genesis, which he argues is demonstrated by the fact that the horsemen are restrained from completely destroying the earth.[106] Alexandrinus has ἀθάνατος instead of θάνατος, which he argues is the more difficult reading in the best text.[107] He also convincingly argues that this term is generally avoided in the NT and early Christianity because it was what the pagans called the Olympians, the Immortals.[108] Less convincingly, he claims, based mostly on Apollo's dominion over wild animals but also on the pairing of the immortality of the gods against the mortality of humanity in Hymn to Apollo 190-193 & 473, that Apollo is the Immortal.[109] He is the bringer of death, representing the Olympian gods par excellence.

In review, Karrer's interpretation adds significantly to the conversation about Apollo in this passage. Especially insightful are his contentions about countering the Golden Age of Apollo by placing it within an OT framework, his discussion of the identity of the riders in relation to the golden age, Apollo's connection to the wild beasts judgment, and his discussion concerning the term Immortal. Much less convincing is his argument about the identity of the first rider as Christ and his attempt to connect the Immortal to Apollo. The former rests primarily on the lack of an arrow and the restraining of the judgments from destroying the earth. However, Apollo does carries a bow without arrows in prominent iconography (see Figure 1). Judgments are not only restrained in the seals cycle, but also in the trumpets cycle. The attempt to connect the Immortal to Apollo rests primarily on the vague connection of terminology and the connection to wild beasts. The link to wild beasts is possible, but his reference to the wild beasts in Pss. Sol. is

[106] Karrer, "Apoll," 242–45.
[107] Karrer, "Apoll," 245–46.
[108] Karrer, "Apoll," 246.
[109] Karrer, "Apoll," 248.

a more convincing link. It also appears more likely that the Immortal is meant to represent all the gods as the term applies to *all* the gods.

Figure 1
Bronze, 19–20, no. 209
© Trustees of the British Museum
1st c. BCE–1st c. CE bronze figurine
Copy of the cult statue of Apollo in Didyma. It held a bow in the left hand.

Witulski has responded to both Kerkeslager and Karrer in his own monograph on the riders of the Apocalypse.[110] He is critical of both. Witulski expands on Osborne's critique by arguing that there is nothing in Rev 6:2 to suggest a connection between 6:2 and false prophets

[110] Witulski, *Reiter*, 89–95.

or false messiahs or their possible relation to the Nicolaitans.[111] He also suggests that they cannot be connected because the first rider conquers the whole earth and not just the churches John is addressing. Likewise, the Nicolaitans cannot be said to be conquering the whole earth, but rather the Christian communities.[112] Witulksi also argues that the rider being given the crown (6:2) contradicts the myth of Apollo's association with the laurel crown in Ovid.[113] He is also rightly critical of other vague aspects of Karrer's arguments. Nevertheless, he does not adequately rebut their arguments or the other suggested references to Apollo in Revelation, and so the explanatory power and thematic coherence remain. Witulski's critiques are further complicated by his thesis that Revelation was written during Hadrian's reign.[114]

Apollo And Apollyon

The most enduring link between Apollo and the Apocalypse comes from the similarity between the names Apollyon and Apollo. Grotius was the first to suggest that Apollyon referred to Apollo.[115] He argued that John could have instead used Ὀλοθρεθτὴς (destroying angel) or Ἐξολοθρεύων. He noted Apollo's close association to the emperor and that the Jews had a custom of slightly changing the names of false gods to insult them. He was also the first to cite Aeschylus *AG*. 1080-81 as an example of Apollo's name being linked to the verb "to destroy" (Ἄπολλον / ἀπόλλων).

Although the view has some detractors, it nevertheless has remained popular among many interpreters since the rise of modern critical biblical interpretation. In his *TDNT* article,

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[111] Witulski, *Reiter*, 94.
[112] Witulski, *Reiter*, 94–95.
[113] Witulski, *Reiter*, 92–93.
[114] Witulski, *Reiter*, v.
[115] Hugo Grotius, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum: Denuo Emendatius Editae* (Groningen: W. Zuidema, 1830), 8:320.

Albrecht Oepke argued similarly to Grotius. He emphasized that the Greeks conceived of Apollo as a destroyer (Plato *Crat.* 404e, 405e), that he was the god of the Roman empire, and that the locust represented him.[116] Boussett followed Grotius, highlighting the derogatory pun aspect.[117] Hermann Gunkel, R. H. Charles, and Isbon T. Beckwith were unconvinced thinking the name a natural expression of the language, while Swete thought the allusion possible but not likely.[118] Kiddle follows the course of Charles and Beckwith.[119] Caird points out that Apollyon as a proper name is not used elsewhere and that John may have intended to attack Apollo and the emperor Domitian, whom he asserted "liked to be regarded as Apollo…."[120] In addition to the passage from Aeschylus, Kerkeslager has adduced a further Greco-Roman association between ἀπόλλυμι and Apollo, where Apollo clearly means destroyer, from the 2nd century CE poet Ammanius (*Greek Anthology* 11.188).[121] Edmondo Lupieri contends for an allusion to Apollo, adding that the double name indicates the Angel of the Abyss has power over both gentiles and Jews.[122] Some have suggested the Apollo link is strengthened by Apollo's association with locusts. Other present-day interpreters have not settled the issue and remain divided with the majority favoring

[116] Albrecht Oepke, "Ἀπολλύων," *TDNT* 1:397.

[117] Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 301.

[118] Beckwith, *Apocalypse*, 563–64; Charles, *Revelation*, 246; Hermann Gunkel, *Schöfung Und Chaos in Urzeit Und Endzeit: Eine Religionsgeschtliche Untersuchung Über Gen 1 Und Ap Joh 12* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895), 214; Swete, *Apocalypse*, 120.

[119] Kiddle, *Revelation*, 159.

[120] Caird, *Revelation*, 120. Caird does not offer a relevant citation for his claim about Domitian. He has unfortunately been followed on this by numerous scholars, who cite him as their source. There is no basis for this claim in the published primary sources. See also Mark W. Wilson, "Revelation," in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 2002), 244–383, esp. 306.

[121] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 119.

[122] Edmondo Lupieri, *L'Apocalisse di Giovanni*, 1st ed. (Roma; Milano: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla; Arnoldo Mondadori, 1999), 167.

the possibility of an Apollo allusion.[123] More recently, Karrer has argued for a combination of the traditional Apollo argument along with the associations of Horus.[124]

Revelation 12: The Apollo-Leto-Python Myth[125]

The second most enduring link between Apollo and Revelation focuses on the sources of Rev 12. It theory suggests that John used or was influenced by the Apollo-Leto-Python myth. This theory has generated significant discussion that has continued up to the present time. At this point, most interpreters support one of several modified versions of the original theory.

The Development of the Theory from 1795-1969

Charles-François Dupuis was the first to assert that parts of Rev 12 resembled the Apollo-Leto-Python myth in 1795.[126] Johann A. L. Richter argued similarly in 1819, but also suggested

[123] Those who regard an Apollyon-Apollo link as possible or likely include: David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, WBC 52B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 535; Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999), 503–4; M. Eugene Boring, *Revelation*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox, 1989), 137–38; Ian Boxall, *The Revelation of Saint John* (Peabody: Hendrickson; London: Continuum, 2009), 145; J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, AB 38 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975), 152; Craig S. Keener, *Revelation*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 269; J. Ramsey Michaels, *Revelation*, IVPNCS 20 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997), 128; Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, Rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 191; Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 374; Mark W. Wilson, "Revelation," in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 2002), 305–6; Ben Witherington, *Revelation*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 154. Those who are against this interpretation, or think it possible but unlikely include: Koester, *Revelation*, 461; George E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eermans Publishing Company, 1972), 134; Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 143–44.

[124] Karrer, "Hellenistische," 62–64.

[125] The amount of literature written on Rev 12 over the last century and a half is substantial. I have referenced a great deal of it in this section, but for the sake of space and to eliminate redundancy I have omitted some commentaries from this review. I intend no disrespect by this. Additionally, my focus at this point is on the use of Apollo and not the source criticism of Rev 12 in general. For in-depth source discussions, see the works of Charles, Beckwith, Hedrick, Prigent, and Yarbro Collins referenced below.

[126] Charles-François Dupuis, *Origine de tous les cultes, ou religion universelle* (Paris: H. Agasse, 1795), 3:49.

Mythric myth as a possibility.[127] The discussion would wait nearly 70 years before Albrecht Dieterich posited that John used a version of the Apollo-Python myth as his source in composing Rev 12.[128] Dieterich's theory invigorated spirited discussion among the source critics and set much of the tone for the present day discussions.

Initially this discussion occurred in Germany. Gunkel agreed with Dieterich, but took issue with Dieterich presenting John as Hellenistic Christian from the Diaspora.[129] Advocating for Babylonian source material, Gunkel was convinced John was a Jew from Palestine and not influenced by Greek myth.[130] Otto Pfleiderer recounted the similarities in 1903, but also suggested this myth was historicized in a legend where the Roman senate tried to kill all male infants to prevent Julius Caesar's rise to power and in the Matthean account of Herod slaying the male infants of Bethlehem.[131] Bousset seriously engaged both Gunkel's and Dieterich's source theories.[132] He likewise advocated for a pagan source original for Rev 12, because he thought Christians would have treated Christ more heroically.[133] However, Bousset criticized Gunkel for settling on a Babylonian source too early and found striking similarities with Rev 12 in the Apollo myth. Nevertheless, Bousset chose the Seth-Typhon myth mainly because he thought it preserved the water nature of the monster.[134]

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[127] Johann A. L. Richter, *Das Christenthum Und Die Ältesten Religionen Des Orients* (Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1819), 212.

[128] Albrecht Dieterich, *Abraxas: Studien Zur Religionsgeschichte Des Späteren Altertums* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1891), 117–20.

[129] Gunkel, *Schöfung*, 283.

[130] Gunkel, *Schöfung*, 284–86.

[131] Otto Pfleiderer, *Das Christusbild Des Urchristlichen Glaubens in Religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1903), 37–41.

[132] Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 346–58.

[133] Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 347.

[134] Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 354–55.

Although Swete briefly mentioned Gunkel's hypothesis, he was noncommittal. Serious English discussion would take slightly over a decade to happen.[135] Beckwith recalled the multiple source theories but offered a different judgment: he ultimately rejected a direct pagan source arguing that, as a Jew, John would have drawn from Jewish myths.[136] Charles also provided an in-depth discussion of the source theories: he rejected all except the Greek myth of Apollo, but critiques Dieterich's claim of a single altered source.[137] Instead, based on his textual analysis, Charles argued for the combination of both pagan and Jewish sources in ch. 12. E. B. Allo provided a modern French entry into the discussion. He argued that even though the Apollo-Leto-Python myth was the best pagan myth as a proposed source, both the OT and NT provided all the necessary materials for the composition of Rev 12.[138]

The period leading up to the 1970s was notable for two major studies and several commentaries that engaged the Apollo-Leto-Python myth. Pierre Prigent published a study that provided an in-depth history of interpretation for Rev. 12.[139] Joseph E. Fontenrose published his seminal Python myth study, which included a brief discussion on Rev 12: he thought Rev 12 resembled one of the variants of the Apollo-Leto-Python myth.[140] Among the commentaries, Caird pushed for a theological and political reaction on John's part to the claims of the emperor to be a sun god who defeated the dragon.[141] Caird cites both the Greek and Egyptian mythologies but appears to favor the Apollo-Python myth.[142]

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[135] Swete, *Apocalypse*, 149.
[136] Beckwith, *Apocalypse*, 614–15.
[137] Charles, *Revelation*, 310–14.
[138] E. B. Allo, *L'Apocalypse* (Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1921), 155–56.
[139] Pierre Prigent, *Apocalypse 12: Histoire de l'Exégèse*, BGBE (Tübingen: Mohr, 1959).
[140] Joseph Fontenrose, *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and Its Origins* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1980), 210.
[141] Caird, *Revelation*, 153.
[142] Caird, *Revelation*, 147–53. M. Kiddle likewise points to either, but does not appear to prefer one over the other (see Kiddle, *Revelation*, 228).

Apollo and Revelation 12 During the 1970s

The 1970's provided the most substantial source critical interactions with Rev. 12 since Gunkel. It saw the publication of two major studies that have become the foundation for all present-day discussion. The first was the ThD dissertation of William K. Hedrick that examined the sources of Rev 12.[143] The second was the revised PhD dissertation of Adela Yarbro Collins that looked at the combat myth in the whole of Revelation but used Rev 12 as a case study.[144] This decade also saw the publication of H. D. Saffrey's article on the influence of Patmos on the Apocalypse and George R. Beasley-Murray's commentary on the Apocalypse.[145]

Saffrey's study was primarily concerned with describing the Sitz im Leben of John on Patmos and proposing how that affected the Apocalypse. A majority of the article is given over to describing the landscape, religion, and politics or Patmos. As noted previously, he looks at both Apollo's and especially Artemis' prominence on the island. Toward the end of his article, he recalls Dieterich's earlier contribution and argues that his own study, as well as Fontenrose's, confirm it.[146] Saffrey also suggested that John used the myth to show that Apollonian religion is brought to perfection in Christ.[147]

Beasley-Murray noted that the Apollo-Leto-Python myth was closest to what was in the Apocalypse, but also recounted the Egyptian and Ugaritic myth cycles.[148] However, based on Michael's activity in Rev 12, he suggested that John adapted a Jewish source that had itself been adapted from pagan sources.[149]

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[143] William K. Hedrick, "The Sources and Use of Imagery in Apocalypse 12" (ThD Diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1970).

[144] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*.

[145] Saffrey, "Patmos."

[146] Saffrey, "Patmos," 410–17.

[147] Saffrey, "Patmos," 417.

[148] George R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation*, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1974), 192–93.

[149] He argued that the Messiah is a ruling figure and not a conqueror. Thus Michael's battle victory and the messiah's rule (as opposed to Michael's) represents Jewish and not Greek thought; see Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*,

Hedrick's dissertation evaluated all the major source theories that had been proposed for Rev 12. Ultimately, Hedrick rejected all but the Apollo-Leto-Python myth. Aside from rejecting Babylonian, Canaanite, and gnostic source theories, he rejected Egyptian myth as well, because he believed Seth-Typhon's connection to the falling stars was not sufficient to overcome the lack of the birth of Horus in the Hellenistic period and Osiris' part in the battle with the dragon.[150] He acknowledged that the "language and figures" were available in the OT and Jewish literature, but contended "that the precise relation of these figures is not familiar and their actions have no Jewish precedent."[151]

Hedrick's acceptance of the Apollo-Leto-Python myth was based on the existence of the Rev 12 type during the 1st century CE, its presence and notoriety in Asia Minor during the 1st century CE, the inadequacy of prior interpretive critiques, and the presence of the dragon battle. He acknowledges that the literary evidence (i.e. Lucian, Hyginus) representing the form of the myth in Rev 12 is too late, but a number of coins, vases, and sculptures demonstrating it are not.[152] Furthermore, the material evidence is almost exclusively from Asia Minor. He also engages Allo's argument that Python is an earth dragon and not a water dragon. Hedrick argues that in the various mythical sources the earth and the sea act in an analogous manner to Rev 12. He notes further inconsistencies in Allo's "assumed identification of the dragon with the earth" and rejects the notion that the Dragon in Rev 12 is a sea monster.[153] He also argued that the

195. The idea of an original adapted Jewish source is not new with Beasley-Murray. For a history, see Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 147–48 n. 8.

[150] Hedrick, "Sources," 145.

[151] Hedrick, "Sources," 180.

[152] Hedrick, "Sources," 109–14.

[153] Hedrick, "Sources," 115–16.

inclusion of the battle between the Dragon and Michael is unnecessary, but only included because of the Apollo myth.[154]

Hedrick attributed the differences between the pagan version and Rev 12 to John's authorial/redactional prerogative. He argued that John was writing with his own purposes in mind and therefore was not bound to retain the myth in its received form.[155] He also followed and expanded on Caird's suggestion about imperial propaganda taking up the myth of a young hero. Hedrick presents Nero as the only emperor to have closely associated himself with Apollo but notes the dissonance in writing about Nero during the reign of Domitian. In a somewhat convoluted argument, he concluded that John used the myth and the attack on Babylon by the beast in Rev 17 to disassociate Nero from the role of Apollo in order that it he might assign it to Christ and associate Nero with the Dragon.[156]

In the main, Hedrick's argument for the presence of the Apollo-Leto-Python myth are sound. His main difficulty lay with his attempt to make sense of its inclusion in the Apocalypse. He is correct to follow Caird in drawing a connection to Nero, but he unnecessarily restricts his application of Nero and his evaluation of the emperors is not as thorough as it should be. Some of these deficiencies are addressed by Yarbro Collins' own approach. Even so, Hedrick's study deserves more attention in discussions of Rev 12 than it has received.

Yarbro Collins provided what has become the definitive source study of Apollo and Rev 12 in her seminal monograph *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*.[157] Yarbro Collins argued that the general themes (e.g. the conflict that brings the victory of fertility and order over

[154] Here he is sympathetic to Allo's and Gunkel's interpretation that the child grows up to return in Rev 19 and finally conquer the dragon; see Hedrick, "Sources," 102, 118, 183.
[155] Hedrick, "Sources," 102, 114–15.
[156] Hedrick, "Sources," 146–53.
[157] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*.

infertility and chaos) of the combat myth genre type played "a dominant role in the book of Revelation."[158] Choosing Rev 12 as her main case study, Yarbro Collins recounted the main cultural iterations of the combat myth from the Mediterranean and Persia and concluded that the pursuit of the woman most closely resembled the Apollo-Leto-Python myth.[159] However, she also argued more fully in favor of the idea that John adapted Jewish-adapted pagan sources, concluding that John used two different Jewish adaptions.[160]

Like Hedrick, Yarbro Collins also followed Caird's understanding for how John meant the passage to be understood. She also expanded on Caird, but more thoroughly examined Augustus' and Nero's close associations with Apollo, demonstrating that these associations were known in the East.[161] She argued the purpose of using these specific Jewish adaptions was to encourage Christian believers by depicting Christ as the fulfilment of Jewish longing and the true "bringer of order and light" over and against the emperor.[162]

Apollo and Revelation 12 in the post-1970s

Even with Hedrick's and Yarbro Collin's studies, consensus has remained elusive. Many interpreters resist committing to one source or another. Even so, most agree that John intended to evoke the myths at the very least. Aune finds it likely that John used the Apollo-Leto-Python myth in order to "validate important aspects of the Christian Gospel."[163] Beale outright rejected a pagan source and argued John drew his account from the OT but is "reflecting on [the various

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[158] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 2.
[159] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 63–67, 75.
[160] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 101–14.
[161] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 188–90.
[162] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 127, 190.
[163] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 712–13. Although the points he raises are thoroughly addressed in Hedrick, which Aune notes as a reference, Aune critiques Yarbro Collins for inconsistencies between her representation of the Apollo myth and Rev 12, leading him to suggest that John is using a "pastiche of mythological motifs" over "coherent pagan myth" (see Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 670–72).

combat myths] collectively and interpreting them through the lens of the OT and Jewish tradition."[164] M. Eugene Boring thinks John used the Apollo myth because of its political associations, but also that he "recast" the characters according to OT tradition and Christian interpretation.[165] Boxall admits the Seth-Typhon myth as a possibility, but argues the Apollo-Leto-Python myth is stronger and is used to invert imperial claims and apply them to Christ.[166] J. Massyngberde Ford demurred committing, claiming the mythology behind Rev 12 was inscrutable. Even so, she found it significant that the color of the dragon was "red like the Babylonian snake or the Egyptian typhon [sic]."[167] Keener holds that both the Apollo-Leto-Python myth and the Seth-Typhon myth are evoked, but generally so. He also raises the possibility that John meant to invert imperial claims and ascribe them to Christ.[168] Karrer argues similarly to Keener but suggests John intended to evoke both myths, as well as imperial propaganda that presented Augustus as victorious over the crocodile of Egypt.[169] Kerkeslager follows Yarbro Collins.[170] Peter Busch and Michael Koch both argue for an original synthesis of pagan and OT materials.[171] Koester suspects that John uses multiple mythologies to make his point and instead argues that readers may have understood John making an Apollo-emperor-golden age connection.[172] Lupieri rejects pagan sources and argues precedents are found in Qumran.[173] Mounce rejects the idea that John would use pagan mythology when he is against

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[164] Beale, *Revelation*, 624, 634.
[165] Boring, *Revelation*, 151–56.
[166] Boxall, *Revelation*, 167–77, 179–81.
[167] Ford, *Revelation*, 199.
[168] Keener, *Revelation*, 316–17.
[169] Karrer, "Hellenistische," 67–71.
[170] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 120.
[171] Peter Busch, *Der Gefallene Drache: Mythenexegese Am Beispiel von Apokalypse 12*, TAZ 19 (Tübingen: Francke, 1996); Michael Koch, *Drachenkampf Und Sonnenfrau: Zur Funktion Des Mythischen in Der Johannesapokalypse Am Beispiel von Apk 12*, WUNT 184 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 293.
[172] Koester, *Revelation*, 528, 555–56, 558–60.
[173] Lupieri, *L'Apocalisse di Giovanni*, 192.

pagan religion.[174] Osborne follows Yarbro Collins and endorses the Apollo-Leto-Python myth, arguing that there is OT precedent for assigning to Yahweh the traits and titles of other gods.[175] The purpose of this, he argues, is evangelistic in saying that Christ is the fulfilment of mythological longing. Prigent continued to argue that the OT and Jewish tradition was sufficient.[176] Witherington suggests that the Apollo-Leto-Python myth is the dominant source, but that John drew from the others to show "that in Christ the primal myths and the truths they enshrine come true."[177] Jan Willem van Henten has been the only one to publish a focused source study since the 1970s, but even it reflects the reluctance to engage in the kind of verse by verse source analysis of the previous source studies.[178]

Van Henten revived the theory of seeing the Seth-Typhon myth behind Rev 12. To a large extent he affirms Yarbro Collins' analysis but notes some key discrepancies in form. He notes that Artemis and the Pythian games are not represented in Rev 12, and that the dragon tries to swallow the child after he is birthed instead of Python ceasing his attack after Apollo and Artemis are born.[179] He argues that the Egyptian combat myth of Seth-Typhon is closer, primarily because Seth-Typhon pursues the woman after she gives birth.[180] He also adds that Isis and Seth-Typhon were linked to stars and constellations, while this was not the case with Apollo-Leto-Python.[181] However, van Henten is not ready to dismiss the use of the Apollo-Leto-Python motif. He states that the "roles of both dragons are very similar" and that even in some myths

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[174] Mounce, *Revelation*, 230 n. 4.
[175] Osborne, *Revelation*, 454.
[176] Prigent, *Apocalypse*, 177–82.
[177] Witherington, *Revelation*, 44, 165, 169.
[178] Jan Willem van Henten, "Dragon Myth and Imperial Ideology in Revelation 12-13," in *The Reality of Apocalypse: Rhetoric and Politics in the Book of Revelation*, SBLSymS 39, ed. D.L. Barr (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2006), 181–203.
[179] Henten, "Dragon," 186.
[180] Henten, "Dragon," 186–87.
[181] Henten, "Dragon," 188.

Typhon is Apollo's opponent.[182] His conclusion is that the mythological cluster, which includes both myths, actually draws on both, but that the Seth-Typhon myth has more emphasis in Revelation.

Van Henten also argues for Seth-Typhon as the dominant myth in light of the political aspects of the passage. This understanding rests on his assertion that chapters 12 and 13 should be understood together, which relies on his linking of the two beasts to the Dragon as his agents.[183] In light of the link, van Henten demonstrates that the myths "were used to endorse the association of rulers with the divine world by linking him [sic] to gods who restore order by triumphing over Python or Seth-Typhon."[184] He also shows that critics switched the association, making the rulers bringers of chaos. He provides the example of Pseudo-Seneca, who compares Nero with Typhon (Pseudo-Seneca, *Oct*. 237-41), and he notes a parallel concerning Domitian by Dio Chrysostom, wherein Dio (*Or*. 45.1) contends that Domitian is not a god (θεόν) but an evil demon (δαίμονα πονηρόν).[185]

In the main, van Henten's contribution is not altogether convincing. Many of his objections to the Apollo-Leto-Python myth are soundly answered in Hedrick's study, which van Henten does not consult. However, his insights concerning how these myths were used in political discussion are helpful to those who advocate a political reading of Rev 12. Aside from the objections that had been addressed by Hedrick, one may also object to the lack of treatment on John's own cosmology and belief regarding the existence of Apollo as a demon.

[182] Henten, "Dragon," 188 & n. 33.
[183] Henten, "Dragon," 189.
[184] Henten, "Dragon," 197.
[185] Henten, "Dragon," 195, 201.

Conclusions

In this comprehensive survey we have reviewed Apollo's place within the secondary literature of the Apocalypse. We saw that Apollo has featured prominently in interpretation for select passages since at least the time of Grotius. More recently, Apollo has been used to explain the nature of local and imperial religion. Overall, it is also apparent that although Apollonian interpretations continue to remain popular among prominent interpreters, there is no consensus as to his place in the Apocalypse. In some cases, this is due to the erroneous assumption that John would not use pagan material. In other cases, they simply find other options more convincing. We have also seen that no one, save the attempts of Karrer, Kerkeslager and Boxall, has attempted to map out the significance of the multiple references to Apollo, which is the aim of this study.

We also saw that when Apollo features as an important aspect of interpretation a major trend is to regard the reference to the god as a slight against the emperor and the imperial cult. This is not true in every case, but it is problematic. It is not necessarily an incorrect interpretation; however, it appears to be an implicit *a priori* assumption demonstrating a bias against John's cosmology.[186] The problem is that John can never slight Apollo for the sake of slighting Apollo, but always for some mundane focus. Yet Apollo was one of the most popular deities in both Asia Minor and the empire and most of the people in the empire believed he existed. This included John, even if he believed Apollo was a demon.

Some have suggested that the way Apollo is used in the Apocalypse is to ascribe certain attributes to Christ, such being the source of true prophecy or the fulfilment of mythic longing. In our own analysis, we will capitalize on these suggestions and combine them, as well as

[186] Karrer, who thoroughly engages John's conceptions of Apollo, is a notable exception to this bias.

interpretations associating the emperor with Apollo, with the robust understanding that John believed Apollo to be an actual powerful demonic entity active in Asia Minor and in imperial religion. For this reason, he engaged in a polemic against Apollo for the sake of the identity formation of his churches.

CHAPTER 2: CRITICAL THEORIES AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter will be primarily concerned with describing the critical theories undergirding my approach to Revelation and explaining their interplay. These are Critical Spatiality and Social Memory Theory. Following this, I will discuss the benefits of using these social theories for exploring the Apocalypse. However, before all this and since these theories are concerned with identity, an adequate and usable definition of identity must be provided.

Defining Identity

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is the assumed larger framework for Social Memory Theory and Critical Spatiality in this study. It provides operative definitions about identity and groups in both theories and an orientating perspective for the analysis of Social Memory and Social Space in Revelation. Critical Spatiality and Social Memory will be our main analytical tools, but the legitimacy of SIT will be assumed, and its terminology will be used because all three theories are deeply interrelated.[1] The most important definition from SIT utilized here will be that of "identity."

SIT is not opposed to a private personal identity. It locates both upon a continuum where both exist simultaneously, but also recognizes that one end of the continuum may be expressed more strongly than the other. Using self-categorization theory, J. Turner, *et al.* "distinguish between personal and social identity as two different levels of self-categorization, which are

[1] Spatial Theory has already been incorporated within the larger framework of SIT; see e.g. Coleman A. Baker, "A Narrative-Identity Model for Biblical Interpretation: The Role of Memory and Narrative in Social Identity Formation," in *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*, ed. J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 105–18.

equally valid and authentic expressions of the psychological process of self." [2] They also provide the definition of identity which this study will use:

> Personal identity refers to self-categories that define the individual as a unique person in terms of his or her individual differences from other (in-group) persons. Social identity refers to social categorizations of self and others, self-categories that define the individual in terms of his or her shared similarities with members of certain social categories in contrast to other social categories. Social identity, therefore, refers to the shared social categorical self ("us" vs. "them," in-group vs. out-group, us women, them men, Whites, Blacks, etc.).[3]

This definition is particularly helpful, because it acknowledges the range of possible expressions of identity. It also rests upon the notion that identity is fundamentally a "self-categorization" shaped by the personal self in relationship to outside factors, thus "self-categorization is inherently variable, fluid, and context dependent, as self-categories are social comparative and are always relative to a frame of reference."[4] It may be inferred from this that in addition to outside influences, conscious and unconscious decisions related to these frames can affect both personal and social identity.

Critical Spatiality

Critical spatiality is a relatively recent development—not only with its entry into biblical studies, but also in its creation within the larger realm of critical theory. Three thinkers are generally recognized in the literature for developing the theory through its initial stages: Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre, and Edward Soja. The spatio-critical approach has gained significant momentum, but because it is still a relatively new theory and was initially developed almost

[2] J. C. Turner et al., "Self and Collective: Cognition and Social Context," *PSPB* 20 (1994): 454–63, esp. 454.

[3] Turner et al., "Self and Collective," 454.

[4] Turner et al., "Self and Collective," 454.

simultaneously by Foucault and Lefebvre, who took different approaches, its current theorists are still wrestling to produce a consistent definition.[5] This is true especially when discussing space and literature.

Critical spatiality, as it is currently understood, can trace its roots to Foucault's recognition of an ontological priority of history in Modern thought.[6] In the seminal 1967 lecture, Foucault describes *history* as the "obsession of the nineteenth century" and describes how concepts of space were also understood in a linear fashion.[7] He pushed back strongly against this characterization of space and argued for a more complex understanding. He argued space was not simply "a void to be filled" by things, but rather a "set of relations."[8] By this, Foucault meant that space contained social values and exerted influence on society and individuals.

In his effort to treat the concept of space more appropriately, Foucault described two kinds of space: utopias and heterotopias. As Foucault defined them, "Utopias are sites with no real place. They are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. They present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces."[9] Concerning heterotopias, Foucault says enigmatically:

> There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias,

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[5] To the best of my knowledge "spatio-critical" is my term. I have not encountered it in the literature.

[6] Edward W. Soja, "Seeing Nature Spatially," in *Without Nature? A New Condition for Theology*, ed. David Albertson and Cabell King (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 181–202.

[7] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* (1986): 22–27.

[8] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 23.

[9] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.

heterotopias.[10]

He lists several different kinds of heterotopias, but what they have in common is that they are non-utopian spaces needed to realize utopian spaces. An example would be a prison.[11] The prison exists solely to remove non-utopian persons from spaces representing utopian ideals.

Lefebvre continued the train of thought initiated by Foucault. In his major work on the subject, *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre voiced Foucault's criticism of modernist perceptions of space and echoed a similar thesis, though couched in Marxist and post-colonial influenced terms of production. Space, he argued, with its relational aspects is in fact a social product.[12] Thus, he replaced the ontological understanding of space as a void with what Soja would later call "The Trialectics of Being."[13] Space has a history, it is socially influenced. History and society likewise exert influence over one another—in effect, an ontological trinity.

He next noted two implications of space being a social product: it implies that natural, pristine, unaltered space disappears and that every society produces its own space.[14] Within his discussion of the second implication, Lefebvre lays out a "conceptual triad" that has come to define the starting point for a spatio-critical approach:

1. *Spatial practice*, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of *competence* and a specific level of *performance*.
2. *Representations of space*, which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' [explicit expressions "buildings, monuments, and works of art"] relations.

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[10] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
[11] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.
[12] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 8.
[13] Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 71. He labels the parts: Historicality, Spatiality, and Sociality.
[14] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 30–31.

3. *Representational spaces,* embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art.[15]

Indeed, the bulk of Lefebvre's project is an attempt to describe the interplay within the triad. In simple terms, his spatial triad can correctly be described as "distinguishing between the physical, the mental, and the social."[16]

Lefebvre's conceptual triad became the starting point for the next phase of development in critical spatiality in the work of Edward Soja. His most important contributions thus far are in his groundbreaking *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places.* A key contribution is Soja's explanation and interpretation of Lefebvre, which is no easy feat. *The Production of Space* is a dense book—it is not readily accessible. Soja, however, lucidly describes Leftover's theoretical meandering and provides a critical methodology. Chief among his contributions is his work on Thirdspace.

Soja, in working through Lefebvre's triad, assigned new labels.[17] *Spatial practice* became Firstspace. *Representations of space* became Secondspace. *Spaces of representation* became Thirdspace. First space is the physical "positivist" space.[18] It is "*perceived* space, directly sensible...the traditional focus of attention in all the spatial disciplines."[19] Secondspace is "*conceived* space."[20] It is space as interpreted by the dominant ideology and power—the "space of utopian thought and vision."[21] Thirdspace, which is clearly the main interest of Soja, is described as "*lived*" space.[22] Thirdspace is the space dominated by Secondspace. Yet Thirdspace

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[15] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 33.
[16] Jon L. Berquist, "Introduction: Critical Spatiality and the Uses of Theory," in *Constructions of Space I, Theory, Geography, and Narrative* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 1–12.
[17] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 66–68.
[18] Berquist, "The Uses of Theory," 3.
[19] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 66.
[20] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67.
[21] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67.
[22] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67.

is open, not fully dominated. Margins and resistance exist in Thirdspace.[23] It contains "all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously."[24] As another scholar aptly renders it: "Thirdspace is the place where … the concrete materiality of Firstspace and the imaginary space of Secondspace come together in a real and imagined space that is *lived* space."[25] Soja called the interplay among the spaces "The Trialectics of Spatiality."[26]

Eric Stewart provides an excellent example of understanding the ancient world through a spatial trialectic perspective. His example focuses on the concept of the *oikoumenē* during the Greco-Roman period.[27] The Firstspace of the *oikoumenē* was understood as the habitable world: Asia, Europe, and Africa. The Secondspace aspect of the *oikoumenē* was the "civilized" world, that is, the places conquered by Rome where "civilized" spatial practice was evidenced. This would, for example, include such things as the wearing of the toga, the erection of imperial monuments, the speaking of Greek, etc. Thirdspace represents the lived space of the *oikoumenē*. Thirdspace contains the spaces of the dominant powers as well as those spaces within the *oikoumenē* of resistance. Resistance spaces were definitely at the edges of the civilized world, where the influence of dominant Secondspace ideology was the weakest. However, spaces of resistance could appear anywhere in the empire. Stewart notes that Thirdspace has the potential to challenge "those who attempt to control the Firstspaces and Secondspaces of empire."[28] This is because "Within Thirdspace the lived experience of the people can create new spatial practices and new ideologies of space."[29]

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[23] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 68.
[24] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 69.
[25] E. C. Stewart, "New Testament Space/Spatiality," *BTB* 42.3 (2012): 139–50, esp. 142.
[26] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 74.
[27] Stewart, "Space," 141–45.
[28] Stewart, "Space," 144.
[29] Stewart, "Space," 144.

Claudia Camp makes a valuable contribution to the union of spatial and biblical studies in her essay on "storied space." In her study, Camp sets forth a two-point goal. She intends to see "what happens when language and ideas about space are foregrounded and then analyzed in terms of a spatial 'trialectic'[.]"[30] She also is concerned about "the intersection of social-historical with literary questions and approaches to biblical interpretation."[31] However, Camp has some initial reservations about spatial theory she wishes to address first. Her interaction with the theory based on these concerns is the primary interest in the following discussion of her essay.

Camp's reservations focus on both Lefebvre and Soja iterations of spatial theory. Her concerns emerged when she attempted to apply the existing spatial understanding presented by Lefebvre and Soja to Sirach.[32] Camp found the existing trialectic structure to be inadequate, as the boundaries between space types kept "collapsing."[33] She traced the inadequacy to several related strains of thought in Lefebvre and Soja's thinking. These are the privileging of Thirdspace and an underdeveloped spatial conception of narrative literature.

Camp critiques Soja for his privileging of Thirdspace over Firstspace and Secondspace.[34] She argues that in relegating Firstspace and Secondspace to the background, the spatial trialectic becomes skewed. The result is that the trialectic's ability to analyze "actual experience and production of space" is weakened.[35] Camp contends that Firstspace and Secondspace play "lively roles" in real life. Additionally, and in response to Lefebvre, she points out the overlooked, but obvious fact, that even oppressors have "lived" space. She resists the notion that "lived" space is

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[30] Claudia V. Camp, "Storied Space, or, Ben Sira 'tells' a Temple," in *"Imagining" Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social and Historical Constructs in Honor of James W. Flanagan*, JSOTSup 359 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 64–80, esp. 66.

[31] Camp, "Storied Space," 66.

[32] Camp, "Storied Space," 69.

[33] Camp, "Storied Space," 69.

[34] Camp, "Storied Space," 66–67.

[35] Camp, "Storied Space," 67.

devoid of power.[36] Recalling Foucault, Camp argues that power is multifaceted and even resistance is a form of power. Thus, similarly to Soja, she advocates an understanding of Thirdspace that contains both the marginalized as well as the dominant.[37]

Camp also pushes back strongly against both Lefebvre and Soja's understanding that literature, as conceived space, is Secondspace. Camp argues that literature, particularly narrative, is more complex than the logic afforded to it by Soja, namely: "the assumption that if it is written, it must be conceptualized, and if it is concepts, it must therefore be Secondspace."[38] Camp appeals to a seminar discussion in which Wesley Kort critiques Soja for "prioritizing … percept and concept as 'basic or prior to lived space'[.]"[39]Additionally, Camp argues that the text creates its own world in which the reader and characters live.[40] She further holds that narrative literature "potentially supplies both a *model* for thinking Thirdspatially and a *site* of Thirdspace from which lived First- and Secondspatial possibilities can be abstracted and analyzed."[41] Additionally, she posits that spatio-criticism offers a tool with which to analyze narrative texts for the purpose of social-historical reconstruction.[42]

Camp's analysis and critique of both Soja and Lefebvre are helpful advancements for spatial theory. Her critiques legitimize the use of spatial theory in biblical studies. Her treatment of Thirdspace is also helpful in that it emphasizes we analyze Thirdspace as a continuum containing both the dominant and marginalized. She provides a useful corrective to keep the

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[36] Camp, "Storied Space," 68.

[37] While Camp's critique of over-focusing on Thirdspace as the space of the marginalized may be warranted, Soja is cognizant of the fact that Thirdspace also is the space of the dominant: "*Everything* comes together in Thirdspace … Anything which fragments Thirdspace into separate specialized knowledges or exclusive domains … destroys its meaning and openness." See Soja, *Thirdspace*, 56–57.

[38] Camp, "Storied Space," 67.

[39] Camp, "Storied Space," 67.

[40] Camp, "Storied Space," 67–68.

[41] Camp, "Storied Space," 68.

[42] Camp, "Storied Space," 68.

lines between the spaces from becoming too well defined and therefore not an effective tool for evaluation. However, her push-back against Lefebvre and Soja's understanding of literature is problematic.[43] Camp is correct that narrative texts can provide models for thinking (and acting) Thirdspatially but texts are Secondspace productions of private or communal ideologies.[44] Indeed, K. Muller Lopez argues that texts demonstrate alternate definitions of Firstspace and are themselves Secondspaces conceived by the groups producing them, who attempt to create alternate lived space (Thirdspace) for the groups.[45]

Still, recognizing that literature can contain conceived spaces is of paramount importance for the application of a spatial perspective to Revelation.[46] This is because John creates a visual world full of spaces. When reading the Apocalypse, these spaces and their types quickly become evident, for example:

1. Geographic spaces
   (a) 1:4 – the seven churches *in* Asia[47]
   (b) 1:9 – *on* the Island called Patmos
   (c) 16:16 – the place … called *har maggedon*

[43] See also Wesley Kort, who argues that spaces also exist as abstractions—spiritual is his word in his "Sacred/Profane and an Adequate Theory of Human Place-Relations," in *Constructions of Space I, Theory, Geography, and Narrative*, ed. Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp, LHBOTS 481 (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 32–50.

[44] Thinking in terms of frames and subframes and social groups is helpful in delineating various spatial perceptions. A subgroup, even if marginalized by a dominant group, can establish its own Secondspace and Thirdspace within the group. Dominance and power structures scale and change depending on which group frame is in focus.

[45] Kathryn Muller Lopez, "Standing before the Throne of God: Critical Spatiality in Apocalyptic Scenes of Judgment," in *Constructions of Space II, The Biblical City and Other Imagined Spaces*, ed. Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 139–55.

[46] Using a spatial-critical method with apocalypses is so far not widespread, but a few examples do exist, such as Muller Lopez above, who explores the use of First, Second, and Third Space in apocalypses, specifically 1 En 85-90 and Dan 7. See also Tina Pippen, who uses a feminist approach combined with the idea of gendered spaces in Revelation ("The Ideology of Apocalyptic Space," in *Constructions of Space II, The Biblical City and Other Imagined Spaces*, ed. Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 156–70.

[47] Even though John is redefining and creating his own spaces, he still makes use of definitions and delineations belonging to the dominant group.

2. Civic spaces
    (a) 2:1 – the angel of the church *in* Ephesus
    (b) 11:2 – the *holy* city
    (c) 21:9-27 – The New Jerusalem
3. Spaces of apocalyptic spatial dualism
    (a) 4:1 – in heaven
    (b) 3:3 – the earth
    (c) 5:3 – no one in heaven or on earth
    (d) 8:1 – silence *in* heaven
    (e) 10:6-7 – who created heaven … the earth
    (f) 12:1 – a portent appeared *in* heaven
    (g) 12:7 – war *in* heaven
    (h) 12:13 – thrown down to the earth
    (i) 21:1 – new heaven and new earth
4. Royal spaces
    (a) 4:2 – a throne
    (b) 20:11 – a great white throne
5. Cult and temple spaces
    (a) 6:7 – altar of souls
    (b) 7:8 – within his temple
    (c) 8:3 – stood at the altar
    (d) 11:1-2 – measure the temple
    (e) 11:19 – God's temple in heaven was opened

(f) 13:14 – make an *image* for the beast

(g) 14:15 – an angel came out of the temple

(h) 21:22 – no temple in the city.[48]

Each of these spaces play a role in the apocalypse and none of them lack ideological association and social meaning. Analogs for these types of spaces can certainly be found in the social-spatial environment of Revelation's first century recipients. A spatially aware interpretive paradigm must ask how John made use of these socially and ideologically charged spaces in light of his recipients' own cultural paradigm and their use and meanings of spaces.

