“The Testimony of Jesus” & “The Testimony of Enoch”:
An emic approach to the genre of the Apocalypse

Dr Sean Michael Ryan
Heythrop College, University of London

1. Introduction: An emic approach to the genre of the Apocalypse

Contemporary genology offers a diverse range of approaches to investigate the genre of an (ancient) text. An interpreter’s choice of genre theory is intimately connected with the questions that s/he is asking of a text. For example, is the concern principally to classify a text or a set of texts for the purposes of academic scholarship? Or is it rather to position a text amidst the generic conventions of its own day? Is the central aim to consider how an ancient hearer may situate a text among the diversity of literary works that s/he is already cognizant of, or to scrutinize the generic cues within a text that aim to direct the audience’s generic expectations? The present study focuses on the latter research questions, teasing out how one particular self-referent (μαρτύρια) may direct the generic expectations of the implied audience of the Apocalypse. This sharply defined focus traces lines of continuity with previous intertextual studies of the genre of the Apocalypse, which differ in method and scope from research into the definition of the genre ‘apocalypse’ itself, notably with regard to the choice of genre theory.

The industry-standard definition of the genre ‘apocalypse’, produced by the SBL Apocalypse Group edited by John J. Collins, offers an excellent example of the use of

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1 I express my thanks to colleagues in the “Revelation Seminar” of the British New Testament Conference and the “Biblical Studies Research Seminar” at King’s College London who offered helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper (2010-2011).


complementary genre theories to respond to a range of research questions.\footnote{John J. Collins, “Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre,” in Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre (Semeia 14; ed. J. J. Collins; Missoula: SBL, 1979), 1-20.} Part of the impetus for the project was to bring clarity to a slippery scholarly category, in order to adjudicate membership of this genre.\footnote{For a detailed overview of scholarly enquiry into the genre apocalypse with extensive bibliographies see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity (Part I),” CBR 5.2 (2007): 235-286 and idem., “Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity (Part II),” CBR 5.3 (2007): 367-432.} Accordingly, the SBL study may be characterized, in part, as a\textit{classificatory} approach to genre, one which offered a nuanced analysis of central and peripheral recurring characteristics, in form and content, shared by a select body of writings commonly assigned to the genre ‘apocalypse’ by scholarship.\footnote{Whilst the body of texts was pre-selected, on the basis of the analysis certain texts were excluded from the genre (eg. “testaments” such as the Epistle of Enoch (1 En 91-104), and “oracles,” such as the Sibylline Oracles) or assigned a borderline status (eg. Jubilees).} To achieve this aim, however, the SBL’s methodological procedure intuitively adopted a\textit{prototype theory} of genre,\footnote{Cf. Michael Sinding, “After Definitions: Genre, Categories, and Cognitive Science,” Genre 35 (2002): 181-220. Drawing on cognitive science, ‘prototype theory’ proposes that people construct conceptual categories on the basis of representative prototypes and then judge how closely other examples compare and contrast with the prototype.} selecting some exemplars as ‘prototypical’ (in this case, Daniel 7-12, 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Apocalypse), with others deemed more or less typical of the genre by comparison.\footnote{Cf. Newsom, “Spying,” 23-26; John J. Collins, “What is Apocalyptic Literature?” in The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature, (ed. J. J. Collins; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1-18 (2-5); and Benjamin G. Wright III, “Joining the Club: A Suggestion about Genre in Early Jewish Texts,” DSD 17 (2010): 289-314 (esp. 295-297).} The subtlety of the SBL study enabled it to move beyond its initial limited goal of bringing terminological clarity to a modern scholarly category, and to trace generic conventions tacitly shared, imitated, and altered, by the ancient authors of these texts.\footnote{In this way the \textit{synchronic} definition produced by the SBL Apocalypse Group provided impetus for subsequent \textit{diachronic} studies of developments and transformations in conventions of members of the genre ‘apocalypse’ during the Graeco-Roman era (3\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE – 2\textsuperscript{nd} century CE). Cf. Bernard McGinn, John J. Collins, and Stephen J. Stein, eds., The Continuum History of Apocalypticism, (London: T&T Clark, 2003), esp. 1-220.}