Social Memory Theory

Social Memory Theory, alternately known as Collective Memory or in Germany as Cultural Memory, is a theory from sociology. Emile Durkheim originally advanced the concept, but his student Maurice Halbwachs offered the most substantial primary iteration.[49] Yet, despite its relative age, the theory has only recently begun making significant inroads into biblical studies.[50]

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[48] This list and the references contained therein are intended to be representative and not exhaustive. In addition to this, there is some natural overlap between space types.

[49] Ritva Williams, "BTB Readers' Guide: Social Memory," *BTB* 41.4 (2011): 189–200, esp. 191. Halbwachs' multiple studies are helpfully gathered together and translated in Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser, HoS (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[50] E.g. Jan Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); John Dominic Crossan, *The Birth of Christianity: Discovering What Happened in the Years Immediately After the Execution of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998); Gerhard van den Heever, "Space, Social Space, and the Construction of Early Christian Identity in First Century Asia Minor," *R&T* 17.3–4 (2010): 205–43; Alan Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," in *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity*, SemeiaSt 52 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2005), 1–24; Uriel Rappaport, "Apocalyptic Vision and Preservation of Historical Memory," *JSJ* 23.2 (1992): 217–26; Ruth Anne Reese, "Remembering the Future, Shaping the Past: Memory, Narrative, and Identity" (presented at the Institute for Biblical Research Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, 2015); Vernon K. Robbins, "Conceptual Blending and Early Christian Imagination," in *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 161–95; Mary B. Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities: Jewish Social Memory and the Johannine Feast of Booths*, LNTS 396 (London: T&T Clark, 2009); Ritva Williams, "Social Memory and the Didachē," *BTB* 36 (2006): 35–39; Azzan Yadin, "Goliath's Armor and Israelite Collective Memory," *VT* 54 (2004): 373–95. For an additional bibliography see also Williams BTB readers guide cited above.

As the theory emanates from sociology, it should come as no surprise that society's ability to exert influence over the individual is foundational. Halbwachs argued:

> One cannot in fact think about events of one's past without discoursing upon them. But to discourse upon something means to connect within a single system of ideas our opinions as well as those of our circle. It means to perceive in what happens to us a particular application of facts concerning which social thought reminds us at every moment of the meaning and impact these facts have for it.[51]

Halbwachs applied this to individual, familial, and societal recollection. How an individual or a group remembers is informed by the priorities (e.g. values) of the society.[52] Thus, as the memories are continually reproduced and interpreted by the group through the lens of their priorities, the identity of the group is reinforced through the recollection.

For reasons of clarity, the distinction between social memory and historical memory will now be described. Historical memory is history *per se*—events recalled objectively. The primary aim is to recall events as *accurately* as *possible*.[53] This aim is also a constraint to relay that information consistently and reliably in a scientific fashion. Social memory, however, does not operate with those aims in the forefront and is by no means scientific.[54] Although reliability and accuracy play a role, in collective memory they are, to an extent, subordinated to the existential concerns of the group. Social memory is never static but is constantly being reinterpreted through the experiences and understandings of the group or individual. An example of this would

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[51] Halbwachs, *Memory*, 53.

[52] Halbwachs, *Memory*, 83.

[53] Although the possibility of a truly successful historical memory is suspect, since terms like "accuracy" must be defined within a system of values, it is still possible to achieve this aim to varying degrees of acceptability.

[54] For an example of what this looks like Yadin, "Goliath's Armor."

be the epics of Homer, which replaced period-accurate culture with that of the eight century Greek city-state. [55]

The benefits of the application of the theory are summarized by one of the method's main biblical studies proponents: "social memory studies can provide another set of heuristic tools for exploring how and why our texts came to be the way that they are, as well as how and why we use those texts the way we do. Social memory studies enable us, not only to contextualize the documents that we work with as scripts for commemorative performances within particular communities, but also to explore how they work as commemorative scripts for both past and present audiences."[56]

Social Memory, Value, And Identity

Social Memory Theory asserts that groups are constantly expressing their values in what they remember and how they remember it (e.g. oral and written literature, monuments, rituals, etc.). These serve as a boundary or constraint upon an individual or group's identity. The memorialization can be either positive or negative and this largely depends on the values of the group. Some group memories are concrete as to whether a memory is positive or negative, while others, perhaps less essential to terminal identity, can be fuzzier or even neutral. On the one hand, many memories result from largely unintentional social phenomenon, but others are intentionally maintained and usually bear a stronger weight of value and meaning for the group, i.e. they are closer to the core of the group's terminal self-identity. All value assigned to or derived from a memory or a group of memories (if they share common values) are negotiable

[55] Karl-J. Hölkeskamp, "Homer in the World of Odysseus. Old Problems and New Perspectives in Recent Research," *OP* 1 (2002): 115–20, esp. 120.

[56] Williams, "Didachē," 36.

and may become unstable. This may be due to numerous influences, such as direct challenge from either an outgroup or from within the ingroup, or even apathy. All groups memorialize, whether mainstream or marginal. The application of social memory theory to the memorialization of a culture or group is essentially about revealing the values that are central to or constituent of a social identity.

Shaping and Actualizing Social Memories

Ritva Williams has been instrumental in bringing biblical studies up to date with the advances made by sociologists in the study of social memory. In an article published in 2006, Williams delineates two fundamental aspects of social memory: "Memory Genre" and "Genre Memory." Building on the research of Jeffrey Olick, Williams defines a memory genre as the "mnemonic practices together with the images of the past that are available to particular social groups at specific moments in time."[57] Genre Memory, on the other hand, she defines as the "past and present tellings and retellings of a particular memory genre."[58] To avoid confusion, genre memory will now be called "Memory Tradition."

Williams argues for the interplay of these two aspects in the main portion of her article, which focuses on the *Didache* as "a written artifact of social memory."[59] In the *Didache*, Williams identifies two prominent memory genres: the Hellenistic Two Ways motif (*Did.* 1.1) and the collected sayings of Jesus, i.e. Q (*Did*. 1.2). She demonstrates that the author of the *Didache* incorporates the "sayings of Jesus" memory genre into the more widely known memory genre of the "two ways". She holds that the reason for this incorporation was to provide a manual

[57] Williams, "Didachē," 35.
[58] Williams, "Didachē," 36.
[59] Williams, "Didachē," 36.

for non-Jewish converts, while the implicit function was to "establish, reinforce, and maintain the social identity of Jesus-group members."[60] This functional role of the *Didache* thus represents the aspect of a memory tradition, which evidences the practical and context driven commemoration of the two genres. However, she also notes that memory genres exert their own force in shaping how they are told and retold.

Barry Schwartz proposed several ways to understand social memory. The first is a corollary of the primary sociological maxim: the present needs dictate how society and individuals remember, but what is remembered simultaneously shapes those doing the memorialization.[61] Yet he also argues for the persistence of memories: the earliest constructions act as constraints (see Williams' memory traditions) in terms of how something is remembered with one result being that social changes do not replace prior memories.[62] The fundamental values of a memory persist, yet the overall memory can be altered.[63] The result is still that the past continues to frame the present, even as the present reshapes the past.

Michael Schudson proposed three factors that serve to prohibit unlimited malleability: "the structure of the available pasts," "structure of individual choice," and "intersubjective conflicts among choosers" (i.e. "conflicts about the past held by numerous mutually aware individual groups").[64] Spaulding notes concerning the structures of the available pasts that "Groups' reconstructions of the past are confined by the structures known, available and salient

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[60] Williams, "Didachē," 36.

[61] Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 301–3. See also Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 12–13.

[62] Barry Schwartz, "Christian Origins: Historical Truth and Social Memory," in *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity*, ed. Alan Kirk and Tom Thatcher, SemeiaSt 52 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2005), 43–56, esp. 55–56; Barry Schwartz, "Where There's Smoke, There's Fire: Memory and History," in *Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Conversation with Barry Schwartz*, ed. Tom Thatcher and Barry Schwartz, SemeiaST 78 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), 7–37, esp. 16.

[63] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 12.

[64] Michael Schudson, "The Present in the Past versus the Past in the Present," *Com* 11.2 (1989): 105–13; Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 13–14.

to their own traditions."[65] Concerning Schudson's second factor, she explains that "Past individual or corporate trauma cannot be ignored unless one is willing to court neurotic avoidance techniques that require great expenditures of emotional capital."[66] Of the final check, Spaulding notes that groups attempting to construct the past must contend with challenges to that construction from outside groups, of which one may become dominant, but only through competition and perhaps being influenced by other groups.[67]

The discussion of malleability and construction derive from a debate within the theoretical circles of memory studies on the persistence (i.e. reliability) of social memory. Two main theoretical models conflict over memory's persistence (i.e. stability): the presentist model (also strong or radical constructionist) and the dynamics of memory approach (or contextual constructionism).[68] The presentist model is highly suspect about the reliability of social memory in conveying factual, *historically* accurate accounts. In this view, construction of memory equals the invention of memory. Pride of place is given to the notion that the hegemonic group exerts all control over the construction of social memory, and memory therefore singularly reflects the ideological agenda of that group. This view focuses on how the past is manipulated in the present. The dynamics of memory approach "model assumes that the past is not totally subjective or fabricated, and that people may continue practices for other than utilitarian purposes." It also "recognizes that memory can be manipulated for the purpose of sustaining (or contesting) group dominance and meaning," but that "memory also can demonstrate characteristics that are highly resistant to change."[69] This is because people assume the

[65] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 13.
[66] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 13.
[67] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 14.
[68] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 10–12.
[69] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 12.

remembered past actually happened, and therefore "resist present changes being made to that past."[70]

Following the dynamics of memory approach, Alan Kirk and Barry Schwartz, among others, push back rather strongly against the presentist model.[71] Kirk recognizes that the past can be and "is appropriated to *legitimize* particular sociopolitical goals and ideologies" in order "to *mobilize* action in accord with these goals."[72] And he appreciates that the presentist model provides "indispensable tools for assessing appeals to the past," but suggests doubt "about whether they can be generalized into paradigmatic models for tradition and memory."[73] Rather pointedly Kirk observes:

> Constructionists would argue that the sense of continuity with the past is itself fabricated by the ideological and hegemonic interests that produce the constructed past. Yael Zerubavel notes, however, that "invented tradition can be successful only as long as it passes as tradition." Hence this approach must assume that most members of society, save the elites, are incorporated into a false consciousness manifest in their naïve acceptance of a fabricated social memory, a view that if for no other reason falters on the fact that subordinated groups are demonstrably and robustly (if discreetly) capable of contesting elite constructions of the past and shaping alternatives.[74]

Indeed, Yael Zerubavel goes on to state that an awareness of a "deliberate construction" in the present recall of a tradition "inevitably undermines its acceptance as tradition."[75]

Spaulding delineates several factors which contribute to the formation and persistence of social memory. At the very basic level, something becomes social memory if a group believes it is deserving of remembrance and commemoration. The past is conceived of (i.e. commemorated)

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[70] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 12.

[71] Richard Bauckham eventually endorses the dynamics of memory approach following his critique of both the form critics, as well as James Dunn's and K. Bailey's alternative proposals. See Bauckham's Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 240–318, esp. 310–318.

[72] Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," 11–12.

[73] Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," 13.

[74] Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," 14. See also Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 232.

[75] Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*, 232.

in such a way that makes it "intelligible, communicable, and public," so that it "encompasses and organizes subjective feeling."[76] Commemorative practices accomplish this through "symbolic forms, drama, repetition, and exhortation[.]"[77]Following Peter Burke, she lists the various mediums of social memory as "oral tradition, written records, images, actions, and space."[78] The most persistent memories tend to coalesce around "important past events—which are such things as fixed points or fateful persons." Yet commemoration is "also often the result of intense contest, struggle, and sometimes annihilation." Spaulding posits three aspects for what she labels the "struggle for memory persistence." These are a "natural layering of and change in meaning over time" to make use of what is most meaningful, may result in "forgetting" and "re-remembering"; losing groups may be "vilified" and forgotten; conflicting groups may "institute and develop distinct rituals that foster solidarity in their own social grouping, but foster strife with conflicting groups and undermine the solidarity of the society as a whole."[79]

A slightly myopic view seems to be present in most of memory scholarship. It tends to present mostly major events or people as candidates for social memory, but this discounts the multitude of micro-memories that form much of the matrix of social identity through memory. This should be understood rather in terms of priority of meaning and degrees of necessity for the existential continuance of the group. Kirk refers to the most crucial and formative as "master narratives."[80] These "have achieved secure status in the cultural memory," but "are not inert, museum-piece representations of the past; rather, they vitally shape perception and organization of reality. They are cognitive schemata, "nuclear scripts" for interpreting and processing streams

[76] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 14–15.
[77] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 15.
[78] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 15 n. 54.
[79] Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 17.
[80] Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," 15.

of experience."[81] Master narratives feature prominently in discussion of theory and usually are the focus of memory research. However, this myopic view misses the important co-working of non-master narratives, or what I label "micro-memories" in shaping group identity. Indeed, the micro-memory traditions are sometimes the most malleable, or perhaps most flexible, because they are less essential to identity. In other instances, they are extremely persistent, because they are less value laden and serve as a framework for making master narratives more intelligible.[82] Therefore, they can demonstrate a wider variety of integration into competing groups. They also can be and are subordinated to the master narratives, but they also offer some of the tools needed to reimage the meaning of the more persistent value laden memories.

The Active Shaping of Social Memory as Resistance

Adherence to or resistance against a dominant ideology is ultimately an issue of identity, whether group or individual. With this view, we may comfortably say that Revelation is a document geared toward identity formation: it forces identification with either God and the Lamb or with the Dragon. Indeed, David deSilva has argued for some time that the purpose of the Apocalypse is identity formation through the careful reinforcement of sectarian identity.[83] One method with which John challenges the dominant ideology and compels the reader to one

[81] Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," 15.

[82] An example of this would be the blending of the "two-ways" memory genre (a persistent micro-memory; i.e. not value laden and essential to group identity) and the Jesus Teaching Traditions (a persistent master narrative; i.e. value laden and essential to group identity) from above. The blend makes the master narrative more intelligible to the non-Jewish adherents.

[83] deSilva, "The 'Image of the Beast' and the Christians in Asia Minor"; "The Revelation to John: A Case Study In Apocalyptic Propaganda and the Maintenance of Sectarian Identity," *SA* 53 (1992): 375–95; "Out of Our Minds?: Appeals to Reason (Logos) in the Seven Oracles of Revelation 2-3," *JSOT* 31.2 (2008): 123–55; *Seeing*, chap. 3.

allegiance or another is through his selective (intentional and unintentional) use of various memory genres.

I have identified at least four methods employed in identity formation of resistance: blending, exclusion, co-option, and inversion.[84] Blending describes when two or more distinct memory genres overlap but are used for a single aim.[85] Exclusion describes when one memory genre, perhaps more culturally relevant and dominant, is ignored and replaced by a competing memory genre. Co-option describes when a memory genre foreign to the group is co-opted for their own purposes.[86] At times this can be used to elevate the resisting group's values over those which were co-opted. Inversion describes the role reversal of the main aspects of a memory genre for the purpose of denigrating the previously upheld value or concept, while sometimes also having values or concepts of the resisting group assume the positive role; this may also result in a limited deconstruction of the memory tradition due to the dissonance.[87] A modern example of inversion would be the "'Murica" movement current in the United States. This movement (only loosely labeled as such) resists a strong cultural narrative of patriotic fervor combined with the ideology of national superiority in the United States by highlighting its negative aspects and caricaturing its values.

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[84] These are not necessarily restricted to identity formation of resistance but can be used by the dominant group. As discussed in ch. 1, Imperial propaganda coopted Greek myths of dragon slaying and applied them to the emperor.

[85] The memory genres are distinct because of how the memory traditions have developed. They are similar insofar as fundamental aspects of content are the same. The blend must be viewed from a synchronic perspective because it is quite possible that both memory genres had a common origin, even though they ended up developing independently.

[86] This does not need to happen in resistance setting, although it can and does happen. It is possible to employ a memory genre from an outsider group without changing the nature of the memory genre.

[87] S. Friesen uses the same terminology to describe a similar action regarding John's use of myth in Rev 13. Beale also notes inverted uses of OT allusions. However, theirs are not discussions about social memory, though there is notable overlapping. The use of the same term is coincidental, but not altogether surprising considering definition of inversion. See G. K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, JSOTSup 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998); Steven J. Friesen, "Myth and Symbolic Resistance in Revelation 13," *JBL* 123 (2004): 281–313, esp. 303–4, 309.

Critical Interplay, Issues, and Application of These Models to Revelation

Both Social Space Theory and Social Memory Theory are concerned with social identity. Additionally, critical factors of each theory are salient to the other, suggesting, at the very least, that they are describing the same phenomenon from slightly different angels. SIT tends to look at a larger picture and to focus on most of the factors that influence and express the group dynamics of social identity. Both space as a social construct and social memory are significant among these factors.[88] Similarly, space often serves as a powerful vehicle of social memory.[89] Likewise, space is shaped by the social identities of the groups and specific spaces may often represent important social memories (e.g. the Western Wall of the Jerusalem Temple Mount).

This close interaction and inter-dependence among these critical theories raises several important methodological questions for our approach to Revelation:

1) How do we know something is formative and significant?

In the complex matrix of identity's interaction with the rest of reality, everything is formative for identity. This is certainly the logical inference of the case made above for the inclusion of micro-memories. Most researchers have concentrated on the less ambiguous influences, namely those master narratives or influences undeniably close to the terminal identity. It is apparent that degrees of meaning and importance are assigned to the large variety of these influences. This is instructive. Why is something a master narrative? Because the subject(s) in questions tells us it is important, either straightforwardly or through clues such as repetition (e.g. it is repeated in self-identification through positive self-association or self-identification against the other through vilification). Understanding this will help us remain close to the nuclear core of the social

[88] Coleman A. Baker, "Social Identity Theory and Biblical Interpretation," *BTB* 42.3 (2012): 129-138. esp. 132.

[89] Kirk, "Social and Cultural Memory," 2.

identities in Revelation, as well as what John thinks the terminal identity should be.

The master narratives exert more control over micro-memories and other aspects salient to social identity because their substance as well as their framework is more persistent. Alternately, we can label these "organizing frames" and "sub-frames."[90] For sub-frames, the framework (i.e. memory tradition) is the least malleable, but can be used like a catalyst to create new ideas through blending.[91] This subordination is more common in situations of higher tension where identity needs to be affirmed; this is mainly because the master narratives are "mobilized" to reinforce identity.[92] In a highly polemical document like Revelation, we can be reasonably confident that most of the included sub-frames have been subordinated to the major themes of the master narratives. If this is the case with a particular sub-frame, then we may also reasonably conclude that it is being used in a formative and significant way. If it is not, then we can reasonably assume it is simply being used as part of the stock of sub-frames current in an uncontested level of social identity.

2) Related to this, how do we know something is in fact a social memory or how do we recognize allusions to memory genres?

Not only does this question set recall the difficulties associated with allusions, but also the

[90] The use of organizing frames and sub-frames comes from Robert von Thaden's synthesis of the theoretical work on conceptual blending; see his *Sex, Christ, and Embodied Cognition: Paul's Wisdom for Corinth*, ESEC 15 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 50–51.

[91] An example would be like the use of the two-ways memory genre from William's discussion of the Didache. The memory genre is a widespread Mediterranean approach to ethical living, but not part of the nuclear core of social identity. The Jesus tradition is the master narrative essential group identity in this case. However, while the sub-frame of the two ways is subordinated to the master narrative, it retains its own distinctive framework while casting the Jesus tradition in a "novel" way. Concerning the blending, it is not on the same level of blending as discussed above in the section on social memory that describes a blending between the major narratives. This kind of blending is akin to the to that of conceptual blending from cognitive linguistics; see

[92] Allan Megill, "History, Memory, Identity," *HHS* 11.3 (1998): 37–62, esp. 40; Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 9.

potential pitfalls of mirror reading. Thankfully, there is a wealth of theoretical and methodological work on Revelation and allusions, as well as allusions in the NT.[93]

Our particular discussion concerning allusions/references is difficult, not only because of the methodological deficiencies frequently pointed out among those engaged in the debates,[94] but also because by and large these debates are solely focused on OT allusions in the NT. Revelation's prodigious use of the OT is so obvious it needs no defense — the discussion instead has focused on answering which text is being recalled, the species of the reference (e.g. direct quote, allusion, echo), and whether the author even intended to make a reference.[95] If the discussion about OT allusions, citations, and echoes has been so difficult, then what kind of methodological assurances do we have for identifying non-Jewish non-literary sources?

The question is further complicated by the fact that we have no assurance of reliance upon non-Jewish written documents, because none have such a wide and consistent provenance for early Christians as the OT. This means that any proposed reference in Revelation to something outside of a Jewish source must surmount an imposing barrier both of giving cause for rejecting a Jewish background and the likelihood of an extra-Jewish influence or combination of both. A good methodology is paramount to overcoming this barrier. This kind of methodology has been largely lacking in the secondary literature. Indeed, in the commentaries scholars have mostly been content to suggest a background and move on. There are notable exceptions. These usually come in the form of a PhD dissertation/monograph where a trenchant methodology is expected, or as articles. The methodologies employed are usually those of suggesting a link, then

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[93] For summaries and critical interactions with important studies, such as those from Jan Fekkes and Richard Hays, as well as important contributions, Beale, *Old Testament*, 13–59; Marko Jauhiainen, *The Use of Zechariah in Revelation*, WUNT 199 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 14–16.

[94] Such as in the ongoing debate between Beale and S. Moyise, for a summary see Jauhiainen, *Zechariah*, 14–16.

[95] Jauhiainen, *Zechariah*, 32–35.

investigating the extent of the possible link, and demonstrating its explanatory power.[96] Even so, setting out a methodology that provides degrees of assurance has been lacking. Does this mean that prior studies are wrong? No, but it does mean that hitherto a serious methodological deficiency has not been addressed, and therefore these studies are more easily dismissed by those convinced of the priority of the Jewish backgrounds of Revelation.[97]

The critical issue for identifying a reference for something outside the primary text, whether a reference to the OT or to some aspect of Mediterranean culture, is one of probability. This of course is the underlying framework for exegesis and certainly the same burdens for demonstrating a likely reading for a given text apply.[98] All this is to push back against fallacious thinking that would automatically and uncritically assign by default a Jewish background to every statement in Revelation. The Jewish background should not be granted *a priori*. This is incredibly irresponsible from a methodological perspective. It creates an author who could not possibly exist, since he would need to remain completely unaffected by any non-native culture.[99] This of course is not the case for any first century Jew—especially one residing outside Palestine. In addition to this, the work of the various Revelation scholars to lay out a proper methodological approach to quotation, allusion, echo, etc.[100] and the need for that methodology demonstrates we cannot uncritically assume a Jewish background.

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[96] E.g. Aune, "Influence"; "Magic"; Kerkeslager, "Apollo"; Henten, "Dragon"; Thomas, *Magical Motifs*; Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*.

[97] E.g. Beale, *Revelation*, 624, 634.

[98] Jauhiainen, *Zechariah*, 33.

[99] This should be understood in terms of varying degrees of affectedness. However, even groups that sequester themselves from general society do so in response to how they perceive that society's ability to affect their way of life.

[100] For my part I am resistant to using various categories such as quotation, allusion, and echo to categorize the varying degrees of the volume of the reference. I am more amenable to the category of "quotation" since it describes a mostly verbatim reproduction of another source. However, I find the other degrees of categorization for textual referents clumsy and unnecessary, as there can be too much overlap between the categories. Thus, I will use allusion or reference interchangeably, as well as incorporate Vernon Robbins categories of Intertexture described further on.

Vernon K. Robbins and SBL's Context Group have placed a heavy emphasis on discerning this affectedness in their work on intertexture. Intertexture describes “a "text's representation of, reference to, and use of phenomena in the 'world' outside the text being interpreted." This world includes other texts (oral-scribal intertexture) other cultures (cultural intertexture) social roles institutions, codes and relationships (social intertexture) and historical events or places (historical intertexture)."[101] Building on Robbins' approach to intertexture, the criteria laid out by R. Hays for intertextuality, and N.T. Wright's subsequent application of those criteria to finding "echoes of Caesar" in Paul, F. Long argues this methodology can be used to detect references outside of the OT and that it does not need to be restricted to texts.[102] The method (modified for Revelation from Long's own comments) and Long's additions (preceded by an asterisk) follow:

1. **Availability**: was the material readily available and knowable in the culture at the time?
2. **Volume**: is the word, or the syntactical pattern, repeated sufficiently in the immediate context to establish an 'audible' volume? How significant is this material in the original source, and in its appropriation elsewhere in John's day?
3. **Recurrence**: does the word or theme recur elsewhere in the Johannine corpus, sufficient for us to be able to establish a broader base of meaning?[103]
4. **Thematic coherence**: does the theme cohere well with other aspects of what John is saying? How well does it sit with the rest of the train of thought of the passage and the letter?
5. **Historical plausibility**: could John have intended this meaning, or is it anachronistic or out of context when we predicate it of him? Would John's readers have understood what he was hinting at? Does the intertextuality of the wider culture, the web of allusion and echo familiar in the world at large, allow, facilitate or encourage this kind of an implicit storyline?
6. **History of interpretation**: have other interpreters from other ages read the text in any way

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[101] Vernon K. Robbins, “Dictionary of Socio-Rhetorical Terms,” n.d., http://www.religion.emory.edu/faculty/robbins/SRI/defns/i_defns.cfm.

[102] Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society, and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996); Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 29–32; N. T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 60–62; Fredrick J. Long, “‘The God of This Age’ (2 Cor 4:4) and Paul’s Empire-Resisting Gospel” (presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, San Francisco, CA, 2011).

[103] The difficulty with this one is similar to the question of how one approaches the disputed Paulines. If one does not hold that the author of Revelation, the Gospel, and the epistles are the same, then this must be restricted to only Revelation, which is the approach I am taking.

like this?

7. **Satisfaction**: does this reading enable the text to speak with new coherence and clarity? Does the text, read this way, settle down and make itself at home? Is there, in Hays's word, an 'aha' of fresh understanding when we read it like this?

*8. **Appropriateness to the needs for the original Audience(s)** (related to 4): how might these echoes or allusions have benefited the audience, or addressed their needs for a continued faithful response to the discourse at hand?[104]

*9. **Authorial Situation** (related to 5): is there any relationship between the author's use and reliance on these echoes and allusions and his or her historical circumstances?

*10. **Geographic Prominence** (related to 1): Are the social-cultural *realia* to be found prominently in the region to which John is writing or from which he is writing, such that allusions would have been meaningful to him and/or to them?

*11 **Singularity or multiplicity of Origin:** Are there alternative origins for the echoes or allusions identified that could better account for their inclusion here? Or is one origin arguably the most likely source? Should one source necessarily preclude or exclude assigning it to one or another origin.[105]

Jauhiainen and others have argued that these criteria do not identify allusions and echoes so much as establish an interpretation.[106] I agree with Jauhiainen that the quest for "scientific" and "objective" criteria for determining allusions etc. is problematic. [107] However, the problem is metaphysical and not methodological. Most interpreters acknowledge the subjective nature of exegesis and that new information or perspectives can alter a given interpretation. Thus, given the that the problem is metaphysical, I suggest that we can identify the distinct types of intertexture and be methodologically certain about them while still acknowledging metaphysical uncertainty.

We come back now to the original question: How do we know something is in fact a

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[104] This criterion recalls Relevance Theory, which will be assumed throughout this dissertation but rarely receive direct interaction. For an explanation of Relevance, see Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, "Précis of Relevance: Communication and Cognition.," *BBSci* 10 (1987): 697–754.

[105] Fredrick J. Long, *In Step with God's Word: Interpreting the New Testament with God's People*, GlossaHouse Hermeneutics & Translation 1 (Wilmore: GlossaHouse, 2017), 324.

[106] Jauhiainen recalls Evan's, Sanders', Porter's, and Beker's critiques and adds his own comments; see Jauhiainen, *Zechariah*, 24–25. Witherington also critiques Hays' method, wherein he argues that the use of references in NT material should be focus on understanding "the use of the material in its new context" and not necessarily as a call to the reader to reexamine the references source material (see *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017], 464–65).

[107] Jauhiainen, *Zechariah*, 36.

social memory, or how do we recognize allusions to memory genres or social spaces? For the purposes of this study, we will follow Robbins' conceptual approach to intertexture[108] and Long's subsequent expansion of Hays and Wright, but focus on issues related to Apollo, social memory, and critical spatiality.[109] This will allow us to explore the possible allusions to Apollo, as suggested by both the history of interpretation and the subjective observations of the present interpreter, along a methodological rigorous line. In light of this, we move on in the next two chapters to establish the general and provisional contexts for investigating the possible references in the text of Revelation.

[108] I depart with him on several methodological points. I do not dispute the utility of his rhetorolects, but I find his utilization of spatial theory unconvincing.

[109] It is interesting to note that efforts to illuminate possible references in the text, such as Thomas' approach to magic, essentially follows the methodology described above. I also should however note that there is a good bit that is intuitive about this approach, which is probably why most studies tend to follow this route. However, they usually lack the methodological rigor and precision of those using an intertextual method.

CHAPTER 3: APOLLO IN ASIA MINOR

In arguing for the existence of an Apollo motif in Revelation, I am necessarily predicating the relevance of such a motif to Revelation's recipients. Yet to sustain the idea of relevance, it at least must be demonstrably clear that Apollo was important, if not integral, in the religion and rituals of Asia Minor. Indeed, Apollo formed an important focus of ritual, critical space, social memory, and social identity for those of Asia Minor. Yet it must be much more than this: Apollo must have played such a major role in the social contexts of the Christians of the Seven Churches, that John thought it necessary to maintain a recurring invective against him throughout Revelation.[1] Thus, the main goal of this chapter will be to demonstrate Apollo's prominence by providing essential information and through examining his relationship to the people of Asia Minor through their spaces, social memory, ritual activity, and social identity. Here we are establishing the contours of Apollo's prominence in Asia Minor. In the next chapter we will narrow our focus to the seven cities of Revelation. The sections of this chapter follow this arrangement: the prominence of Apollo; the essential Panhellenic Apollo; Apollo and Asia Minor; and Apollo, politics, and empire.

The Prominence of Apollo

The question of prominence requires a bit more nuance. It is simply not enough to cite MacMullen and say that, after Zeus, Apollo was by far the most popular deity in Asia Minor with at least twenty-nine different cults for his various epithets in Caria alone—though this is by

[1] The evidence for the presence of a recurring invective—more than the discussed references—will be presented in chapter 5

no means an insignificant piece of evidence.[2] The question of prominence, especially in light of the variety of Apollonian manifestations, requires us to ask about the character of the theology and cults of Apollo in Asia Minor and their wider effects on the populace as well as other cults.[3] These nuances are absolutely critical to explore, because they formed the matrix through which the citizens of Asia Minor received and integrated the imperial propaganda machine (and the message of the Gospel). Many of the emperors, as we will see, actively engaged in associating themselves with Apollo. However, the Palatine Apollo in Rome was in many respects different from the various Apollos of Asia Minor. Yet the differences were not clear cut and neither conception was immune from being influenced by the other—especially since the Palatine Apollo had a heavily Hellenic character. The interplay is complex, but by no means inscrutable. The benefit of examining this interplay is being able to bring this information to bear on analyzing John's invective in Revelation.

The Panhellenic Apollo

In his important study *Letters to the Seven Churches*, Ramsay discusses Apollo Tyrimnaios, the patron deity of Thyatira.[4] Ramsay describes how this Apollo is an interesting syncretistic mix, combining characteristics of the Thytiaran hero Tyrimnaios, as well as Helios and Pythian Apollo. The visual representations mix both Greek and Anatolian aspects. However, there was a great deal of continuity from old Greek religion into the Hellenistic and Roman era. These two poles represent the classic dilemma of syncretism: How much has the change

[2] Ramsay MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 4 & n. 23. See also Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 2, who finds the multitude of "Apollos" quite appalling.

[3] Recall here number 10 of Longs' expanded criteria: "*10. **Geographic Prominence** (related to 1): Are the social-cultural *realia* to be found prominently in the region to which John is writing or from which he is writing, such that allusions would have been meaningful to him and/or to them?" I also grant here that there are further distinctions between regions and municipalities.

[4] Ramsay, *Letters*, 320–22.

influenced the continuity? Yet in these ancient cultures that valued tradition, we should assume continuity while putting the burden of change and peculiarity on the evidence of specific locales.

In places where Hellenism was a cultural change brought by conquerors, the situation leans more towards syncretism with the continuity of the ingenious systems. However, in our period of study, Hellenism was already well and truly established[5]—even reinforced by the general philhellenism and the great Hellenic cultural pushes of Augustus and other emperors. The point is that with both the continuity in the old Greek cities and the spread of Hellenism, there was a good deal of strength in Panhellenism, especially, considering the spread of myth by popular epics and other poetry, to provide a unified image of the gods and their roles among the Greek and Hellenized peoples.[6]

This unified image applies to this study of Apollo. The term archetype may be too strong in that it conjures an idea of all other types developing from it—this certainly was not the case, as the history of religions studies demonstrates in the research on Apollo's origins.[7] No, the image of the Apollo we see in Panhellenism is more like a cluster or nucleus of unspoken mutual agreement among those who practiced Greek religion as to who the god was and what he was generally concerned with. The result is that we see the many and various facets of Apollo's roles, functions, and characteristics in differing degrees of strength based on location and time period; the conception of Apollo was malleable as was needed within the bounds of the memory

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[5] Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*, vol. 1 of *FF* (Philadelphia: Fortress; Berlin: Gruyter, 1983), 166.

[6] Fritz Graf, *Apollo*, GHAW (London: Routledge, 2009), 3–4.

[7] Frederick M. Ahl, "Amber, Avallon, and Apollo's Singing Swan," *AJP* 103 (1982): 373–411; Edwin L. Brown, "In Search of Anatolian Apollo," *HesperiaSup* 33 (2004): 243–57; Arthur B. Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 2.1:453–501; Alexander Herda, "Apollon Delphinios – Apollon Didymeus: Zwei Gesichter eines milesischen Gottes und ihr Bezug zur Kolonisation Milets in archaischer Zeit," in *Kult(ur)kontakte: Apollon in Milet/Didyma, Histria, Myus, Naukratis und auf Zypern ; Akten der Table Ronde in Mainz vom 11.–12. März 2004*, ed. Renate Bol, Ursula Höckmann, and Patrick Schollmeyer, IAATSK 11 (Rahden, Westf: Leidorf, 2008), 13–86, esp. 14–16.

tradition. For instance, a major feature of the Pythian Apollo was his role in prophecy. However, as an institutional feature, this was mostly only active at his sanctuary in Delphi, even though Pythian Apollo had a strong cult following and many temples throughout the Mediterranean.[8] Another example is that of the Clarion Apollo, who, while mainly associated with Apollo's role in prophecy, also came to be strongly associated with Apollo's role as the averter of plagues during the 2nd century CE, even sometimes at the expense of an inquiring city's local Apollo cult.[9] Yet aside from the various local peculiarities resulting from syncretism and varying degrees of emphasis on certain traits, what we are left with is the assurance that this nuclear Apollo is a helpful image that can serve as an excellent point of comparison and contrast for his various cults in Asia Minor. At this point I find Sarah Johnston's phrasing helpful for stating my point: "the distinction between them is best used as a heuristic tool rather than a measuring rod[.]"[10]

The differences between the localized Apollos and the Panhellenic Apollo is an excellent example of the malleability of a memory genre within the confines of its broader memory tradition. For instance, despite the myths many variations, Apollo is always Python's bane, he is always the far-shooter, he is always the averter of plague, etc. The memory tradition ensures that such things as these that belong to the Panhellenic Apollo will always be a part of his memory genres, even if they are not mentioned. Yet the memory genres remain malleable, because they can emphasize different traits or subsume and display the traits of local deities. Thus, a localized Apollo cult will contain all the elements of the Panhellenic Apollo, while at the same time

[8] E.g Athens and Laodicea, see H. W. Parke, *The Oracles of Apollo in Asia Minor* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 200; J. K. Davies, "Pythios and Pythion : The Spread of a Cult Title," *MHR* 22 (2007): 57–69.

[9] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 154–55.

[10] Sarah Iles Johnston, *Ancient Greek Divination*, Blackwell Ancient Religions (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 152.

emphasizing local traits, such as with Apollo Tyrimnaios above. Yet, I am also sympathetic to André Lardinois' claim that scholarly focus on Panhellenism has "helped to obscure the variety in regional belief."[11] A Panhellenic image is helpful in general but loses much of the nuance required for proper localized biblical exegesis, especially when it is widely acknowledged that much of the NT is occasional literature written to specific audiences.

What follows is a truncated, but no less accurate portrait of the Panhellenic Apollo.[12] I regard the following characteristics as a polythetic set: Apollo and his twin Artemis were the offspring of a liaison between Zeus and Leto. He was the slayer of Python and instrumental in the death of Achilles (Apollodorus, *Library: Epitome* ES 3.3–4 [LCL]). He was the god of prophecy, instructing the whole Mediterranean as to the will of the gods, but especially Zeus' will (HH *Hermes* 430–444) through his many oracle sites.[13] He was the god of light, law and order, colonization, healing, plague (both averting and sending), music, poetry and purity.[14] The apple, palm, bay, and laurel trees;[15] swan (Nonnus, *Dion.* 38.205–206), snake,[16] locust (Pausanias, *Descr.* 1.24.8; Strabo, *Georg.* 13.1.64), mouse (Strabo, *Georg.* 13.1.48), wolf (Aeschylus, *Sept.* 145); cithara,[17] and tripod[18] were sacred to him. He preferred sheep for his

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[11] André Lardinois, "Greek Myths for Athenian Rituals: Religion and Politics in Aeschylus' Eumenides and Sophocles' Oedipus Coloneus," *GRBS* 33 (1992): 317–27, esp. 317.

[12] Fritz Graf has already provided an excellent in-depth look at the Panhellenic Apollo in his appropriately titled monograph *Apollo* (Graf, 2009). Foundational treatments of the Classical and Archaic Apollo can be found in the notable works of Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); Lewis Richard Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, repr., vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Martin P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, vol. 1 of *HAW* (München: Beck, 1955); Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möellendorff, *Der Glaube Der Hellenen*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1932). Those left wanting a more comprehensive picture of Apollo than I can offer here should consult Graf and Burkert at the very least, because they are less distracted by the origin concerns than earlier studies.

[13] For a more complete list, see the section on Temples and Sanctuaries of Apollo below.

[14] Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 145–49; Robert Parker, "Greek States and Greek Oracles," in *Oxford Readings in Greek Religion*, ed. R. G. A. Buxton, ORCS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 76–108, esp. 85.

[15] Ahl, "Amber," 408.

[16] Daniel Ogden, *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 138.

[17] MacMullen, *Paganism*, 16.

[18] Graf, *Apollo*, 54.

sacrifices.[19] He was the youthful god with long hair and no beard: the "eternal ephebe."[20] His weapons were the bow and arrow—he was the far-shooter (Homer *Il.* 1.14–15). He was bisexual and never married (Apollodorus, *Lib.* 1.3.3).[21] He watched over sailors and ships (as Νησσόος) and was "the god of shores and beaches (Ἄκτιος, Ἀκταῖος) and the happy landing (Ἐμβάσιος)," as well as colonization."[22] He migrated with the seasons (Vergil, *Aen*. 4.143–45).[23] He was the ancestor god of Athens and all the Ionian race, as well as their protector.[24] His wrath frightened both the gods (HH *Apollo* 1–4) and mortals (Plato, *Crat.*, 404d–406b).[25] In the Imperial age, he was the guarantor of both the emperor and imperial rule.[26]

Apollo and Asia Minor

As the multitude of Apollo cults in Asia Minor suggests, Apollo has a long and storied history within the region. From a very early time Apollo was established in the social identities of Anatolia through space, social memory, and ritual. Homer even calls him Apollo λυκηγενής or Lycian-born (Homer, *Il*. 4.102). Some of these cults, such as Apollo Didymeus, Apollo Delphinios/Pythian Apollo, Apollo Lairbenos, and the Clarian Apollo were extremely important throughout Asia Minor, while others were only important to their specific locality, such as the above-mentioned Apollo Tyrimnaios. With his overall popularity, one should not be surprised to

[19] Johnston, *Divination*, 35.
[20] Graf, *Apollo*, 85, 103.
[21] Graf, *Apollo*, 85–86.
[22] Alexander Herda, "How to Run a State Cult: The Organization of the Cult of Apollo Delphinios in Miletos," in *Current Approaches to Religion in Ancient Greece: Papers Presented at a Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 17 – 19 April 2008*, ed. Matthew Haysom and Jenny Wallensten, SuSIA8˚ 21 (Stockholm: The Swedish Institute at Athens, 2011), 76.
[23] Ahl, "Amber," 377–80; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 146 & n. 32.
[24] H. W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians*, AGR (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 148; Graf, *Apollo*, 86.
[25] This was true even about the Roman conception of him into the Imperial Period, see John F. Miller, *Apollo, Augustus, and the Poets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 8.
[26] See section below on Apollo, Politics, and Empire.

find that he probably had a local cult site in almost every town of Asia Minor. Some were simply from the spread of a cult, like that of the Pythian Apollo,[27] through travel, trade, settlement, etc. Others were the result of Hellenization, where the Panhellenic Apollo was grafted into or over existing indigenous cults—here the epithets are usually mere location markers.[28] Burkert remarks that after the peninsula had been Hellenized, there was a widespread tendency to call city and provincial gods Apollo.[29] Chaniotis also notes that just like Artemis and Dionysus, Apollo had a festival in every city – many of them unique to their particular city.[30] Indeed, Cook relates that Asia Minor actually had more Apollonian festivals than the Greek mainland.[31] Several of these cults, or at least the populations associated with them, sometimes developed mythology that deviated from the Panhellenic norms. For instance, there are several manifestations throughout Anatolia representing Apollo as a rider-god.[32] Having already mentioned Didyma and Claros, it is fitting to also mention that they were the two most important oracle sites in the ancient world during the first century CE.[33]

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[27] Davies, "Pythios"; Cook, *Zeus*, 2.1:455.

[28] Cook notes that he had more place name epithets than any other god (see Cook, *Zeus*, 2.1:455). This peculiarity of Apollo demonstrates a unique relation to space with Apollo versus the other gods. On the one hand, the geographic epithets add little to the localized conceptions of Apollo, but on the other hand Apollo defines these places.

[29] Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 144.

[30] Angelos Chaniotis, "The Dynamics of Rituals in the Roman Empire," in *Ritual Dynamics and Religious Change in the Roman Empire. Proceedings of the Eighth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Heidelberg, July 5–7, 2007)*, ed. O. Hekster, S. Schmidt-Hofner, and C. Witschel (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 3–29, esp. 27.

[31] Cook, *Zeus*, 2.1:455.

[32] From Perminus in southern Pisidia (Gül Işın, "The Sanctuaries of the Cult of Apollo in Southern Pisidia," *Anatolia* 40 (2014): 87–104, esp. 118., Apollo Bozenos from Satala in Lydia (K. M. Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," *Numen* 32 [1985]: 46–70, esp. 66), and also Smyrna (Robert Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, trans. Antonia Nevill [Oxford: Blackwell, 1996], 249) and Thyatira (several coins from the Antonine period in Thyatira depict him this way (See online at http://www.asiaminorcoins.com/gallery/displayimage.php?pid=10847 ; http://www.asiaminorcoins.com/gallery/displayimage.php?pid=10064 ; http://www.asiaminorcoins.com /gallery/displayimage.php?pid=10909 ; http://www.asiaminorcoins.com/gallery/displayimage.php?pid=8360. Concerning Thyatira, we can be reasonably sure that this practice was not new, as the hero Tyrimnos with whom Apollo merged had also been depicted this way (see Ramsay, *Letters*, 318 fig. 26).

[33] This is strictly in terms of activity. No other site was as famous in its association with Apollo or more widely represented in ancient literature than Delphi.

Apollo and Festivals

Festivals were an import nexus of ritual action that utilized social memory and social space to reinforce both cosmic, imperial, Hellenistic, regional, and civic social identities. With regard to Apollo, they invoked myth and practiced rituals that celebrated his relationship to the celebrants in his various roles as founder, purifier, bane of chaos, patron, etc.; they were also usually celebrated on the seventh day of the month.[34] During the Pythian Games that proliferated in Asia Minor under Roman rule, he was celebrated as the slayer of the chaos monster Python though musical contests (Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 2; Lucan *Civil War* 6.407–409; Strabo 9.3.10).[35] Not only did the proliferation of this festival increase Hellenistic social identity, it also reinforced memory genres connected with Apollo's role as giver of music and order throughout Asia Minor. The Great Didymeia (Μεγάλα Διδύμεια) at Miletus functioned primarily to ensure the goodwill of Apollo Delphinios toward the city, but also recalled its mythic past and reinforced its social structures and political boundaries.[36] Though it included multiple competitions as a Panhellenic festival, the procession of the Didymeia, through its emphasis on sacred space, memory genre and ceremony, reinforced and formed the civic identity of the Milesians, while also demonstrating their status as favored of Apollo.[37]

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[34] Ahl, "Amber," 376.

[35] The inscriptions for the celebration of the Pythia during Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman times are ubiquitous in Asia Minor, see http://epigraphy.packhum.org/ for multiple examples; see also Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 147; Fontenrose, *Python*, 457.

[36] Space was a crucial aspect of this festival. Its procession started at Apollo Delphinios' altar in the agora that had been built and first used by Herakles, and finished at the altar of Apollo Didymeus in Didyma—a meandering journey of 18 km. During this time, seven (Apollo's number) stops were made where ceremonies took place to honor various gods at specific sites along the way and paeans were sung. For the procession the whole citizen body arranged themselves according to tribe and brotherhoods (Herda, "Apollon," 13–86, esp. 18–20).

[37] Herda, "State Cult," 59–93, esp. 74.

It is also worthwhile to briefly mention the purification festival of Thargelia.[38] In the Athenian version that sources suggest had a good deal in common with the Ionian version, a city would expel the prior year's pollution by ritually assigning it to two undesirables (φαρμακοί) and driving them from the city. On *Thargelion* 6th the *pharmakoi* were symbolically (though not actually) killed and the pollution was discarded outside of the city boundaries. The following day (*Thargelion* 7th), the inhabitants brought first fruits into the city and celebrated with choral contests.[39]

This festival is notable in forming social identity for several reasons. First, it ritually cleansed the people and purified their city space, ensuring the maintenance of proper relations with Apollo. Second, they brought in the bounty from the fields that Apollo's goodwill had ensured and offered it to him along with the choral contests in which he delighted, ensuring his good will for the following year in averting disaster. The powerfully evocative festival recalled the Apollonian memory genre of his role as purifier and averter using space and ritual. All together these reinforced his relationship to his worshipers in this role and *vice versa*. That at least the first part of this festival occasionally occurred during extreme calamity demonstrates how it reinforced Apollo's role as purifier and averter.

[38] It is not clear that this was the name of the festival in Ionia, but it was substantially the same in that it celebrated Apollo, had musical contests, and a scapegoat ceremony. We are confident that the festival was discontinued at Athens prior to the Imperial period, but we cannot say the same of Ionia. We know the festival originated in Ionia and was practiced there, but we lack the epigraphic data that is available to us for Athens. Thus, we cannot say for sure when it ended there. It was not an agonistic or stephonic festival and so may have not attracted the monumental inscriptions so prevalent for the athletic competitions. The epigraphic evidence from Asia Minor during the Imperial period does show that the moniker Thargelion was still being used for the calendar month and that the personal name Thargelia was common in Caria and Ionia, e.g. PH261401, PH247821. As this was a festival of annual communal purification, we should assume something like it continued into Imperial times; purification is important enough to warrant this assumption.

[39] The second part of the festival is only attested in Athens (Martin Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von Religiöser Bedeutung Mit Ausschluss Der Attischen* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1906], 110).

Temples and Sanctuaries of Apollo in Asia Minor

Among the gods of the ancient world, Apollo was unique due to his heavy association with prophecy. He had cult sites in or near almost every city of Greece and Asia Minor—these generally were outside the city and featured sacred groves.[40] He was the patron deity, founding deity, or ancestral deity of many towns and cities, such as Miletus (Apollo Delphinios), Apollonia ad Rhyndacum (Apollo Sauroktonos—this temple was actually located on its own small island near the town),[41] Thyatira (Apollo Tyrimnaios), Hierapolis (Apollo Archegetes), Motella (Apollo Lairbenos),[42] and possibly Tarsus.[43] He also had oracle sites at some of these sanctuaries—more than any other god.

Concerning Asia Minor and Apollonian oracle sites, Willamowitz-Möelendorf states: "Die ganze kleinasiatische Küste finden wir besetzt von Apollonheiligthümern, meist Orakelstätten."[44] There were oracle sites at Thymbra, Claros, Magnesia, Didyma, Knidos, Xanthos, Patara,[45] Khyrse in the Troad, Chalcedon,[46] Cyaneae in Lycia,[47] and Hierapolis,[48] just to name a few.[49] In addition to these dedicated oracular sites, Parke speculates that since "[d]ivination is such a typical function of Apollo, associated with him in the earliest mentions of

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[40] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 198.

[41] Serdar Aybek and Ali K. Öz, "Preliminary Report Of The Archaeological Survey At Apollonia Ad Rhyndacum In Mysia," *Anatolia* (2004): 1–25, esp. 3.

[42] Beate Dignas, *Economy of the Sacred in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor*, OCM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 241.

[43] The evidence is mixed for Tarsus. Some sources indicate Sandas/Herakles, while others indicate Apollo (possibly the Clarian Apollo)—both are well represented in the coinage of the Imperial Period; see Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 2:1647; Attilio Mastrocinque, "The Cilician God Sandas and the Greek Chimaera: Features of Near Eastern and Greek Mythology Concerning the Plague," *JANER* 7 (2007): 197–217, esp. 198; William M. Ramsay, *The Cities of St. Paul: Their Influence on His Life and Thought* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1907), 155–56.

[44] Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, "Apollon," *Hermes* 38 (1903): 575–86, esp. 576.

[45] Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, "Apollon," 577.

[46] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 179.

[47] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 199.

[48] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 200.

[49] Some of these had ceased functioning by the time of the Imperial period.

him … [o]ne cannot exclude the possibility that in any Apollonian shrine the god might be consulted for local purposes."[50] Even so, Claros and Didyma were the main oracle sites of the ancient world during the Imperial Period and exerted the most significant political and religious clout of any Apollonian sanctuaries in Asia Minor.

Both Didyma and Claros were ancient. Didyma was established before the Ionian migration.[51] Claros appears in the epic cycle and Homeric Hymns (*Artemis* 5; *Apollo* 40) and functioned as an oracular site from the Archaic epoch.[52] Didyma enjoyed a fair bit of success and notoriety from Archaic to Hellenistic times, while Claros was a minor site. They however achieved their greatest notoriety during the Imperial Period—both being fairly strong at its beginning but achieving their zenith in the late second century CE.

Didyma was located about 10 km south of Miletus at the end of the sacred way.[53] It had extremely close ties with Miletus and acted as a kind of brother cult to the state cult of Miletus—Apollo Delphinios. Its surrounding area was mostly barren, but it was located on a sacred spring. The temple for Apollo Didymeus in the Imperial Period was extremely large—the third largest in the Greek world—and featured a sacred grove of bay trees.[54] Didyma was the oracle of choice for the old Greek cities of Asia Minor during the Imperial period, but it also received envoys from the far reaches of the Roman empire.[55]

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[50] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 199.

[51] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 2. Parke is following Pausanias here (*Descr*. 7.2.6) and regards his information as correct.

[52] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 112–13.

[53] This is simply the distance from Miletus to Didyma, not the distance of the meandering route a procession would travel during the Didymeia.

[54] Johnston, *Divination*, 86; Parke, *Asia Minor*, 199.

[55] Aude Busine, "Recevoir et formuler le divin: Les identités religieuses des consultants des oracles d'Apollon en Asie Mineure à l'époque romaine," in *Entre lignes de partage et territoires de passage; les identites religieuses dans les mondes Grec et Romain: "paganismes", "judaismes", "christianismes,"* ed. Nicole Belayche and Simon Claude Mimouni, CRJ 47 (Paris: Peeters, 2009), 65–77, esp. 67.

The sanctuary was home to shrines to a number of deities, such as Artemis (*Pythie, Lykyeia, Aretmis/Hekate Phosphoros*), Leto, Zeus (*Soter, Hyetios, Telesiûrgos, Kataibates, Hypsistos*), and many other minor cults, as well as various heroes and rulers.[56] There were also a number of other shrines to Apollo under other cult epithets (*Philesios, Ephopsios, Pidanassseus, and Delphinios*).[57] In addition to this, Apollo Didymeus, in both inscriptions and the literature, occasionally carried the additional epithets and titles of *Branchides/iades/tes/ios, Milesius, Archegetes, Soter, Patroos, Phoibos, Paian, Hekaergos, Pythios*, and others.[58]

Didyma's history can be divided into two main eras—pre-Persian destruction and post-Alexandrian restoration. Both eras are fairly illustrious. During the period prior to its destruction, the Branchidae family administered the oracle at Didyma, from which Didyma draws its alternate name. The founding of the oracle centered on a cluster of myths about Branchus and provide an etiology for that family's administrative and prophetic monopoly over the oracle. Yet all these myths (despite archaeological and historical evidence to the contrary) link its founding to Apollo's oracle at Delphi. In one myth, the youth Branchus is accidentally abandoned by his father on the beach near Miletus during a trip from Delphi. He receives special favor from Apollo due to the god's infatuation with Branchus and founds the oracle. In another version, Branchus, by the commission of Apollo, drives away a plague ravaging Miletus and then founds the oracle. In yet another, Apollo, as a ray of light, enters the womb of Branchus' wife, thus bestowing the gift of prophecy to the family. In historical accounts, pre-Hellenistic Apollo *Didymeus* received benefaction and a thank-offering from Pharaoh Neco for his victory over

[56] Joseph Fontenrose, *Didyma: Apollo's Oracle, Cult, and Companions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 123–71.
[57] Fontenrose, *Didyma*, 118–22.
[58] Fontenrose, *Didyma*, 114–15.

king Josiah of Judah at Megiddo (609 BCE).[59] Tacitus also records that Darius (prior to destroying it) had granted the status of asylum to Apollo Didymeus' sanctuary (Tacitus *Ann.* 3.63) and the site possibly may have received benefaction from earlier Persian kings.[60] Apollo Didymeus also played a major role in consultations concerning the founding of Milesian colonies.[61]

The second period of Didyma's operation began with its liberation from Persian rule by Alexander—who was supposedly the son of Apollo. The myth surrounding its revival was that the divine spring that had run dry after the sack by the Persians began to flow again at Alexander's arrival. The temple was rebuilt and eventually the cult statue that was plundered by the Persians was returned by Seleucus—who also claimed descent from Apollo.[62] The statue was of the Kouros type with the left arm holding a bow and the right held out holding a small figure of a stag on the palm.[63] The image created by Kanachos prior to 500 BCE would still be present during Imperial times.[64]

In the Imperial period, Apollo *Didymeus*' power and influence grew to its highest level. However, there is limited evidence showing the interest of the Romans in Didyma. Even so, prior to the Imperial period, Julius Caesar extended the *asylia* of his sanctuary by two miles.[65] Caligula gave money toward finishing either a temple of Apollo Didymeus in Miletus or the Didymeon itself (Suetonius. *Cal.* 21).[66] Mostly the business and fame came from Asia Minor

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[59] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 14.
[60] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 19, n. 22.
[61] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 11.
[62] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 57–58; Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 181.
[63] The stag may represent some of Apollo's pre-Greek Anatolian traits as the hunter (see Brown, "In Search of Anatolian Apollo"). For a further description of the statue, Parke, *Asia Minor*, 26.
[64] Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 181.
[65] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 71.
[66] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 71.

itself. This was in large part due to the nature of the site as an oracle, but also due to the popular Didymeia festival of Miletus.

Unlike Didyma, Claros lacked any real notoriety before the Imperial period, although the Homeric Hymns and in the Epic Cycle do mention it. It is often associated with Colophon, as this town had control over the sanctuary.[67] In further contrast to Apollo of Didyma, the Apollo of Claros was consulted much more by cities "on the margin."[68] These were Hellenized cities without a Hellenic history, and so they sought to cultivate a Hellenic identity by practicing the traditional rites of consulting Apollo's oracles.[69]

The temple was smaller than that of Didyma, but the Clarian Apollo received significantly more benefactions and attention from Roman notables. Statues of Pompey, Augustus, and Cicero's brother were set up on its sacred way.[70] The Roman proconsul Sextus Appuleius likely also heavily contributed to the repair of the temple.[71] It also begins showing up with some frequency in the period's poetry.[72] Pausanias also notes that there is a statue of the Apollo Clarios at Roman Corinth (Pausanias 2.2.8).[73] There is also an account in Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.22) where the wife of Claudius, Agrippina the younger, sought revenge against her rival Lollia Paulina. Agrippina accused her of seeking prophecies about the emperor, using a small copy of the cult statue of Apollo Clarios to do this.[74] During the reign of Augustus, and probably in response to Apollo being Augustus' patron deity, the sanctuary received from Colophon a

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[67] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 112.
[68] Robinson, "Oracles," 63.
[69] Busine, "Identités Religieuses," 71.
[70] Aude Busine, "Oracles and Civic Identity in Roman Asia Minor," in *Cults, Creeds and Identities in the Greek City after the Classical Age*, ed. Richard Alston, Onno van Nijf, and Christina G. Williamson, GRHSGCCA 3 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 173–96, esp. 181.
[71] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 135.
[72] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 135.
[73] Robinson, "Oracles," 63.
[74] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 141.

large and magnificent marble cult statue of Apollo Clarios: it was about 7–8 meters tall and the seated Apollo, who held a bough of bay in his right hand, had a proportionally smaller Artemis and Leto standing behind his shoulders.[75] Finally, it is very likely that imperial cult worship occurred in Apollo Clarios' sanctuary.[76]

The ceremony for receiving the oracles of Apollo is somewhat conjectural, as our source (Iamblichus) is late (3rd to 4th century CE), even though the oracle had not yet ceased functioning. Even so, Iamblichus is dependent on prior literary sources and Fontenrose argues his description is reliable since Iamblichus is accurate about Claros and regards little as having changed at Didyma for several centuries.[77] Iamblichus (*Mysteries* 3.11) says:

The woman oracle-speaker at Branchidai, whether she is filled with the divine light while holding a wand first conveyed to her by some god, or foretells the future while sitting on an axle, or receives the god by wetting her feet or a hem in the water or by inhaling vapor from the water, makes herself ready in all these ways [*or* in any of these ways] for the reception and partakes of him from without.

> The number of sacrifices and the law of the whole consecration and all the other things done reverently before the oracle-singing—the prophetess's baths and her fast of three whole days and her stay in the adyta …[78]

[75] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 134.

[76] See Busine, "Oracles," 181; S. R. F Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 254. Having local cults host ruler cults was an established practice from Hellenistic times (see Sviatoslav Dmitriev, "Local Administration in the Province of Asia: The Problem of Roman Influence" [PhD Diss., Harvard University, 2001], 387). J. Ferrary relates that a base dedicated to Octavian and the remains of cult statues were found in the *cella* of Apollo's temple at Claros and that an inscription shows the *pronaos* of the Clarian temple was consecrated to the worship of Tiberius (see Jean-Louis Ferrary, "Les inscriptions du sanctuaire de Claros en l'honneur de Romains," *BCH* 124.1 [2000]: 331–76, esp. 357–59, 368–70).

[77] Fontenrose, *Didyma*, 79.

[78] Here I am using the translation of Fontenrose, see Fontenrose, *Didyma*, 81.

Parke provides a thorough discussion of all the different ceremonies noted by Iamblichus and points out apparent issues.[79] The consultants likely did not get to see what was going on during the process of inspiration. However, the end result was that the prophetess would receive the oracle, after the consultant asked the question, and likely pass it on to the prophet to record and render appropriately for the consultant.[80] We can also say with some assurance, at least with reference to Delphi, that the experience of the sibyl was not wildly ecstatic, but more measured and controlled.[81] In my estimation, due to the prominence of Delphi, it is not unlikely that the experience was similar at the other oracles: the revived Didyma was modeled on Delphi and Claros in turn received its *sacerdos* from among the Milesians.[82]

As social space, the oracle sites were important focal sites for reinforcing social identity and fostering social memory. The memory genre of Apollo as prophet of Zeus and the conception of these spaces as oracular sites (and any Apollonian oracular cult site) were mutually reinforcing, if causally circular. People went to the shrines because Apollo was the giver of oracles, but through the giving of oracles at these sites the memory genre was reinforced and enlarged by whatever was contained in the oracle. Ceremonies were performed in these spaces to elicit an oracular response. These ceremonies were costly and reinforced the cosmic identity of practitioners and petitioners as to who they were to Apollo and who he was to them, as well as

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[79]Parke, *Asia Minor*, 210–14.

[80] Johnston, *Divination*, 85.

[81] While this does not exclude the use of psychotropic substance, wild ecstatic sessions were not the norm. See the example from Plutarch, where he does not regard a wild ecstatic experience as normal (see Plutarch, *Def. orac*. 438B; Joseph Fontenrose, "The Cult of Apollo and the Games at Delphi," in *The Archaeology of the Olympics: The Olympics and Other Festivals in Antiquity*, ed. Wendy J. Raschke, WSC [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988], 120–40, esp. 123; Terence Paige, "Who Believes in 'Spirit'? Πνεῦμα in Pagan Usage and Implications for the Gentile Christian Mission," *HTR* 95 [2002]: 417–36, esp. 429).

[82] Aude Busine, "The Officials of Oracular Sanctuaries in Roman Asia Minor," *AReG* 8 (2006): 275–316, esp. 285, 296.

their place in relation to the gods and their realms of activity. Depending on the content, the oracle could reinforce civic and Hellenic identities.[83]

Apollo and Divination

People visited oracles for a variety of reasons. Often the visits were about how to obtain divine favor for a business venture, ritual matters, discovering or averting *agos* or cleansing *miasma*. Yet the divination in Asia Minor evidences a fair amount of complexity based on oracle type, locale, ritual, clientele, and class.[84]

We could consider the use of oracles, and by this, we mean oracle sites as opposed to the content of a prophecy, a mostly non-Roman aspect of religion. The Romans had no real need for consulting oracles, since they preferred the Sibylline books and their own species of divination.[85] The Greek use of oracles continued from Classical into Imperial times. Even so, Delphi, the most famous and important oracle during Classical times, had fallen into a period of decline. However, for reasons not wholly explainable, both Claros and Didyma of Asia Minor grew and thrived during the late Republic and especially during the Imperial Period—even garnering significant benefaction from notable Romans as well as emperors. Claros and Didyma did not just enjoy success local to Asia Minor, but received envoys from all over the Mediterranean.

The nature of the oracles gives us an excellent measure as to why they were important. They were not consulted about politics, but mostly regarding ritual matters, the success of

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[83] Apollo's oracles from both Claros and Didyma demonstrated an intimate familiarity with the local settings of petitioners (including local cults and history) as well as with both philosophy and classic literature (see Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 240).

[84] Those searching for a comprehensive treatment of Greek divination in and beyond Asia Minor should see Sarah Johnston's definitive monograph published in 2008 by Wiley-Blackwell (see bibliography for full bibliographic information).

[85] H. W. Parke, *Greek Oracles*, Hutchinson University Library (London: Hutchinson, 1967), 132–33.

business ventures, or discovering how to avert *agos* or cleanse *miasma*. Even these business matters were framed within questions relating to ritual matters, insofar the petitioner asked what deity one needed to sacrifice to for a venture to have success. Eventually they show a distinctive evolution in that Apollo began to field philosophical and theological questions.[86]

What these kinds of questions reveal is that both individuals and political bodies were extremely concerned with the gods' involvement in their lives and proper maintenance of the social/cosmic order. Furthermore, the increasing activity at both Claros and Didyma demonstrate and increasing concern, in Anatolia at the very least, for how the gods were treated and how the gods treated them. This may be symptomatic of the so called "age of anxiety," however it is not an anxiety concerning personal salvation. The anxiety that led to the heavier consultation of oracles was symptomatic of the stress and despondency caused by the civil wars. As Zanker notes, people believed the wars were a result of impiety, thus Augustus began his major cultural campaign of the *Pax.* Among its major emphases was the restoration of piety.[87] Therefore, it would not be surprising if Augustus and his successors' programs of spiritual renewal turned many people toward consulting the gods themselves concerning proper piety. While the reason for the intensified concern for piety is somewhat conjectural, the concern itself for piety and remaining free from *agos* remains. The necessary conclusion is that these oracles had a very real bearing on some of the most important aspects of religion—both public and private—in Asia Minor. It is also telling, because these oracles were expensive.[88]

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[86] Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 248.

[87] Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 2–3.

[88] Busine, "Identités Religieuses," 65–77, eps. 66–67; Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 173.

Borrowing the framework from Sarah Johnston, it is helpful to distinguish between institutional and non-institutional oracles.[89] The institutional oracles in the main belonged to Apollo, especially during the Imperial period, while there was slightly more diversity among the non-institutional oracles as far as the sources of the prophecy. Even so, Apollo still played the leading role in non-institutional oracles and prophecy. Non-institutional oracles, meaning the *mantis* (μάντις) and the *magos* (μάγος) as well as non-specialist divinatory rites (e.g. casting lots), were widespread and common throughout the empire. The main reason for this is that they were accessible to normal people (i.e. those without means).

Aude Busine has argued persuasively that the inscriptions from both Didyma and Claros present a skewed perspective on the practice of divination.[90] There were two classes of inquirers at Apollo's oracles, cities and citizens with means. Consulting oracles required sacrifices of the larger variety (goats, oxen, etc.) and the Clarian Apollo was fond of choirs of boys singing hymns as payment for his oracles—these choirs had to travel from their point of origination and that required money.[91] The result is that these oracles do not cater to the lower-class groups. Even so, both institutional and non-institutional means of divination tell us a good deal about how Apollo functioned at all levels of Anatolian society.

After Didyma's restoration in 334 BCE, the administrative and prophetic function was not reestablished under the Branchidae; Darius had taken to Bactria.[92] So instead, Miletus would model Didyma's administration after the Pythian oracle at Delphi—not surprising, since Apollo

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[89] Johnston, *Divination*, 28.

[90] Busine, "Identités Religieuses," 66–67.

[91] Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 173. No doubt the Clarian Apollo also received sacrifices. Priests do have to eat after all. Johnston also notes that, since a consultation could have taken a good deal of time, a whole support industry of taverns, inns, and markets sprung up around the oracle centers, (see Johnston, *Divination*, 35). As Graf sardonically states, "there is a reason why [Apollo] chose merchants as his priests in Delphi. It was Christ, not Apollo, who drove the moneychangers out of the temple" (Graf, *Apollo*, 26).

[92] H. W. Parke, "The Temple of Apollo at Didyma: The Building and Its Function," *JHS* 106 (1986): 121–31, esp. 123.

Delphinios was Miletus' patron deity. Here it differed greatly from Claros, in that Claros only ever had a male prophet, while at the restored Didyma there were often both male and female prophets simultaneously. It is also worth noting that at perhaps the oldest oracle of Apollo at Patara, it also had a prophetess.[93] At Didyma the prophetess was the one who received the oracle, while the prophet presided over the cultic activity (e.g. ceremonies, rites, sacrifices, and festivals) and administration.[94] As a political office, the prophet was much more important. He was chosen by lot from among the notable citizens of Miletus and served for one year, but the holding of the office could be renewed several times.[95] The more politically important female office was that of the *hydrophoroi* (ὑδροφόροι) of Artemis Pythie, whose sanctuary was located just across the sacred way.[96] This office was similar to that of Apollo's prophet in that it was a yearly position that could be renewed and in that she presided over the cultic rites and mysteries. The daughter of Apollo's prophet often held this office.

All extant oracles from Didyma reveal that predictions account for very little of the authentic responses.[97] Instead they mostly indicate religious and public concerns. This is certainly curious, because in Iamblichus' view the oracle was regarded as mainly prophesying the future (*Mysteries* 3.11).[98] We also find that a number of the authentic responses were answers to questions the Didymaean staff had asked concerning the cult itself.[99] Didyma also mostly

[93] Farnell, *Cults*, 4:229.
[94] Busine, "Officials," 283.
[95] Busine, "Officials," 281.
[96] Busine, "Officials," 283–84.
[97] Fontenrose, *Didyma*, 92.
[98] It strikes me that this dissonance between perception and reality should not really be surprising. Fontenrose notes that the same situation was also the norm at Delphi (*Didyma*, 92). What we are witnessing then is not lack of belief of about Apollo's ability to foretell the future, but conditioned petitions based on need. I say conditioned, because the Greeks learned that Apollo's answers could be a double-edged sword, and so they learned to frame their questions in such a way as to get the least ambiguous answer they could—as well as one that would guarantee success (see Parker, "Greek States and Greek Oracles," 80–81). This however did nothing to diminish their perception that Apollo could in fact tell them the future should they desire to know it.
[99] Fontenrose, *Didyma*, 96.

responded to individuals, as opposed to civic envoys.[100] The fact that these individuals are aristocratic also demonstrates the potential impact Apollo Didymeus had in the circles of municipal and regional power. Finally, inscriptions of Apollo Didymeus' oracles are mostly confined to Didyma.[101]

Apollo's oracle at Claros is in a valley to the northwest of Ephesus and the sanctuary site is much less impressive in terms of size than that of Didyma. It featured a Doric temple made with imported blue-gray banded Proconnesian marble. The temple remained under construction from about the 3rd century BCE until Hadrian finally completed it.[102] The sanctuary contained an underground labyrinth where the oracle proper was located.[103] The Clarian Apollo gave the majority of its (recorded) oracles to civic delegations. While some of these were recorded at Claros, many more were inscribed in the cities that received them. Again, newly Hellenized cities (i.e. not old Greek cities) in Asia Minor were keen to use Claros as a way to demonstrate their philhellenism, since they themselves were not ancient in terms of Hellenic history. Claros encouraged this and flourished because of it.

Even though the institutional oracles were expensive to consult, the fact that they were repeatedly consulted evidences a widespread need in the Anatolian aristocracy to receive revelation from the gods. This need was no less among the *humiliores* who could not afford to consult the institutional oracles. Thus, it should come as no surprise that alternate methods of divination were ubiquitous. While the means vary, in the main they are all usually dependent upon Apollo.

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[100] Fritz Graf, "An Oracle against Pestilence from a Western Anatolian Town," *ZPE* 92 (1992): 267–79, esp. 273.

[101] Graf, "An Oracle against Pestilence from a Western Anatolian Town," 273.

[102] Deborah N. Carlson and William Aylward, "The Kızılburun Shipwreck and the Temple of Apollo at Claros," *AJA* 114 (2010): 145–59, esp. 146, 151.

[103] Robinson, "Oracles," 62.

While there were diverse types of "seers," the most popular method of divination, due to the accessibility to everyone, was the throwing of dice. This practice, especially popular in second century CE southwestern Anatolia, worked like this: there were four-sided dice (ἀστράγαλοι) kept with a statue or pillar of Hermes that were usually located in the center of a marketplace.[104] Oracles in verse were inscribed upon the statue. Each oracle had a number that corresponded to the total number rolled by a set of five dice. Each oracle was supposed to be the answer from the god listed by it. Even though the oracles were on the statues of Hermes and provided by differing deities, it is generally understood to actually have been Apollo who was "speaking" the oracles.[105] The association of the various divinities with the oracles is because they were regarded to have governance over the particular matter with which the oracle dealt. That said, the oracles were, as one might expect, rather cryptic. Therefore, I agree with Johnston that it is likely that there were plenty of street diviners who were ready to help interpret the oracle for a nominal fee.[106]

There were several various kinds of street diviners, but most fit under the larger catch-all term of *mantis*.[107] The terms *magos* or *pharmakos* (φαρμακός) were also used.[108] The *mantis* was a seer, so the term would also describe the official prophets at the institutional oracles. In terms of street diviners, the *manteis* would include dream interpreters (ὀνειροκρίται), interpreters of

[104] A more comprehensive description may be found in Johnston, *Divination*, 99–100.
[105] Johnston, *Divination*, 100.
[106] Johnston, *Divination*, 99. On the presence of street diviners see Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 2.
[107] There are a variety of technical terms for the various types of diviners or arts of the diviners, but even the ancients used this as a catch all term (Johnston, *Divination*, 109).
[108] I am limiting my discussion of practitioners mostly to Anatolia and to Greek practice in general. Roman divination was a fairly different enterprise. Although it is likely that some Roman style augurs were present in the Greek East, they probably would have been attached to the Roman aristocracy residing there. It is difficult to say with certainty whether the Roman styles of divination flourished in Anatolia, but it seems unlikely to me, since there were ancient and venerable Greek practices already in play and because we see a flourishing of Greek religious practices (i.e. the swiftly rising popularity of Apollo's Anatolian oracles) in the philhellenism of the Imperial period.

various omens and prodigies (ὀρνῖθοσκόποι), interpreters of earlier oracles (χρησμολόγοι),[109] the *daimones* channeling *pythones* (πύθωνες) and *engastrimuthoi* (ἐγγαστρίμυθοι).[110] The *magos* on the other hand was a practitioner of magic, i.e. a magician, sorcerer, and mixer of potions. Among the assorted reasons for seeking the services of a *magos* (e.g. healing, loves spells, astrology, etc.) was that of divine revelation. It is in this role that Apollo features quite prominently[111] and was in fact the Greek god invoked most often for magic in general.[112] There were many and various types of street diviners, but what becomes clear is that when any oracular pronouncement is provided, it is usually associated with Apollo.

A few things are distinctive about the magic of Asia Minor: namely Artemis Ephesia, Apollo, and the Anatolian Jews. First, Artemis Ephesia was heavily associated with magic.[113] So also was Hecate with whom Artemis was often associated.[114] Apollo, as we noted, was also heavily invoked in the magical rites and formula of Asia Minor. Furthermore, Jews in Ephesus had a well-known reputation for magic.[115] The necessary conclusion is that the practice of magic was alive and well in Asia Minor, and it was also associated with very prominent Anatolian deities as well as ethnic groups.

Apollo's role in divination, whether by institution, street diviner, or *magos*, was a primary reason for the spread of his cult as well as his popularity. Although his oracles were at times

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[109] Johnston, *Divination*, 137–39.

[110] Such as the slave girl in Acts 16:16. They were understood to be filled with *daimones* who would speak and prophesy. Johnston speculates that the title *pythones* was appropriated by these practitioners from the Pythia to lend more authority to their practice (*Divination*, 140). Johnston's speculation is possible, but it appears just as likely that the ancients applied the term to the practitioners simply due to their prophesying. Prophesy was widely known to be Apollo's realm and the *pythones* no doubt claimed to speak for him. Thus, the rise of the appellation may have been inevitable.

[111] e.g. *PGM* I.262–347, *PGM* II.1–64, 64–183, *PGM* III.187–262, 282–409, *PGM* VI.1–47, PGM X.36–50.

[112] Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), xlvii.

[113] Arnold, *Ephesians*, 22–26.

[114] Arnold, *Ephesians*, 22–23.

[115] Kraabel, "Judaism," 53–60; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 31–32.

notoriously duplicitous, such as the famous wooden wall oracle (Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.141–43),[116] they still gave a large measure of assurance to those of pagan society, since their gods could be capricious and unknowingly offended. With their public ceremonies, mythic and recorded histories, and imposing sites (as well as satellite cults), the institutional oracles featured strongly in local conceptions of Apollo. These in turn became a major part of how cities and aristocrats related to the gods. The street diviners and dice ceremonies acted in a similar fashion, except they made Apollo's oracles accessible to the common person. The magicians too had their rites that purified spaces for summoning Apollo and recalled Apollonian memory genres.

Myths of Apollo

There are numerous myths about Apollo in the ancient world. Some are important in our understanding of Asia Minor, such as the mythology mentioned above about the founding of the oracle of Didyma, as well as Miletus, or of the claim of Ephesus that it was the birthplace of Apollo and Artemis (Tacitus *Ann*. 3.61). No doubt there were also other important founding myths tied to Apollo—Apollo Delphinios and Apollo Didymeus were both colony founders—even if he had melded with local cults, such as with Apollo Tyrimnaios at Thyatira or Apollo Lairbenos at Hierapolis, but they have been lost to time. Yet none were perhaps more popular or more important than the story of Apollo's birth and subsequent defeat of Python. It is frequently represented in both public art and on coinage, as well as in imperial propaganda. There are a small number of variations of this myth and it is possibly very ancient, even predating archaic

[116] In the oracle, Apollo declares "Yet shall a wood-built wall by Zeus all-seeing be granted / Unto the Trito-born, a stronghold for thee and thy children" (Herodotus *Hist.* 7.141; *LCL* A. D. Godley) Herodotus records that there was significant debate as to the nature of the wooden wall. Some argued it was an actual wooden wall, while others argued that it meant ships (7.142–43).

Greek civilization.[117] In addition to this *Kaoskampf* myth of Apollo, we also find a curious positive association of Apollo and snakes where they are under his purview: they guard his temples, impart the gift of prophecy, and are sent as agents of vengeance.[118] Apollo himself occasionally takes the form of a serpent to impregnate some great leader's mother, such as with Alexander of Macedon (Plutarch *Alex.* 3.1).

Both Fontenrose (1980) and Ogden (2013) have treated the Apollo/Python myths extensively, so we will not treat them at length here. The essential narratives are that Hera, furious with Zeus, sent Python (either her offspring or Earth's) after the pregnant Leto. After his birth, Apollo killed Python. In the other popular variation Apollo founds his oracle at Delphi but must defeat a monstrous δράκων. This results in giving the name Pytho (Πῡθώ) to the site based on the δράκων's rotting carcass (πύθεσθαι).[119] Both versions provide etiologies for the Pythian games. The former was perhaps the most popular, and it was certainly part of the popular consciousness in Anatolia, even though it was part of the mythic past (see Figure 2).[120] Perhaps the most powerful example of this can be adduced from the late second century. During this time, a plague brought from returning imperial legions was ravaging Anatolia. Naturally seeing this as punishment from an offended god, various cities sent envoys to the Clarian Apollo to find

[117] Fontenrose, *Python*, 20–22; Ogden, *Drakōn*, 151.

[118] Ogden, *Drakōn*, 135–38, 147, 192.

[119] For an extensive collection of primary sources regarding the myths and variations see Daniel Ogden, ed., *A Companion to Greek Religion*, BCAW (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 40 n. 93.

[120] Fontenrose lists several examples (Fontenrose, *Python*, 79 n. 8). Notable among them are *Acts Phil.* 113; the myth appears on coins from Hierapolis (Figure 2; see Leo Weber, "Apollon Pythoktonos im phrygischen Hierapolis," in *Philologus*, vol. LXIX of [Leipzig: Dieterich, 1910], 178–251, esp. 178). Coins appearing with a serpent coiled around a tripod in the same scene as Apollo are ubiquitous in Asia Minor. This imagery almost certainly suggests Python over a "medical' or "healing" interpretation, so also with the cult of Apollo Sauroktonos in Apollonia ad Rhyndacum (Edward J. Olszewski, "Praxiteles' 'Apollo' and Pliny's 'Lizard Slayer,'" *NHA* 31.2 [2012]: 2–9).

out what they should do. According to Apollo in his oracle to Hierapolis, Earth was still upset at the slaying of Python and so was visiting this plague upon them.[121]

Figure 2
Image Public Domain
Coin from Hierapolis Showing Apollo and Python ca. 218-22 CE

The pervasive nature of this and other Apollonian myths in Asia Minor speak to the importance of how Apollonian myth featured in social identity. Myth sometimes gave reasons for why particular ceremonies and rites were performed, but they also described a god's character and made that god (somewhat) intelligible. Where a city recalled a myth through ritual, the ritual was usually specific to that city—reinforcing that city's relationship to the god as special, since the ritual was assumed to be effective if performed properly. Apollo's myths reinforce many of his festal ceremonies, prophetic dominion, or purifying capabilities. The festal ceremonies were important to the social cosmic and civic identities of the various individual cities. The myths also

[121] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 153–54.

reinforced the cosmology of Anatolian social identity, because if something went wrong, the myths consistently told them who to consult.

Apollo, Politics, and Empire

Almost unsurprisingly, we find that Apollo also was significantly involved, at least from the Roman perspective, in the mythic past and founding of Rome, as well as its more recent history and the establishment of the principate. Apollo, through his oracles, could play the political games of the Mediterranean, but he could also be appropriated and used for others' political aims. As we will see in this section, none used Apollo better than Rome and its emperors. The consequences of this would reverberate throughout the empire, but especially in the East where both the emperors and Apollo would be worshiped.

Apollo's rise to prominence in terms of imperial propaganda and the self-representation of the principate is complex.[122] On the hand, it arises from the marriage in the general Roman consciousness of their manifest destiny due to their *pietas* and their mythic history. On the other it arises from very specific political circumstances or personal proclivities. The latter, however, would not have arisen without the former. Insomuch as the *Pax Romana* was a fiction, it was a necessary political fiction. The populace of the empire was shaken by the civil wars that preceded Augustus' ascent to total power. Augustus was an extremely shrewd politician and his ability to seize on the memory genres of myth and *pietas* and bend them to his political will and so settle the anxiety throughout the empire so effectively that it would be copied throughout the life of the principate.[123]

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[122] Miller, *Apollo*, 5.

[123] Shane Wood discusses these concepts at length (*The Alter-Imperial Paradigm,* 77–109). See also Karen A. Laurence, "Roman Infrastructural Changes to Greek Sanctuaries and Games: Panhellenism in the Roman Empire, Formations of New Identities" (PhD Diss., University of Michigan, 2012), 235–39.

The most powerful association of Apollo and the principate originated with Augustus during the Second Triumvirate.[124] Antony began a propaganda campaign styling himself as the "New Dionysus" and Cleopatra as the "New Isis." In associating himself with Dionysus, Antony sought to portray himself as one who would bring the worry free and indulgent life-style associated with Dionysus to those who would follow and support him.[125] This was a powerful piece of propaganda on Antony's part and was enough of a threat that Octavian had to think carefully about the potential fallout of who he would choose for his divine association.[126] Octavian chose Apollo and by all accounts made the right choice. While the cult of Dionysus did not suffer in Rome, Octavian's association with Apollo emphasized his association with traditional Roman virtue and cast Antony as hedonistic and distinctly non-Roman.[127] Octavian's propaganda campaign was highly visual, using both monumental constructions and coinage.[128] It drew on Apollo as the mythical patron and protector of the Roman people, as well as the god of order and law, while it associated Antony as the embodiment of the vices that had resulted in the years of civil war.[129]

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[124] Octavian had previously associated himself with Apollo at an ill-received banquet of the gods (Suetonius *Aug*. 68), but it is not clear that he was acting politically here; otherwise, it is possible that Octavian associated his forces with Apollo at the battle of Philippi, but R. Gurval's argument to the contrary is convincing (see Robert Alan Gurval, *Actium and Augustus: The Politics and Emotions of Civil War* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998], 97–100). More convincing is C. Lange's assertion that Octavian's political association with Apollo began with his stay at Apollonia, where he learned that Caesar had been murdered and that Octavian finally took Apollo to be his patron when lighting struck part of his home, which the *haruspices* interpreted to be a sign that Apollo wanted that part of the property (Suetonius, *Aug*. 29.3; Carsten Hjort Lange, *Res Publica Constituta: Actium, Apollo, and the Accomplishment of the Triumviral Assignment*, IE 10 [Leiden: Brill, 2009], 46–48; Olivier Hekster and John Rich, "Octavian and the Thunderbolt: The Temple of Apollo Palatinus and Roman Traditions of Temple Building," *ClQ* 56.1 (2006): 149–68).

[125] Zanker, *Images*, 46–47.

[126] Graf, *Apollo*, 102.

[127] Karl Galinsky, "Continuity and Change: Religion in the Augustan Semi-Century," in *A Companion to Roman Religion*, ed. Jörg Rüpke, BCAW (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 71–82, esp. 76; Zanker, *Images*, 52.

[128] Zanker, *Images*, 33–77.

[129] Zanker, *Images*, 57.

Octavian's association with Apollo was extremely successful and it continued after the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra. Indeed, Augustus claimed that Apollo's favor was what won him the battle at Actium.[130] Augustus would commemorate and honor Apollo Actius through both statuary and coinage. However, in contrast to the way he presented Apollo as the no-nonsense answer to the hedonism of Dionysus, he now presented an Apollo in his aspects of poet, musician, and bringer of peace, who would guarantee the peace of Rome.[131] In a statement that could hardly be rivaled in its grandiosity, Augustus identified himself closely with Apollo by building a new temple to Apollo on the Palatine and connecting his house to it.[132] In this way Augustus, as emperor, symbolically and practically took on Apollo's role as guarantor of Rome peace.[133] This image was reinforced through a variety of ways. For example, not only was his house connected to Apollo's but its gate was adorned by symbols of Apollo Agyieus, there was a statue of himself with the trappings of Apollo the Kitharode in the Library of Apollo, and he did nothing to discourage the rumor that he was sired by Apollo (Suetonius *Aug*. 94); he also minted coins in the 20s BCE that displayed himself as Apollo.[134]

Augustus also made use of the work of Vergil and other poets in cementing the destiny and divine prerogative of his rule in the national identity of Rome.[135] Vergil had of course written the *4th Eclogue* prior to Augustus' ascension to power, but Augustus nevertheless seized

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[130] Graf, *Apollo*, 102.