An alternative approach to genre is to focus on the generic conventions of individual texts, such as the New Testament Apocalypse. The focus here may centre on comprehension of genre through\textit{intertextual comparison},\footnote{Cf. Newsom, “Research Questions,” 273-274, 276-277.} assessing how an (implied) hearer of the Apocalypse may position this work in relation to other known texts. An intertextual approach considers every text to exist in a complex web of textual relations.
It moves beyond a narrow source-critical focus, to consider the dialogical interrelationships evoked by verbal, structural, and formal echoes of intertexts. The implied author guides the competent hearer’s expectations by means of explicit generic cues, such as titles and prefaces, as well as implicit verbal echoes of the wording, structure, and forms of texts that have (implicitly) shaped this work’s generic conventions. Nuanced intertextual studies of the genre of the Apocalypse have traced the mixed generic conventions of this text in its opening chapter (Linton) or across all twenty-two chapters (Aune).

The present study will similarly focus on comprehension of genre through intertextual comparison, but with a more narrowly-defined target than the studies of Aune and Linton, by undertaking an exploratory study of one explicit generic cue. The aim of this study is to reconsider the potential generic significance of the emic term ‘testimony’ (μαρτυρία) that occurs in the Apocalypse (cf. Rev 1:2, 1:9, 12:17, 19:10, 20:4). Whilst the potential generic significance of the opening word, ἀποκάλυψις (Rev 1:1), has been extensively discussed and debated, another prominent self-referent contained in the introduction to the Apocalypse, namely ‘testimony’ (μαρτυρία) (Rev 1:2), has received far less attention. ‘Testimony’ does, however, function elsewhere in Second Temple Jewish literature as a generic self-designation. A translation equivalent (גזרה = μαρτύριον / διαμαρτυρία) occurs in Jubilees to refer to itself (Jub 1:7-8) and portions of the Enochic corpus (Jub 4:17-19, 21-23; cf. 1 En 1-36, 72-82, 85-90, 92-105).

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12 For a helpful overview of the philosophical and literary theories that shaped the approach (eg. Kristeva, Barthes, Genette) see Graham Allen, Intertextuality (NCI; 2nd Ed.; London: Routledge, 2011).


14 The noun ἀποκάλυψις does not appear to function as a “generic cue” for the original target audience of the Apocalypse to relate it to other written works of that name; no such written works are known to have existed in the 1st century CE. So Morton Smith, “On the History of ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΡΤΩ and ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΙΣ” in Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East, (ed. D. Hellhom; Tübingen: Mohr, 1983), 9-20; William Adler, “Introduction,” in The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity (ed. J. C. VanderKam and W. Adler; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1996), 1-31 (esp. 8-12); Linton, “Reading the Apocalypse,” 26-28. Linton provides a list of scholars who accordingly accept that ἀποκάλυψις cannot carry a generic sense in Rev 1.1, as well as a list of dissenting voices who argue the contrary, whilst acknowledging that supporting data is lacking in the extant literature.
Both ‘testimonies’ document cosmological and eschatological mysteries deriving from a heavenly source, entrusted to a privileged witness (Enoch, Moses).\(^{15}\)

This paper investigates the meaning of the term “testimony” (תעודה) in the context of Jubilees and portions of the Enochic literature and considers whether the presence of a translation equivalent (μαρτυρία) in the Apocalypse may function as a generic cue for the implied audience directing them to detect generic affinities with the former written “testimonies” of Enoch and Moses.\(^{16}\)

2. ‘Testimony’ (תעודה/ διαμαρτυρία) as a generic self-designation for Jubilees & portions of 1 Enoch

2.1 Jubilees’ self-designation: “The Torah and the Testimony”

Jubilees, a 2\(^{nd}\) century BCE work, originally written in Hebrew, provides an interpretative re-telling of much of the contents of Genesis 1 to Exodus 24, beginning with the account of creation and concluding with the giving of the Torah on Sinai. Incidents derived from the source texts are abridged, expanded, deleted or rewritten in accordance with Jubilees’ own ideological concerns (eg. prominence ascribed to a 364 day calendar and the Festival of Weeks).\(^{17}\) On the basis of broad parallels in exegetical method that underlie the composition of a range of Second Temple Jewish texts such as 1 Enoch 6-11, Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen), and Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, Jubilees is most commonly

\(^{15}\) Cf. Sarah Underwood Dixon’s paper in this volume on the Apocalypse’s “testimony of Jesus” as “revealed wisdom” (analogous to Daniel and 1 Enoch).

\(^{16}\) The Apocalypse also explicitly describes itself as a work of ‘prophecy’ (Rev 1.3; 22.7, 10, 18-19), which undoubtedly carries generic overtones, not least because of the extensive resonances of prophetic writings that resound throughout the work, notably to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, David (Psalms), and the Twelve, such that Frederick D. Mazzaferri, *The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-Critical Perspective* (BZNW 54; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 58 suggests that the Apocalypse selects ‘prophecy’ as its “generic voice.” As will be discussed below, this generic category interacts closely with the more neglected self-designation that is the focus of this paper, namely “testimony” (μαρτυρία), as the two terms frequently appear in apposition: (Rev 1.2, 9; 20.4).

assigned to the genre ‘rewritten Bible/Scripture’. Texts assigned to this genre rewrite select portions of scriptural texts according to an ideological agenda.

More recently, however, there has been a re-assessment of the value of etic genre labels used by scholars to classify Second Temple Jewish texts, and a renewed interest in emic categories indicated by the writings themselves. Jonathan Campbell, in particular, has highlighted how both aspects of the generic classification ‘rewritten Bible’ are anachronistic in a Second Temple Jewish context. First, given that there was no fixed canon of scripture in the 3rd century BCE-1st CE, when texts such as Jubilees were composed, there was no ‘Bible’ to rewrite. As a consequence the relative status of a source text and its interpretative commentary may not have been viewed as of unequal authority at least not in the eyes of the new text’s audience. Secondly, from a compositional perspective, Jubilees undoubtedly constitutes a ‘rewriting’ of portions of the Torah (and other authoritative texts). But such a compositional perspective differs from the text’s own self-presentation to its original target audience:

*Jubilees* was ... a ‘rewritten’ entity only for the anonymous elite that produced it. For those who took it at face value, it was Mosaic scripture parallel with, but not dependent on, Genesis 1-Exodus 25.

Approaching genre from this perspective requires sensitivity to the authority claims made by the text itself. Jubilees portrays itself as an accurate transcription of details recorded on the heavenly tablets, dictated by an angel of the presence and transcribed by Moses on

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22 For the issues surrounding the emergence of the canon of the Hebrew scriptures and Septuagint see the insightful series of articles in Lee McDonald and James A. Sanders, eds., *The Canon Debate* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002).

23 Campbell, “Rewritten Bible.” 49.
Sinai (cf. Prologue, and 1:1-29). Accordingly, Jubilees positions itself as a complementary revelation alongside the Torah (cf. Jub 6:21-22, where the audience are advised to refer to the former work for the full details of the regulations regarding the Festival of Weeks: “Celebrate it as it is written and inscribed regarding it. For I have written (this) in the book of the first law…”). Whilst Jubilees thus appears to function as a ‘second law’ (of which more will be said shortly), a significant self-designation that is used is the term ‘testimony’. Jubilees refers to itself as a תועודה (cf. especially Jub 1:8), that is, a legal witness or testimony (cf. Jub 1:4 The Lord related to Moses “the divisions of all the times - both of the law and of the testimony [תועודה]”; cf. also Jub 1:26). The particular nature of this legal testimony can be clarified on the basis of the verbal echoes of Deuteronomy 31 in Jubilees 1:7-8.

**Jub 1:7-8** [Lord to Moses] Now you write this entire message which I am telling you today, because I know their defiance and their stubbornness (even) before I bring them into the land which I promised by oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: ‘To your posterity I will give the land which flows with milk and honey’. [cf. Deut 31:20] When they eat and are full, they will turn to foreign gods – to ones which will not save them from any of their afflictions. Then this testimony [תועודה] will serve as evidence [cf. Deut 31:21].

**Deut 31:19, 21** (NRSV/MT)

19 Now therefore write this song, and teach it to the Israelites; put it in their mouths, in order that this song may be a witness (לעד) / (LXX: εἰς μαρτύριον) for me against the Israelites … 21 And when many terrible troubles come upon them, this song will confront them as a witness (לפניו לעד) / (LXX: κατὰ)

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πρόσωπον μαρτυροῦσα) because it will not be lost from the mouths of their descendants.