[131] Zanker, *Images*, 85–86.

[132] Up until this time Rome had only had one temple of Apollo—Apollo Medicus—and he was regarded as a healer, but through the building of the new temple Augustus clearly associated Apollo with victory: it was built near the temple of Victory and scenes in the temple recalled the battle of Actium. In addition to this, Augustus founded a new city near Actium named Nikopolis and erected a new temple to Apollo Actius there, where he also instituted a Panhellenic quadrennial festival to Apollo (see Mary Beard, John A. North, and S. R. F. Price, *Religions of Rome* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 1:198–99).

[133] Beard, North, and Price, *Religions*, 1:197–99.

[134] Graf, *Apollo*, 103; Miller, *Apollo*, 16 nn. 5, 20–24; Ogden, *Drakōn*, 337; Beard, North, and Price, *Religions*, 1:209.

[135] For a comprehensive treatment, see Miller (2009).

on it and expounded its message in his own way: Apollo brings back peace and prosperity through Augustus' reign (*Ecl.* 4.4–10). Through his political propaganda, Augustus suggested that as Apollo's son and protegee he embodied this reign.[136] According to Zanker, this move to explicitly associate himself with Apollo was unprecedented and followed his original propaganda of being the *divi filius* of Caesar, Venus, and also Aeneas.[137] There was no paucity of Aeneas traditions before Vergil.[138] However the *Aeneid*, written at Augustus' behest, combined the mythology to elevate the national Roman identity, while at the same time praising Augustus and firmly rooting his authority in the mythic tradition.[139] Apollo's role in the myth is greatly expanded by Vergil; prominent moments include no less than declaring to the weary dispirited Trojans that Rome will rule the nations (*Aen*. 3.84–98) and assuring Caesar's victory at Actium (*Aen.* 8.698–706).[140]

Apollo and Augustus were the perfect mythical pair. This was not only the case for Vergil, whose works were used in the classroom into late antiquity, but for all the other poets of the Augustan reign.[141] It is difficult to fully measure the impact that the poets had on the imperial populace, but we should note that they were regarded as *vates* of Apollo and that their poetry was inspired commentary on current events.[142] Still no other poem became such an important part of

[136] Graf, *Apollo*, 106; Lange, *Res Publica Constituta*, 46.

[137] Zanker, *Images*, 193.

[138] Sergio Casali, "The Development of the Aeneas Legend," in *A Companion to Vergil's Aeneid and Its Tradition*, ed. Joseph Farrell and Michael C. J. Putnam (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 37–51, esp. 37; C. S Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1942; repr., New Delhi: Atlantic, 2005), 31.

[139] Zanker, *Images*, 193; Sabine Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority and Vergil's 'Aeneid,'" *Vergilius* 50 (2004): 35–62.

[140] Miller, *Apollo*, 11.

[141] Bonz, *Past*, 61; Joseph Farrell, "The Augustan Period: 40 BC–AD 14," in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, ed. S. J. Harrison, BCAW (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 44–57, esp. 50; Miller, *Apollo*.

[142] Anne Gosling, "Political Apollo: From Callimachus to the Augustans," *Mnemosyne* 45.4 (1992): 501–12, esp. 502; Grebe, "Augustus," 60.

Roman conceptions "of their mythic past and religious present" or as "central to the emperor's self-representation."[143]

Augustus, through his use of programs and propaganda, established a strong imperial narrative, wherein the peace and future of Rome was tied to the gods' election of his ancestors, himself, and his descendants and their *pietas*.[144] Apollo was prominently featured in his propaganda and became intimately and publicly connected to both the princeps and the state through literature, coinage, and monumental constructions, statuary, as well as in various other programs, including the ritual of the Secular Games.[145] This all happened when the social and political structures of the Roman state were quite fluid. Thus, not only did Augustus successfully consolidate power and begin the era of imperial rule, but he also established a new structural relationship between the state and religion that increasingly focused most everything onto his person and rule.[146] This would not only endure, but in many cases grow stronger. Augustus had charted the course for further development, seen, for example in Apollo's prominence in of imperial ideology and identity under Nero.[147]

Tiberius is a curious case among the princeps. He was not creative with his propaganda in the same way as was Augustus. However, while he did improve the efficiency and reliability of provincial administration, he was conservative in his preservation of Augustan ideology as well

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[143] Denis Feeney, "The History of Roman Religion in Roman Historiography and Epic," in *A Companion to Roman Religion*, ed. Jörg Rüpke, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 129–42, esp. 134–35.

[144] Beard, North, and Price, *Religions*, 1:182. See also J. Rufus Fears, "Nero as the Vicegerent of the Gods in Seneca's de Clementia," *Hermes* 103 (1975): 486–96.

[145] For several examples of the coinage of Augustus and Apollo in Asia Minor, see AMC5522; AMC12712; AMC6719. See also Champlin, *Nero*, 141–42.

[146] Beard, North, and Price, *Religions*, 1:169, 184–210.

[147] Beard, North, and Price, *Religions*, 1:210; Champlin, *Nero*, 143–44.

as his own public self-representation.[148] He was philhellenic privately,[149] but there is nothing official beyond preserving Augustan ideology to suggest any close association with Apollo, except perhaps an eight year stay in Rhodes.[150] However, Marcus Manilius, who lived and wrote during Tiberius' reign, does make an explicit link between Rhodes, Sol, and Tiberius, to whom he ascribes solar honors and attributes (Manilius, *Astronomica* 4.765–66).[151]

Caligula, who stands in stark contrast to Tiberius, took the deification of the princeps to heart. He not only enjoyed being called a god, but also would dress himself up as one. Most notable among these were Herakles and Apollo (Dio Cassius, *Hist. rom.*, 59.26. 5–8; Philo *Legat*. 95–98). As mentioned above, Caligula funded the building of the temple of Apollo at Didyma, but he also chose Miletus to be the location for his imperial temple (Dio Cassius, *Hist. rom.*, 59.28.1).[152] While not altogether popular at Rome, these actions—especially the funding of the temple—would likely have been regarded favorably by the residents of Asia. Finally, at Assos in the Troad an inscription calls him Helios.[153]

Claudius was certainly a welcome change in Rome, but if anything, he was more of a stabilizing force after Caligula and less creative than Tiberius.[154] His religious programs were merely those of setting things in order and making sure rites and festivals were properly observed (Suetonius *Claud*. 22). Even so, Parke is likely right in assuming that the work of

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[148] W. T. Arnold, *The Roman System of Provincial Administration to the Accession of Constantine the Great* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1906), 139–40.

[149] Steven H. Rutledge, "Tiberius' Philhellenism," *CW* 101 (2008): 453–67.

[150] Rhodes was the location of the only significantly developed Helios cult in the ancient Mediterranean. Sol/Helios was also associated with Apollo in Roman thought (see Andrew Coutras, "Helios," *LBD*). For examples of coinage associating Tiberius with Apollo in Asia Minor see AMC4381; AMC4638.

[151] See also *Greek Anthology* 9.178 that is from a later writer who also equates Sol and Tiberius and then Nero.

[152] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 71.

[153] Peter Herz, "Emperors: Caring for the Empire and Their Successors," in *A Companion to Roman Religion*, ed. Jörg Rüpke, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Malden: Blackwell Pub, 2007), 304–16, esp. 309.

[154] Beard, North, and Price, *Religions*, 1:209–10.

Caligula in Didyma and Miletus was halted by him.[155] He was more interested in "restoring" the ideology and programs of Augustus in Rome, rather than aggrandizing himself in the provinces.[156] However, his restoration of the Augustan ideal set the stage for Nero.

Seneca probably realized that his pupil Nero could easily outshine Claudius and perhaps even hoped that he would outshine Augustus.[157] Nero would eventually fall short of Augustus' political acumen. However, Nero would become a far greater showman than any of the emperors and used the systems instituted by Augustus to accomplish this. While Augustus was content to be the protegee of Apollo, Nero, to the chagrin of Seneca, would be Apollo. In stark contrast to the measured tone of *De Clementia*, an effulgent adulation of Nero as second Apollo and bringer of a golden age was inserted into Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* (section 4) sometime during the 60's CE.[158]

The fascinating account of Nero's association with Apollo is explored at length in Edward Champlin's study of the emperor, but several significant factors should be recalled here.[159] Champlin argues that many of the actions of Nero that were regarded by his later critics such as Tacitus, Dio, and Suetonius as signs of madness, were actually carefully planned and executed by the young princeps and resulted in his massive popularity with everyone but the Roman elite. For Nero, suggestive propaganda and monumental associations were not enough. Nero was a showman and needed to act out the mythic associations.[160] His public spectacles were carefully crafted to visibly manifest in himself the structures and associations initiated by Augustus, whom

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[155] Parke, *Asia Minor*, 71–72.

[156] For examples of coinage in Asia Minor associating Claudius with Apollo see AMC8032; AMC9356; AMC3600; AMC5660; AMC7683; AMC5164.

[157] Fears, "Nero." See *De Clementia* 1.1-6.

[158] Edward Champlin, "Nero, Apollo, and the Poets," *Phoenix* 57 (2003): 276–83, esp. 277–80.

[159] Champlin, *Nero*, 112–44.

[160] Champlin, *Nero*, 138.

he endeavored to closely emulate. While these were scoffed at by his opponents, both the poets and the common citizenry celebrated them, especially those of the Greek East.[161]

Figure 3
RPC I, 496-497, no. 3059.24
Image Courtesy of www.cngcoins.com
Coin from Blaundus in Lydia
NEPO KAIΣAP on Obverse with Apollo on Reverse, ca. 55 CE

Nero's association with Apollo most likely springs from his desire to emulate Augustus, who, as shown above, was regarded as embodying the rule of Apollo.[162] Though Nero would take the association with Apollo much further into enacted mythology, there were several initial

[161] Champlin notes that Asia Minor was a recipient of Nero's propaganda (coins in Thyatira, Nicaea, and Bithynia show a "radiate Nero"); the message of the propaganda appears successful, because he is called a "New Sun" or "the New Sun God" by some residents of Pisidia (Champlin, *Nero*, 117). However, this was certainly building on the success of Augustus' program of propaganda, where as early as 14 CE we have a report that when a ship from Alexandria chanced upon that of Augustus, they arrayed themselves in religious garb and offered incense to him as a deity (see Herz, "Emperors," 310). The Nero Redivivus myth also originated in Asia and several imposters came from there (see David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, WBC 52B [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998], 738–39; Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993], 408–9; Eva Matthews Sanford, "Nero and the East," *HSCP* 48 (1937): 75–103).

[162] Champlin, *Nero*, 140; Graf, *Apollo*, 102.

points of comparison that were either similarities or efforts to recall the association of Apollo with Augustus. Although not sired by Apollo as the rumors claimed of Augustus, Nero was nevertheless protected by Apollo, who, as the story goes, protected him as a small child from assassins with a serpent (Suetonius, *Nero* 6; Tacitus *Ann*. 11.11).[163] Just as Augustus after his apotheosis had been represented with a radiant crown of Apollo since 14 BCE, Nero had himself depicted on coinage with a radiant crown.[164] Nero also minted coins associating himself with Apollo.[165] For his triumph, Nero made the temple of the Palatine Apollo and the obelisk of Sol, both established by Augustus, the high points of the procession (Suetonius, *Nero* 25) and rode in Augustus' chariot .[166] However, because Nero was interested in embodying the mythic and divine, he went beyond Augustus is his self-representations as Apollo.

The drive behind these public self-representations, apart from his love of all things mythic and theatrical, was to reinforce the imperial structures and ideology surrounding his person[167]—the emperor was the one appointed by the gods to lead Rome into the rule of the world under the reign of Apollo—and he crafted them on his terms for maximum poetic and theatrical effect.[168] His efforts to style himself after Hercules (by athletics, acting the part, and looting Delphi), Augustus, and Apollo/Sol (by music, theater, solar rule, and chariot racing) were

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[163] See also Suetonius, *Aug*. 94 and Ogden, *Drakōn*, 339–40.

[164] Champlin, *Nero*, 142–43.

[165] For examples from Asia Minor, see AMC8767 (Figure 3), AMC11565, AMC6601, AMC6365, AMC7181, AMC9119, and AMC3219.

[166] Champlin, *Nero*, 118.

[167] This statement could be the subject of some debate. However, for my part there seems sufficient evidence to support the claim that he sought to reinforce the structures and identity surrounding himself as emperor, especially with the common people (i.e. most of the population of the Empire). Consider among other things that the *Aurea Domus* was likely open to the public and its design would have reinforced his cosmic presentation (Edward Champlin, "God and Man in the Golden House," in *Horti Romani*, Supplementi 6 (Rome: Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma, 1998), 333–44). Also, Seneca had encouraged just such thinking (Champlin, "Nero, Apollo"; Fears, "Nero"). The staging for the crowning of Tiridates on the "Golden Day" also suggests such an understanding on the part of Nero (Champlin, *Nero*, 126–27). Finally, and perhaps paradoxically, even for all his theatricality and propaganda Nero refused divine honors. Champlin argues that this is because the associations were ideological in nature and not theological (*Nero*, 132).

[168] Edward Champlin, "Nero Reconsidered," *NER* 19 (1998): 97–108, esp. 99–100.

transparent enough that during his triumph the entire populace of Rome hailed him as Augustus, Apollo, and Hercules (Dio Cassius, *Rom. Hist.* 62.20.5–6).[169] Nero also employed a large number of equestrians and commoners to form his *Augustiani*, essentially cheerleaders, to provide appropriate accolades for him when performing. Tacitus claims they gave him acclamation only suited to deities (Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.15; Suetonius, *Nero* 20). The appellation Nero-Apollo or the portrait of Nero with a radiate crown also appeared on imperial coins and provincial coins from Greece and Asia Minor (including Thyatira), and Apollo with the Kitharode was often featured on the reverse of other coins.[170] The propaganda was effective, for similar forms also appear in private inscriptions in Greece and Asia Minor.[171] The associations with Sol/Apollo were on full display on the "Golden Day" and in the *Aurea Domus* and no doubt both developed a good bit of notoriety throughout the empire.[172]

The Flavians are not recorded as actively associating themselves with Apollo like Augustus or Nero. Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest that there may have been an imperial policy of either active association or acquiescence to associations with Apollo, especially with Domitian. Asia Minor minted a considerable number of assorted styles of coins displaying Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, or a combination of them with Apollo; Domitian and Apollo were represented more than either Titus or Vespasian.[173] This suggests that either the mints carried on with the tradition of associating the emperors with Apollo with either tacit or active imperial approval. We know that both Vespasian and Domitian deliberately emulated Augustan policy, "especially in the sphere of public religion[,]" and in light of the traditional

[169] Nero's imitations of Hercules and Augustus were closely connected to Apollo (Champlin, *Nero*, 138).
[170] Champlin, "Nero Reconsidered," 117 & n. 9.
[171] Champlin, *Nero*, 117 & n. 11.
[172] Champlin, *Nero*, 126–32; Champlin, "God."
[173] For examples of Domitian see AMC10278; AMC12991; AMC13330; AMC11804; AMC12161; AMC6555; AMC7750; AMC3368; AMC11171. For Titus, Vespasian, or Titus and Domitian see AMC11319; AMC5540; AMC3087; AMC10265; AMC9604; AMC10479.

religion of Asia Minor associating the ruler with the Sun, it appears likely that this trend continued with the Flavians.[174] At the imperial mint of Rome, Domitian overwhelmingly favored Minerva during most of his reign. However, during the latter half, he was repeatedly presented with a radiate crown and Apollo featured prominently on a number of common semis type coins.[175] While it may not have been official propaganda, it appears likely that the association of Domitian with Apollo was popular and even influenced Roman poets, who were eager to make the comparison (Martial, *Epigrams*, 9.20.6, 9.34; Statius, *Silvae* 1.1.103–104, 5.1.13–15).[176] Whether official or unofficial, it reinforced the association between the deity and the emperor in the eyes of the inhabitants of Asia Minor.

Though he officially associated himself with Jupiter and Minerva, Domitian himself may have aided in his association with Apollo. He provided generous benefactions to traditional local cults of Asia Minor that included the various Apollo cults.[177] It may have also become common knowledge that Domitian repaired the oracle at Delphi at personal financial cost in 84 CE.[178] In addition to this, he also repaired the Library of the Palatine Apollo.[179] These actions likely would have added to the prior associations in Asia Minor of Apollo and the emperor.

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[174] Michael Grant, *Roman Anniversary Issues: An Exploratory Study of the Numismatic and Medallic Commemoration of Anniversary Years, 49 BC-AD 375*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 88; Brian W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian* (London: Routledge, 1993), 13, 99.

[175] See RIC II, 154–213; note especially coins 273, 274, 398a, 398b, 399, 410, 424b. This trend may have been spearheaded by the local elite who were keen on ascribing divine honors to Domitian (David A. deSilva, *Seeing Things John's Way: The Rhetoric of the Book of Revelation*, Kindle Ed. [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009], ch. 2).

[176] Henriksén notes that along with comparisons of Domitian to Jupiter and Hercules, the Sun (as *Phoebus*) also features prominently. The references to Domitian as the Sun mostly occur in *Epigrams* book 9. It was published sometime during 94–95 and thus may represent further development of an already popular association, or as a way of flattering the emperor by acknowledging his desire to emulate Augustus, as C. Henriksén suggests (Christer Henriksén, *A Commentary on Martial Epigrams Book 9* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012], xi, xxx–xxxi, 90, 152–53).

[177] Jones, *Domitian*, 112. An inscription (*MAMA*, IV, 293) records how part of the temple of Apollo Lairbenos near Hierapolis were upgraded in the name of Domitia. For commentary on the inscription see Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 50.

[178] Jones, *Domitian*, 112.

[179] Jones, *Domitian*, 89.

Indeed, the Clarian Apollo received a new cult statue during the reign of Augustus that was likely due to Apollo's popularity with Augustus. This strongly suggests that Augustus' association with Apollo, who would come to be seen as the patron deity of Rome during his reign,[180] was well known in Asia Minor. It would be expected then that as the networks of social advancement in Imperial Asia Minor developed post-republic, that they would pay special attention to the association between Augustus and his patron deity. The placing of an imperial cult shrine in the Clarian Apollo's temple demonstrates just such an awareness. In addition to this, the way the imperial cult insinuated itself into and affirmed traditional cults, of which most were either Zeus or Apollo, only reinforced the emperor's association with Apollo.[181] We should also recall the proliferation of the number of Pythian styled games and festivals during the early principate, and that emperor and Roma festivals were increasingly attached to these. The consistent issue of coins associating the emperor with Apollo also bears repeating. And if we add to all this the sweeping mythic propaganda of Nero and his popularity in the Greek East, we should not be surprised that the emperor, imperial cults, and imperial administration were joined to the common conceptions of Apollo, perhaps irrevocably by the time of Domitian.[182]

But how did this bear out in space, memory, ritual, and social identity in Roman Asia Minor? We have already seen that Augustus instituted a program born out in second space representations (e.g. coinage) and in the blending of imperial ideology with memory genres of Apollo to create a new political and cosmic social identity around himself. Both imperial policy

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[180] Galinsky, "Continuity," 75.

[181] Friesen details how the reliefs on the imperial altar in the *bouleuterion* of Miletus depicted Apollo, Leto, and Artemis, as well as the city's mythic founders (Steven J Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001], 70); Boxall argues this demonstrates a tendency of "indigenizing Roman rule" by "integrating the worship of the Augustus into local myths" (Ian Boxall, "Reading the Apocalypse on the Island of Patmos," *ScrB* 40.1 [2010]: 27).

[182] It is perhaps also worth noting the eventual rise of Sol Invictus as the official imperial deity (Emmanuel Friedheim, "Sol Invictus in the Severus Synagogue at Hammath Tiberias, the Rabbis, and Jewish Society: A Different Approach," *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 12.1 [2009]: 89–128, esp. 95).

and imperial cult were helpful in spreading the ideology (and theology) of this identity that because of the existing ruler cult structures was more or less seamlessly integrated into the existing social identities of the Anatolians. These programs were maintained or furthered by his successors and/or the provincial and municipal administrations with the result being that the emperors were closely associated with Apollo, with Nero and Domitian being the most closely associated after Augustus. It is difficult to say with any precision how exactly this looked in the rituals, but we can assume the emperor received sacrifices along with the other gods in the temples and we know that his image was carried along in the festal processions. Even so, the result would at least be to reinforce his power and rule in conjunction with that of the gods.

CHAPTER 4: APOLLO IN THE SEVEN CITIES OF REVELATION: A CASE STUDY OF SARDIS AND THE LYCUS VALLEY

In the last chapter this study examined Apollo's prominence in Asia Minor as well as his leading role in imperial propaganda. We found that his influence and popularity were far reaching. Aside from being quite popular in the same sense that might be ascribed to other members of the pantheon, he also enjoyed unique popularity for his oracular activity, magical associations, and mythic stories. In this chapter we will briefly adduce evidence of Apollo's prominence in the seven cities of Revelation before conducting case studies of Apollo in two of them. The case studies will examine Apollo in Sardis, as well as its immediately surrounding area, and Apollo in the Lycus Valley. We are examining Sardis due to its long history of excavations. We are examining the Lycus Valley because of the high level of interaction between the cities, as well as sanctuaries, which would have affected Laodicea. We will interact with the material culture (e.g. monuments, coinage, etc.) as Secondspace that utilizes social memories and have organized the material according to location (i.e. Sardis and the Lycus Valley) and by type (e.g. Numismatic Secondspace representations).

Figure 4
Lamp III, 374, Q3019
© Trustees of the British Museum
1st c. CE Mold-made head
Of Apollo from a Lamp

While the discussion in this chapter will focus on only two of the cities, Apollo remained popular in all seven cities. As previously related, Apollo was the patron deity of Thyatira. And while Ephesus claimed Artemis as its patron deity, it is well known that she was Apollo's twin and the birth of both was important to the Ephesian claim of *asyla* for her temple (Tacitus, *Ann*. 3.61). Furthermore, Claros was close to Ephesus (about 21 km). Ephesus was also associated

with magic for which Apollo was especially important. Ramsay has also related that both "Great is Artemis" and "Great is Apollo" inscriptions were found in Ephesus.[1] A mold-made lamp manufactured in the first century CE and found in the temple of Artemis featured the head of Apollo in high relief (see Figure 4). Smyrna worshipped Apollo as a rider-god and locust god, was also near Claros (54 km), and associated him with Helios on some of its coinage.[2] The Melfi Sarcophagus, which features an exquisite relief of Apollo the Kitharode based on fourth century BCE styles, and others like it were produced in either Smyrna or Ephesus.[3] In his description of Smyrna, Strabo related that a temple of Apollo was among the notable landmarks near Smyrna (Strabo, *Georgr*. 14.1.36). Pergamum, Laodicea, and Thyatira all consulted Apollo's oracles.[4] Apollo features on the coinage of Philadelphia with Domitian as well as Artemis.[5]

Figure 5
Courtesy of Luigi Catalani
Apollo with Cithara Seated Left
Used by Permission

[1] William M. Ramsay, "Artemis-Leto and Apollo-Lairbenos," *JHS* 10 (1889): 216–30, esp. 228.

[2] Turcan, *Cults*, 249; Farnell, *Cults*, 4:138; Walter Leaf, *The Illiad, Edited, with Apparatus Criticus, Prolegomena, Notes, and Appendices*, 2nd ed. (Medford: Macmillan, 1900), 1:6 n. 7.

[3] Charles R. Morey, *Roman and Christian Sulpture: The Sarcophagus of Claudia Antonia Sabina*, vol. 1 of *Sardis: Publications of the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis* 5 (Princeton: American Society for the Excavation of Sardis, 1924), 35, 38–39, 69, 75. Figure 5 used under Creative Commons Licensing: Luigi Catalani, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File: Sarcofago_di_Rapolla_ (Melfi).jpg), Cropped and Resized by Andrew Coutras, https://creativecommons.org /licenses/by/4.0/legalcode.

[4] Robinson, "Oracles," 64, 75 n. 23; Busine, "Oracles," 178.

[5] AMC5653; AMC3760

Apollo in the Lycus Valley

The Lycus Valley was at an important junction in the road system of western Asia Minor. While technically located in Phrygia, it serviced the tri-region areas of Phrygia, Caria, and Lydia and provided a route to Pisidia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia.[6] Laodicea was the primary junction for the routes through the valley.[7] Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae were the major cities in the valley. Hierapolis lay only a few miles north of Laodicea across the narrow aspect of the valley floor and was an important religious center.[8]

Apollo was one of the most important deities in this region. He had temples in both Hierapolis and Laodicea. The major sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos was located north of Hierapolis near Motella. Both Laodicea and Hierapolis hosted Apollonian oracles. Multiple material and literary sources attest Apollo's importance in the religious,[9] civic,[10] and political institutions of the valley, as well as its history. In other words, Apollo featured prominently in many of the important social situations the Christians John wrote to in Laodicea would have faced at Laodicea, Hierapolis, and the surrounding area.

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[6] Sherman E. Johnson, "Laodicea and Its Neighbors," *BA* 13 (1950): 1–18, esp. 3.

[7] Johnson, "Laodicea," 4.

[8] Hemer, *Letters*, 181.

[9] Hierapolis held Pythian games (the *Pythia Apolloneia)*; Colossae held the *Nea Olympia Apollonia* (Ulrich Huttner, *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley*, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 85 [Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013], 45). Ritti makes the case for the rise in their pan-regional popularity toward the end of second century CE (Tullia Ritti, "La Carriera Di Un Cittadino Di Hierapolis Di Frigia: G. Memmios Eutychos," *Cahiers Du Centre Gustave Glotz* 19 [2008]: 279–308, esp. 291–92).

[10] The city used tribal divisions for its populace. One tribe had the name "Apollonis" (A. H. M Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1998], 74).

Numismatic Secondspace Representations of Apollo in the Lycus Valley

The coinage of the Lycus valley consistently represented Apollo throughout the Julio-Claudian, Flavian, and Nerva-Antonine dynasties. However, Hierapolis and Laodicea do not appear to have frequently paired Apollo with the emperor on their coins. In the main, the coinage from these cites represents Apollo in various ways that recall both local and Panhellenic social memories.

Struck around 5 CE in Hierapolis, Figure 6 bears Apollo's image on both sides. His head bears the laurel crown on the obverse. On the reverse, he sits upon a horse while carrying the double-sided axe.

Figure 6
RPC I, 484, no. 2957
Image courtesy of www.cngcoins.com

Nearly a thousand different types of coins from Asia Minor present a laureled Apollo. Other deities and persons also appear as laureled busts or otherwise, but Apollo seems to appear

this way more than any other deity by far.[11] It was a popular Panhellenic representation that recalled Apollo's failed pursuit of Daphne (Ovid, *Metam.* 1.525–567). Daphne, fearing for herself, appealed to her father for help. He changed her into a laurel tree. In reaction to Daphne spurning his advances, Apollo pledged make the laurel his sacred tree, using it in his lyre, bow, and crown. Ovid did not invent this myth, but, *vaticinium ex eventu*, took it up and associated it with Roman generals and the house of Augustus. This coin, shown above, may not be intended to recall Ovid's additions, but it nevertheless represents a prominent Panhellenic mythic association for Apollo that had settled in the social memories of Asia Minor.

Figure 7
RPC I, 485, no. 2975
Image Courtesy of www.cngcoins.com

The image of Apollo mounted on a horse carrying the double-headed axe on the reverse displays a strictly local representation. Rider gods were mainly limited to Phrygia and Lydia. The

[11] In searches on www.asiaminorcoins.com, the laureate head of Apollo turns up so frequently that it is impossible to get returns on searches for "laureate" that do not include him due to the limitations of the in-site search engine. Nevertheless, when searching for "laureate Apollo," the returns exceed 800 hits.

Apollo on the reverse of this coin recalls Apollo Tyrimnaios of Thyatira, who is also represented this way. Aside from his association with Helios, who rode a chariot, the reason for the association of Apollo with either the horse or the labrys is probably related to his assimilation of indigenous deities. As it is, it is a statement of local religious identity and affiliation in several regions that claimed several of the cities from the Apocalypse. The representation was popular enough that the reverse image was reminted on a new issue during Nero's reign (see Figure 7). Karrer has reasonably suggested this type of representation is in John's mind for his crafting the horseman of the Apocalypse.[12]

The coin of Figure 8 was struck in Laodicea during the reign of Tiberius. The obverse bears the laureate head of Apollo facing right with the lyre immediately to the left. The reverse bears the headdress of Isis within a wreath. The magistrate's name during this coin's issue was Pythes Pythou.

The obverse image again recalls the social memory of Daphne and Apollo through the laurel as a primary identifier of Apollo. At this point in time, it is possible that Ovid's propaganda associating Roman generals and Augustus with the laurel had become more widely known in Asia Minor. The addition of the cithara recalls the multiple mythic social memories of Apollo and his chosen instrument. These associations may also reflect imperial influence, insofar as Apollo the kitharode was the preferred imperial representation of Apollo. Even if that was not the intent in the minting, imperial associations with Apollo's laurel and kitharode have entered the memory traditions of Apollo due to Augustus' Nero's intentional cultivation of these images and could have been recalled when one viewed the image on the obverse of this coin.

[12] Karrer, "Apoll," 239.

Figure 8
RPC I, 478, no. 2905
Image courtesy of www.cngcoins.com

The reverse bears the crown of Isis. Some have suggested that the heavenly woman from Rev 12 could be using the associations of Isis. This pairing of Apollo and Isis suggests that John could combine their myths and symbolic identifiers in tandem without confusing his readers. It also points to the presence of the myths of Isis in the Lycus Valley.

The name of the magistrate, Pythes Pythou, recalls the popularity of Apollo and Apollonian derived names in Asia Minor. The name could refer either to Pythian Apollo, the Pythic myth, or both. The name also attests the popularity of the Pythian aspect of Apollo in Asia minor—both the cult and the myth.

Figure 9
RPC 1, 485, 2973
Image courtesy of www.cngcoins.com

The coin in Figure 9 was struck in Hierapolis during the reign of Claudius. It bears the laureled head of Apollo on the obverse and a hexastyle temple on the reverse. One can easily discern the long hair of Apollo on the bust. His long hair recalls that Apollo is the eternal ephebe. He is the god of young men who have not yet entered the *demos* as citizens. As a prominent deity in the Lycus valley, Apollo would probably have played a key role in the male rites of passage into manhood. This would be almost guaranteed in Hierapolis where he was the patron deity. If these rites of passage were done at an annual festival, as in Miletus, then it is likely that members of the surrounding communities would have witnessed them. Radar surveys suggest it is possible that the temple of the reverse represents the temple of Apollo *Archegetes* in Hierapolis before its

destruction in the Neronian era earthquake.[13] Even if it is a generic temple, it still reflects a Secondspace priority upon religious spaces reminding the viewer to honor the gods for the sake of the city.

The coin in Figure 10 was minted in Laodicea during the reign of Domitian. The obverse features a helmeted bust of Athena. The reverse features a seated Apollo holding a cithara in his left hand and a laurel branch in his right. The coin prominently displays the name ΛΑΟΔΙΚΕ(ΩΝ) on the obverse.

The image of Apollo and the cithara recalls his sacred associations with music. The laurel reminds one again of Apollo and Daphne. In this case, however, the association focuses more on Apollo's role as purifier since he holds the laurel as a branch. Viewers of this coin might be reminded of Apollo's role in various purifications they have seen or experienced. It might also remind them of mythic histories, such as Branchus' banishing a plague at Miletus using the purifying laurel of Apollo.

[13] Francesco D'Andria, "Hierapolis Antik Kenti 2001 Yılı Kazı ve Onarım Çalışmaları," in *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantıları*, ed. Koray Ölşen et al., vol. 2 of *Kültür Bakanlığı yayınları Antılar ve Müzeler Müdürlüğü yayınları* 24 (Ankara: Kültür Bakanliği Dösimm Basimevi, 2003), 415–22, esp. 418.

Figure 10
RPC II, 37, no. 1294
Image courtesy of Numismatik Naumann
Used by Permission

The pairing of Athena and Apollo is curious. Apollo of course had at this point been associated with the emperors for over a century. Domitian, on the other hand, favored Athena (Minerva) as his patron deity. This pairing may or may not be intended to reference the patron deities of Domitian. Regardless of intention, bearers of this coin involved in the imperial cult would have recalled these deities' connection to their emperor.

Hierapolis minted the coin of Figure 11 sometime between the beginning of Domitian's reign (81 CE) to the end of Trajan's reign (117 CE). A laureate head of Apollo with his unshorn hair decorates the obverse along with a mostly legible IEPAΠOΛEITΩN. The reverse features the rape of Persephone by Hades.

The pairing of these two deities would remind the bearer of their important spatial connection in Hierapolis. The whole of the city was oriented around both the temple of Apollo and the Plutonium. Initiates of either cult may have been familiar with the tunnel leading from

the temple of Apollo to the Plutonium.[14] Apollo *Karios* was also worshiped at the temple in Hierapolis. This aspect of Apollo had chthonic characteristics in addition to his oracular role.[15] This association may have provided background for the chthonic attributes John highlights in his renderings of Apollo in the Apocalypse.

Figure 11
SNG Copenhagen 428
Courtesy of www.romanumismatics.com

[14] Sergio Negri and Giovanni Leucci, "Geophysical Investigation of the Temple of Apollo (Hierapolis, Turkey)," *JARS* 33 (2006): 1505–13.

[15] Francesco D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale): An Archaeological Guide*, Ancient Cities of Anatolia 5 (İstanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2003), 141.

Figure 12
RPC III, no. 2340
Image courtesy of www.cngcoins.com

Laodicea struck the coin of Figure 12 during the latter part of Hadrian's reign (134-138 CE). The reverse features Zeus Laodiceus and Apollo the Kitharode. Zeus carries a scepter and probably an eagle. Apollo carries the cithara. The inscription on the reverse reads ΛΑΟΔΙΚΕΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΙΕΡΑΠΟΛΕΙΤΩΝ ΟΜΟΝΟΙΑ.

This coin was jointly issued and demonstrates the close ties between Laodicea and Hierapolis. Zeus represents Laodicea and Apollo represents Hierapolis. There are several Secondspace meanings inherent in this image: (1) cities can be wholly represented by their patron deities; (2) as a unity coin, the image propounds the notion that both cities are united across their short spatial separation by the harmony of friendship. Apollo as the Kitharode is presented in his peaceful aspect; he lacks the bow of the Python slayer or the plague sender. Upon reflection, the bearer might also recall the relationship between the two: Zeus is the father and Apollo the son; Zeus wills the course of history and Apollo reveals his will.

Epigraphic Secondspace Representations of Apollo in the Lycus Valley

The epigraphic evidence below paints a picture of thriving Apollo worship in the Lycus valley. The inscriptions evidence the existence of cult and prophet of the Pythian Apollo in Laodicea, an association of symbol-bears of Apollo in Hierapolis, and the popularity of the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos among the inhabitants of the Lycus Valley. Perhaps most importantly for the Apocalypse, they demonstrate a transregional network of the worship of Apollo.

Inscriptions from Hierapolis

The ruins of Hierapolis are notable for the large necropolis. A large number of burial inscriptions belong to members guilds or associations. Most of these inscriptions demarcate the area for the interred and his family. The inscriptions often commission the guild or association to perform some rite ceremony at the grave (e.g. burning incense) or to watch over the gravesite in order exact a financial penalty from those who make unauthorized use of the burial plot. Generally, the violators pay the penalties to either the treasury or the council of elders. Two examples are relevant here.

The first is from a sarcophagus located before a fork in the road in the northern necropolis with a date range between 138-300 CE:

> ἡ σορὸς καὶ ὁ τόπος Μάρ(κου) Ἰουλίου Μακεδονικοῦ, ἐν ᾗ
> [ἐ]κηδεύθη ὁ Μακεδονικὸς καὶ ἡ σύνβιος αὐτοῦ Αἰ[λί]-
> [α] Ἰουλία· καὶ μηδενὶ ἑτέρῳ ἐξὸν κηδευθῆναι· ἂν οὐ(?), ἀπο-
> τείσει τῷ φίσκῳ (δην.) φ΄. [ἔδ(?)]οσαν δὲ οἱ Μακεδονικοὶ τοῖς σημια-
> φόροι(ς) τοῦ Ἀρχηγέτου Ἀπόλλωνος στεφανωτικὸν μη(νὸς) ι΄ (δην.) ͵ζσθ΄
> καὶ [μη](νὸς) α΄ γ΄ (δην.) ͵ζσθ΄.
> PH271769
>
> Here the association of sign-bearers are granted funds to decorate the grave with crowns (garlands) twice a year, likely on the anniversary of Makedonikos' and Julia's deaths. The grave and the land belong to Marcus Julius Makedonikos. Makedonikos and his wife

> Aelia Julia were buried in it and no one else is to be buried in it. Whoever does so will pay a fine of 500 denarii to the treasury. The Makedonikans (i.e. descendants of the heroized Makedonikos [?]) gave to the sign–bearers (*sēmeiaphoroi*) of Apollo Archegetes ("Founder") grave–crowning funds in the amount of 7209 denarii for the tenth month and 7209 denarii for the third day of the first month.[16]
> (Written and translated by Philip Harland)

The *sēmeiaphoroi* was an association of Apollo Archegetes, the patron deity of Hierapolis; they likely bore the symbols of Apollo Archegetes in their own rites as well as the yearly civic festival.[17] The *sēmeiaphoroi* likely existed well before the accepted date range of the inscription.[18] The amount of the bequest—roughly equal to forty years salary for a day laborer[19]—indicates that the association drew wealthy patrons. The *sēmeiaphoroi* would have been highly visible as they carried the symbols of Apollo during festivities and likely accorded significant honor since they bore the symbols of the patron deity for the procession. They no doubt would have stopped at the temple of Apollo Archegetes that was on the main street and performed some rituals in his honor. Christians from Laodicea, who no doubt would have visited during the festival, and Hierapolis would have witnessed the attending populace join with the *sēmeiaphoroi* in honoring their city's patron.

The second inscription comes from a sarcophagus on the opposite side of the road from the above inscription. It dates from between 117-212 CE:

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[16] "Grave of Makedonikos with Bequest to Sign-bearers of Apollo (138-300 CE) ‖ Hierapolis – Phrygia," Philip Harland, http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=10525; IHierapJ 153 = IPhrygR 19 = PH 271769.

[17] Philip A. Harland, *Dynamics of Identity in the World of the Early Christians: Associations, Judeans, and Cultural Minorities* (New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 52.

[18] An inscription on a monument from Lydia dating from 48/47 BCE declares that it was set up by the *sēmeiaphoroi* for Apollo and Artemis (ILydiaM 136 = SEG 49 (1999); see also "Dedication to Apollo and Artemis by the Sign-bearers (48/47 BCE) ‖ Saittai area [Nisyra] – Lydia," Philip Harland, http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=12222).

[19] Koester, *Revelation*, 396.

ἡ σορὸς καὶ ὁ τόπος [Π]ο[υ(βλίου)] Αἰλίου Ἑ[ρμογένους Χαρ(?)]οπείνου, ἐν ᾗ κη-
[δευθήσεται ὁ υἱὸς(?) αὐτ]οῦ· ἐν ᾗ κεκήδευται Σωτηρὶς ἡ γυνὴ
αὐτοῦ, κηδευθήσεται δὲ ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ὁ Ἑρμογέν[ης, ἄλλος]
δὲ οὐδείς· εἰ δὲ μή, ὁ κηδεύσας τεινὰ ἀποδώσει τῷ [ἱερω]-
[τάτῳ ταμίῳ(?)] (δην.) ͵βφ΄ καὶ τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι (δην.) ͵αψ΄ καὶ τῷ ἐκδικήσαντι (δην.) ω΄.
προνοήσει δὲ τῆς ἐπιμελε[ί]ας τῆς σοροῦ [ἡ] ἐ[ργασί]α τῶν βαφέων. κατ-
έδωκα στεφανωτικὸν, καθὼς τὸ γενόμενον ἔνγραφον τοῦ
στεφανωτικοῦ περιέχει, δοθησομένου τοῦ στεφανωτικοῦ
{περιέχει δοθησομένου τοῦ στεφανωτικοῦ} κατὰ ἔτος, (δην.) ͵α δη-
[— — —] τούτου ἀντίγραφον ἀπετέθη ε[ἰς] τὰ ἀρχεῖα.
PH 271809

This grave and area belong to Publius Aelius … Hermogenes son of Charopeinos (?). His son (?) … will be buried in it, his wife, Soteris, has been buried in it, and Hermogenes will be buried in it as well, but no one else. But if someone violates this by burying someone else here, that person will pay 2500 denarii to the … most holy treasury (?), 1700 denarii to Apollo, and 800 denarii to the one prosecuting the case. The guild of dyers (*bapheis*) will supervise the grave. He has provided the grave–crowning funds, as contained in the document about the grave–crowning funds, in order that the grave–crowning funds be given each year in the amount of 1000 denarii (10) … a copy of this inscription has been put into the archives.[20]
(Written and translated by Philip Harland)

This inscription is notable for its mention of Apollo. There are numerous inscriptions from the necropolis that mention the dyers guild, yet this is the only extant inscription that mentions both a deity and the guild. One possibility is that Hermogenes was especially concerned with his piety toward Apollo; we should not regard him as an isolated example. Another, which does not negate the first, is that the guild held Apollo Archegetes in special esteem as the patron of the city. This seems to be the case with the related guild of purple-dyers, who helped fund the cities construction of theater architraves dedicated to Apollo Archegetes in 209 CE.[21]

[20] "Grave of Hermogenes with Bequest to Dyers (117-212 CE) ‖ Hierapolis – Phrygia," Philip Harland, http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=1192; AGRW 154 = IHierapJ 195 = PH 271809.

[21] Harland, *Dynamics of Identity in the World of the Early Christians: Associations, Judeans, and Cultural Minorities*, 138.

Inscriptions from the Sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos

Archeologists found two major types of inscriptions at the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos (or Lermenos) near ancient Motella. These are the confession inscriptions and the *katagraphai*. The confession inscriptions were phenomena mostly isolated to Phrygia and Lydia.[22] The normal variety of inscriptions were also present. The inscriptions do not demonstrate refined Greek and, based on subject matter, we may suppose that those dedicating the inscriptions came from a variety of social classes.[23]

In his article on Apollo Lairbenos, K. Miller adduced three inscriptions from *MAMA*, IV that are helpful here.[24] They are all dated to the second century CE and come from the sanctuary, but the second dates to 164 and the third prior to 124.