As noted by Nickelsburg and VanderKam, Jubilees consequently appropriates for itself the role of the Song of Moses as a ‘testimony’ as outlined in Deut 31-32; that is, it acts as a witness (τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ τοῦ νόμου) testifying in advance against (potential) failings to uphold the covenant obligations. It is possible that Jubilees goes even farther. In Deut 31 the witnessing role delegated to the Song of Moses is itself re-appropriated by “the book of the law”:

Deut 31:26 (NRSV/MT)
26 Take this book of the law ( ספר התורה) and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God; let it remain there as a witness against you (בך לעד ( / ) LXX: ἐν σοὶ εἰς μαρτυροῦσα).

Accordingly Wacholder has argued that Jubilees refers to itself by the full-phrase ‘the torah (תורה) and the testimony (תעודה)’ (cf. Jub 1.4, 26), which he renders as “Torah-Admonition”. Jubilees functions as the ‘The-Torah-and-the-Testimony’ alluded to in Deut 31.24-7 - over against the Torah-Commandment taught by Moses to the people of Israel - functioning as a legal witness in advance against the covenant violations of the people of Israel. The basis for its expert testimony is guaranteed by the nature of its

27 Wevers, Septuaginta, 340. Wevers, Notes, 503 on Deut 31:21: “LXX has omitted the first part of MT …[such that] In LXX the opening clause is paratactically presented: ‘and this song shall be set up as a witness in opposition’[…] κατά πρόσωπον …[t]ogether with the verb ἀντικαθίστημι …has the legal sense of being set up over against a defendant, i.e. as a witness μαρτυροῦσα (for לעד) – for the prosecution.”

28 Cf. George W. E. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, Fortress, 2001), 75; VanderKam, “Jubilees,” 93.

29 Cf. Duane L. Christensen, Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12, (WBC 6B; Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2002), 762-87 on the parallel functions of the Torah (= scroll of Deuteronomy) and the Song of Moses (Deut 32) as orally proclaimed (sung?) witnesses to the people of Israel to encourage covenant loyalty.

30 Wevers, Septuaginta, 342. Wevers, Notes, 506, the book “serves as a witness among (or possibly against) you” (ἐν σοὶ).


Cana Werman, “‘The תора and the תועדה’ Engraved on the Tablets,” DSD 9 (2002): 75-103 (esp. 94-95) proposes that Jubilees appropriates the function of “witness” previously assigned to the Torah (Deut 31.26) even more closely than it does the same function that was assigned to the Song of Moses.
composition: it is an accurate transcription of all the deeds of the people of Israel, throughout their history, from creation until the eschaton, as recorded on the heavenly-tablets (cf. Jub 1.26-29).

Wacholder’s double-designation for Jubilees as “Torah-Admonition,” has received some noteworthy criticism, not least from Martha Himmelfarb, who prefers to interpret the clauses as contrastive rather than synonymous.32

Wacholder’s interpretation of Jubilees 1 ignores much of what Jubilees itself has to say. …Jubilees does not claim to be a book of law, but rather an account of past and future and the divisions of times. The Torah, the public document that Moses is to teach to the children of Israel (1:1) is the repository of Israel’s law. Jubilees is a testimony, a book for the future from Moses’ point of view, not because of its laws, as Wacholder argues, but because of its record of history that will remind the children of Israel of God’s goodness after they have gone astray.33

It is unnecessary to draw such a sharp distinction, however, as the two elements are interrelated: Jubilees with its resonant intertextual echoes of the Mosaic Torah presents itself as ‘another’, complementary, Torah (cf. Jub 6.21-22) that functions as a ‘testimony’ (Jub 1.8; cf. Deut 31-32) - appropriating the role ascribed to the “book of the law” in Deut 31.25-26.


2.2 “The Testimony of Enoch” (1 En 1-36; 72-82; 85-90; 91-105)

Jubilees’ self-designation as “The-Torah-and-the-Testimony” (Jub 1.4, 26) serves to closely relate this work with two sets of ancient writings known to the implied audience: the Mosaic Pentateuch (“Torah”) and another “testimony” (תעודה) formerly revealed to the antediluvian patriarch, Enoch. Portions of the Enochic corpus were known to the Jubilean author, and constitute presumed knowledge for the competent reader/hearer of Jubilees, as alluded to in the expanded biography of Enoch recounted in Jub 4.16ff (cf. Gen 5.18-24):

**Jub 4.17-22**

17 He [Enoch] was the first of mankind who were born on the earth who learned (the art of) writing, instruction, and wisdom and who wrote down in a book the signs of the sky in accord with the fixed pattern of their months so that mankind would know the seasons of the years according to the fixed patterns of each of their months.

18 He was the *first to write a testimony* [תעודה]. He *testified* to mankind in the generations of the earth: The weeks of the jubilees he related, and made known the days of the years; the months he arranged, and related the sabbaths of the years, as we [the angels] had told him.

19 While he slept he saw in a vision what has happened and what will occur – how things will happen for mankind during their history until the day of judgement. He saw everything and understood. He *wrote a testimony* [תעודה] for himself and placed it upon the earth against all mankind and for their history. …

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Cf. Jub 10.17 “Enoch’s work was something created as a *testimony* for the generations of eternity so that he should report all deeds throughout generation after generation on the day of judgement.”
21 He was, moreover, with God’s angels for six jubilees of years. They showed him everything on earth and in the heavens – the dominion of the sun – and he wrote down everything.

22 He testified to the Watchers who had sinned with the daughters of men because these had begun to mix with earthly women so that they became defiled. Enoch testified against all of them.

The constituent parts of the Enochic corpus that are known to the implied author of Jubilees can be tentatively reconstructed by the intertextual allusions to various extant Enochic booklets in this extract. The reference to Enoch as an author of calendrical material (see Jub 4.17b, 21b) most plausibly relates to the contents of the Astronomical Book (1 En 72-82); notably the more detailed calendrical material contained in the Aramaic original of this section (cf. 4QEnastr). The allusion to jubilees and sabbaths (Jub 4.18b) may similarly refer to the Astronomical Book (1 En 72-82) or perhaps The Apocalypse of Weeks (1 En 93.1-10; 91.11-17), although it is also plausible that this is a characteristic retrojection by the Jubillean author of his own calendrical preferences back onto the patriarch. Jub 4.21-22 indicates a familiarity with significant portions of the Book of the Watchers (1 En 1-36), notably Enoch’s guided tour of the perimeter of the disc-earth, escorted by angelic guides (1 En 17-19; 20-36), and his ‘testimony’ against the Watchers (1 En 12-16). The reference to a dream-vision of all human-history (Jub 4.19a) corresponds most closely with the second dream-vision (1 En 85-90), although it may also refer to the overlapping schematization of history in the Apocalypse of Weeks (1 En 93.1-10; 91.11-17). Finally, the two-fold references to Enoch’s ‘testimony’


almost certainly include an explicit allusion to the Epistle of Enoch (1 En 91-105), as explicated by Stuckenbruck:

*Jubilees* [refers] to “a testimony” (*samāʿ*’) that Enoch wrote “and deposited … upon the earth against all the children of men and their generations” (4:19; cf. also 4:18). The same Ethiopic term (*samāʿ*’), as a substantive, occurs only in the *Epistle* at 96:5, 97:4, 99:3 (Grk: διαμαρτυρία), while the verbal form is preserved in the *Exhortation* at 91:3, the conclusion of the *Epistle* at 104:11 and 105:1, and in the body of the work at 100:11. The allusion in *Jubilees* suggests that the author knew of the *Epistle* in its entirety (i.e. both the frame and the body).  

The double reference to Enoch’s ‘testimony’ (Jub 4.18a, 19b), framing this section discussing Enoch’s literary output strongly suggests that the ‘testimony’ includes all the Enochic documents alluded to, rather than being narrowly limited to the Epistle of Enoch itself (1 En 92-105). Accordingly, by means of intertextual verbal echoes, the implied audience of “The-Torah-and-the-Testimony” (= Jubilees) are prompted to recall an earlier “testimony” of Enoch comprised of the following booklets: The Book of the Watchers (1 En 1-36; cf. Jub 4.21-22), The Astronomical Book (I En 72-82 / 4QEnastra; cf. Jub 4.17b, 21b), The Book of Dreams (1 En 83-90; Jub 4.19a), and The Epistle of Enoch (1 En 4.18a, 19b).