> Ἀπόλλων[α]
> Λαιρμηνὸν θε̣ὸ̣[ν]
> ἐπιφανῆ κατὰ ἐπ[ι]-
> ταγὴν Χαρίξενο̣[ς]
> Μενεκλέους [Δ]ιο̣-
> νυσοπολείτη[ς].
>
> *MAMA*, IV 227A; PH 269711

Charixenos of Dionysopolis (about three miles from the temple) set up a statue of Apollo Lairmenos and had the above inscribed upon the pedestal. The inscription informs us that Apollo compelled Charixenos to do this after some type of epiphany. Epiphany inscriptions were not

[22] Angelos Chaniotis, "'Templejustiz' Im Kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien Rechtilche Aspekte Der Sühneinschriften Lydiens Und Phrygiens," in *Symposion 1995. Vorträge Zur Griechischen Und Hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte (Korfu, 1.-5. September 1995)*, ed. Gerhard Thür and Julie Velissaropoulus-Karakostas (Köln: Böhlau, 1997), 353–84; MacMullen, *Paganism*, 32.

[23] Angelos Chaniotis, "Illness and Cures in the Greek Propitiatory Inscriptions and Dedications of Lydia and Phrygia," in *Ancient Medicine in Its Socio-Cultural Context: Papers Read at the Congress Held at Leiden University, 13 - 15 April 1992*, ed. Ph. J. van der Eijk, H. F. J. Horstmanshoff, and P. H. Schrijvers, vol. 2 of *CMe* 28 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995), 323–44, esp. 324.

[24] Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 51.

uncommon. This Secondspace representation is a public and costly declaration by Charixenos as to the power of Apollo and a passive demonstration of a cosmic social identity that included and expected revelatory activity of the gods. These epiphanies could be costly, but the *agos* one would invite from not listening would be worse, as the confession inscriptions demonstrate.

> Ἡλίῳ Ἀπόλλωνι Λαιρμη-
> νῶ τὸν ἀνδριάντα τοῦ
> ἀλεξικάκου Ἀπόλλωνος
> Παπίας Παπίου Δημητρί-
> ου Παπίου Μοτελληνὸς
> [ἀ]νέθηκε ἔτους σμθ΄,
> μηνὸς Πανήμου ζ΄.
>
> *MAMA*, IV 275 A; PH 269706

This inscription dedicated a statue of Apollo the "Warder-off-of-Evil" to Apollo Lairbenos and Miller is at a loss as to the purpose of this kind of dedication.[25] Indeed, there is no epiphany mentioned in the text. However, because of the date (164 CE) it is possible that this may be in response to an early outbreak of the Antonine Plague. It may also be in response to a localized plague or family sickness. The Clarian Apollo often recommended setting up statues of Apollo the Averter to banish plagues (perhaps the oracle at Hierapolis did too?). If so, this may be representative of the network established by the Clarian oracle.

This inscription also names Apollo as Helios Apollo Lairbenos. This indicates that the solar associations of both deities have been subsumed into the takeover of the local cult. Even so, Apollo is the dominant deity and the sun (*helios*) describes him. The solar aspect was important: coins often represent Apollo Lairbenos with a radiant crown.[26] The strength of the solar aspects

[25] Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 51.
[26] Huttner, *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley*, 48–49.

of this popular deity is an important background to the solar aspects assigned to Christ in the Apocalypse.

θεῶ Ἡλίω Ἀπόλλωνι Λαιρμη-
νῶ καὶ τῆ βουλῆ καὶ τῶ δήμω
τῶν Μοτεληνῶν Ἀπολλώ-
νιος Ἱεραπολείτης ὁ καὶ Κρο̣υλε-
ὺς τὰς Νείκας ἀνέθηκεν
μετὰ τῶν τέκνων Ἀλαζόνος
καὶ Ἀπολλωνίου.

MAMA, IV 276 A1; PH 269708

Miller relates that this text was inscribed on an altar that supported statues of Nike.[27] The inscription was dedicated to the council and people of Motella by a resident of Hierapolis. The reason for this is not altogether clear. Motella did govern the temple and claim Apollo Lairbenos as their patron deity. Perhaps Apollonius sought the god's favor by making a dedication to his favored city. We can say with certainty that this inscription demonstrates that the sanctuary was part of the network of relationships between the inhabitants of the region.

[ἡ δεῖνα] Ἀ-
[πόλ]λω-
[νι] Λερμ-
[η]νῷ ε-
[ὐ]ξαμέ-
νη
[?][28]

During their fieldwork on-site at the temple of Apollo Lairbenos in 2009, E. A. Öztürk and C. Tanriver found this text inscribed on what may be the upper part of a marble stele. The stele has a representation of the female breast next to the text. Öztürk and Tanriver suggest that

[27] Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 51.

[28] Esengül Akinci Öztürk and Cumhur Tanriver, "Some New Finds from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 42 (2009): 87–97, esp. 97.

the text was originally between two representations. Based on the paleography, they date the dedication to the Hellenistic era, which makes it the earliest epigraphic evidence of the cult of Apollo Lairbenos. They also suggest the dedicator had asked the god to heal some ailment of her breasts.

This dedicatory inscription establishes that Apollo Lairbenos had played a role in the region's conceptions of health and healing. Apollo was a healing god and this stele suggests that the inhabitants reinforced this memory genre in this region, even as Asclepius became the more prominent healing god in Hellenistic culture.

[Δ]όκιμος Δομιτί-
[α]ς Σεβαστῆς δοῦ-
[λ]ος Ἀπόλλωνι Λαιρ-
μηνῶ ἀνέθηκεν
[κ]εραμεῖδας δέ-
[κ]α καὶ εἰς τὴν χρύ-
σωσιν τοῦ παθνω-
ματικοῦ (δην.) ιβ΄.

MAMA, IV 293; PH 269731

This inscription was briefly mentioned in the last chapter in the discussion on Domitian and Apollo. Domitia, the wife of Domitian, provided funds to tile the roof and use gold in the decorations. The inscription dates to c. 90 CE. Miller notes that παθνωματικός is a metathesized spelling of φατνωματικός.[29]

This is an important Secondspace representation. The dominant political power, in this case Domitia, represents the imperial family, honors the gods, specifically Apollo, and presents herself as the servant (δοῦλος) of Apollo Lairbenos on a public inscription. Furthermore, the prestige of Domitia as the patron raises the status of the rural cult site. The visitors from the

[29] Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 50.

Lycus valley would have seen the decorations and who the benefactor was and reported this on their return journey. The imperial family's patronage of an important Apollonian sanctuary would have been known among the Christians in Laodicea and Hierapolis. The social memory about the golden age of Apollo propounded in imperial propaganda may also have been recalled, since a member of the imperial family gilded a highly visible space in Apollo's sanctuary.

Inscriptions Concerning Laodicea

The best epigraphical information so far concerning Apollo and Laodicea does not come from Laodicea. Instead they come from the many inscriptions that archeologists found at the oracle of Apollo at Claros. Sometime during the early second century CE these inscriptions began to appear.[30] We know that Claros actively sought to attract the cities of Asia Minor and this may be a service they began to offer at this time. Regardless, the oracle had an excellent reputation and had existed since archaic times. So, it is unlikely that the civic delegations and practices described in the inscriptions are novel occurrences. Laodicea and several other cities sent yearly delegations to the oracle.[31]

> {line-divs.?} Λαοδικέων πρὸς τῷ Λύκῳ ... οἱ ὑμνήσαντες τοὺς
> θεοὺς κατὰ τὸν χρησμὸν κόροι καὶ κόραι· Λούκιος Ἀντώνιος Ζήνων ὁ προφήτης τοῦ Πυθίου
> Ἀπόλλωνος ... θεοπροποῦντος Οὐ(λπίου) Ἀν(τωνίου) Ἀλκίμου τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ προφήτου.
>
> . . . καθηγησαμένου τὸν ὕμνον {musician Περμισσοῦ β´ Νοθίππου} . . .
>
> Robert, Laodicée du Lycos 300,8 / PH 295221

[30] Robinson, "Oracles," 64.
[31] Robinson, "Oracles," 64.

This inscription and several others (e.g. Robert 300,12/PH 295223; 300,14/PH 295225) record that the delegation included the prophet of the Pythian Apollo. This individual was in the service of the Pythian Apollo in Laodicea.[32] The fact that they would send their prophet suggests a high level of respect for the Clarian Apollo on the part of the Laodiceans. This was a public inscription placed at a nexus of regional Apollo worship. This suggests that Laodicea was proud of the respect they gave the Clarian Apollo through their yearly delegations. We can infer from this that the delegation itself, as it traveled to Claros (a journey of approximately 175 km), would have endeavored to bring attention to itself and its mission. This is even more likely since the inscription also records that a choral group of boys and girls accompanied the prophet to sing hymns.[33] The age of the choral groups and the choral aspect itself actively recalled by their presence and purpose the genre memory associations with Apollo as the eternal ephebe and god of music and art.

Monumental Secondspace Representations of Apollo in the Lycus Valley

The Neronian earthquake of 60 CE wrought substantial devastation that required much rebuilding in Hierapolis and Laodicea.[34] The layouts of the cities remained the same, but most of the monumental building that remains for archeological was "created during the intense programme of reconstruction that followed the earthquake."[35] Both Hierapolis and Laodicea benefited from the patronage of the Flavians and the monuments reflect this.[36] This fact has two

[32] The Clarian Apollo was called by his oracular appellation in the inscriptions (e.g. Robert, Laodicée du Lycos 304, n. 3 / PH295241).

[33] Robinson, "Oracles," 73.

[34] Johnson, "Laodicea," 8; Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 46.

[35] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 35.

[36] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 35; Yamauchi, *The Archaeology of New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor*, 140.

implications. The first is that some monuments that showed pre-earthquake social memories and Secondspace priorities are lost. The second is that monuments post-earthquake monuments give us a wide-ranging synchronic picture of social memory and Secondspace priorities during the period when John wrote Revelation.

The Temple of Apollo Archegetes in Hierapolis

The temple of Apollo Archegetes was in the middle of Hierapolis along the main road. The sacred area was about 70 meters long but may have been longer prior to the construction of the Nymphaeum in the 3rd century, which necessitated the demolition of part of Apollo's temple.[37] The Neronian earthquake destroyed parts of the prior temple and its reconstruction took place during the Flavian building programs. The temple was under construction prior to, during, and after John wrote the Apocalypse. Its central location meant that anyone traveling through Hierapolis would have seen its impressive structure. The site and its construction would no doubt have been the topic of many conversations both in Hierapolis and the surrounding areas.

One entered the complex by ascending an impressive monumental staircase (center of Figure 13).[38] Three buildings built during the Julio-Claudian period survived the earthquake and used during this time. They have been identified as such: one could be a temple, but most likely had an oracular function, the temple of Apollo, and a *monopteros* with an underground chamber; all three were built over fractures from a fault line that runs under the city.[39] The Plutonium, which exuded toxic gasses from this fault was adjacent to the temple. Archeologists found

[37] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 135–36.

[38] Grazia Semeraro, "Ricerche archeologiche nel Santuario di Apollo (Regio VII) 2001-2003," in *Hierapolis di Frigia*, ed. Francesco D'Andria and M. Piera Caggia, vol. 169–209 of (İstanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2007), 169–209, esp. 169.

[39] Grazia Semeraro, "Archaeology of the Cult in the Sanctuary of Apollo in Hierapolis," in *Fra il Meandro e il Lico. Archeologia e storia in un paesaggio anatolico. Atti del Worshop Internazionale, Università 'La Sapienza-Roma', 30 Marzo 2012*, ed. Francesco Guizzi, Scienze dell'antichità 20 (Roma: Quasar, 2014), 11–29, esp. 12.

oracles of Apollo *Karios* and found two marble steles bearing dedicated to him bearing his *labrys*.[40]

Figure 13
Ruins of the Temple of Apollo in Hierapolis
Courtesy of Denizli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism[41]

F. D'Andria suggests one consulted the oracle of Apollo in the grotto of the Plutonium.[42] The recovered oracles of Apollo *Karios* indicate that one consulted the oracle by randomly

[40] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 141, 228.
[41] This image and others may be found at the website: http://www.pamukkale.gov.tr/tr/Antik-Kentler/Pamukkale-Hierapolis.
[42] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 228–30.

selecting a ticket and matching its letter to that assigned to a list of alphabetic oracles.[43] For example:

> (**A**)ὐτός σοι τελέσει καιρῷ θεὸς ὅσσα μεριμνᾷς.
> **B**οθλαῖς ταῖς ἀγαθαῖσι Τύχη πρέσβειρα πάρεσται.
> **Γ**ειαρότης, ὥς φασι, δέχοθ κόλποισιν ἔχιδναν.[44]
> (emphasis added)

The oracles range from cryptic to vague. The oracle responses necessitate the need for interpreters. Street diviners were likely a common sight around the temple precinct. Any early Christian doing business or passing through Hierapolis would have seen them plying their trade—reinforcing the social memory of Apollo's role as revealer of the will of the gods.

The temple placement and construction, as well as the adjacent Plutonium suggest a chthonic character to both Apollo *Archegetes* and Apollo *Karios*. The *monopteros* had access to an underground chamber that containing a gas-leaking fissure. G. Semararo surmises that a separate, but complimentary oracular function occurred here, and the focus was chthonic.[45] The fissures, both in the *monopteros* and at the Plutonium issued carbon dioxide, which is colorless and odorless. The reputation for the deadly nature of this sight, especially the Plutonium, where creatures simply died for no apparent reason, was widespread and reinforced notions about the power of the gods over mortals (Strabo *Geogr.* 6.186-7). The chthonic aspect of Apollo *Kairos* may have been known to John, as this deity was also widespread in Caria.[46] Here we should recall Karrer's earlier assertion about John foregrounding chthonic associations with Apollo.

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[43] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 228–29.
[44] M. L. West, "Oracles of Apollo Kareios. A Revised Text," *ZPE* 1 (1967): 183–87, esp. 183.
[45] Semeraro, "Archaeology of the Cult in the Sanctuary of Apollo in Hierapolis," 19.
[46] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 141.

Figure 14
Urban Theater of Hierapolis
Courtesy of Denizli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism[47]

Theater at Hierapolis

Hierapolis boasted an impressive theater a few blocks to the east of the temple of Apollo (see Figure 14). Multiple improvements occurred throughout the imperial period. An inscription during the Severin period marks the theater as dedicated to Apollo *Archegetes*.[48] A remarkable relief of the Apollo cycle is carved into the *scaena* of the theater. The cycle is comprehensive and includes multiple myths in sixteen different scenes, such as Apollo's birth, the gigantomachy, and the flaying of Marsyas (see).[49] The *scaena* dates from the Severin period.[50] However, the sculptors did not invent these myths. Indeed, the *scaena* demonstrates the presence

[47] This image and others may be found at the website: http://www.pamukkale.gov.tr/tr/Antik-Kentler/Pamukkale-Hierapolis.
[48] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 147–48.
[49] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 161–71.
[50] D'Andria, *Hierapolis*, 154–55.

and popularity of Apollo's myths in Asia Minor in the early imperial period.

Figure 15
Courtesy of Carole Raddato[51]
Flaying of Marysas by Apollo
From the Scaena of the Theater in Hierapolis

The Temple of Apollo Lairbenos

The temple building of Apollo Lairbenos was similar in size to that of Apollo *Archegetes* in Hierapolis.[52] It was over eighteen miles from Hierapolis and the approach was not easy.[53] The temple was on a ridge overlooking the Meander and visitors enjoyed an impressive vista (see

[51] Carole Raddato, "Apollo frieze from the scaenae frons of the Roman theatre, myth of Marsyas, Marsyas is bound to a pine-tree and flayed alive, Hierapolis Archaeological Museum, Turkey," https://www.flickr.com /photos/carolemage/17234668735/in/photostream/. Used under Creative Commons licensing: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/. Image resized by Andrew Coutras.

[52] Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 50.

[53] Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 50.

Figure 17). The relative remoteness of the space appears to contrast with the number of visitors it received from all over the region. The surrounding cities, especially Hierapolis, competitively provided benefaction for the site, which would have only increased its prestige in the Lycus valley.[54] Visitors would likely have included Christians prior to their conversion, as well as their friends and relatives.

Figure 16
Inscribed Monument from Sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos Imperial Period

We have already discussed various inscriptions and some of their related votive offerings at the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos. However, we should note that the sanctuary hosted a myriad of various inscribed monuments set up by devotees (see Figure 16).[55] Inscriptions declaring the power of the god, confessions, statuary and votive dedications, as well as *katagraphai* also adorned the architectural features of the site. Simply visiting the site continues to yield previously unrecorded inscriptions and evidence of dedicated statuary.[56]

The sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos as Secondspace reinforces the narrative of Apollo's splendor. As one inscription from the late 1st or 2nd century CE on an architrave of the temple has it, he is called Helios Apollo Lairbenos, the most manifest god (ἐπιφανεστάτῳ θεῷ).[57] The site and its monuments declare the splendor and power of the god. Thirdspatially, it also demonstrates a dynamic mixing of classes, from people from local villages to the household of Caesar, who were unified in their worship of the god.

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[54] Dignas, *Economy*, 243.

[55] Photograph courtesy of Denizli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism. Readers are encouraged to view this image and that of the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos, along with other images of the website at http://www.pamukkale.gov.tr/tr/Antik-Kentler/Apollon-Lairbenos-Tapinagi. Further information about this monument can be found in Esengül Akinci Öztürk and Cumhur Tanriver, "New Katagraphai and Dedications from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 41 (2008): 91–111, esp. 93–96.

[56] Öztürk and Tanriver, "Some New Finds from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos," 87.

[57] Esengül Akinci Öztürk and Cumhur Tanriver, "New Inscriptions from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 43 (2010): 43–49, esp. 44.

Figure 17
Sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos Overlooking Meander River
Courtesy of Denizli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism

Apollo at Sardis

Apollo was not the major deity at Sardis. This role belonged to Artemis. Nevertheless, we will see in the following section that Apollo enjoyed popularity among the residents of Sardis. He is present in their social, political, and mythic history. He adorns their coins and their monuments. Thus, despite Apollo not being the center of the Sardis' religion, Sardis still demonstrates Apollo's general popularity in Asia Minor.

Apollo in the Political and Mythic History Sardis

Apollo featured prominently in the political and semi-mythical history of Sardis. During the Tylonid Dynasty of the Lydians, Alyattes (reigned c. 759–745 BCE) was punished with illness for destroying the temple of Athena Assesos during a war near Miletus. Herodotus, citing both Delphi and the Milesians, records that Apollo revealed the source of his illness and after his recovery Alyattes gifted a large silver bowl on a stand of welded iron (Herodotus *Hist*. 1.19–25). The stand was still present during the time of Pausanias (*Descr.* 10.16.1–2). Gyges, founder of the Mermnad Dynasty (reigned c. 716–678 BCE), came to the throne after murdering the last of the Tylonid kings (Herodotus, *Hist*. 1.13–14). Facing a Lydian rebellion, Gyges sought and received Apollo's confirmation to the kingship by his Delphic oracle. In return Gyges gave substantial gifts of silver and gold to Apollo's oracle, including six golden bowls, each weighing thirty talents. Croesus (reigned c. 560–546 BCE), the fifth of the Mermnadian kings and the final king of Lydia, had much more substantial interactions with Apollo, the stuff of which became Greek legend.

Herodotus provides a lengthy account of Croesus' reign and demise (*Hist*. 1.26–89).[58] During his kingship, Croesus conquered much of Anatolia, including most of its Greek east, and acquired great wealth. At one point during his reign, Croesus endeavored to discover which oracle was the most reliable. Delphi's response impressed him and so Croesus gave Apollo extravagant offerings:

> After this, he strove to win the favour of the Delphian god with great sacrifices. He offered up three thousand beasts from each kind fit for sacrifice, and he burnt on a great pyre couches covered with gold and silver, golden goblets, and purple cloaks and tunics; by these means he hoped the better to win the aid of the god, to whom he also commanded that every Lydian should sacrifice what he could. When the sacrifice was

[58] The portions concerning his interactions with Apollo and the consequences can be found at 1.45–56.2; 69–92.

> over, he melted down a vast store of gold and made of it ingots of which the longer sides were of six and the shorter of three palms' length, and the height was one palm. These were an hundred and seventeen in number. Four of them were of refined gold, each weighing two talents and a half; the rest were of gold with silver alloy, each of two talents' weight. He bade also to be made a figure of a lion of refined gold,[59] weighing ten talents. When the temple of Delphi was burnt, this lion fell from the ingots which were the base whereon it stood; and now it lies in the treasury of the Corinthians, but weighs only six talents and a half, for the fire melted away three and a half talents.
> When these offerings were fully made, Croesus sent them to Delphi, with other gifts besides, namely, two very great bowls, one of gold and one of silver. The golden bowl stood to the right, the silvern to the left, of the temple entrance. … Moreover, Croesus sent four silver casks, which stand in the treasury of the Corinthians, and dedicated two sprinkling-vessels, one of gold, one of silver. … Along with these Croesus sent, besides many other offerings of no great mark, certain round basins of silver, and a golden female figure three cubits high, … Moreover he dedicated his own wife's necklaces and girdles.
>
> Herodotus *Hist*. 1.50–51 [Godley, LCL]

Croesus also gave gifts of similar quality to the Apollo Didymeus and a dedicated a golden tripod to Apollo Ismenus (1.92.1–2). These offerings, as well as the initial consultation with Delphi, were in response to Croesus' concerns over the growing might of Persia. When he sent the gifts, Croesus instructed his emissaries to ask Apollo whether he should attack Persia. Apollo gave an ambiguous answer, but Croesus regarded it as favorable to him. Cyrus completely defeated the kingdom of Lydia soon after Croesus moved against him. Cyrus ordered Croesus burned on a pyre, however a rainstorm saved Croesus when he appealed to Apollo. Herodotus records that the Lydians were his source for the story of Croesus' rescue (1.87.1).

While Herodotus provided a reasonably historical account, mythical accounts were already circulating in less than a century after the defeat of Croesus.[60] Bacchylides, a contemporary of Pindar, wrote of Croesus defeat in his third ode (*Victory Odes*, 3.23–62). In his

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[59] H. Cahn argues that Apollo had an ancient and robust association with lions in the East; Hanfmann follows him with limited reservations (Herbert A. Cahn, "Die Löwen Des Apollon," *Museum Helveticum* 7 [1950]: 185–99; George M. A. Hanfmann, ed., *Sardis from Prehistoric to Roman Times: Results of the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, 1958-1975* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983], 94).

[60] Diodorus of Siculus appears to depend on Herodotus but lacks the deliverance of Croesus by Apollo (see *The Library of History*, 9.4.1–4).

version, however, Zeus sends the storm and Apollo brings Croesus to live with the Hypberboreans because of his many offerings and piety. Ctesias, who wrote a Persian-friendly history, recorded that after Sardis fell Croesus fled to the temple of Apollo.[61] He was bound several times but was miraculously freed. This continued until Cyrus spared him. Xenophon of Athens lacks the miraculous rescue but presents and extended dialogue between Croesus and Cyrus wherein Croesus extolls Apollo and faults himself testing the deity (*Cyropedia*, 7.2.15–29).

The enormous impact of the legend of Croesus on the social memory of the Mediterranean is remarkable. The legends surrounding Croesus endured and spread; ancient literary references to him are almost too numerous to count. It is beyond doubt that the inhabitant of Sardis and the rest of Asia Minor knew the stories of Croesus. The memory tradition appears to focus on the folly of hubris, the importance of piety, and the god's response to piety. However, Clement of Alexandria's interpretation is noteworthy: he castigates Apollo as a duplicitous and untrustworthy demon who betrayed Croesus (Clement of Alexandria, *Protr*. 3.88P). It seems likely that John would have heard the legends and held a view similar to that of Clement. Revelation scholars have not missed the possible connection between the message to Sardis and the legends of Croesus.[62]

[61] The account of Ctesias is recorded by Photius and may be found in *The Library of Photius*, trans. J. H. Freese, Translations of Christian Literature (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge: London; Macmillan: New York, 1920), 93–94.

[62] E.g. C. J. Hemer, "The Sardis Letter and the Croesus Tradition," *NTS* 19 (1972): 94–97.

Figure 18
Courtesy of Carole Raddato[63]
The Imposing Mt. Tmolus (Bozdağ) with the Temple of Artemis in the Foreground

In terms of the purely mythical, Sardis also celebrated their mountain Tmolus (Τμῶλος) as a deity (see Figure 18). Tmolus played a meaningful role in Sardian social identity—they even named one of their tribes after it.[64] Ovid writes of a contest between Pan and Apollo for which Tmolus was the judge (*Metam*. 11.146–179). Apollo won the contest, but Midas dissented. In response Apollo gave him the ears of an ass. This contest occurs nowhere else but in Ovid, which

[63] Image may be found at https://followinghadrianphotography.com/2017/01/08/sardis/. Used under Creative Commons Licensing: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/.

[64] Nicholas D. Cahill, "Mapping Sardis," in *Love for Lydia: A Sardis Anniversary Volume Presented to Crawford H. Greenewalt, Jr.*, ed. Nicholas D. Cahill, Archaeological Exploration of Sardis (London: Archaeological Exploration of Sardis; Cambridge: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2008), 111–24, esp. 111.

leads A. Griffin to conclude that Ovid adapted it from the Apollo Marysas contest.[65] Even so, due to Ovid's popularity, this tale would probably have become known in Sardis. Nevertheless, it stands as a striking intersection of social memory and space: Apollo's association and skill as a kitharode is reinforced, Tmolus and so also Sardis are honored. Some have suggested that the literary image of Apollo is based on the statue of Apollo the Kitharode that Augustus set up.[66] Perhaps the modification of the myth to include Tmolus and Lydian mythic history with his patron deity was an attempt by Augustus through Ovid to honor Sardis for erecting an imperial temple, as well as declaring a festival honoring his son.[67]

Numismatic Secondspace Representations of Apollo at Sardis

Apollo appears frequently on the coins of Sardis.[68] George M. A. Hanfmann remarks: "If we were to go by popularity on Sardian Hellenistic coins, Apollo and Herakles would be the leading male contenders."[69] This was not the case prior to Hellenism. Hanfmann suggests his popularity increased due his patronage of the Seleucids.[70] Regardless, his representation on the coinage at Sardis continued well into the empire.

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[65] A. H. F. Griffin, "A Commentary on Ovid 'Metamorphoses' Book XI," *Hermathena*.162/163 (1997): 1–290, 116–17.

[66] Griffin, "Ovid," 114.

[67] Price, *Rituals*, 66.

[68] Richard S. Ascough, "Greco-Roman Religions in Sardis and Smyrna," in *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Sardis and Smyrna*, ed. Richard S. Ascough, Studies in Christianity and Judaism/Études Sur Le Christianisme Et Le Judaïsme (Waterloo: Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 2005), 40–52, esp. 44.

[69] Hanfmann, *Sardis*, 132.

[70] Hanfmann, *Sardis*, 132. Multiple coins found in Sardis dating from Selucid rule that were minted in and around Sardis depict Selucid rulers on the obverse with Apollo on the reverse (see items 336–341, 345–381, 383–389, 392–411 in H. W. Bell, *Sardis: Coins*, vol. 1 of *Publications of the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis* 11 [Leiden: Brill, 1916]).

Figure 19
SNG Cop., Lydia no. 493; BMC Lydia 240, no. 36
Image courtesy of www.cngcoins.com

Sardis struck the coin of Figure 19 some time during the second or first century BCE. The bust of Herakles is on the obverse, while Apollo stands on the reverse holding a bird in one hand and the laurel in the other. It is a standard type well represented as a series running from the late second century BCE to the early first century CE.[71] Another popular type minted in parallel with the Herakles/Apollo type features the laureate head of Apollo on the obverse with a wreath surrounding a club on the reverse (e.g. SNG Cop., Lydia nos. 470-482).

The laurel crown recalls the social memory associated with Apollo and Daphne. The laurel branch recalls his role as purifier. The bird, suggested to be a raven by Hanfmann, may recall the myth of Apollo and Coronis (Apollodorus, *Library and Epitome,* 3.10.3).[72] If so, this would recall Apollo's association with healing.

[71] Hanfmann, *Sardis*, 132. For numerous examples of these series see Theodore V. Buttrey et al., eds., *Greek, Roman, and Islamic Coins from Sardis*, Archaeological Exploration of Sardis 7 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 42–45.

[72] Hanfmann, *Sardis*, 132.

Figure 20
RIC II, 400, no. 484
© Trustees of the British Museum

The pairing of Apollo with the raven and the laurel continued into imperial times. Figure 20 depicts Hadrian on the obverse with Apollo and his raven and laurel on the reverse. This demonstrates the importance of these Apollonian associations to the Sardians in that they continued to strike similar images for hundreds of years. The pairing of Apollo with the emperor predates Hadrian. A coin from Sardis minted sometime during 70–73 CE depicts Nero on the obverse and Apollo with a cithara and bowl on the reverse.[73] We have already seen in chapter one that this imagery may have influenced the Apocalypse. This coin type demonstrates that John's recipients were in fact aware of the imagery of Apollo holding both a cithara and bowl.

[73] Item 247 in Buttrey et al., *Greek, Roman, and Islamic Coins from Sardis*, 45.

Epigraphic Secondspace Representations of Apollo at Sardis

> Ἐπὶ ἱερέων τῆς μὲν Ῥώμης Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ Διονυσίου, τοῦ δὲ Διὸς τοῦ Πολιέως Φοίνικος τοῦ Φοίνικος, μηνὸς Ἀπελλαίου … Ἀπόλλωνι Πλευρηνῷ Ἑρμογένης Καδοου ἱερεὺς καὶ οἱ μύσται εὐχήν· …
>
> SEG 46 (1996), no. 1520 = SEG 46 (1996), no. 1520
>
> When Apollonios son of Dionysios was priest of Roma and Phoinix son of Phoinix was priest of Zeus Polieus ("of the City"), in the month of Apellaios, the priest Hermogenes son of Kadoas and the initiates dedicated this votive to Apollo on the Shores …
>
> [Written and translated by Philip Harland][74]

This inscription was found on a slab of marble in near Sardis north of Gygaia lake and inscribed some time during the 90s BCE. It reveals the existence of a religious association in or near Sardis called the initiates of Apollo of the Shores (Ἀπόλλωνος Πλευρηνοῦ).[75] The inscription was part of a dedication they erected near Gygaia lake, which makes sense in light of Apollo's epithet. The inscription continues beyond what is recorded with a list of the initiates. The list is incomplete, but lengthy: forty-three members are listed with a "son of" genitive formula naming the fathers as well. Of the eighty-six names, names derived from Apollo (Apollonius and Apollodorus) account for twenty-four. It is unclear whether any of the initiates are related but the Apollonian names repeat more than any other type.

As Secondspace, the dedication asserts the honor of Apollo and his initiates. Its placement near the lake reinforces Apollo *Pleurenos'* association with the shore. The number of names derived from Apollo visibly demonstrate the popularity of the deity.

[74] "Dedication of a Votive by Initiates of Apollo Pleurenos (90s BCE) ‖ Sardis area [north of Gygaia lake] – Lydia," Philip Harland, http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=610.

[75] This group was active in the first century CE as well (see SEG 46:1528 / PH 348274)

> ἔτους ϛ′, ἐπ᾽ ἀρχιερέως Ἑρμογένου, Ἀπολλώνιος Καδοου ἱερεὺς καὶ οἱ μύσται Ἀπόλλωνος Πλευρηνοῦ Εὔξενον Μενάν{αν}δρου Σαρδιανὸν τὸν ἐπ[ὶ] τῶν ἱερῶν προσόδων καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν γενόμενον εἰς αὐτούς· …
> PH 277195
>
> Year six, when Hermogenes was high–priest, Apollonios son of Kadoas, the priest, and the initiates (*mystai*) of Apollo on the Shores honoured Euxenos son of Menandros, the Sardian who was in charge of the sacred revenues and who was a noble and good man towards them …
> [Written and Translated by Philip Harland][76]

This inscription dates to 150 BCE and was also found near Gygaia Lake on a slab of marble. This inscription suggests Apollo on the shores had a high priest, as well as other priests and initiates. It honors Euxenos, who may have been the treasurer for the group. This and other evidence suggest that Apollo Pleurenos had a temple near the lake.[77] Euxenos is called a Sardian (Σαρδιανὸν), which definitively informs us that Sardians were active members of this cult group. Thus, it was known in Sardis.

> … τὸ ἱερὸν Ἀρτέμιδος Σαρδια-
> ⸣ῆς [πάντ]ῳς (?) ἄσυλον εἶναι ⸣τ[αὐτῶ]ι δικαίωι ᾧι κα[ὶ]
> ⸣τὸ ⸣τῆς Ἐφεσίας Ἀρτέμι[δος ἱερὸ]ν καὶ τὸν να[ὸν]
> φύξιμ[ο]⸣ν ὄντα [τῆς] Ἀ[θ]⸣ηνᾶς Νικηφόρου κ[αὶ]
> τ[ὸ ἱερὸν τ]⸣οῦ [Ἀσκ]⸣λ[ηπιοῦ] ἅτινά ἐστιν ἐν τῆι πό[λει]
> [Περγάμωι κα]ὶ τὸ [τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος τὸ] ἐν Κολο[φῶνι]
>
> SEG 46:1522 / PH 348269

Artemis was the patron deity of Sardis. The remains of her temple can be seen in the foreground of Figure 18 above. This inscription is on a boundary stone of the temple of Artemis and records a decree from Caesar confirm the *asyla* of the temple. The decree announces that the temple of

[76] "Honors by Initiates of Apollo on the Shores for Euxenos (ca. 150 BCE) ‖ Sardis area [near Gygaia lake] – Lydia," Philip Harland, http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=600; SEG 32 (1982), no. 1236 = SEG 32 (1982), no. 1236.

[77] H. Malay and C. Nalbantoğlu, "The Cult of Apollon Pleurenos in Lydia," *Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi* 4 (1996): 75–81, 76.

Artemis of Sardis' *asyla* is to be observed like that of other notable deities that it lists. This list includes Apollo of Colophon/Claros. The inscription dates to eleven days before Caesar's death.

Caesar's decree would have elevated the status of Artemis of Sardis. The inscription is one of comparison to the other cults, all of which are remarkable for their fame. The inscription, as Secondspace, represents the view of the dominant power that declares to Sardis that the Clarian Apollo, like Artemis *Ephesia* and Asclepius of Pergamum stand above all the cults of Asia Minor. Now that Artemis of Sardis is included in this list, it is in the Sardians interests to support this view of Apollo.

[-8 1. -]ο[..]α[κο]σίας και
Ἀπόλλωνος δηνάρια δια-
χόσια πεντήκοντα καθ' ἕ-
καστον ἔτος, δικαιότατον
αὐτῶν τὴν γνώμην ἀξι-
οῦσθαι τέλους εἰς τήν
εὐσέβειαν τῶν Σεβαστῶν
ἐρρῶσθαι ὑμᾶς
βούλομαι

"- - - hundred, and of Apollo
two hundred and fifty denarii in each
year, it is most just that their sentiment
should receive the recognition of a
subsidy toward their loyalty to the
Augusti. I bid you farewell."

IGR IV 1513

This text was inscribed on a marble panel on the southern wall of the acropolis. It is dated to the middle of the second century CE. It records a letter from the proconsul ratifying a vote of the *boule* and *demos* of Sardis. H. W. Buckler and D. Robinson suggest the text discusses

subsidies to a local cult.[78] The cult receiving the subsidy belongs to Apollo. The Augusti is the newer cult and the proconsul is drawing attention to the fact that they are unsubsidized. This may suggest that Sardis had subsidized Apollo's cult previously and the proconsul is suggesting *boule* and *demos* now do the same for the Augusti.

Monumental and Other Material Secondspace Representations of Apollo at Sardis

Archaeologists have not yet located the temple of the Pythian Apollo in Sardis; however, they have unearthed two artifacts that suggest Apollo was present in both public and private spaces.

The first is a hemispherical moldmade relief bowl that is of typical Sardian design. Bowls of this type postdate 165 BCE.[79] The relief design features Apollo playing the cithara.[80] That the bowl is moldmade suggests mass production of this design. That the potters would choose Apollo suggests popularity: the bowls needed to attract buyers. The pairing of Apollo with the cithara suggests that this memory genre was a popular representation. Since the numismatic evidence also represents Apollo with the cithara into the common era, we can surmise that representations of Apollo probably remained popular on Sardian pottery into the common era as well.

G. Hanfmann and N. Ramage discuss the second, which was found in Sardis but now resides in the Berlin museum.[81] It is a double-sided herm dated to the first or second century CE of an archaicized kouros type. It represents both Apollo and Hermes and was part of a herm

[78] W. H. Buckler and David M. Robinson, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions*, vol. 1 of *Sardis: Publications of the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis* 7 (Leyden: Brill, 1932), 34.

[79] Susan I. Rotroff and Andrew Oliver, *The Hellenistic Pottery from Sardis: The Finds through 1994*, AES 12 (Cambridge: Archaeological Exploration of Sardis: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2003), 94.

[80] Rotroff and Oliver, *The Hellenistic Pottery from Sardis*, item 509; 121; plate 88.

[81] George M. A. Hanfmann and Nancy H. Ramage, *Sculpture from Sardis: The Finds through 1975*, Report - Archaeological Exploration of Sardis 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 165–66.

fence. The same type also made a fence in nearby Philadelphia. Hanfmann relates that this monument type remained popular during the imperial period.[82] The archaicized style and its widespread use suggest that Sardians valued ancient social memory associations of Apollo—in this representation, his long hair and stylized pubic area display his ancient associations with youth and virility. As Secondspace, this comports with the philhellenism promoted by the emperors and represents an intentional effort to demonstrate valuing antiquity.

Conclusion

In Sardis Apollo was an integral part of its social identity. The cult of Apollo Pleurenos was active in Lydia and drew membership from Sardis. The numerous numismatic Secondspace representations propounded his social memory associations and regional importance. Imperial poets incorporated their Secondspace social memories of Tmolus into popular myth and increased its notoriety and association with Apollo. Apollo also featured prominently in their mythic history of Croesus. Monumental and other material finds showed that representing Apollo was part of their commercial industry.

The presence of Apollo was far more pronounced in the Lycus Valley. Much of this had to do with Hierapolis, which had Apollo Archegetes as its patron deity. Even so, numismatic, epigraphic, and monumental Secondspace demonstrated the importance of Apollo for the whole valley. Laodicea sent yearly delegations to Apollo Clarios. Hierapolis and Colossae celebrated Pythian festivals. The rural site of Apollo Lairbenos drew adherents from Laodicea, Hierapolis, and all over the Lycus Valley. In addition to Apollo Archegetes and Apollo Lairbenos, the Lycus

[82] Hanfmann and Ramage, *Sculpture from Sardis*, 166.

valley also worshiped the chthonic Apollo Kairos. The numismatic Secondspace representations recalled various Apollonian social memory and imperial associations.

This study of both Sardis and the Lycus Valley further demonstrated the Panhellenic and local character of Apollo, as well as his imperial associations. We also noted several transregional aspects of Apollo demonstrated here that fit with John's presentation of the deity in the Apocalypse, such as the chthonic and solar attributes. In the following chapter, we will apply our understanding of these and other aspects described in the previous chapter to examining Apollo in the Apocalypse.

CHAPTER 5: APOLLO IN REVELATION

My approach to Apollo in Revelation has necessarily been one of establishing a proper context to answer the questions: What is the purpose of Apollo's inclusion in the Apocalypse? And how does John's use of him interact with John's larger goals for the formation of social/sectarian identity? In the first chapter, we reviewed the scholarly interaction concerning John's use of Apollo and began to form an answer to the first question. We saw that interpreters often regard references to Apollo as slights against the emperor or the imperial cult, as a means to disparage local religion, as a means of ascribing his attributes to Christ, or some combination thereof. However, Apollo has not featured in any key discussions of John's aims for social identity formation. In the last two chapters we examined Apollo's prominence in Asia Minor. At this point, especially with the case studies of Sardis and the Lycus Valley, it is beyond doubt that Apollo and his cults were heavily involved in both the public and private life of Anatolian society, as well as the overarching framework of Roman Imperialism and the self-representation of various emperors. These chapters showed that social memory and social space associated with Apollo featured prominently in western Anatolia and would have exerted remarkable influence on Revelation's recipients. The present chapter finishes answering the above questions.

We will revisit the passages discussed in chapter one where interpreters have used Apollo as a key interpretive lens. We will reevaluate them utilizing the methodology discussed in chapter two and the contextual evidence set forth in chapters three and four. Following this, we will suggest alternate Apollonian readings of additional passages in Revelation based on the local contextual evidence and discuss how they comport with the counter-Apollo motif present in the previously discussed passages. We will make prolific use of Hay's criteria for detecting allusions and Long's subsequent expansion throughout this chapter (Criteria for Detecting

Allusions – CDA) .[1] For convenient recall, they are: (1) Availability, (2) Volume, (3) Recurrence, (4) Thematic coherence, (5) Historical plausibility, (6) History of interpretation, (7) Satisfaction, (8) Appropriateness to the needs of the original Audience(s), (9) Authorial Situation, (10) Geographic Prominence, (11) Singularity or Multiplicity of Origin.

Passages Where Apollo Features as a Key Interpretive Lens

In chapter one, we noted several passages where interpreters use Apollo as a major interpretive lens. The references are the message to the church at Thyatira (Rev 2:18-29); the first horseman of the Apocalypse (Rev 6:2); Apollyon of Rev 9:11; and the combat myth of Rev 12. In this section we will reevaluate these references in light of memory, space, identity, and the local contexts discussed in the previous chapters. Due to the lack of scholarly consensus, we will instead discuss Apollonian references in the message to the Church at Thyatira in the section proposing alternate readings.

Rev 6:2 – Rider on white horse

A favored interpretation of the first rider is to see him as representing Parthia, due to the white horse and the bow.[2] While this is possible, I am not convinced of its strength here, since we would logically expect the other horsemen to likewise represent nations or empires.[3] Further, we can hardly identify the Parthians in the pericope based on the combination of the horse and

[1] Generally, CDA will be displayed along the lines of: satisfies CDA # 1, 2, 3, etc. Sometimes an explanation will be given when a positive fulfillment of an CDA is not easily apparent. Sometimes the CDA numbers will be placed in parentheses: CDA # (1). This indicates that the particular CDA is satisfied by the argument of the entire chapter.

[2] Beale, *Revelation*, 376; Kiddle, *Revelation*, 113; Mounce, *Revelation*, 142; Osborne, *Revelation*, 276.

[3] Does not satisfy CDA # 4 or 11.

the bow.[4] The imagery of the horse belongs to the larger symbolism of the four horsemen and the other horsemen do not represent nations. However, by this same token we should expect the other horsemen to represent gods. Gunkel suggested this, opting for War and a god of corn for the second and third riders.[5] Karrer has argued convincingly that the second is Mars and the third is personified Aequitas.[6] Thus, the weight of identification must fall on the aspects of the bow and the crown that very strongly point to Apollo (CDA #2). This interpretation becomes all the more likely when we consider the fact of the various rider gods of Asia Minor and that Apollo was often represented as a rider god during the Imperial period in Asia Minor.[7]

In our earlier discussion, we found that interpreters who dissented with understanding the first horseman as Apollo objected that the allusions were inadequate.[8] However, reviewing the same kinds of evidence with regard to Hellenistic and Imperial culture, Princeton classicist and Roman historian Edward Champlin is confident to make the assertion: "Representations of the god [Apollo] would be recognizable *immediately* by his attributes: *his bow*, or his lyre, or the *wreath or branch of Delphic laurel which he wore* or carried …" (emphasis mine).[9] The rebuttal that gods also carried bows is rather weak. Not only is Apollo very often represented with the bow, but Kerkeslager also shows that bow-related epithets were often used of Apollo and I have noted previously how widespread the representation of Apollo the Archer was in Asia Minor.[10]

Interpreters often point to Zech 1:7-17 and 6:1-8 as the background to the imagery presented here. However, there are differences between Revelation and Zechariah that diminish

[4] Does not satisfy CDA # 2, (4), or 11.
[5] Gunkel, *Schöfung*, 53–54 n. 6.
[6] Karrer, "Apoll," 239–41.
[7] Satisfies CDA # 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, 11.
[8] E.g. Keener, *Revelation*, 201; Osborne, *Revelation*, 276 nn. 6 & 7.
[9] Champlin, *Nero*, 114; Graf, *Apollo*, 74. See also Miller, *Apollo*, 1.
[10] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 118–19. 118–19. These satisfy CDA # 1, 5, 8, 10. These in turn strengthen the volume of the allusion (CDA # 2).

the strength of this proposal: the number of horsemen are not congruent, the colors are not parallel either in number or type, chariots are not used in Revelation, their missions are not the same, and only the horsemen of Revelation carry objects in their hands.[11] In his own study on Zechariah and Revelation where he argues that Revelation does not rely on Zechariah as much as generally thought, Jauhiainen argues this passage does not allude to Zech 1:8-17, 6:1-8, or 9:9-17. [12] Karrer, on the other hand as we saw previously, argues for interdependence between OT and Greco-Roman sources. Regardless, the weakness of the volume of Zechariah combined with the imagery in the Rev 6:1-8 points us in an alternate direction for the first rider, namely Apollo.

In Rev 6:2, the first rider receives the crown of a conqueror. Witulski argues that the rider receiving the crown contradicts the myth of Apollo's association with the laurel crown in Ovid.[13] It is a fair critique, however in light of the ubiquitous representation of Apollo with a laurel wreath, John's use of the memory genre does not need to fully rely on the myth. Additionally, the association of a wreath with memory genres of rule and conquering had of course happened when these became the crowns of Roman victors and rulers.[14] Even so, John is blending the social memories of Apollo and his crown with those of conquering. The giving of the crown also occurs in a scene of divinely orchestrated judgment, i.e. Apollo can be associated with a crown as a conqueror but cannot claim it for himself under god's sovereignty.

The image of Apollo as a conqueror also has precedent in the Roman poets.[15] In book VIII of the *Aeneid* where Aeneas' shield is described, the portion specifically discussing the battle of Actium stands out (Vergil, *Aen.* 8.671–713). Here the Olympian gods and Augustus'

[11] Karrer, "Apoll," 231.
[12] Jauhiainen, *Zechariah*, 65–66.
[13] Witulski, *Reiter*, 92–93.
[14] Gregory M. Stevenson, "Conceptual Background to Golden Crown Imagery in the Apocalypse of John (4:4, 10; 14:14)," *JBL* 114 (1995): 257–72, esp. 258–60. Satisfies CDA # 1 and 5.
[15] *Pace* Witulski, *Reiter*, 94. Satisfies CDA # 1, 5.

forces are arrayed for battle against their Eastern counterparts. The Olympians and Augustus win of course, but they remain evenly matched until Apollo bends back his bow and enters the fray. At this sight all the enemy flees the battle:

> Monstrous gods of every form and barking Anubis wield weapons against Neptune and Venus and against Minerva. In the middle of the fray storms Mavors, embossed in steel, with the grim Furies from on high; and in rent robe Discord strides exultant, while Bellona follows her with bloody scourge. Actian Apollo saw the sight, and from above was bending his bow; in terror at this all Egypt and India, all Arabians, all Sabaeans, turned to flee.
> (Vergil, *Aen.* 8.698–706 [Fairclough, LCL])

In Horace there appears a phrase that is substantially similar to what the horsemen represent in Rev 6:1–8 and that also expounds on Apollo's ability to protect Rome's *oikumene* and Caesar:

> [S]ing as many praises to exalt Tempe and Delos, birthplace of Apollo, and that shoulder which is noted for the quiver and his brother's lyre. Moved by your prayer, he will drive away mournful warfare, he will drive away wretched famine and plague from our people and Caesar, our leader, and direct them against the Persians and Britons.
> (Horace, *Odes* 1.21.9–16 [Rudd, LCL])

Miller argues that these verses disrupt an otherwise expected formulaic ending and that Horace is expounding imperial ideology: Apollo will save the empire and its princeps from war, famine, and plague and bring peace.[16]

There are two apparent difficulties with suggesting John might be alluding to Augustan Poets and their imperial ideology. The first, which is about whether John was familiar with the poets and Latin, has been addressed in the introductory chapter where it was argued that John was familiar with both the Greek and Latin poets and also Polybius' Greek translation of the *Aeneid* due to his rhetorical training. The second is the prevalence of the particular judgment

[16] Miller, *Apollo*, 265–69. The volume (CDA # 2) of this reference seems especially strong.

memory genre formed from the threefold combination of war, plague, and famine.[17] The problem with this difficulty has already been acknowledged by others in that it does not quite fit with the horsemen, but is more aptly applied to the fourfold formula in Rev 7:8.[18] The closest of the possible OT allusions is Deut 32:23-25. This is the only reference to mention arrows. However, it is part of a much larger list that includes many other types of punishing judgments. Keener does make a distinction between a fourfold formula (such as in Rev 7:8) and a threefold formula (war, pestilence, and famine).[19] Thus the volume (CDA # 2) for these references is not as strong as generally presented.

The problem with these formulas is that they leave no place for the first rider, unless one wishes to conflate conquering with war (e.g. Keener; Karrer).[20] More likely, especially in light of the strengths of the Apollonian allusions argued by Kerkeslager, is that John preserves the threefold formula as represented by the final three horsemen, but pairs them with Apollo. This represents an inversion of the memory genre of Apollo and imperial propaganda, as well as the memory tradition established by the Augustan poets.[21] Apollo along with the three other horsemen are presented as demonic figures.[22] His attribute of being a conqueror is cast in decidedly negative terms. He is no longer protecting Rome from war, famine, and plague, but

[17] For a helpful list of biblical and extra-Jewish literature, see Keener, *Revelation*, 200 and nn. 5&6.
[18] Beale, *Revelation*; Keener, *Revelation*, 200.
[19] Keener, *Revelation*, 200 & n. 6.
[20] Does not satisfy CDA # 4, 7.
[21] So also deSilva, *Seeing*, chap. 5; Schüssler Fiorenza, *Revelation*, 63. D. deSilva, following Schüssler Fiorenza, holds that the first four seals represent the time period between Christ's ascension and John's writing. However, Karrer's treatment of the four riders as presenting a counter-statement that represents the false gods and ideologies of Rome makes a historical timeframe unnecessary and less appealing (Karrer, "Apoll," 241, 244). Aune also presents evidence that imperial legates sought to administer equitable justice to the masses during the severe famine of the early 90s CE (see *Revelation 6–16*, 399–400).
[22] Boxall, *Revelation*, 107. CDA # 4 and 6. As Jan Fekkes notes, "The divine use of evil agents for the purposes of judgment is common" in biblical and extra-biblical Jewish literature (Jan Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and Their Development*, JSNTSup 93 [Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1994], 188–89 n. 41). Consider also Rev 9:1 features the opening of the abyss as part of the sequence of trumpet blasts

inaugurating them under the sovereignty of God's judgment. In essence, he is a plague upon humanity and in fact does nothing to avert war or stop the coming plagues sent by Death and Hades (Rev 6:8). Apollo, for all his boasts about stopping calamity, is instead an instrument of destruction and not protection.[23] He is a parody of Christ as the rider on the white horse—a deliberate snub at Apollo and the emperor as "saviors" and an inversion of the memory genres presenting them as bringers of the golden age.[24]

The implications for the dual identities of John's recipients are powerful. With this inverted allusion to Apollo's place in imperial ideology, John reveals Apollo to be a malevolent demonic entity who leaves only destruction in his wake. The message appears clear enough: neither Apollo nor the empire are able to protect anybody; they bring death and destruction and to identify with them will result in calamity—Apollo is evil and the empire lacks divine protection. The real protection has come from God, who has restrained Apollo's true nature until the inauguration of final judgment.[25] Through this, John reinforces his emphasis on the terminal sectarian identity of the church by placing the opening of the first four seals in the larger context of divinely orchestrated judgment. God and the Lamb are the ultimate powers and not Apollo or the empire, thus, in the presentation of a superordinate identity based in God's supreme rule, there can only be one logical choice for self-identification by association.

[23] A third century CE inscription written as though spoken by Apollo boasts of Apollo's ability to frustrate the designs of fate by his divine protection, see DI 217.

[24] deSilva, "The 'Image of the Beast' and the Christians in Asia Minor," 185–208, esp. 192; Karrer, "Apoll," 235. Satisfies CDA # 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10.

[25] See note 21 above. Even if this is looking back on the Roman civil wars of mid-first century CE, it still casts the so called bringer of the golden age as a bringer of calamity.

Rev. 9:11 – Apollyon

As noted previously, since the time of Grotius many scholars have acknowledged a probable link between Apollyon (Ἀπολλύων) and Apollo.[26] The main reason was the wordplay on his name. Aune helpfully offers the following: "The name "Apollyon" is a formation from the Greek verb ἀπολλύναι "to destroy," and means "destroyer." In Aeschylus *AG.* 1080-81, the name of the god Apollo is etymologically linked to the verb ἀπολλύναι that appears to reflect a widespread ancient view.[27] The text in question from Aeschylus reads as follows:

> Ἄπολλον Ἄπολλον ἀγυιᾶτ',
> ἀπόλλων ἐμός.
>
> Apollo, Apollo!
> God of the Streets, and my destroyer!
> (Sommerstein [LCL])

Another reason is Apollo's association with locusts.[28] The golden crowns and the apparent plague[29] they bring through their stings also suggest Apollo, who was associated with bringing plagues or averting them.[30] Also, Gregory Stevenson has convincingly argued that *golden* crowns are most often associated with "divine glory and honor" over against royalty or victory.[31]

The locusts and their king issue from the abyss. This is *Kaoskampf* imagery. The locusts and their king are agents of chaos who are pretending divine glory and honor that rightly belong

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[26] Supporters include Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 535; Beale, *Revelation*, 503–4; Boxall, *Revelation*, 145; Caird, *Revelation*, 120; Keener, *Revelation*, 269; Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 119; Osborne, *Revelation*, 374; Mounce, *Revelation*, 191; Witherington, *Revelation*, 154. This sampling satisfies CDA # 6. For a more complete bibliography that also includes dissenting scholars, see "Apollo and Apollyon" section in chapter one.

[27] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 535. This satisfies CDA # 1, 2, 6.

[28] Although correct about Apollo's association with locusts, both Keener and Witherington incorrectly adduce Aeschylus, *AG*. 1080–1086 as evidence for Apollo's association with locusts, see Keener, *Revelation*, 269; Witherington, *Revelation*, 154. For evidence of this connection refer to my section on the Panhellenic Apollo in ch. 3. Walter Leaf records that Apollo was worshiped in his locust aspect at Smyrna; see *Illiad*, 1:6 n. 7. Strabo notes Apollo was worshiped in this aspect in Asia (Strabo, *Georg.* 13.1.64).

[29] Caird, *Revelation*, 119.

[30] Champlin, *Nero*, 113; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 145.

[31] Stevenson, "Crown."

to God. Beale demonstrates John's reliance on OT imagery for this allusion.[32] However, based on the above evidence, John is inverting the memory genres of Apollo saving the Athenians from locusts and his divine splendor as Helios-Apollo or Phoebus Apollo by inserting them into an OT framework. The abyss in general is a space of chaos and darkness – a space seen in this context as being opposed to the rule and nature of God. This also was the case in Greco-Roman Mediterranean culture with regard to Apollo, who was the god of order, light, and law.[33] However, the particulars of Apollo's temple at Hierapolis and his chthonic associations as Apollo Karios are probably in view here.[34] As we demonstrated in chapter four, this temple was notable for being located over and having access to the Plutonium, an underground cave that issued toxic gasses that was thought to be an entrance to the underworld (Pliny *Nat.* 2.95; Strabo *Georgr.* 13.4.14), and for being an oracle site for Apollo Karios.[35] Especially salient here is the description from Strabo of thick mist always being present at the entrance (compare to Rev 9:2–3). Related to this is the possibility that some of the ancient world considered Helios-Apollo to be the same being as Hades.[36] The emergence from the abyss as chaos imagery also provides a typological foreshadowing for Rev 12–13.

The context of *Agamemnon*, so far untreated by scholars as it bears on this passage, is also telling.[37] The phrase cited above is uttered in despair by Cassandra, the Trojan oracle of

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[32] Beale, *Revelation*, 491–502.
[33] W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (Boston: Beacon, 1985), 85; Herda, "State Cult," 72.
[34] CDA # 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11.
[35] Negri and Leucci, "Geophysical."
[36] Jane E. Harrison, "Helios-Hades," *CR* 22 (1908): 12–16.
[37] As discussed at other points John probably had some rhetorical training and thus would have been exposed to a variety of poets and playwrights. Quintilian says that the orator ought to have read the poets, specifically mentioning Aeschylus, and supports his assertion by citing various famous personages who agree and citing general practice (Quintilian *Inst.* 10.1.27 and 10.2.66). It is also possible that John had seen the plays of Aeschylus in the theater. P. Trebilco has shown that some Jewish communities in Asia Minor, Miletus in particular, often attended the theater (*Jewish Communities*, 159–62). I admit that the message of Revelation does not present to us a John who would likely attend a theater. However, if one does not hold that the apostle wrote Revelation, as seems likely to me, then we know nothing of John's early life and at what age he joined the Christian sect. However, his knowledge of pagan practice and mythology does support more than a passing familiarity. In addition to the

Apollo. Cassandra is a tragic character. She was given the gift of prophecy by Apollo, but because she refused his advances she was cursed so that her prophecies would never be heeded. In Aeschylus *AG.*, the story narrates the return of Agamemnon to his home with the captive Cassandra in tow as his concubine. Unbeknownst to Agamemnon, his wife plans to murder him for sacrificing their daughter at Apollo's behest in order to sail for Troy. Cassandra of course prophesies this, as well as her own death along with Agamemnon, but is not believed or understood. Cassandra's cry of despair cites Apollo as the source of her thrice-cursed fate. The mythic history here suggests Apollo's destructive nature manifest in the present and will manifest in the future.

The way John speaks of Apollo as a destroyer here is similar to how he presented Apollo as the first rider.[38] The effects on social identity and ingroup bias are likewise similar.[39] A major difference here is the historical associations of "The Destroyer" with the destroying angel in Ex 12 and Wis 18:25. However, the association between Apollo and the Destroyer may have already been current in Christian thought, as Paul may also make such an association in 1 Cor. 10:9-10.[40] Here however, Apollyon stands at the head of a demonic host. Koester notes the two main interpretations for Apollyon's identity are either Satan or an agent of Satan.[41] The evidence suggests the latter. Thus, this reference and association of Apollo with Satan through the title Destroyer foreshadows their association in Rev 12-13.

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kinds of exposure to the material we might usually expect, Aeschylus had made further inroads into popular culture in Asia Minor, even as late as the 3rd century CE, we have examples of *Agamemnon* influencing burial epitaphs (W. M. Calder, "Agamemnon 444 and a Galatian Inscription," *CR* 37.3 (1923): 55–57). This discussion is intended to satisfy CDA # 's 1, 5, 9, and 10.

[38] This satisfies CDA # 3 and 4.

[39] This satisfies CDA # 8.

[40] Harrisville suggests Paul may have Apollo in mind here due to the allusion to the snakes as well as the use of ἀπόλλυμι (Roy A. Harrisville, *I Corinthians*, ACNT [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987], 165–66).

[41] Koester, *Revelation*, 460–61.

In 9:1-11 John blends both Greek and Jewish memory genres as he builds toward chapters 12-13. He has recalled Apollo's associations with preventing locust plagues and inverted it. He has overwhelmed the splendor of Phoebus Apollo with Apollo *Tortor*, the tormentor (Suet. *Augustus*, 70), and the chthonic Apollo Karios, who one consulted at the entrance to the underworld. With the name Abaddon, John could be relying upon a host of Jewish traditions about princes and leaders of demons—many of them related to Satan as the ultimate leader of demons.[42] However, Satan is not Apollyon. He does not issue from the abyss in Revelation but is cast from heaven and instead calls creatures forth from the abyss. John blends these Greek and Jewish genre memories to strip Apollo of his imperial and resplendent majesty revealing his true nature. He does not come down from Olympus but rises from Sheol echoing the attributes of Satan. In drawing on Apollo's chthonic and destroyer memory genres and pairing them with the vision of demonic locusts and OT memory genres, John is blending them into a powerful statement: associating with Apollo will lead to destruction—both immediate and far-reaching.[43]

Rev 12-13 – Combat Myth and the Beast from the Sea

Chapters 12–13 represent a further step in the development of the association of Apollo with Satan. In Rev 6:1–8 Apollo brings the calamity of war, famine, and plague. In 9:1-11 Apollo and his demonic host actively torture humanity and he is associated with Satan through the blending of Greek and Jewish memory genres. In ch 12 we will see that Apollo's role in the

[42] Beale, *Revelation*, 502–3.

[43] I am not convinced that we should see this as a direct slight against the emperor. Rather, John is describing in his own vision the actual nature and activity of Apollo. Thus, what we should expect instead is that anyone associating themselves with Apollo will be stung and eventually destroyed. This view certainly would include the Roman Empire, which associated itself and its emperors closely with Apollo.

Python myth is taken up by both Christ and Michael; Python's role is assumed by Satan. Apollo at first seems to be displaced in John's iteration of the myth, but in ch 13 we will see that Apollo is in fact subservient to the Dragon. Thus, not only is Apollo the Averter complicit in war, famine, and plague, or Phoebus Apollo the god of order and light really a chaos monster, but he is in fact a chaos agent subservient to God's oldest enemy (and his own within the framework of the Apollo-Leto-Python myth).

Revelation 12 and The Combat Myth

Previously we noted that Hedrick's study soundly preempted many of van Henten's arguments against the Apollo-Leto-Python myth. However, I have several concurrent criticisms in light of the previous chapters and my methodology. It is not problematic that Artemis is not evidenced in Revelation 12. The combat myth is being appropriated by John to tell the story of Christ, not of Apollo, Artemis, and Leto. Likewise the Pythian games need not be referenced, as John is not seeking to demonstrate an etiology.[44] Even so, as Daniel Ogden has shown, the defeat of a δράκων often featured in the foundation myths of royal capitals[45]—in this case, the descent of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:2) after the final defeat of Satan (Rev 20:10) fits this rather well.[46] Van Henten's argument that the Seth-Typhon myth is closer because Python does not pursue Leto after she has given birth is not entirely true. It is the case in some versions of the myth, while in others Python does indeed attack Leto after she has given birth.[47] Furthermore, we should be mindful of the fact, as van Henten admits, that Apollo was sometimes the hero-god

[44] In the version of the myth recounted in the Homeric Hymn to the Pythian Apollo, the slaying of the δράκων is an etiology for the establishment of Apollo's temple and oracle at Delphi, but the games receive not mention.

[45] Ogden, *Drakōn*, 291.

[46] Although Rev 20-21 come much later than 12-13, the same characters are mentioned in Rev 20:10 (Satan, beast, and prophet) and they are partially defeated in Rev 12-13.

[47] See both items C and D in Fontenrose, *Python*, 21.

who fought with Seth-Typhon. Van Henten also appears to downplay the fact that the flight of the mother and baby are "less prominent in the texts on Seth-Typhon[.][48]However, this is a key feature of Rev 12:1- 6.

We must also consider John's description of the dragon: in Rev 12:9 he is a dragon (ὁ δράκων) and also a serpent (ὁ ὄφις). This is an important distinction. Typhon, while called a dragon in the literature, is a composite form anguipede (human shaped upper body and serpent lower half) with a human torso and thighs and dragon heads for hands (Apollodorus, *Library* 1.6.3), and he is not called a serpent. The same is not true of Python. Python is a "pure form" dragon, that is, he (or she in some cases) is a monstrous serpent.[49] The visual and literary representations are overwhelming in this regard throughout the Mediterranean.[50]

Yet, it is no small matter that van Henten has provided evidence showing that the Seth-Typhon myth existed in Asia Minor.[51] However, Apollo and Artemis' dominance in the region must be considered in interpretation of the passage. The prominence of these two deities in Asia minor heavily implies that reliance on the Apollo-Leto-Python myth is more probable.[52] Of particular significance is the variety of physical and literary evidence from Asia Minor depicting aspects of this myth.[53] Pursuing this vein further, van Henten does not engage the actual religious climate and strength of local cults in Imperial Asia Minor, but assumes the supremacy of the

[48] Henten, "Dragon," 187. This fails to satisfy CDA # 4.

[49] Ogden, *Drakōn*, 2–5.

[50] E.g. Python is specifically called a *serpens* in Latin, even though *draco* was available (Ovid, *Metam*. 1.439-448); see also the visual representations from the British Museum: 4-5th century BCE Greek coinage (museum number 1946,0101.610), imperial copper medallion from the mid-second century (museum number 1873,0303.8), a second century CE statue from Libya (Museum number 1861,0725.1).

[51] Henten, "Dragon," 187.

[52] CDA # 1, 5, 9, 10.

[53] See the section on Apollo and Myth in ch. 3. Also consider the ubiquitous Pythian festivals in Asia Minor at this time that celebrated Apollo's triumph over Python. We noted in ch. 4 that at least two of these occurred in the Lycus Valley. CDA # 1, 5, 10.

imperial cult in religious life.[54] Related to this is the fact that the sources van Henten cites for the comparisons of emperors with Typhon come from aristocratic circles.[55] Associations of Nero with Apollo would have been more widely known on a popular level through both propaganda and coinage, and John certainly would have known about them.[56] Add to this that Nero was popular in the East and even in the West, except among the intelligentsia, and the fact that John would invert a popular and positive association of the emperors becomes far more likely.

Finally, I am not convinced by van Henten's argument connecting Typhon to the astral imagery of Rev 12. The evidence adduced either does not talk of sweeping stars out of heaven (Apollodorus *Bibl.* 1.6.3) or is too late (Nonnus *Dion* 1.165–218) to definitively say John could draw from this tradition.[57] The stars falling from heaven is most likely a reference to Dan 8:10 (perhaps also blended with 1 En 21:3-6), and need not align with any particular myth.[58] I am also not convinced that we should regard the signs of the woman and dragon as constellations.[59] Additionally, Lucan's generic description of stars falling from heaven (Lucan, *Civil War* 1.74–76) implies a generic stock of images for divine battle encounters that John could draw from and does not necessarily imply relation to any particular myth.

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[54] Fails to satisfy CDA # 8.

[55] Fails to satisfy CDA # 1, 5, 8, 10.

[56] Nero was a narcissistic showman who traveled through Greece with an entourage whose sole purpose was to shout that he was Apollo. The vast number of people who would have witnessed this at his competitions in the games surely would have repeated this, especially since he was so popular in the Greek East. Refer also to Figure 26 below for an example of coinage associating Nero with Apollo/Sol; see also the multiple examples from Harold Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum: Augustus to Vitellius* (London: Trustees at the British Museum, 1923), 1:245–46, 249. CDA # 1, 5, 8.

[57] Does not satisfy CDA # 1.

[58] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 686; Beale, *Revelation*, 635. Satisfies CDA # 1, 2, 4 (prior use of Dan. 8:13 and Rev 11:2 and John's overall use of Daniel), 5, 6, 11 (the use of Dan 8:10 is much closer than the sources adduced by van Henten).

[59] While this might be suggested by the description of the heavenly woman, the dragon lacks any astral descriptions. This leads me to follow Beale, who provides a number of examples showing the importance of the particular descriptions of the heavenly woman for Israel and its typological referents, such as the patriarchs, Jerusalem, etc. (Beale, *Revelation*, 625–28).

In Rev 12:9, the Dragon is explicitly identified as Satan. He is making war against God, which is implied by Satan's battle with God's archangel (Rev 12:7). Yarbro Collins' analysis has demonstrated that John is not merely rehashing a Jewish combat myth tradition but is drawing significantly from pagan sources. John's identifying the Dragon as Satan indicates that the proper theological understanding of the background framework should be Jewish/Christian. That he uses a pagan myth as the inner structures for that framework indicates he is reinterpreting the pagan memory genre. This reinterpretation becomes evident in the beast from the sea that is linked to ch. 13 by 12:18.[60] Yet the combat myth is primeval in its origin and cosmic in its scope. Gunkel noted that John relocated it from the mythical past to the future and Yarbro Collins showed that the eschatological defeat of Leviathan and Behemoth may have been current in Jewish thought at the time.[61] In his blend of the OT and Apollo combat myth memory genres, John brings the defeat of Python into the eschatological age. Apollo has lost his role as bringer of light and order to Christ. John inverts the dominant role of this myth in Asia Minor and imperial propaganda. In this way John proclaims the universality of Christ's victory over Satan and the powers of darkness while also continuing his rhetorical attacks against the false golden age of Apollo and the empire.

The combat myth and its multiple cultural manifestations represents a prime example of a memory tradition. The various ways the culture chooses to remember the myth indicates self-identified values of the group. Very broadly, the triumph of the hero/god represents a culture's desire for order and fear of chaos. It also presents a case for worship of that god. More particularly, it legitimizes the worship of such gods as are represented in those myths, such as Zeus, Apollo, Yahweh, Marduk, etc. In Apollo's case, Pythian Apollo became one of his primary

[60] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 725.
[61] Gunkel, *Schöfung*, 367; Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 164–65.

epithets. Thus, John's use gives some insight with regard to the values, experiences, and thinking of his group.

Revelation 13 and the Beast from the Sea

Interpreters often understand the scene of Rev 13:1-8 to reference Dan 7:1-8.[62] Indeed, Dan 7:1-8 provides the framework for understanding the nature of the beast in Rev 13:1.[63] The beast itself has received multiple interpretations. Regarding the beast as Rome may be the most popular.[64] Another that enjoys some popularity is the view that the beast was the Roman Proconsul who entered Asia via the sea.[65] Ladd and Osborne argues the beast represents the Antichrist.[66] In a similar vein, Mulholland posits the beast is a manifestation of the Dragon.[67] These interpretations are not mutually exclusive. However, the beast also has Apollonian aspects that have yet to be recognized.

The creatures from Dan 7 emerge from the sea, as does the one from Rev 13:1. The "sea" and its synonym the "abyss" have often been recognized to have been understood in the ancient world as the realm of chaos.[68] The sea from which the beast emerges should also be regarded in this way due to not only the common motif, but also through the link of the battle with the chaos monster in Rev 12. Additionally, the Dragon shows that his realm is properly the sea in that he stands on the seashore (Rev 12:18) to summon the beast.

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[62] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 732; Koester, *Revelation*, 568–69; Osborne, *Revelation*, 490. CDA # 6.
[63] Beale, *Revelation*, 683.
[64] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 175; Beale, *Revelation*, 684; Keener, *Revelation*, 335.
[65] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 733; Boxall, *Revelation*, 187–88; Caird, *Revelation*, 162. Aune notes that the Rome interpretation is also possible.
[66] Ladd, *Revelation*, 177; Osborne, *Revelation*, 495.
[67] Mulholland, *Revelation*, 225–26.
[68] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 732.

Considering the geo-cultural context of reception and origination of Revelation, we can note several characteristics that imply the beast also represents Apollo. Apollo *Delphinios* was worshiped at Miletus and around Anatolia. Particularly important in this context is the way in which Delphi and Miletus were founded. In two different well-known myths, Apollo founds both Delphi and Miletus after coming out from the sea as a dolphin.[69] We should also recall that Apollo was the god of sailors, ships, seashores, beaches, and happy landings in his Panhellenic conception and that Lydians worshiped him as Apollo *Pleurenos*, Apollo of the Shores.[70]

The beast that rises from the abyss (Rev 11:7) also provides an intermediate link between Apollyon and the beast from the sea. Yarbro Collins has provided compelling evidence for regarding the beast from the abyss and the beast from the sea as essentially the same entity.[71] Several prominent interpreters have suggested that the beast in 11:7 comes from an inadequately redacted source.[72] Koester, however, argues the abrupt introduction is merely a literary device meant to introduce the beast so that John can "elaborate on him in the visions that follow."[73] Yarbro Collins points especially to the prominent link between ἄβυσσος and θάλασσα as synonyms, so the simple literary link suggested by Koester is likely.[74] Apollyon also rises from the abyss in the cover of smoke. Thus, the use of ἄβυσσος explicitly points back toward Rev 9, while implicitly pointing toward Rev 13 and its use of θάλασσα and its explicit use of θηρίον. Apollyon may be called the angle of the abyss, but this does not preclude John also labeling him a beast.[75]

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[69] Herda, "State Cult," 81. This knowledge would have been widely available, CDA # 1, 8, 10.
[70] Herda, "State Cult," 76.
[71] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 165–72.
[72] E.g. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 616; Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 166.
[73] Koester, *Revelation*, 499. Aune also suggests this, but that John made a clumsy insertion.
[74] Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 166.
[75] Koester (*Revelation*, 460–61) understands Apollyon as Satan, who is clearly a dragon in Rev 13.

Further aspects of identification are found from the heads of the beast. That the slain head refers to Nero Redivivus enjoys broad support.[76] The rest of the heads are also generally understood to be the emperors. As discussed previously, the emperors, especially Augustus and Nero, claimed special patronage from Apollo for themselves and the empire, and this is seen in that the heads are connected to the beast. The beast represents a hideous amalgamation of the empire and Apollo. The despair of the people of the earth at the might of the beast (13:4) replaces the genre memory of the golden age of Apollo, Nero, and Augustus.

Beale is one of the few commentators to outright reject a pagan source for Rev 12. He claims that the anti-idolatry polemic scattered throughout Revelation precludes John's using these myths.[77] However, John's ubiquitous use of inversion severely weakens the strength of Beale's assertion. The inversion here is a slight against Apollo and casts him as an agent of chaos, which is very much in keeping with John's polemic. Furthermore, changing the roles in an easily recognizable myth makes the claim that Apollo is a demonic fraud all the more poignant.

In blending the memory genres of Daniel and other related myths (e.g. Leviathan and Behemoth) with Apollonian memory genres, imperial propaganda, and popular memory genres along with the spatial associations of the sea and the Abyss, John continues the inversion he began in ch 12. The great enemy is Satan, but his servant is Apollo, who comes from the Abyss and utilizes the forces of the empire. Instead of being a force of light and law, which are associated with God, both Apollo and the empire make war on God's people (13:7). The rhetoric is powerful in that it demands John's recipients make a deliberate choice as to the acceptance or rejection of their subgroup associations. Do they choose association with the conquered(ing) saints as people of God or do they choose the cowardice and despair of those who submit to the

[76] Aune provides a discussion of the myth as well as a helpful bibliography (*6–16*, 737–40). CDA # 6.
[77] Beale, *Revelation*, 634.

power of the beast (13:4)? This choice occurs in a paradox of apocalyptic dualism. The child has already been born and the Dragon has been thrown out of heaven. The battle is won, yet the situation on earth with the beast is dissonant from the heavenly reality. Thus, the choice must be made in light of the knowledge of divine revelation and Jewish cosmology and not necessarily with the on-the-ground facts as they appear.

Conclusions Concerning Previously Proposed References

In reevaluating the generally acknowledged references to Apollo in the Apocalypse, I have applied the information from the socio-religious context established in chs. 3 and 4, as well as the view that John understands pagan deities as demons, and therefore could be focusing part of his overall invective against Apollo in particular. This has revealed that the previously proposed references to Apollo are much stronger than they have generally been regarded to be. In these references, John has evidenced that his invective is sometimes only against Apollo (9:11), and other times it is against both Apollo and the Roman Empire/Emperors (Rev 6:1-8; 12-13). We have also seen that John features Apollo in ever increasing associations with Satan, until he is fully disclosed as an agent of Satan. From that point (Rev 13) Apollo's activities are joined with those of Satan. We should expect then that there would be more references evincing both aspects of John's invectives throughout Revelation. This is what will be demonstrated in the following section.

Alternate Readings in Light of a Counter-Apollo Motif

What follows are references to Apollo that are either underdeveloped (e.g. Patmos, Message to Thyatira) or have not been suggested by other interpreters. The references to Apollo

that were not previously recognized were found by careful examination of the text of Revelation in light of the research of the two prior chapters. A number of possible allusions were identified based on simple associations with Apollo (e.g. cithara or prophecy). These possible allusions were then subjected to a methodological analysis. Key to this analysis was the use of Long's extended criteria. To be considered likely, the proposed allusion had to provide a better explanation than what had hitherto been proposed, fit the themes and aims of Revelation, be explainable in terms of identity formation, and make sense for the socio-religious situation of John's audience.

Rev 1:3 – This Prophecy

Aune holds that προφητεία of Rev 1:3 most likely means a "*written composition,*" meaning that John is referring to the majority of Revelation. He supports this by noting multiple places where the LXX uses προφητεία to carry the above understanding: 2 Chr 15:8, 32:32; 2 Esdr 6:14; Neh 6:12.[78] Helmut Krämer claimed that the construction προφητεία was unknown outside of Jewish literature before the 2nd century CE.[79] Yet, while the overwhelming majority of uses are indeed from Jewish sources, at least two extant fragmentary texts attest extra-Jewish use prior to the second century CE: Pherecydes of Syros from the sixth century BCE (Pherecydes of Syros, *Fragmenta* 2.8) and Chrysippus of Soli from the third century BCE (Chrysippus of Soli, *Fragmenta moralia*, 619.5). Even so, the gentile audiences receiving the letter would likely also have been influenced by a generic use of the term as an office of oracular seers or other

[78] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 21. Here he also notes that in some instances προφητεία can mean an "oral *proclamation*."

[79] Helmut Krämer et al., "Προφητεία," *TDNT* 6:784.

oracle personnel, who were often labeled as "προφήτης".[80] Aune even notes that the plural instance of λόγοι could be understood as "oracles."[81] With the presence and notoriety of the Apollonian oracles and non-institutional oracles in Asia Minor at this time, the two different prophetic traditions would have come to mind when John labels the content of Revelation a prophecy. Even though John firmly places himself within the prophetic tradition of Israel, he too would not have been unaware of the pervasive association of Apollo with prophecy. Although conflict is not explicit in Rev 1:3, the memory genres of both Jewish and gentile cultures would immediately have been evoked, yet the words of prophecy are clearly from a source other than Apollo (Rev 1:1-2).[82] This is an example of exclusion, for John is already identifying himself with a memory genre that is associated with the God of Israel, as well as setting himself up against an ancient, well established, and venerable pagan memory genre. This subtle statement is the first piece of rhetoric that begins to challenge the social identities of the churches by making an implicit request: will the listener accept the prophecy and therefore the source, which is Christ, as genuine and thereby proclaim exclusive allegiance to him, or will the listener reject the prophecy and its source?

Rev 1:9 – Patmos

Very early in the visionary experience (Rev 1:9), John relates that he was on Patmos when he received his vision. Often, Patmos receives scant attention in interpreting Revelation. Usually, some facts are recycled and related about its being a prison colony.[83] Yet, in

[80] Krämer et al., *TDNT*, 6:784–92; Keener, *Revelation*, 32.
[81] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 21.
[82] CDA # 4, 9, 11.
[83] Beale, *Revelation*, 202; Caird, *Revelation*, 21–22; Keener, *Revelation*, 82–83; Ladd, *Revelation*, 30. For a more comprehensive discussion, see Boxall, "Reading," 24 n. 7.

apocalypses written prior to or concurrent with Revelation, whenever the location of the recipient of the vision is given, it is important.[84] Each location in the other apocalypses supplies a significant tone and setting for vision due to their importance in the recipients' history. In addition to this, Revelation makes careful use of place names. In mentioning the island of Patmos, John may be recalling Jewish exilic memory genres and pagan memory genres of Delos.

Ian Boxall's article "Reading the Apocalypse on the Island of Patmos" and book *Patmos in the Reception History of the Apocalypse* are the only studies concerning Revelation in the last thirty-five years to devote more than a few pages to Patmos.[85] He states that "[t]he dominance of Apollo and Artemis, and hints that in local tradition Patmos was regarded as the island sacred to Artemis, makes it highly likely that these two were prominent in the rival symbolic world with which John's apocalyptic world would have to engage and that it attempted to subvert."[86]

Boxall suggests an Apollonian influence in Revelation based on several aspects of Patmos. On the basis of epigraphic evidence found at Patmos, Boxall follows H. D. Saffrey in surmising a strong presence of an Artemisian cult.[87] He also points to Artemis' close association with Apollo and the proximity of Didyma.[88] Indeed, Patmos was a district of Miletus even in imperial times and had been populated by Milesians since before Roman rule.[89] Saffrey argued that the whole island was sacred to Apollo as a holding of Miletus and both he and Koester have

[84] Consider Baruch's location at Jerusalem (*2 Baruch* 5:5; 6:1-2 3; 3 *Baruch* (Slavonic) 1:1; (Greek) 1:2), Ezra's at Babylon (*4 Ezra* 3:1), Abraham's at Horeb (*Apoc. Abraham* 12:3). Daniel's location (Babylon) is often implied at the start of the visions in that he supplies the year of the vision according to the reigning monarch. The setting provided in the narrative section also implies it. Ezekiel also notes he is by the River Chebar (Ezek 1:1).

[85] Boxall, *Patmos*.

[86] Boxall, "Reading," 27–28. CDA # 1, 5, 9, 10.

[87] Boxall, "Reading," 25.

[88] Boxall, "Reading," 26. He also cites Apollo's frequent appearance on coins minted at Miletus.

[89] Boxall, "Reading," 26.

adduced evidence showing an active Apollo cult on Patmos.[90] So a strong presence of both cults is to be expected.

Boxall's and Saffrey's assertions are further corroborated by the work of Alexander Herda, who has done extensive archeological and epigraphic study of ancient Miletus. Herda has convincingly demonstrated the highly significant influence of Apollo at Miletus. Apollo Delphinios was the central political cult of Miletus and his altar was centrally placed in the agora.[91] People became citizens of Miletus through a festival that was dedicated to Apollo Delphinios and Apollo Didymeus.[92] Additionally, in one myth, Apollo is said to have founded Miletus and he features strongly in it otherwise.[93]

While I am essentially in agreement with Boxall, his approach puts too much priority on the socio-religious environment of Patmos as an interpretive lens for the whole of Revelation. While the recipients of Revelation may have been familiar with the cultic setting of Patmos and Miletus, it hardly follows that John's own encounters with artemisian and Apollonian cults would play a role in the day to day events of the believers in western Asia Minor.[94] Still, two things can be suggested, namely that John speaks from authority, in that he understands the influence of the cults on daily life of the average Anatolian, and he can demonstrate solidarity with the believers by stating he too is in a place where these cults hold significant sway and make significant demands on the individual and community. Some, including Boxall as quoted above, have suggested that the cultic presence at Patmos influenced John to counteract a rival symbolic

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[90] Saffrey, "Patmos," 391–92; Koester, *Revelation*, 241–42, 251.

[91] Herda, "State Cult," 74.

[92] Herda contends that this was a new year festival, but Chaniotis is highly critical of this view (Herda, "State Cult," 60; Angelos Chaniotis, "The Molpoi Inscription: Ritual Prescription or Riddle?," *Kernos* 23 (2010): 375–79).

[93]Herda, "State Cult," 81. See also the description of Didyma in ch. 3.

[94]Fails to satisfy CDA # 8.

world.[95] While possible, this again puts too much stress on the socio-religious environment of Patmos. Instead, it is more likely that Miletus and Didyma reflect the strength of these cults' influence on Asia Minor. Thus, the cults of Apollo and Artemis should indeed be understood as a major influential backdrop for Revelation, but instead based upon their widespread dominance in Asia Minor and the effect of that upon the churches.

The question of why John explicitly mentions Patmos still remains. A simple answer would be that John is grounding his vision in the concrete reality of his tribulation, suffered as a result of missional activity, which would in turn resonate with the tribulation suffered by the seven churches.[96] This is true, but not the whole reason. As stated earlier, place names are extremely important in apocalypses. John has already explicitly stated that what will follow is a prophecy, which will disclose the future of the people of God (Rev 1:1, 3). As discussed above the trope for the founding of a city (i.e. nation) is present in Revelation. However, it is cast within the framework of prophecy and the founding is in the future. In the meantime, the prophecy seeks to remind the recipients that they are not truly citizens of the worldly empire (Rev 18:4), but exiles who belong to the heavenly Jerusalem.[97] Because of this attempt by John to distinguish between the people of God and the people of the Roman Empire (and therefore the Dragon), I contend that the mentioning of Patmos is meant to trigger both spatial and social memory connections to help achieve that end.[98]

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[95]Aune thinks it likely that the presence of the Artemis cult affected the writing of Rev 1 (Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 77).

[96]Keener, *Revelation*, 81; Osborne, *Revelation*, 79.

[97]The language in Rev 18:4 casts the Christians as exiles by using the language of the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah to the Jewish exiles (see Beale, *Revelation*, 897–98).

[98] With John's familiarity with rhetorical method in mind, it is very likely that John would front-load a good deal in his introduction that would of course be unpacked over the course of the book; see also Keener, *Revelation*, 69.