The characterization of Enochic booklets as a “testimony” of Enoch by Jub 4:16-25 coheres with the self-presentation of portions of the Enochic corpus itself, as outlined in the Epistle of Enoch (1 En 91-105). The Epistle of Enoch characterizes itself in

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42 For a critique see van Ruiten, “Literary Dependence,” 90-93. It is uncertain whether the Apocalypse of Weeks was included in the “testimony of Enoch” known to Jubilees, due to the difficulty of ascertaining when this text was combined with the Epistle of Enoch; cf. Stuckenbruck, “1 Enoch 91-108,” 49-64, although both Stuckenbruck and Nickelsburg conclude that it was combined with the Epistle already by the 2nd century BCE (cf. 4QEn5).
43 The proposal that Jub 4.16-26 refers to a collection of Enochic booklets as a “testimony” coheres with Nickelsburg’s influential hypothesis of a “testamentary” form of an earlier collection of Enochic
combination with certain other Enochic booklets (cf. 1 En 104.12-13, ‘my books’) as the
written ‘testimony’ of Enoch (cf. 1 En 91.3; 96.4; 97.4; 100.11; 104.11; 105.2). The
opening and closing frame of the document make a direct connection between the oral
‘testimony’ of the antediluvian patriarch, Enoch, addressed to Methuselah and his sons
and the written contents of this document, to be testified, in turn, to the righteous at the
end-time (1 En 91.1-3; 104.11; 105.1-2).

The ‘testimony’ of Enoch has two principal functions according to 1 En 91-105.
First, it functions as legal testimony against sinners on the day of judgement: “this word
will be a testimony against you” (1 En 97.4). This testimony coheres with the heavenly
record of indictments against sinners (1 En 96.7; 97.7), complements the petitions of the
righteous against them (1 En 99.3) and corroborates the testimony of sinners own hearts
(1 En 96.4). The “testimony of Enoch” coheres with the heavenly record as it is
envisaged as a transcription of the contents of the heavenly tablets (1 En 93.2: “…in the
heavenly tablets I read everything and I understood”), testifying in advance to the course
of human history, specifically the conduct of the righteous and sinners and their
respective rewards and punishments.

Secondly, the written copy of Enoch’s testimony is to be revealed to the righteous
at the end-time (cf. 1 En 93.10; 104.11-105.1), as revealed wisdom, which is to be
‘testified’ in turn to humanity to effect their repentance. Consequently, Enoch’s written
‘testimony’ (1 En 1-36; 72-82; 85-90; 91-105) discloses cosmological and eschatological
secrets of the course of human history and the fate of righteous and sinners, deriving from
Enoch’s privileged vision of the whole of human history and the contents of the heavenly
tables.

booklets (1 En 1-36 + 81.1-82.4 + 85-90 + 91 + (portions of) 92-105). Cf. Nickelsburg, “1 Enoch 1,” 21-26,
117-118, 333-338. For a critical evaluation see James C. VanderKam, “Response to George Nickelsburg, I
Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of I Enoch: Chapters 1-36; 81-108 Hermeneia Commentary,” in
George W. E. Nickelsburg in Perspective: An Ongoing Dialogue of Learning (JSJsup 80; vol. 2; ed. J.

Space-constraints preclude a detailed engagement with this issue in this present paper, aside from
noting one crucial point: whilst Nickelsburg refers to this literary form as a “testament,” he qualifies this to
mean a “testament” like Deut 31-33—the precise text that Jubilees itself alludes to in detailing its function
as a legal “testimony.”

44 Cf. Nickelsburg, “1 Enoch 1”, 471; Stuckenbruck, “1 Enoch 91-108”, 90. In addition angels and
heavenly bodies (sun, moon, stars) will also be consulted as witnesses on the day of judgment (1 En
100.10), whilst cloud, mist, dew, and rain provide their own “testimony” against sinners by being withheld
from them (1 En 100.11).