Patmos was sacred to Artemis and Apollo, yet the fact that islands were often sacred to deities has played almost no role (with the notable exceptions of Boxall and Saffrey) in considering how to interpret Revelation. However, when actually considered, it is readily apparent that islands played a major role in the Greek and Roman mythic memory genres, especially with regard to Apollo. Several islands off the coast of Asia Minor (e.g. Samos, Lesbos, Chios) hosted oracles of Apollo.[99] Yet, the most obvious and perhaps also most salient island is that of Delos which was generally understood to be the birthplace of both Artemis and Apollo. In both the Archaic and Classical period, Delos was home to an oracle of Apollo. This was enshrined in mythology and mythic history in both the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* and Vergil's *Aeneid* (3.84-98).[100] It was at Delos that Aeneas told the Trojans their manifest destiny was to conquer the world. Revelation debunks this myth. John, as an oracle in exile like Ezekiel, proclaims a revelation of hope to his fellow exiles from a space sacred to Artemis and Apollo.

1:10 – In the Spirit

This phrase has been traditionally interpreted to mean "in a trance," and the fact that a visionary experience follows it makes this understanding all the more appealing.[101] Beale simply sees this as an allusion to Ezekiel's "rapture in the Spirit," for the purpose of "giving John's revelation prophetic authority like that of the OT prophets."[102] The language however is quite peculiar from the perspective of the average gentile resident of the Roman world.

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[99] H. W. Parke, *Greek Oracles*, Hutchinson University Library (London: Hutchinson, 1967), 32.

[100] The text is quoted in full in the comments on Rev 16:1 below.

[101] Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 150–52; Richard L. Jeske, "Spirit and Community in the Johannine Apocalypse," *NTS* 31 (1985): 452–66.

[102] Beale, *Revelation*, 203.

Terence Paige has rightly criticized Hans Leisegang and Hermann Kleinknecht for their defective approach to understanding πνεῦμα in terms of mantic inspiration in Greco-Roman conception prior to the onset of Christianity.[103] Indeed, this particular construction is virtually unknown in the Greek works prior to the Imperial period and only refers to breath as a physical trait (Hippocrates *Alim* 25.1; *Coac* 88.1-2).[104] There were already words widely used to describe mantic phenomenon: μανία, ἔνθεος, or ἐνθουσιάζω.[105] Paige also argues, based on a survey of pre-Christian non-Jewish literature, that πνεῦμα being used with a mantic nuance is distinctly Judeo-Christian. In fact, he goes so far as to argue that the literary evidence supports the idea that the Judeo-Christian understanding of πνεῦμα influenced the pagan use and that prior to Christianity there was no "widespread belief in "spirit-inspiration" and Greek spirit-mysticism[.]"[106]This use may have been natural for John and clearly shows that he identifies himself within this particular memory genre of the Jews and early Christians (see *Did.* 11:8).[107] This use at once excludes a common vocabulary used by the larger society for discussing a particular phenomenon. This common vocabulary belonged to the stock of Apollonian memory genres (see Plato *Phaedr* 265b).[108] Using the phrase ἐν πνεύματι is insider language marking the separation of John's group from larger Greco-Roman society.[109] Thus, we have another example of exclusion used to reinforce sectarian social identity.

This insider use, while perhaps more natural for Jewish members of the churches of Asia, would have at first been odd for the gentile recipients to hear. Πνεῦμα, as related to oracular

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[103] Paige, "Spirit."
[104] Jeske, "Spirit and Community," 454.
[105] Paige, "Spirit," 424; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 109–10.
[106] Paige, "Spirit," 423–33.
[107] Boxall, *Revelation*, 39–40; Witherington, *Revelation*, 94.
[108] Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 111.
[109] CDA # 11 (singularity of origin).

activity, was for them a material substance—corporeal and unintelligent.[110] John's understanding of the Spirit was one decidedly of intelligence and personal agency (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 22: 17) closely related to the person of the exalted Christ.[111] Even after becoming familiar with the insider language, would the gentile Christian recipients have fully appreciated the practical, theological, philosophical, cosmological, and ontological differences between pagan and Christian (i.e. Apostolic and Jewish) usage? This cannot be answered affirmatively with anything approaching certainty. The fact that Christian usage eventually came to influence pagan usage suggests that the matter had to be repeatedly hashed out and reiterated. Witherington argues that misunderstandings about the differences between pagan and Christian prophecy could stand behind Paul's admonition in 1 Cor 14:35.[112] Origen was still dealing with misunderstandings of the Christian usage of πνεῦμα at the end of the second century.[113] The Greek terminology also influenced Christian conceptions: a Christian inscription found in Ephesus from the mid-sixth century uses ἔνθεος of John's inspiration (SEG 4, 517 = PH 250637).

A potential issue is that this occurs early in Revelation. Would John intentionally exclude Apollonian genre memory associations at this point in the text? Yes. References to Apollo will occur in the main text. His associations with prophecy and the empire are well known. They are ubiquitous in the Thirdspace inhabited by early Christians in Asia Minor as both social memory and Secondspace. The discussion about Apollo and prophecy in chapter three demonstrates that prophecy belonged to Apollo in the Imperial age. Members of the church at Thyatira are

[110] Paige, "Spirit," 425–26, 434.
[111] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 36.
[112] Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 287.
[113] Paige, "Spirit," 426.

participating in his worship at the very least and using him as a source for revelation at the worst. John will challenge Apollo's claims throughout the Apocalypse and he begins doing so by immediately excluding Apollonian prophetic terminology.

Rev 2:18 – 29 – Message to the church at Thyatira

As discussed previously, critics remain divided concerning the potential referents to Apollo in the message to the church at Thyatira. Even more, Richard Oster has recently argued that there is no clear local referent here in the description of Christ and cautions against the temptation of relying on local allusions.[114] Yet, the description of Jezebel's teaching (Rev 2:20) suggests some sort of complicity with the local business and trade guilds, or religious climate more generally. John accuses her of leading the church of Thyatira into fornication and the eating of meat sacrificed to idols. Caird and Koester hold that fornication in this setting is used metaphorically to mean "religious infidelity."[115] In addition to this, Witherington has shown that εἰδωλόθυτον refers to meat sacrificed to and eaten in the presence of idols.[116] The question then is, with whom are they being unfaithful?

Apollo Tyrimnaios is the most likely object of Jezebel's and her followers' infidelity simply as a matter of probability.[117] As is often mentioned, Thyatira had a strong trade guild

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[114] Richard E Oster, *Seven Congregations in a Roman Crucible: A Commentary on Revelation 1-3* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 147.

[115] Caird, *Revelation*, 39; Koester, *Revelation*, 288–89, 299. Others, however, hold that πορνεία never means religious infidelity in the NT. Instead, in this context they see πορνεία to refer to sexual immorality, perhaps specifically referring the sexual immorality that sometimes accompanied feasts and festivals (see Leslie N. Pollard, "The Function of Λοιπός in the Letter to Thyatira," *AUSS* 46 [2008]: 45–63, esp. 49–50; Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 190). This is certainly possible, but, as Koester notes, religious infidelity was often portrayed in terms of sexual infidelity in the Hebrew prophets and sexual immorality was likewise portrayed as religious infidelity (see Koester, *Revelation*, 289). Furthermore, the accusation of adultery in 2:22 makes the best sense here and with the rest of Revelation if taken figuratively as well (Koester, *Revelation*, 299).

[116] Ben Witherington, "Not so Idle Thoughts about Eidolothuton," *TynBul* 44 (1993): 237–54.

[117] CDA # 1, (3), (5), (7), 8, (9), 10.

presence and claimed Apollo Tyrimnaios as its patron deity.[118] As the patron deity, his cult proliferated throughout the city and was celebrated on their coinage. Some have suggested the object of infidelity is the imperial cult, but, as we discussed in chapter three, even the imperial shrines in Thyatira would have been attached to the main cult sites and would not have displaced normal religious activity.[119] The evidence for Apollonian references in this message are located in the description of Christ (Rev 2:18) and the specific message to Jezebel and her followers (2:20–24).

References to Apollo in the Description of the Exalted Christ

Several features in the description of Christ in 2:18 suggest Apollo. We saw that a number of scholars usually point to the title "son of God" (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ), the "eyes as a flame of fire" (τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόγα πυρός), and the "feet of burnished bronze" (οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ), as possibly co-opting traits of Apollo.[120] However, it stands as one of a number of interpretations. The title "son of God" could refer to Apollo being the son of Zeus, but it was also a title claimed by emperors.[121] Having fiery or shining eyes was not necessarily a trait belonging uniquely to Apollo, but was one generally reserved as a mark of divinity in both Jewish and Greek traditions (Dan 10:6; 1 En. 106:5; HH *Hermes* 4.415). However, it does fit a description of Apollo in Hesiod ([*Scut*.] 72) and lends credence to the idea that the description of Rev 2:18 is a co-option of Apollonian traits.[122] Hemer and Kiddle argued that χαλκολίβανος from Rev 1:15 and 2:18 was supposed to evoke the image of Apollo to the

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[118] Caird, *Revelation*, 43; Keener, *Revelation*, 133; Ramsay, *Letters*, 352–53.
[119] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 201–2; Mounce, *Revelation*, 85. This view does not satisfy CDA # 2, 5, 8, or 10.
[120] Caird, *Revelation*, 43; Keener, *Revelation*, 133.
[121] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 201–2.
[122] The volume is slight here (CDA # 2) but Hesiod's antiquity, John' familiarity with pagan culture, and the appropriateness to a city where the patron god was Apollo satisfies CDA # 1, 5, 8.

church at Thyatira.[123] Beale also reminds us that Dan 7 and 10 is also a necessary background for both the title "son of God" and the term χαλκολίβανος, but one that does not disqualify the "attractive and fairly persuasive" idea that Apollo is also in view here.[124]

The combination of the fiery eyes and title "son of God" unequivocally point toward the deity of Christ in 2:18. Yet, χαλκολίβανος is not as clear to us in this regard. However, given that two out of the three descriptions emphasize deity, we should suspect that χαλκολίβανος does as well.[125] Commentators are correct in pointing out that χαλκολίβανος was intended to be readily understood by at least the church in Thyatira.[126] With the emphasis on deity in mind, Caird and Kiddle's suggestion that the cult image of Apollo Tyrimnaios was made out of χαλκολίβανος is all the more appealing and likely—especially since the ubiquity of bronze cult statues is well attested (Pausanius *Descr.* 2.2.6–3.1; 10.7.1), including those of Apollo such as at Pergamon or Didyma (Pausanius *Descr.* 1.16.3; 8.42.7).[127] Indeed the use of χαλκολίβανος suggests that the overall allusion has more to do with Apollo Tyrimnaios and less with the emperor.[128]

The glaring problem with this approach is that χαλκολίβανος is a hapax legomenon, occurring only in Revelation up to this point in time. However, C. Koester's claim that χαλκολίβανος is an original compound word based on Theodotian's Greek text of Daniel is not convincing.[129] His argument also rests on his premise that John does not use local allusions in his

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[123] Hemer, *Letters*, 116; Kiddle, *Revelation*, 37.

[124] The proposed allusion to Daniel satisfies CDA # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. However, the blend with Apollonian traits also satisfies CDA # 1, 2, (3), (4).

[125] CDA # 4.

[126] Hemer, *Letters*, 111.

[127] Caird, *Revelation*, 34; Hemer, *Letters*, 116; Kiddle, *Revelation*, 37.

[128] CDA # 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11.

[129] Koester, *Revelation*, 246.

letters, which is unnecessarily restrictive.[130] Both arguments are circumstantial, but a local allusion explains the deviance of the term from Daniel better.

The use of the title "son of God" is deliberately changed from the title "son of man" in Rev 1:13. Would the combination of this change and the recalling of χαλκολίβανος used in Rev 1:15 have been enough to recall Apollo? As noted previously, Oster does not think so. If the allusion stood on its own, I would agree with Oster. However, as numerous commentators have discussed, the description of Christ in Rev 1:12-16 is intimately connected to the seven messages to the churches and vital for their interpretation and there are features there that suggest the cognitive jump to seeing Apollo as the subverted referent of Rev 2:18 would be natural.[131]

Excursus: The Vision of the Exalted Christ as a Greek Cult Statue

The description of Jesus is generally regarded as part of a literary whole that also includes the letters to the seven churches (Rev 1:9–3:22). The literary background of the image is usually understood to be both Daniel and Zechariah (CDA # 6). Yet, there are a number of features that signal the image should be understood in terms of a Greco-Roman cult statue. However, a Jewish theology is the framework through which these features are to be properly understood. Indeed, this is no inanimate cult image, but the living image of God. The features that recall cult statues are the lampstands, the girdle, the μαστοί, the stars of the right hand, and the use of χαλκολίβανος.

[130] Koester argues that the peculiarities of the messages that interpreters generally agree are local allusions are explainable by scripture and general cultural practice (see Koester, *Revelation*, 266–67). However, he does not appear to entertain the notion that John drew from scripture, general practice, and local practice according to what he thought was most effective. Koester's argument is not so much a critique of the likelihood of local allusions so much as a critique of other interpreters' suggestions.

[131] Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 6; Osborne, *Revelation*, 85; Witherington, *Revelation*, 17–18.

Concerning the lampstands, Aune, Beale and others suggest that Zech 4:2 is the likely literary background for the vision of the lampstands (λυχνία).[132] However, John has changed some important things. First, there are seven lamps, not one as in Zech 4:2. Second, the lampstand from Zechariah is explicitly marked as holding seven lamps, while no such indication is given in Rev 1:12. Third, the lampstand is between two trees in Zech, while Christ is in the midst of the lampstands in Rev.[133] Witherington suggests that the seven lampstands are not in fact menorahs, but separate individual lamps[134] that represent the inclusion of the gentiles into the Israel of God.[135] Indeed, multiple lamps in the sanctuary at this time is a pagan custom and not Jewish.[136] Thus the reader would have been reminded of the use of lamps around the cult image in pagan temples and rituals.

The clothing description—a long robe and a girdle—is also not unique to Jewish memory genres.[137] In fact the cult statues of Zeus Labraundos (in Caria; see Figure 21), Jupiter Heliopolitanus, Artemis Ephesia (in Ionia), Aphrodite of Aprhrodisias (in Caria), and Mercury Heliopolitanus all wore floor length robes and girdles.[138] Aune even mentions one fresco and two

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[132] See Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 89; Beale, *Revelation*, 206–7; Ladd, *Revelation*, 32. Apart from a respectable number of interpreters following this view (CDA # 6), Beale makes a convincing argument based on the volume (CDA #2) of the pericope from Zechariah.

[133] Fails to satisfy CDA # 2.

[134] Seven-nozzled oil lamps are mentioned as cultic instruments at Kos (see Andreya Mihaloew, "An Exploration of the Function of Lamps in Archaic and Classical Greek Culture: Use, Concepts, and Symbolism" (PhD Diss., Harvard University, 2012), 198).

[135] Witherington, *Revelation*, 81. See also Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 89; Caird, *Revelation*, 24. The inclusion of the gentiles is a recognized theme in Revelation, thus this satisfies CDA # 4.

[136] Mihaloew, "Lamps," 201; Koester, *Revelation*, 245. So also Oster, who doubts a Jewish background to the lamps in the vision (see Oster, *Seven Congregations*, 75). Satisfies CDA # 1, 4 (see preceding note), 5, 10.

[137] I agree with Aune (*pace* Beale) that the clothing description, although resting on Dan 10:5, does not overtly resemble priestly clothing (see Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 93–94; Beale, *Revelation*, 208–9). Charles also argues the description lacks the placement needed to be a priestly girdle, which was slightly below the armpits and over the chest (R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, vol. 1 of *ICC* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1920), 28). At best the argument for Dan 10:5 is a weak CDA # 2.

[138] Turcan, *Cults*, 149–50, 153. CDA # 1, 2, 5, 7, 8 (in line with CDA # 4: the false gods are imposters, while Christ appropriately has all the power and glory), 9, 10, 11.

bas-reliefs of Mithras wearing a golden girdle under his chest.[139] Gold itself was common enough on cult statues (Paus *Descr.* 1.24.5, 1.40.4, 5.11.1, 8; Herodotus *Hist.* 1.69.4; Thucydides *Hist.* 2.13.5) and often used to describe deities clothing or attributes during epiphanies.[140] Even the inclusion of the μαστοί of Rev 1:13 recalls the μαστοί on the cult statues of Zeus Labraundos or Artemis Ephesia.[141] But would John have known how the cult statues looked? Almost certainly, for as the episode in Acts 19 makes clear, small copies of the cult images would have been seen easily enough by John, even if he had never entered a pagan temple (LEC # 1, 5).[142] Additionally, pagan statuary was prolific throughout the cityscapes of Asia Minor (LEC # 1,

[139] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 94. CDA # 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 (in line with CDA # 4: the false gods are imposters, while Christ appropriately has all the power and glory), 9, 10, 11.

[140] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 94.

[141] CDA # 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11. Indeed, on the basis of the μαστοί Sarah Shier has argued that this description of the exalted Christ may be an attempt to subvert the claims and role of Artemis Ephesia and draws connections of similarity to her cult statue (Sarah Shier, "'Girdled at the Breasts: (Rev 1:13): Motherhood, Magic, and Misogyny in the Portrayal of the Son of Man in the Apocalypse of John" [presented at The SBL Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, 2015]). Additionally, we should not read περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς as "girded around the chest." That would be the natural reading of περιεζωσμένοι περὶ τὰ στήθη in Rev 15:6. Additionally, the sense of "near" or "at" is more faithful to the use of πρὸς—all NT sources (see BAGD), including Rev 15:6 pair ζώνη with περί when they wish to emphasize the belt/girdle is around something. The suffix of περι- only refers to the essential nature of the girdling—it must wrap around to be a girdle—so the emphasis should remain on the preposition. The use of πρὸς and μαστοί instead of στῆθος (μαστοί is only used two other times in the NT (Lk 11:27, 23:29) and refer exclusively to female breasts; στῆθος is used four times aside from Rev 15:6 (Lk 18:13, 23:48; Jn 13:25, 21:20) and refers to the breast /chest of either sex) indicate that the μαστοί are critical for understanding this particular aspect of the theophany. The background material from Dan 10 is hardly helpful here: the MT and "proto-Theodotion" read that the loins were girded with gold of Uphaz, but both lack an explicit belt or girdle; the LXX simply says the loins were girded with linen (on John's sources see G. K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, JSOTSup 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 61–62). The given text in Rev 1:13 has changed too much from the background material to simply assume an OT background, although many have gone this route in assuming this is priestly garb or a combination of priestly and royal Jewish garb (e.g. Beale, *Revelation*, 209; Wilhelm Bousset, *Offenbarung Johannis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1906), 194; Boxall, *Revelation*, 42–43; Caird, *Revelation*, 25; Ladd, *Revelation*, 32; Witherington, *Revelation*, 81). Again, I agree with Aune, Charles, and Oster, who do not think this image is priestly (Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 93–94; Charles, *Revelation*, 27–28; Oster, *Seven Congregations*, 75–76). Thus, I am inclined to agree with Shier that the traits of μαστοί and a girdle in Rev 1:13 is an allusion to the cult statue of Artemis, and I would also say possibly Zeus Labraundos (concerning the μαστοί of Zeus Labraundos, see Turcan, *Cults*, 255). I am unconvinced that μαστοί is an allusion to Song 1:2 as J. Rainbow argues (Jesse Rainbow, "Male Μαστοί in Revelation 1.13," *JSOT* 30.2 (2007): 249–53). *Nota Bene*: I have probably reproduced some of Shier's work in the discussion in this footnote, however this was unintentional, and my own research followed what seems a natural course. As it is, she declined to let me review her paper, since it relied heavily on her dissertation that is in the process of being published and was likewise unavailable.

[142] Consider a small bronze statue of Zeus Labraundos (Figure 24) in the Walters Art Museum (accession number 54.2610) from the first century that was produced in Rome even though it was a relatively minor cult from Mylasa and Labraundos in Caria. This one however does lack the polymasty and girdle of some of the local images.

5).[143]

Figure 21
SNG Kayhan 890
Image Courtesy of www.cngcoins.com
Tetradrachm c. 341–335 BCE from Caria
Zeus Labraundos with Girdle on Reverse

Figure 22
RIC II.1, 276, no. 153
Image Courtesy of www.cngcoins.com
Silver Denarius with Domitian's deceased
child holding seven stars

[143] Ine Jacobs, "Production to Destruction? Pagan and Mythological Statuary in Asia Minor," *AJA* 114.2 (2010): 267–303.

The stars in the right hand are the only aspect of this vision that does not have a Dan 10 referent.[144] Thus seeing the stars of the right hand (Rev 1:16) as relating to astrology is a natural reading and likely correct.[145] Stars and planets could affect one's fate and were regarded as angels or deities—able to be manipulated through magic—in pagan thought, but this was also not unknown in Jewish thought (LEC # 1, 5).[146] This is strengthened by the interpretation of the stars as "angels of the churches" given in Rev 1:20 (LEC # 4). Thus, as Keener notes, the fact that the stars are in Christ's hand indicates that he has power over their fate.[147]

Figure 23
RIC II.1,276, no. 152
© Trustees of the British Museum
Gold aureus of a similar type as above

[144] Beale's argument that the star imagery also comes from Daniel is strained and ultimately unconvincing. His acquiescence to the possibility of an astrological meaning is telling for its explanatory power (Beale, *Revelation*, 210–11). Fails to satisfy CDA # 2.

[145] Keener, *Revelation*, 99.

[146] Arnold, *Ephesians*, 28; Clinton E Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 21; Keener, *Revelation*, 99 n. 27; Boxall, *Revelation*, 43.

[147] Keener, *Revelation*, 99; Boxall, *Revelation*, 43.

Using this kind of imagery to indicate a deity's dominion over or close association with something is ubiquitous in both pagan cultic statuary and coinage: Apollo at Claros' left hand holds a lyre that shows that Apollo is lord over music, while his right holds the laurel that represents that he is lord of both plague and purity;[148] the cult statue of Apollo at Didyma held the bow that was associated with lordship over plague,[149] and his other held a stag that was probably a carryover from pre-archaic times when Apollo was an Anatolian lord of the hunt;[150] Athena Parthenos' association with victory is clear from the winged Nike held in her right hand (Pausanius *Descr.* 1.24.7); more importantly for the local context of John, Artemis Ephesia was decorated around her neck with representations of the Zodiac, and Zeus Labraundos (Figure 24) had astral signs on his clothing that indicated their power over the stars and fate.[151] Oster also points out the use of the motif of seven stars on imperial coinage to indicate universal dominion (Figure 22 Figure 23).[152] The dominion aspect is certainly in play here, although I

Figure 24
Roman produced bronze statuette of Zeus Labraundos, ca. 1st c. CE Italy
Courtesy of the Walters Art Museum

[148] Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 172; Robert Parker, *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 228.

[149] It was fairly common practice during times of plague for the afflicted city to erect a statue of Apollo specifically signifying his archer aspect (see Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 166–67; Parker, *Miasma*, 280).

[150] Brown, "In Search of Anatolian Apollo"; Parke, *Asia Minor*, 26–27.

[151] Arnold, *Ephesians*, 28.

[152] Oster and H. Omerzu apply this coin (Figure 22 & Figure 23) to Revelation (Oster, *Seven Congregations*, 77–78; Heike Omerzu, "Die Himmelsfrau in Apk 12. Ein Polemischer Reflex des Römischen Kaiserkults," in *Apokalyptik als Herausforderung Neutestamentlicher Theologie*, ed. Michael Becker and Markus Öhler, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 214 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006], 167–94, esp. 189). However, this particular coin type was only minted between 82–83 CE from Rome as a silver denarius

hardly think it is possible at this point in the narrative to suppose this image of dominion in Revelation must necessarily be a counter to imperial claims, as the motif appears common enough.[153]

The use of χαλκολίβανος in Rev 1:15 is different from the use of χαλκός in Dan 10:6 (LXX).[154] The description in Revelation is also restricted to describing the feet, whereas it is the legs and arms in Daniel. Bronze cult statues were common enough (Pausanius, *Descr.* 10.7.1), but Revelation only describes the feet this way. This suggests that the Danielic background is supposed to be the strongest general referent

Figure 25
Silver 33
Fortuna or Tutela
with the seven planetary deities
Ca. 150–220 CE, Mâcon
© Trustees of the British Museum

and as an aureus. The first minting was only the silver denarius, while the second also included the aureus. They are classified as scarce and rare (R^2 for the second run denarius and R^3 for the aureus type) respectively (see RIC 2:179–180). Due to the scarcity of the types and the early minting I am inclined to think that either John probably did not see this coin type or that its circulation was extremely limited by the time of his writing Revelation. Additionally, aside from these two types and one early restoration, astral motifs do not figure in the coinage of Domitian's reign; sometimes Domitian is presented with a radiate crown (See RIC 2:154–213). This does not satisfy CDA # 1, 2, 10, or 11.

[153] Of particular interest concerning the idea of dominion over fate, although the find location of France separates it geographically, is a second century statuette of either Fortuna or Tutela adorned above her wings with the seven planetary deities (see Figure 25 above or item 1824,0424.1 at www.britishmuseum.org). Both Fortuna and Tutela were guardian deities—often paired together—and both were popular with the emperors, especially the Flavians (Harold Axtell, "The Deification of Abstract Ideas in Roman Literature and Inscriptions" [PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 1907], 10–11, 42; Michael Grant, *Roman Anniversary Issues: An Exploratory Study of the Numismatic and Medallic Commemoration of Anniversary Years, 49 BC-AD 375.* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015], 89). See also Harold Axtell, "The Deification of Abstract Ideas in Roman Literature and Inscriptions" (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 1907), 10–11, 42; Michael Grant, *Roman Anniversary Issues: An Exploratory Study of the Numismatic and Medallic Commemoration of Anniversary Years, 49 BC-AD 375.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 89. CDA # 1, 5, 8.

[154] This should make us wary of assigning to high of a referential volume (CDA # 2) to Dan 10 and does not satisfy CDA # 7.

for this particular description.[155] However, the uniqueness of the term χαλκολίβανος strongly suggests John intended something beyond referring to Dan 10.[156] Some of John's audience may have been puzzled by the term. However, those at Thyatira would be reminded of Apollo Tyrimnaios by the term's use in a larger description of what amounts to a literary description of a cult statue and yet is clearly more.[157] All of the original recipients would likely understand the meaning of the use of χαλκολίβανος once Revelation progressed to the message to Thyatira, especially after being paired with the other descriptions of Rev 2:18.[158]

A question that must be answered before moving on to the other parts of the message to Thyatira is why does John mix the Danielic background with that of a cult image? The point of the overall background of Daniel and the carryover of explicit elements from Dan 10 (son of man, voice as many waters, flaming eyes) and one from Dan 7:9 (white hair) is used to properly frame the overall interpretation of the vision.[159] This is not an Olympic, Roman, or Egyptian deity, but rather the God of Israel. John's blending of elements of cult statuary memory genres and memory genres about Israel's God and the Son of Man makes a good deal of sense in light of what follows in the seven messages (LEC # 4, 8). And while the elements of the image are

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[155] There is an example of a statue made during the imperial period where the majority of the statue was made from porphyry and the extremities and head were made from bronze (see http://cir.campania.beniculturali.it/museoarcheologiconazionale/thematic-views/image-gallery/RA223?page=109). It is possible that John could have seen statues such as these, but it is difficult to say because the porphyry was prohibitively expensive, and its mines were under imperial control.

[156] I am not convinced by Koester's claim that χαλκολίβανος was a joining of two words from Theodotion Greek text of Daniel. He does not provide sufficient reason for John's decision to coin a new term (Koester, *Revelation*, 246).

[157] Malina points out similar descriptions (*On the Genre and Message of Revelation: Star Visions and Sky Journeys* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995], 70). Because of the uniqueness of the term χαλκολίβανος and the abundance of bronze cult statues, restricting the term to describe the feet would have been enough to trigger an association. It also makes sense to restrict the term, because all the major sections of Christ's body have other associations that he did not want to overshadow. Satisfies CDA # 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11.

[158] I again admit that χαλκολίβανος describing the cult statue is circumstantial, but it also makes the best sense of the material.

[159] This conclusion seems warranted based on CDA # 1, 2, 3 (Revelation has a strong Danielic background), 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 (apart from the flaming eyes); see also the chart comparing the two passages in Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 72.

distributed among the messages, a key feature in several of the churches and the message of Revelation overall is the problem of idolatry and religious accommodation. One of the main points in Jewish polemics against idolatry was that cult idols were inanimate (e.g. Rev 9:20). John continues this traditional polemic by way of showing that Christ is the *only* living image of a god, and as such is identical with him in power (Col 1:15).[160] Thus worship of any other image is to deny this reality.[161]

(End Excursus)

Apollo and Jezebel

The majority of the message to Thyatira is given over to the discussion of Jezebel and her followers. It seems clear from Rev 2:20 that they were not a majority of the church there, as the church is said to tolerate (ἀφίημι) her and her followers. However, it is not apparent as to whether she and her followers made up an individual home church or were spread throughout the other church groups there.[162] It is clear that she and her followers were welcome in the assemblies of Thyatira's church. Regardless, the length of the invective against her in an otherwise very brief collection of messages indicates that she probably had substantial influence

[160] If the writer of Colossians argued this, it is not unlikely that John with his own high christology would espouse a similar view (see Ben Witherington, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 133 n. 17). Both Keener and Aune note that it was common practice to try to have "animate" images in the pagan world (Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 762–64; Keener, *Revelation*, 351–52).

[161] Rev 19:16 may also support understanding this description of Christ as a living cult image, which describes Christ as having an inscription (γεγραμμένον) on his thigh. Several scholars point to the mention of an Apollo cult statue with writing on its thigh in Sicily as recorded by Cicero (*Verr.* 4.43) as well as some others (Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1062; Ford, *Revelation*; Keener, *Revelation*, 455; Koester, *Revelation*, 759; Witherington, *Revelation*, 244 n. 461). While I do not think this is an Apollonian reference, it does suggest that John continues with his living cult statue representation of Christ. Others plausibly suggest that the καί from 19:16 is epexegetical, e.g. Osborne, *Revelation*, 686.

[162] It can hardly even be assumed that there was more than one church group in Thyatira, nevertheless it is still certainly possible (Larry W. Hurtado, *Destroyer of the Gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World* [Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016], 3).

in Thyatira and that John saw her teaching and leadership as particularly insidious. Perhaps it even affected other churches. As others have noted, the longest message is given to the least important city.[163]

Some have tried to draw connections between the Nicolaitans, the teachings of Balaam, and those of Jezebel.[164] While the substance of what she advocated resulted in the same results as the teaching of the Nicolaitans, it should be regarded as different in its particulars: the Nicolaitans are not mentioned here. This means her teaching differed enough to merit an individual categorization.[165] According to John, Jezebel styled herself as a prophetess. Since she had followers, this suggest they labeled her as such too. This designation suggests charismatic leadership on her part versus simply the promulgation of heretical doctrine as in the case of the Nicolaitans. To be sure, as has been mentioned, Jezebel does advocate a specific teaching, namely religious infidelity, the substance of which John parodies by calling them the "deep things of Satan" (Rev 2:24)—a phrase not used of the Nicolaitans. While it is not explicit, it is very likely that Jezebel's teaching was based on her prophetic activity.

What kind of prophetess was Thyatira's Jezebel? Did she style herself as one from Jewish prophetic tradition? This position would be difficult to sustain simply due to the ubiquitous invectives against idolatry from the Jewish prophets. We know that there were early Christian prophets—both itinerant and those embedded within congregations (Acts 21:9–10; Eph 2:20; Did 11:3)—but there was also a distinction between that and the gift of prophecy.[166] Jezebel most likely is embedded within the Thyatiran church. The name Jezebel is very instructive here

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[163] Charles, *Revelation*, 68; Hemer, *Letters*, 106; Mounce, *Revelation*, 84.

[164] See examples in Andrew Coutras, "Nicolaitans," *LBD*.

[165] Note also in the message to Pergamum (Rev 2:12–17) that the teachings of Balaam are not equated to the Nicolaitans, although the proximity of both in the message does suggest similarity.

[166] David E. Aune, "The Social Matrix of the Apocalypse of John," *BR* 26 (1981): 17; C. M. Robeck Jr., "Prophecy, Prophesying," *DPL*, 755–62, esp. 757–58; Witherington, *Revelation*, 93–95.

as well.[167] The biblical Jezebel is easily enough associated with the prophetess as they both were responsible for leading God's people into religious infidelity, but as a few commentators note, the biblical Jezebel was not herself a prophet.[168] At the very least we may say that the character of her prophetic activity could be described as having similar effects as those of biblical Jezebel's religious policies. However, 2 Kg 9:22 accuses her of sorcery, which would have included revelatory magic.

Emil Schürer argued that Jezebel was a prophetess from the sanctuary of the sibyl Sambethe in Thyatira.[169] This view never gained any strong adherents and is rarely mentioned at all among modern commentators—the circumstantial connection was just too tenuous to sustain this view in the long run.[170] There is also more recent debate about whether the inscription mentioning the Sambathion (*CIG* 3509) refers to a synagogue or to an actual pagan sanctuary.[171] However, Bousset states the main issue succinctly: "Es ist gar nicht einzusehen, mit welchem Recht man die christliche Prophetin Isabel mit der heidnischen Prophetin des Sambatheions identifizieren darf...."[172] Most likely the issue of an over-precise identification along with Bousset's criticism have been enough to discourage further discussion. Yet, in light of the Apollonian references embedded in the beginning of the message, the presence of both the Sambathion, its officials, and especially in light of the fact that Jezebel was a "false-prophet," we should at least consider Schürer's proposal as a distinct possibility.[173]

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[167] CDA # 2 and 11 (singularity) are very prominent here.

[168] Keener, *Revelation*, 134.

[169] For descriptions and critiques of his argument, see Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 217–18; Hemer, *Letters*, 117–20.

[170] See Mounce, *Revelation*, 87; Osborne, *Revelation*, 156.

[171] Kraabel, "Judaism," 163–68; Hemer, *Letters*, 117–20.

[172] Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 217.

[173] The presence of the Sambatheion and its officials are appropriate to consider as background material (CDA # 1, 5, 8, 10). With the Apollonian references, it can also satisfy CDA # 4, 7, and 9.

In addition to Schürer's proposal a similar avenue is actually quite appealing and has precedent in the NT. Sambathe was of course a sybil of Apollo and provided oracles in his name. If there was a Sambathion (the mention of "Chaldean" in the inscription suggests there was), it was probably within the shared precinct of Artemis Boreitene and Apollo Tyrimnaeus. Furthermore, based on 2 Kg 9:22 and the repeated invective against sorcery[174] in Revelation, we can conclude that Jezebel was probably a *magos*[175] or *mantis* not officially associated with the sanctuary, but who nevertheless had offered her services of interpretation to help those who sought oracles from Apollo.[176] At some point she was converted, but like Simon Magus in Acts 8:14-24 misunderstood the nature of the apostolic teaching. As a magician she probably advocated the practice of magic to make Apollo provide revelation (i.e. "the deep things"), or more likely exclusively practiced revelatory magic (often associated with Apollo)[177] and thus styled herself a prophetess.[178] Furthermore, she may have advocated participation in the religious affairs (guild meals, festivals, etc.) to preserve economic and social security, because she envisioned her group as having power over the pagan deities.

This scenario is made all the more likely in light of several factors. The existence of Christian magic is a concrete reality, meaning some of those claiming to be Christians practiced magic.[179] This no doubt was a major reason that spawned the many invectives against magic and

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[174] Aune, "Magic"; Thomas, *Magical Motifs*.

[175] See 2 Kgs 9:22 (4 Kgs 9:22 LXX), which labels Jezebel a sorceress (τὰ φάρμακα). Additionally, we should note the punishment for her followers being thrown on a sickbed—*magoi* were supposed to be protected from such things with their arts.

[176] "... street prophets were strongly in evidence. We hear much about prophetic women, "pythonesses," as they were popularly known..." (Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 208). See also Johnston, *Divination*, 109–10.

[177] The connection of Apollo with plague prevention also suggests a link here.

[178] Aune appears to entertain this possibility as well, see Aune, "Matrix," 28–29.

[179] Coptic texts dating from the 1st to the 11th century CE demonstrate the existence and persistence of Christian magic (see Marvin Meyer, Richard Smith, and Neal Kelsey, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power*, Mythos [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999]). For other sources and discussion, see Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism*, 238–41.

divination among the early Christians.[180] Indeed, Christians and Jews did not always doubt the veracity of pagan oracles. Among our examples are the existence of the Jewish Sibylline Oracles,[181] Hermas' assumption that the woman providing him revelation was the Sibyl (*Herm. Vis.* 2.4.1 (8.1)), and the use of oracles by early Christian apologists to prove the truth of Christianity.[182] Additionally, the widespread reputation and existence of Jewish magic in Asia Minor suggests that there existed precedents in the religion (at least its Anatolian version) with which early Christianity was closely aligned (LEC # 1, 5, 8). This of course would have complicated things for those not fully comprehending the differences between apostolic Christianity and paganism. We must also take seriously both Aune's and Thomas' work on the prevalence of magical motifs in Revelation and the fact that magic was not always cleanly separated from prophecy/divination and non-institutional oracles (LEC # 4, 8).[183] Finally, John's refusal to recognize the legitimacy of Jezebel's claim to be a prophet is important. John does not title her a false prophet—false prophets stand as part of, although antithetical to, the tradition of the Jewish prophets.[184] Instead, John mockingly acknowledges the title of prophetess as her own

[180] In contrast to the pagans who had no real problem with magic, we find that early Christian polemics were what turned society against it (see Johnston, *Divination*, 148).

[181] Christian and Jewish interpolations aside, Collins notes that early Christian apologists appealed to the sibyl as an independent authority verifying the veracity of the Christian faith and that they were likewise held in high esteem by Jews and Christians because the form was copied (see John Joseph Collins, "Sibylline Oracles: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 of (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2009), 317–472, esp. 320, 322).

[182] Busine, "Oracles," 173–96, esp. 176.

[183] Aune, "Magic"; Thomas, *Magical Motifs*; Johnston, *Divination*, 179.

[184] John may very well be saving this term (ψευδοπροφήτης) for the second beast (see Rev 13:11, 16:12, 19:20, 20:10). Even so, John shows that the actions of the second beast parody those of the OT prophets (i.e. imitate the legitimate OT prophets), see Rev 13:13; Beale, *Revelation*, 707–8; Caird, *Revelation*, 172; Witherington, *Revelation*, 184.

illegitimate self-designation.[185] This suggests that her prophecy was not charismatic, as some assume,[186] but instead based on ritualistic magical divination.[187]

The Message to the Church at Thyatira and Social Identity

Charles states "The longest letter is addressed to the least important of the Seven Cities."[188] Lund discerned a chiastic structure of the seven messages with Thyatira at the center. As he notes: "It is significant that the strongest representation of idolatry, namely, by the woman Jezebel, and the ultimate doom of that perversion of worship … should be found in the central epistle of the seven."[189] These structural characteristics alone demonstrate the content of this message is highly important to John's overall aims of identity formation. References to Apollo begin the message to Thyatira and are implicit in the condemnation of Jezebel. They illustrate Karrer's argument that John treats Apollo with silence and cooption of his memory genres.[190] The message is the pivot of the chiasm and so we should expect Apollo and his associations to take on a significant role in the Apocalypse's invective against participation in pagan worship. This is what we see in the riders of the Apocalypse, Apollyon, and chapters 12 and 13.

John's strong rhetoric reinforces these structures. He condemns anyone who would willingly associate with pagan deities, while promising reward to those who conquer. Through these promises, the co-option of sacred space representations and memory genres, and the

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[185] This is not to say that John did not recognize the capacity of women to be prophets. He is too steeped in Hebrew scripture to not know about Deborah and others. Rather, he is refusing to acknowledge the claim of Jezebel of Thyatira.

[186] Caird, *Revelation*, 44; Ladd, *Revelation*, 51; Osborne, *Revelation*, 155–56.

[187] Aune notes that "deep things" (Rev 2:24) could be a magical reference (*Revelation*, 1:208). Indeed, the statements about "not holding the teaching" and especially, "not learned the deep things of Satan" suggest that magical initiation rites had been conducted within the church among her followers. Aune's musings on gnostic teachings and equivocation to the Nicolaitans are unconvincing (*Revelation*, 1:207-208).

[188] Charles, *Revelation*, 68.

[189] Nihls Wilhem Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament: A Study in Formgeschichte* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), 337.

[190] Karrer, "Apoll," 226, 228–29.

chiastic structure of the messages John emphasizes proper social identity based in a proper superordinate identity based in the rule of God. On the one side is Christ, God, and his true servants. On the other are those who participate in pagan worship (i.e. eating meat in temples sacrificed to idols and religious infidelity). At this point in the Apocalypse there is no explicit antithesis given to identifying with the Lamb other than the actions of pagan worship. However, there is the implication of an antithesis. In no uncertain terms John has pointed to Christ as the one solely due what is being given to his religious rivals (i.e. Apollo, Artemis, Hecate, and the emperor). The strong language demonstrates a strong ingroup bias and is meant to promote a crisis of identity among those who are being warned in the messages. In the vision proper John will show why they should identify with the Lamb: the Lamb reigns with God, who will win, and Apollo and the empire are servants of the Dragon, who will lose.

Rev 5:1–4 – Scroll in Heaven

There are a variety of views concerning the contents of the scroll of Rev 5:1, but the most convincing concern the present and future judgments recorded in Revelation.[191] What can be said with confidence is that the one seated on the throne holding the scroll does know what is inside. However, the main intention of the passage is establishing the qualifications of the Lamb. This is done through his being able to open the seals, while no one else was found who was worthy (5:3). Aune and others have noted the threefold formula of "in heaven or on earth or under the earth" (ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς) as a reference to the threefold realms that are inhabited by "primarily supernatural beings[.]"[192]Aune also notes that this cosmic

[191] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 343–46; Boxall, *Revelation*, 94–95; Witherington, *Revelation*, 119–20.
[192] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 348.

division was widespread throughout the ancient world. The formula indicates that supernatural beings are the focus of the search for finding who is worthy. This passage appears to be an explicit accusation that other divinities lack true power, while Christ is the only one, apart from the one on the throne, who has it. This would be another reinforcement of John's push to identify with the Lamb as the source of true power over that of either the empire or the pagan gods.

Apollo may be specifically in mind in this passage because of the emphasis on the Lion-Lamb being the only one worthy to know the will of God. John draws on messianic and Passover OT memory genres in his presentation of Christ as the Lamb (e.g. Isa 53:7) and Lion of the tribe of Judah (e.g. Gen 49:9).[193] Yet, if we recall from earlier, Apollo had his own genre memories associated with Lambs and Lions: lambs were an excellent sacrifice for securing revelation from Apollo and in addition to an ancient association in Asia Minor with lions, lions of Apollo lined the road from Didyma to Panormus and Croesus' gifts had adorned his temple in Delphi.[194] Additionally, knowing the will of Zeus was Apollo's specific domain:

> But as to the prophetic art, my dear nursling [Hermes] of Zeus, which you ask about, it is not destined that you should know it, nor any other of the immortals. That is known to the mind of Zeus, and I have agreed under pledge, and sworn a powerful oath, that none other of the eternal gods apart from me shall know Zeus' intricate intent; so you, my brother gold-wand, must not ask me to reveal the destinies that wide-sounding Zeus is contriving.
> HH Hermes 533–40 (M. L. West [LCL])

Even among the gods he was special for having insight into Zeus' plan. Among the Romans, the Sibylline Oracles were kept at the temple of the Palatine Apollo and consulted when important events needed to be interpreted. However, it is the sacrificed lamb, not the pagan gods, who is able to open the scroll. The point is to present the inability of Apollo with his purported special

[193] Beale, *Revelation*, 349–51.
[194] Hanfmann and Ramage, *Sculpture from Sardis*, 30, 34.

insight into the ruler of the cosmos' will or any other supernatural being to view the contents of the scroll and thereby help the pagans avoid judgment and to present the Lamb as the only one worthy of this knowledge and the only one able to save any from judgment (Rev 5:9-10).

Rev 8:10–11 – Wormwood

Traditionally (LEC # 6) the mention of wormwood has been connected to scenes of judgment in the OT (e.g. Jer 9:15; 23:15; Lam 3:15, 19).[195] This does indeed fit the context of Rev 8 (LEC #4) as well as satisfying LEC #'s 1, 2, and 5. However, as Osborne remarks, it is odd that the star itself is named Wormwood.[196] Yet, the name Wormwood may be a reference to Apollo and magic, as well as foreshadow the coming of Apollyon.

It is remarkable that despite clear references in the PGM to wormwood none have noted this in their attempts to interpret this passage.[197] Additionally, in the PGM there are clear associations of wormwood with celestial events (III 333–34, 385–93; IV 2690). Aune also notes that wormwood was associated with the constellation of Scorpio.[198] Finally, wormwood is sometimes used in the PGM in ceremonies that conjure or petition Apollo or Helios (II 1–64; III 282–409; IV 1275–1322). In light of both Thomas' and Aune's assertion of magical motifs in Revelation, wormwood and its association with magic seems an important background.

From a narrative perspective this association may work in several ways. The association of wormwood with Scorpio may foreshadow the arrival of Apollyon and his scorpion tailed

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[195] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 519–20; Bousset, *Offenbarung*, 296; Boxall, *Revelation*, 139; R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, vol. 2, *ICC* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1920), 235; Witherington, *Revelation*, 149.

[196] Osborne, *Revelation*, 355.

[197] See PGM II 17–20, 37; III 305–310; 333–34, 390; IV 704, 1090, 1311–12, 2239, 2395, 2690, 2894, 3201; VI 1000; XII 99, 397.

[198] Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 521.

army. Related to this is the idea that the events of the first four trumpets are necessary for the opening of the abyss (Rev 9:1) and the release of the four angels (9:13–14). If it were not for the structure of the trumpets being closely aligned with that of the seals and bowls, then I might be inclined to regard the trumpet sequence as a cosmic magical summoning ceremony (i.e. to summon Apollo). The implicit message of such an understanding would be that magic really only deals with demons and Apollo's true nature is thus revealed. Even so, I am not altogether convinced that the structure similarities preclude this theory.

Another possible reading comes in light of a curious hymn in one of the invocations of Helios wherein it describes his acts creating and sustaining the universe:

> Come to me in / I your holy circuit of
> The holy spirit, founder of the world,
> O god of gods, lord of the world, who have
> Divided by your own divine spirit
> The universe; first from the firstborn you
> Appeared, created carefully, from water
> That's turbulent, who founded all the world:
> Abyss, earth, / fire, water, air, and in turn
> Ether and roaring rivers, red-faced moon,
> Heaven's stars, morning stars, the whirling planets.
> 'Tis by your counsels they attend all things.
> PGM III 550–58 (Trans. Edward O'Neil, [PGM])

The inclusion of so many cosmological elements involved in the sequence of the trumpets and the emphasis on divine sovereignty over the cosmos is notable: fire (Rev 8:7, 8), earth (8:7, 13), celestial bodies (8:10-12), water/seas/springs/rivers (8:8-10), the abyss (9:1-2), sovereignty over creation (10:6; also implicit in the trumpet sequence).[199] The abyss (ἄβυσσος) is also mentioned a number of times throughout the PGM.[200] In the context of the above hymn the abyss is meant

[199] CDA # 2.

[200] PGM III 681; IV 140, 1120, 1149, 1351, 3064; VII 263, 519; XIII 170, 333, 481; XXIIb 18; XXXV 1; XXXVI 219; LXII 30, 32.

to recall the Egyptian myth of the sun god's rising from the primordial waters.[201] Yet this Egyptian myth clearly demonstrates syncretism through its application to Helios.[202] Its possible use by John is also fitting, because, as interpreters have noted, the trumpets of Revelation are also alluding to the Egyptian plagues.[203] In another spell, Helios is invoked as "the storm-sender and controller of the abyss, master of fire" (PGM XIII 331–334). Perhaps the sequence of trumpets is meant to show that God is sovereign over creation, while Helios-Apollo is not, and that Helios-Apollo rightly resides in the Abyss. This would be in keeping with what was discussed above about Apollo Lairbenos and the Plutonium under his temple in Hierapolis, where Helios/Apollo was sometimes also thought to be Hades.[204]

13:18 – Number of the Beast

Bauckham is likely correct that the number 666 refers to Nero.[205] Yet, the use of this number in a book full of 7's and multiples of 7's certainly stands out as a symbolic contrast. Considering the context (Rev 12–13), where Apollonian references feature quite strongly, we should not be surprised to find them here as well.

The most direct evidence comes from the number itself and plays on memory genres that had been associated with Apollo for centuries. Apollo had a special and ancient association with the number seven (e.g. Aeschylus, *Sept.* 800).[206] Herda describes a sixth century BCE oracle text

[201] Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*, 33 n. 109.

[202] With the popularity of Isis in Asia Minor, we must assume that Egyptian mythology accompanied her. The ancient mythology of Atum or Ra and creation would be included among these, as they include the genesis of Isis.

[203] Caird, *Revelation*, 115; Boxall, *Revelation*, 137; Osborne, *Revelation*, 350. CDA # 4, 5, 11.

[204] CDA # 1, 4, 5, 8, 10.

[205] Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 384–407.

[206] See also Ahl, "Amber," 376. CDA # 1, 5, 10.

from Apollo Didymeus that "mentions four different Apollo cults linked to seven and multiples of seven, the holy number of Apollo, in ascending positions."[207] He continues: "Walter Burkert has convincingly argued that these numbers symbolise years of rule, resulting in the number 7777, the "Great Year" —or to put it another way—eternity: 7 years of Apollo Lykeios, the "wolf" god, 70 years of Apollo Helios, the "lion" god, 700 years of Apollo Ietros, the "healer" god, and 7000 years of the "wise dolphin", Δελφὶς φρόνιμος, that is: Apollo Delphinios."[208] Additionally, Nilsson relates that all the feasts of Apollo were celebrated on the seventh day of the month, a practice promulgated through the auspices of Delphi.[209] Thus, if John had been in Asia Minor for any length of time, which is likely based on his local knowledge, he would certainly have encountered the association of Apollo with the number seven on multiple occasions, whether through festival, feast, theater, or games.[210] Based on his apparent knowledge of imperial propaganda, it is also likely he knew of Augustus and Nero's views toward their respective reigns as ushering in the Golden Age and rule of Apollo and their efforts to identify with him (e.g. Figure 26). The whole point of using these numbers is to invert Apollo's and his agents claim to perfection and rule, since both perfection and rule belong to God and his Christ.

Considering the second beast to be Nero through the recognition of Apollonian references continues the inversion and association of Apollo and the Empire with chaos and evil begun in Rev 12-13:10. John does not seek to balance the choice of identity association as a neutral observer; the revelation grants him a knowledge of reality as it really stands. As a result, his characterizations are based in impassioned rhetoric. The side of the Dragon, Apollo, and the

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[207] Herda, "State Cult," 78.

[208] Herda, "State Cult," 78; Walter Burkert, "Olbia and Apollo of Didyma: A New Oracle Text," in *Apollo: Origins and Influences*, ed. Jon Solomon (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 49–60.

[209] Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, 561.

[210] CDA # 1, 5, 9, 10.

Empire are evil, while the side of God, the Lamb, and the saints are good. In this section he also adds to the side of good the concept of wisdom (13:18). Those who are wise and associated with the Lamb will be able to distinguish the evil in the world. The implicit critique and exposition of ingroup bias is that those who accommodate with the Empire and Apollo lack wisdom, because they do not see that the Dragon stands behind them.

Figure 26
RIC I, 153, no. 46
Image Courtesy of www.cngcoins.com
Colossus of Nero on Reverse

Rev 16:1-21 (Rev 16-9) – The Voice from the Temple and the Destruction of Babylon

Beale suggests an allusion to Isa 66:6.[211] The judgment scenario of Isaiah certainly renders his reading plausible, as the judgments of Rev 16 serve to reinforce God's sovereignty. However, several aspects of the passage also suggest a reference to Apollo and Rome. Vergil composed a

[211] Beale, *Revelation*, 812.

passage wherein Aeneas and his companions seek knowledge from Apollo at his temple on Delos:

> Templa dei saxo venerabar structa vetusto:
> "Da propriam, Thymbraee, domum; da moenia fessis
> et genus et mansuram urbem; serva altera Troiae
> Pergama, reliquias Danaum atque immitis Achilli.
> Quem sequimur? Quove ire iubes? Ubi ponere sedes?
> Da, pater, augurium, atque animis inlabere nostris."
> Vix ea fatus eram: tremere omnia visa repente,
> liminaque laurusque dei, totusque moveri
> mons circum, et mugire adytis cortina reclusis.
> Submissi petimus terram, et vox fertur ad auris:
> "Dardanidae duri, quae vos a stirpe parentum
> prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere laeto
> accipiet reduces. Antiquam exquirite matrem:
> hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris,
> et nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis."
>
> I was paying homage to the god's temple, built of ancient stone: 'Grant us, god of Thymbra, an enduring home; grant our weary band walls, and a race, and a city that shall abide; preserve Troy's second fortress, the remnant left by the Greeks and pitiless Achilles! Whom should we follow? Whither do you bid us go? Where fix our home? Grant, father, an omen, and inspire our hearts!'
> "Scarcely had I said this, when suddenly it seemed all things trembled, the doors and laurels of the god; the whole hill shook round about and the tripod moaned as the shrine was thrown open. Prostrate we fall to earth, and a voice comes to our ears: 'Long-suffering sons of Dardanus, the land which bore you first from your parent stock shall welcome you back to her fruitful bosom. Seek out your ancient mother. There the house of Aeneas shall lord it over all lands, even his children's children and their race that shall be born of them."
> (Vergil, Aen. 3.84-98 [Fairclough, LCL])

Three things stand out in this text, namely the manner in which Apollo speaks, its effects, and the content of the prophecy. Just as in Rev 16:1, the voice issues from the temple. So also Rev 16:17-18, except here cosmic portent of the earthquake is manifested similar to the *Aeneid*.[212] In this prophecy, Apollo declares that the descendants of Aeneas will rule the world. The allusion

[212] CDA # 2.

appears all the more likely in light of Rev 16:19 and Rev 17-19 that describe the fall of Babylon or Rome as most interpreters understand it.[213]

Neither the *Aenied* passage nor the Isaiah passage are a perfect fit, which suggests that John could be blending them here. The Roman right to rule was a significant feature of their identity and ideology. What passages such as the one from the *Aeneid* above demonstrate is the widely held belief that they had the right to rule the nations as their divine destiny. Revelation 16-19 would be an inversion of this memory genre and subvert Apollo's role in it, while at the same time recalling OT genre memories of God's sovereignty and final victory over his enemies. It is the saints, not the Romans, who are destined to rule. The inversion also occurs in terms of Secondspace: the temple from which the will of God is announced is not the pagan temple so prevalent in Greco-Roman society with their abundant imperial shrines, but rather the temple of Yahweh in heaven. This reinforces the superordinate identity John presents in his cosmology: ultimate authority and dominance resides with the deity of this temple. He dispenses judgment and decides the course of the future.

16:16 – Armageddon

Opinions on the meaning of this geographical reference range from a mis-transliteration from Hebrew to a conflation of referents, but most readily admit the meaning is obscure.[214] There are several factors that suggest an Apollonian reading may be preferable. From within the passage (Rev 16:12-16), there is a motif of false-prophecy (i.e. evil spirits gathering the kings of the earth) connected to the Dragon, Beast from the Sea, and false prophet (16:14).[215] In terms of

[213] Boxall, *Revelation*, 236. CDA # 4.
[214] For a discussion of the various interpretations see Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 898–99.
[215] CDA # 4.

OT allusions, there are only a few places where Megiddo is referenced (Judg 5:19; 2 Kgs 9:27; 23:29-30; 1 Chr 7:29; Zech 12:11), and as Witherington notes most of them are connected to battles that were significant in Israelite history.[216] Of these possible allusions, only 2 Kgs 23:29-30 has any connection to false-prophecy.[217]

The passage almost immediately before that of Josiah's death at Megiddo (23:28-30) gives the summary statement of Josiah's reign (23:24-25), wherein he is noted for removing mediums and wizards from Judah. These internal factors suggest a possible counter-Apollo motif *à la* false prophecy, since this is a key feature linked to him. The connection becomes more compelling when we consider that John could have known about Pharaoh Neco attributing his victory to the Didymean Apollo.[218] This reading also provides a reversal of the situation in 2 Kgs 23. Josiah cleanses Judah of mediums and wizards and is subsequently killed by one of Israel's ancient enemies—this fits the image of martyrdom in Revelation. In Revelation, the earth is filled with spirits of false-prophecy who work wonders—probably through *magoi* and *manteis*—and the kings of the earth are slaughtered instead (Rev 19:17-21).

From the memory/spatial perspective, this reading is rhetorically forceful. John combines two powerful social-spatial memories (Armageddon as a place of important battles and Apollo as a prophetic guarantor of victory) at the social-spatial intersection of the oracle of Apollo Didymeus. With this approach John highlights the fact that Apollo is both an ancient, current, and future enemy of God's people, who on behalf of the Dragon deceives the nations.

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[216] Witherington, *Revelation*, 210.

[217] It may be possible to construe 2 Kgs 9:27 similarly, since Jezebel and her "sorceries" (τὰ φάρμακα αὐτῆς, 4 Kgs 9:22 LXX) appear in the same narrative. However, this seems unlikely to me because the passage lacks an explicit reference to prophecy or to a battle between nations. CDA # 1, 2, 4.

[218] Temples were not hesitant about describing their illustrious history, especially if they were recorded in Herodotus such as the account with Neco (Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.159.2). They were in fact quite keen on remembering their history, as it was often the basis for establishing and maintaining their legal rights under the empire (see Beate Dignas, *Economy*, 272–78). CDA # 1, 5, 10.

6:14; 16:20 – Islands and Mountains

While readily equating the reference to mountains as an allusion to the high places of the OT, Caird expresses some consternation as to how to understand the reference to islands.[219] Both Caird and Boxall suppose that the reference to islands may be due to John's location on Patmos.[220] Keener dismisses the difficulty with interpreting the islands by labeling them as simply part of "cosmic judgment" imagery.[221] Yet, the OT and Pseudopigraphical references he supplies (Isa 42:15; 64:1-3; Nah 1:5-6; Ezek 38:19-20; Mic 1:3-4; Zech 14:5; 1 En 1:6-7) are overwhelmingly concerned with the destruction of mountains, whereas only one (Isa 42:15) mentions islands.[222] Furthermore, the island reference is only concerned with an effect on rivers, with the appearance of islands being a byproduct. Therefore, his contention is unsatisfactory. The reference to high places is correct, but these interpreters fail to take into account the prominence of islands for pagan deities. For example, Samos, Delos, and Patmos were sacred to Apollo and Artemis (see previous section: Rev 1:9 – Patmos). The islands function in a parallel manner to the mountains. So, if the mountains serve to illustrate the destruction of pagan cultic spaces by drawing on OT memory genres, then islands likewise illustrate the destruction of pagan cultic spaces by drawing on Greco-Roman memory genres. Thus, the removal of islands and mountains is a radical reconstruction of Firstspace and results in the destruction of pagan Secondspace. As only the creator of Firstspace can do, the sacred places of pagan deities cease to exist. With the initial emphasis on Patmos, this passage gains a bit more significance not only representing the banishment of Apollo, but of the gods in general.

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[219] Caird, *Revelation*, 209.
[220] Boxall, *Revelation*, 237.
[221] Keener, *Revelation*, 397.
[222] Aune takes a similar view, although he completely ignores the mention of islands. Additionally, none of the OT references he offers regarding a similar occurrence in Rev 6:14 mention islands (Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 415–16, 901).

Rev 21:23, 22:5 – No Sun or Moon

The mention of the lack of a sun and moon in Rev 21:23 and 22:5 have a clear dependence on OT passages (e.g. Isa 60:19-20).[223] Even with these passages' clear dependence on the OT, when we consider that John uses the technique of exclusion, then Aune is certainly correct to consider the "pagan parallel".[224] Indeed, celestial bodies were inextricably embedded in pagan religion, a fact of which the biblical writers were aware. Additionally, we must remain mindful of the solar and other celestial imagery ubiquitous in Secondspace representations in Asia Minor that continually propounded dominant ideologies. Aune suggests the parallel is that of the pantheon where the sun shines through the *Oculus* at the top of the dome and therefore Jupiter is present in the temple as the rays of the sun since the sun is sometimes called "the Eye of Jupiter."[225]

While this is an intriguing idea and the sun was occasionally called the Eye of Jupiter (Gellius, *Attic Nights* 10.15.22; Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1.21.12), the *Oculus* did not exist until Hadrian reconstructed the Pantheon.[226] A better choice is Apollo, who by far is most closely associated with the sun in Roman and Greek thought and whose most common epithet is *Phoebus*.[227] Indeed, in the Imperial period Greeks and Romans associated Apollo with Helios and Sol.[228] If we also consider Apollo's association with a golden age of rule, then considering him a pagan

[223] In the cases of Rev 21:23 and 22:5, the verses so closely mirror the OT references that there can be little doubt that they are the intended allusions; the satisfy CDA 1, especially 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and especially 11. See also Keener, *Revelation*, 498; Osborne, *Revelation*, 330, 761–62.

[224] Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1169–70.

[225] Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1169–70.

[226] The original pantheon was open to the sky (see Robert Hannah and Giulio Magli, "The Role of the Sun in the Pantheon's Design and Meaning," *Numen* 58 (2011): 486–513, esp. 486–87).

[227] CDA # 1, (3), 4, 5, 7, 9, 10.

[228] Graf, *Apollo*, 102. For clear associations of Apollo with Helios see PGM II 95; PGM VII 727–39. Examples of Apollo's association with Sol/Helios also are explicit in Roman domestic art (David L. Balch, "'A Woman Clothed with the Sun' and the "Great Red Dragon Seeking to 'Devour Her Child' (Rev 12:1, 4) in Roman Domestic Art," in *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune*, ed. John Fotopoulos, NovTSup 122 [Leiden: Brill, 2006], 305–12)

parallel becomes all the more appropriate in the context of Rev 21:1–22:5's own golden age (Rev 21:18, 21).[229] This context may also recall Nero's own Golden Day. Thus, despite the volume of Isa 60, and in light of other exclusions of Apollo's solar splendor in Revelation, his solar memory genre association are recalled here, even if only to further exclude them.

By excluding a very prominent ubiquitous memory genre John is making a clear statement about social identity.[230] In many ways Rev 21 and 22 are the culmination of John's textual effort for identity formation. God's rule has finally come in its fullness and nothing that has associations outside the rule of God is present. Thus, if one has identified with the Dragon, Apollo, or the Empire, then they are no longer present. John presents a picture of God's endgame, it is intended to be at once both beatific but also to serve as a warning (see Rev 22:12-15).

Apollo and the Cithara in Revelation – Rev 5:8; 15:2, 18:22

The cithara as an actual musical instrument or profession (vs. being used in a simile) occurs three times in Revelation (5:8; 15:2; 18:22). These are the only occurrences in the NT apart from 1 Cor 14:7.[231] Greek cultic worship made wide use of the cithara and it was closely associated with the cults of Apollo.[232] Of the musical instruments used in worship (temple ceremonies, processions, etc.) the cithara and *aulos* (flute) were used the most, although sometimes only the cithara was used in the worship of Apollo and the *aulos* was favored "in Dionysiac worship."[233] Generally, the *aulos* and cithara were not used together, but this was not

[229] CDA # 1, 4, 5, 8.
[230] Consider the mention of various social groups in Rev 21:24, 26 and the exclusionary statement of 21:27.
[231] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 355.
[232] J. A. Haldane, "Musical Instruments in Greek Worship," *GR* 13 (1966): 98–107, esp. 98.
[233] Haldane, "Musical Instruments," 100, 102.

always the case during processions.[234] The cithara was used instead of the *aulos* when the ceremony was more orderly and singing was emphasized.[235] Yet, Aune demonstrates quite convincingly that the cithara, or at the least the harp or lyre, has a long history within the Jewish traditions of worship.[236]

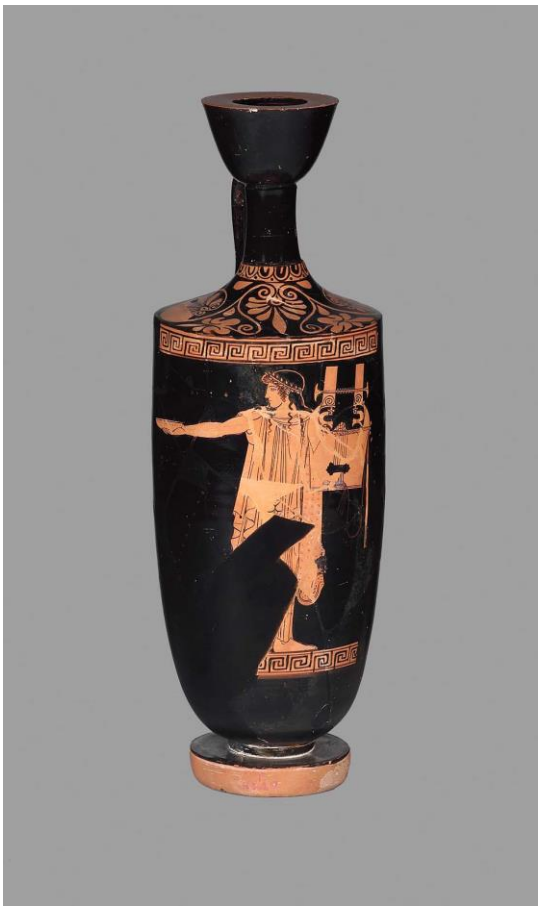

Figure 27
Photograph
© Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/oil-flask-lekythos-with-apollo-153767
Apollo with Cithara and Phiale
Ca. 470–460 BC
Manufactured in Athens

Figure 28
RIC I, 69, no. 366
Image courtesy of www.cngcoins.com
Apollo with Cithara and Phiale on obverse of Imperial coin. Ca. 16 BCE

The cithara is first used in Revelation in the scene of heavenly worship, where the elders around the throne possess both citharas and a golden bowls (κιθάραν καὶ φιάλας χρυσᾶς γεμούσας θυμιαμάτων) filled with incense (Rev 5:8). Aune rightly notes that

[234] Haldane, "Musical Instruments," 100–101, 104.
[235] Haldane, "Musical Instruments," 104.
[236] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 355–56. See also Gary A. Rendsburg, "The Psalms as Hymns in the Temple of Jerusalem," in *Jesus and Temple: Textual and Archaeological Explorations*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 95–122.

the presence of the both the citharas and bowls indicate cultic worship, but also notes the difficulty in determining whether the scene is meant to evoke a scene of Jewish or Greek cultic worship.[237] The second reference (15:2) mentions that those who had conquered the beast had the harps of God in their hands, while the third reference (18:22) proclaims that harpists and other musicians will no longer be found in the Babylon the Great.

It remains ambiguous as to whether John is evoking a scene of Jewish or Greek worship in 5:2.[238] John may be deliberately ambiguous here intending to blend both forms into a unified scene of heavenly worship; his theology of the inclusion and conversion of the gentiles makes this likely, but not definitive. The elders themselves who probably represent a divine council could reinforce this notion, because, as I have already noted, different nations were governed by different angels.[239] Yet it is also possible John may be co-opting Apollo's association with the cithara in order take back the liturgical worship space from Apollo and the other gods.

The blending or co-opting of memory genres in the heavenly cultic space explains the possible (probable?) Jewish background, but not so much Apollonian memory genres over general memory genres of Greek worship. The blend or co-option of Apollo may use him as a stand-in for the gods in general. In addition to literary cues in Revelation, this appears likely based on the prominence of Apollo in Asia Minor, his very close association with the cithara, and the imperial favoring of Apollo the Citharode.[240]

Concerning Apollo and the cithara, Apollo's association with the cithara is well known and attested throughout antiquity in art, numismatics, myth, and literature. Eighty or so coins minted in Asia Minor from Classical to Imperial age that feature the cithara also feature Apollo

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[237]Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 356–58.
[238] CDA # 11 cannot be satisfied here due to possible blending.
[239] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 290–91; Beale, *Revelation*, 322–26; Caird, *Revelation*, 63–64.
[240] CDA # 1, 5, 8, 10.

either holding the cithara or on the obverse with the cithara on the reverse.[241] At the various Pythian type festivals, the musical contests, which used the cithara, were dedicated to Apollo.[242] According to myth, although invented by Hermes, Apollo claimed the cithara as his own (Apollodorus, *Library* 3.10.2; HH *Hermes* 415-524). The cithara also played a key role in other Apollonian myths (e.g. Apollodorus, *Library* 1.4.2; Ovid, *Metam.* 6.625–36). Pindar assigned cosmic significance to Apollo's playing the cithara (Pindar, *Pyth.* 1.1–15). In addition to this, it is the aspect of Apollo the Citharode who was favored by both Augustus and Nero—the Palatine Apollo was Apollo the Citharode and Nero himself played the cithara.

Concerning the cues in text itself, Aune notes the image of Apollo holding both a cithara and a φιάλη in a setting of cultic worship just as in Rev 5:8 appears on Greek oil flasks.[243] The specific image (see Figure 27) Aune cites was made in Athens some time between 470–460 BCE, however the similarity of the image to that of Rev 5:8 is too close to dismiss.[244] Indeed, Apollo is so commonly featured in artwork holding the cithara (see examples from ch. 4) that we can reasonably suspect John may have seen similar images in Asia Minor, such as the coin in Figure 28 that was minted several hundred years later. The unique prevalence of hymns in Revelation, the curious phrase "cithara of God" (κιθάρας τοῦ θεοῦ) (15:2), and the comment of 18:22 that neither citharodes, singers, flutists, nor trumpeters (μουσικῶν καὶ αὐλητῶν καὶ σαλπιστῶν οὐ μὴ ἀκουσθῇ) will be heard any longer in Babylon may also suggest John is trying to take back the worship of cultic spaces solely for God.[245] In Greek cultic worship music was

[241] I conducted a search for the term "kithara" on www.asiaminorcoins.com. The vast majority of the 86 coins returned in the search featured both Apollo and the cithara and had a wide geographic distribution in Asia Minor. CDA #1, 5, 8, 10.

[242] The cithara did feature in other festivals dedicated to different deities, but there was a preponderance of Pythian type festivals in Asia Minor during the Imperial period.

[243] Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 355.

[244] The volume (CDA # 2) of the image is deafening.

[245] This parallels claims made by Aune about the comparisons between the imperial court and the heavenly court ("Influence," 22).

expected, as also was the singing of hymns or ritual songs.[246] As stated above, where singing was expected the cithara was used; this may explain the lack of the *aulos* in Rev 5:8 or 15:2. Similarly, the *aulos* may be absent because it was heavily associated with the memory genres of Dionysiac worship and the scene of the heavenly throne room is one of ordered worship.[247]

The phrase "citharas of God" is an ambiguous genitive that could mean "belonging to God," "from God," or "for the worship of God."[248] Even so, the genitive identifies the citharas as having one purpose: to worship God. This is a counter claim to all the Greek memory genres regarding Apollo and the cithara. That this occurs in a context of victory over the Beast, who was identified as Apollo above, is highly suggestive. Finally, the implicit claim that all worship, which was the primary function of music, belongs to God and the Lamb alone, is reinforced by the lack of musicians in the great pagan city (18:22).

Apollo and Victory

Revelation demonstrates an association of Apollo with victory or conquering (νίκη). The association of victory with various gods was widespread in the ancient world and Apollo had no special claim to it. However, Apollo did receive some notable associations with victory, such as with Pharaoh Neco or with Augustus at Actium. At Hierapolis Apollo's statue in his temple had a Nike on the tip of his spear (Macrobious, *Saturnalia* 1.17.66–70) and likewise inscriptions and other statuary there also associate him with victory.[249] Thus an association in Revelation of

[246] Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 67; Haldane, "Musical Instruments," 106; Fred Ralph Porta, "Greek Ritual Utterances and the Liturgical Style" (PhD Diss., Harvard University, 1999), 195–97.

[247] Haldane, "Musical Instruments," 98.

[248] Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 852; Koester, *Revelation*, 632.

[249] See text of *MAMA*, IV, 276 A1 in ch. four and commentary in Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," 51.

Apollo with victory is not out of character with his representations both locally and throughout the Mediterranean.[250]

The association of Apollo with victory in Revelation is clear from Rev 6:1-2. When one considers this association in conjunction with the saints' and the Lamb's own conquering a organizing structure with chiastic characteristics emerges.[251] This structure accounts for all the uses of νίκη in Revelation and its established cognates.[252] It runs this way:

A – Rev 2–3 – The one conquering (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21)

B – Rev 5:5 – The Lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered

C – Rev 6:1-2 – The first rider goes out conquering and to conquer

D – Rev 11:7 – The Beast from the Abyss conquers the two witnesses

E – Rev 12:10-12, esp. 11 – They have conquered by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony

D_1 – Rev 13:7 – The Beast conquers the saints

C_1 – Rev 15:2 – The saints actually are conquering the Beast instead

B_1 – Rev 17:14 – Christ conquers the Beast and the ten kings

A_1 – Rev 21:7 – The one conquering

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[250] CDA # 1, 5, 10.

[251] The main difficulty here is that this structure covers the entire text of Revelation and the presence of macro-chiasms is debated (Bruce W. Longenecker, *Rhetoric at the Boundaries: The Art and Theology of New Testament Chain-Link Transitions* [Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005], 47). At most, it can be called a 'chiastic organizing structure' of a major plot point since it displays classic chiastic pivot and inversion. The compelling aspects of the above structure are that it accounts for all the uses of νίκη, it is distributed evenly with the pivot near the center of the text and reflects John's theology of conquering. With the length of the document we might think it would be difficult for the hearers to register this structure, but the messages to the seven churches establish conquering as a major theme very early on by front-loading the repetition of the term. However, we concede the point that this structure is not a classical rhetorical chiasm.

[252] The integrity of this structure depends on taking the uses of νίκη in Rev 2-3 as one use. This makes sense, however, because each use of νίκη in the messages mirrors the others, just as each message mirrors the others. The messages make up a discrete unit in Revelation.

Thematically the gathering of the armies of the earth (16:14) or the ten kings (17:13) to do battle with the Lamb balance the notion of C with its "conquering and to conquer" phrasing, but conquering is not mentioned in either of these passages. Whereas conquering is explicitly mentioned in 15:2 and it does fit thematically, although it is not paired with a verb of going out. Even so, this movement is in keeping with John's theology of conquering.[253]

The association of Apollo with victory in Revelation may not only stem from imperial associations, but also from the teachings of the Nicolaitans. Some have noted that the root νίκη may be related to the idea of victory.[254] Their teachings possibly contain notions of accommodating to pagan religion. So, might this be a response to them? Regardless, we know that John inverts popular notions of conquering by replacing them with martyrdom and faithful witness—an inversion made all the more poignant by this chiastic structure that pivots on conquering "by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony." Inverting this very basic memory genre (i.e. conquering is equivalent to success through strength over another's weakness), one that is represented *ad nauseum* in Secondspace representations (art, literature, myth) throughout the Mediterranean, challenges the social identity of his hearers at a very fundamental level.[255] The costs of claiming such a terminal identity are made clear both in the martyrdom of Antipas as well as the martyrdom of the saints and witnesses in the body of the main vision. This is again an endgame claim about associating with the views and values of God and the Lamb.

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[253] Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 184; Koester, *Revelation*, 265, 385–86. CDA # 3, 5.

[254] Kerkeslager, "Apollo," 120–21; Witherington, *Revelation*, 96. For other discussions of the Nicolaitans see Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 149; Koester, *Revelation*, 263.

[255] Oster, *Seven Congregations*, 108–12.

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined previously proposed reference to Apollo in Revelation as well as proposed alternate readings in light of a counter-Apollo motif. Utilizing the methodology I outlined in chapter two and the relevant data of chapters three and four, we revisited those references where Apollo has traditionally featured as a major interpretive lens and argued further for this approach. We saw that John's references to Apollo fit within the larger thematic scope and aims of Revelation as a document that reinforces sectarian identity. Based on the presence of the counter-Apollo motif apparent in these passages, we then examined alternate readings of passages based on the presence of this motif. In our full analysis of Apollo in Revelation, we saw how John developed the concept of Apollo. Apollo starts simply as a parody, imposter, and rival to Christ. John presents then presents him as an agent that invites rather than expels war, famine, and plague through his conquering. Finally, John reveals Apollo as an abyssal chaos monster, a full-fledged agent of the Dragon, and the power behind the empire. Throughout these and other references John also reclaimed, as it were, aspects and associations of Apollo that he regarded as belonging purely to God and the Lamb, such as worship, splendor, and knowledge of the divine plan of history.

John's use of Apollo and his spatial and memory associations fit within John's goals of reinforcing sectarian identity by his use of space and especially memory. Within the larger context of the Apocalypse as Secondspace, John redefines and re-associates spatial and memory associations according to divine revelation. The Firstspace of the earth has been dominated by the Dragon and his servants. They have reconfigured Firstspace in their Secondspace conceptualizations. However, this is temporary and the Secondspace of heaven will overwhelm

them. In the meantime, the message of the Apocalypse encourages faithful witness to the Lamb while living in the Thirdspace of the present.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study we set out to answer the question: What is Apollo doing in Revelation? To answer it, we examined the history and current state of NT research on Apollo and Revelation, described his Panhellenic, imperial, and local manifestations, and applied this information along with the methodology to the text of Revelation itself. We saw that John inverted his role as patron of the empire and bringer of the golden age, presenting him instead as a demonic creature in the service of the Dragon. This characterization of Apollo fits within the larger matrix of John's rhetorical use of spaces and social memory, namely, the reinforcement of sectarian boundaries and the redefinition of pagan and Jewish reality interpreted through the Christ event. John's main invective is against the Dragon, but Apollo, pagan religion, and the empire are tools and servants of the Dragon who parody the true sovereignty and splendor of God and his Christ. John's rhetoric reveals that accommodation to the Dragon's servants, no matter how innocuous it may seem, will bring destruction.

Summary

This study's initial chapter reviewed the history of interpretation and the current state of NT research on Apollo and the Apocalypse. Interpreters had suggested allusions to Apollo since at least Hugo Grotius and Apollo often featured as background material in discussing the cultural milieu of Revelation. The most prominently discussed allusions were the first horseman of the Apocalypse (Rev 6:2), Apollyon (9:11), and the Apollo-Leto-Python Myth (ch 12). We noted that only a few interpreters had attempted to explain the question of Apollo's place in Revelation, while most had suggested the references were probably intended as slights against the emperor.

In this study's approach to Apollo's place in the religion, culture, and politics of Asia Minor, this study utilized insights from the social science theories of Social Memory and Critical Spatiality. These theories allowed us to evaluate not only the manifestations of Apollo's prominence, but also the effect these had on forming and maintaining social identity. This study also utilized the insights from the ongoing conversation, by those such as Hays, Wright, Jauhiainen, and Long, about the detection and evaluation of intertextural allusions.

The initial portion of our examination of Apollo focused on his Panhellenic conceptions, his conceptions in Asia Minor, and his place in imperial ideology and propaganda. The analysis of Apollo in Asia Minor demonstrated that he was one of the most important deities there, and that his cults, myths, etc. strongly affected the formation of social identity. His Panhellenic representation existed in varying degrees of strength throughout Asia Minor, but was also integrated into or overshadowed by local conceptions. During the Imperial period Apollonian festivals proliferated throughout Asia Minor. This not only demonstrated Apollo's importance regionally, but also served to reinforce his place in Anatolian social identity. Apollo's role as the oracle of Zeus and the other gods also elevated his position in Asia Minor. The flourishing of his oracle sites at Didyma and Claros during the Imperial Period enhanced his prominence. Many cities claimed Apollo as their patron deity and often sent delegations to his oracle sites. His role as oracle played a key role in establishing the "Greek" identity of newly Hellenized cities in Asia Minor. Prophecy included several practices based on the socio-economic status of the inquirer, but they were almost always related to Apollo as the source of prophecy. Asia Minor evidenced a number of local Apollonian myths as well as those that might be described as Panhellenic.

The role of Apollo in Asia Minor was complicated during the Imperial period by his inclusion in imperial propaganda. Augustus took Apollo as his patron deity and expanded his

worship in Rome. Augustus incorporated Apollo into his public self-representation and presented Apollo as the guarantor of Roman rule. He accomplished this through coinage, a public propaganda war, as well as actual war with Antony, monumental building, rumor, and literary patronage. This association was extremely successful. Through it he consolidated power and made himself and his rule the focus of both religion and the state. He not only established a precedent many of his successors continued, but the local governments of Asia Minor also reinforced this association, even into the reign of Domitian. The most notable association of Apollo and the person of the emperor, apart from Augustus, came from Nero, who made extreme and flamboyant displays to ensure this association.

Following the more general discussion of Apollo in Asia Minor, this study narrowed its focus to the seven cities of Revelation. After briefly exploring the prominence of Apollo at Ephesus, Smyrna, Thyatira, Philadelphia, and Pergamum, this study explored the social memory and spatial manifestations of Apollo at Sardis and the Lycus Valley. This exploration included social memory and spatial evaluation of political and mythic history, as well as numismatic, epigraphic, monumental, and other material Secondspace representations of Apollo.

The final portion of this study addressed the presence of Apollo in Revelation and was divided into two parts. The first reevaluated previously proposed references in light of Apollo's prominence in Asia Minor and the methodology for discerning intertextual allusions. This reevaluation demonstrated that they had a greater strength and thematic continuity than previously realized. Karrer's assertions that John sought to strip Apollo of his divine glory and assign them to Christ, as well as to emphasize his chthonic and destructive nature while showing that the golden age of Apollo and empire was a lie proved accurate. In light of this counter-Apollo motif, alternate readings in the Apocalypse were suggested and explored.

Evaluating the effects on social identity also played a key role in the analysis of the references. This study demonstrated its initial assertion that John alludes to Apollo or Apollonian themes in the Apocalypse because he is part of John's main invective against the Dragon. Apollo was part of this invective because he was intimately involved with the empire and extremely prominent in Asia Minor. Part of John's task in writing Revelation was unmasking the insidious nature of Apollo and his relationship to the Dragon.

Conclusions

John's approach to group identity fits well within the recognized dualism of apocalyptic literature, but in this case he 'unveils' the deceit of the dragon and his servants and their attempts to entice the people of God into unholy compromise—both locally and pan-geographically. John's message is clear: despite how the dragon and his servants present themselves, one must remain faithful to God and the Lamb or find oneself on the receiving end of judgment. To do this, John identified the greatest threats to the integrity of the church through signs and symbols, as well as various memory genres and uses of space. He primarily did this through the practices of exclusion, blending, co-option, and inversion. With Apollo these included such things as cult statues, prophecy, myth, divine attributes, and imperial propaganda. In the greater context of Revelation as Secondspace, he redefined and reassigned the true nature of Firstspace in that it will eventually be dominated by the Secondspace of heaven. In the Thirdspace of Roman imperial rule John advocates for resistance by faithful witness to Christ through the rejection of accommodation to local and imperial religion.

Although Apollo is only explicitly mentioned once in Revelation, the circumstantial evidence attests the strength of the recognized and newly proposed references. Using the Criteria for Detecting Allusions and the social scientific theories Social Memory and Critical Spatiality

we established that these references demonstrate thematic and rhetorical coherence both in the text and between the text and the socio-religious context of John's recipients. Indeed, this methodology should prove especially useful to other studies looking to establish the likelihood of references in Revelation to other aspects of pagan culture. This study also corroborates previous and current research advocating for Apollonian intertextural allusions.

In his invective against the Dragon, Apollo, and the empire, John offers a vision of their waning power. All their splendor and authority are a lie. The Dragon was cast down from heaven, Apollo is really Apollyon, and Rome is a drunken harlot. True power, splendor, and authority belong to God and his Christ. As we discussed earlier, Karrer and others are certainly right to suggest John writes to reclaim positive associations from the gods and ascribe them to Christ as the fulfillment of every good thing they represent. John singles out Apollo because he is the god of light and order and the protector and guarantor of the empire. John strips him of his light, prophecy, music, and role as bane of chaos. Instead of shining forth he dims into the Apollondämmerung of the Lamb's conquering.

Avenues for Further Research

This study demonstrated Apollo's prominence in Asia Minor and in imperial self-conception and self-representation. Much of the NT was written to churches in Asia Minor. Since John thought Apollo was important enough to counter, it follows that traces of Apollo's influence may also be found in other NT documents. This study also demonstrates that care should be taken to research the local expressions of Greek or Roman religion when suggesting religious intertextural allusions.

The methods employed in this study proved helpful for approaching the text. This study explored Apollo's role in Revelation and demonstrated that critical spatiality and social memory

theory are excellent heuristic tools for examining its intertexture. Although the counter-Apollo motif plays an important role in Revelation, it is not the only important motif. These other motifs would benefit from a similar analysis using these theories.

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