On the basis of Jubilees’ self-presentation as “The-Torah-and-the-Testimony” (Jub 1.7-8; cf. 6.21-22), comparable, in part, to the former “testimony of Enoch” (Jub 4.18, 19), the generic self-designation of both texts can be schematically presented as follows (fig 1):46

Fig. 1 Jubilees as “The Torah and the Testimony” / 1 En 1-36, 72-82, 85-90, 91-105 as the “Testimony” of Enoch

3. The Apocalypse as “The Testimony of Jesus” (ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ)?

The distinctive phrase ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ occurs on six occasions in the Apocalypse (Rev 1.2, 9; 12.17; 19.10 [x 2]; 20.4), accounting for two thirds of the occurrences of the noun μαρτυρία in this document (cf. Rev 6.9; 11.7; 12.11). The ‘testimony of Jesus’ forms part of a broader complex of ideas relating to testimony/witness (deriving from the μαρτ-stem) that interweave throughout this visionary narrative.47 Previous studies of this

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46 Cf. Werman, “Tablets,” 77-81; Wacholder, “Jubilees.”
phrase, in the context of the broader word-group, have principally focused on two issues: one, the force of the genitive Ἰησοῦ in each instance, specifically whether the genitive is subjective (ie. the witness/testimony borne by Jesus) (Trites, Mazzaferri) or objective (ie. witness/testimony about Jesus) (Vassiliadis, Lampe). Secondly, the most appropriate semantic field in which to situate the phrase ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ in any given context: principally forensic (Sweet), prophetic (Mazzaferri), or martyrological (Vassiliadis), as well as the interrelationships between these registers (ie. a causal connection between prophetic testimony (prophetic register), or testimony at trial (forensic register), resulting in suffering and potentially death (martyrological register) (cf. Rev 2:13; 6:9; 11:7; 12:11; 17:6; 20:4). Whilst the present study engages with a number of the issues raised in previous research, it does not provide an exhaustive word-study of such terminology in the Apocalypse. Instead, I focus more narrowly on the potential generic significance of the phrase ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ in the Apocalypse.

3.1 ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ in the main body of the book: ‘Having (ἔχειν) the testimony of Jesus’

In the main body of the Apocalypse (Rev 1.9-22.5) ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ relates to ‘the testimony of Jesus’ that has been entrusted (cf. ἔχειν, Rev 12.17; 19.10; cf. 6.9) to Christian witnesses (μάρτυρες) (cf. 2.13; 11.3; 17.6) who are required to ‘testify’, to its contents, in their turn, to a wider audience, with potential consequences of suffering and death (cf. Rev 3:14; 6:9; 11:7; 17:6; 20:4).

In Rev 12.17 οἱ ἄγιοι are defined as those who observe the commandments of God and ‘hold/maintain the testimony of Jesus’ (τῶν τηροῦντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἔχοντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ), whilst in 19.10 οἱ ἀδελφοί are similarly defined as

48 In addition to the ‘hard-line’ taken by some interpreters that all references are to be understood as either subjective (Trites, Mazzaferri) or objective (Vassiliadis), many commentators detect alternative senses in different contexts, or reject such a sharp dichotomy, and perceive aspects of both senses within the same passage.
‘those who hold/maintain the testimony of Jesus’ (τῶν ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ). What, precisely does ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ consist of in such a context? Supporting evidence strongly suggests a close correlation between the testimony of Jesus and ‘prophecy’. In Rev 11.3-13 the identity and functions of the two witnesses (οἱ δύο μάρτυρες) continually shifts and oscillates between references to these figures as ‘witnesses’ (11.3) who present ‘testimony’ (τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτῶν) (11.7), and ‘prophets’ (οἱ δύο προφηταί) (11.10) who ‘prophecy’ (προφητεύω, 11.3; προφητεία, 11.6) (cf. 2 Chron 24.19; Jub 1.12).

This point is made explicit in Rev 19.10 in which ‘the testimony of Jesus’ is explicitly defined as ‘the spirit of prophecy’ (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς προφητείας). The exalted Christ passes-on his ‘testimony’ by means of the prophetic spirit. This is consistent with the proclamations to the seven assemblies (Rev 2-3), to whom the exalted Christ speaks with the voice of the spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα). Yet, once received the testimony of Jesus is not simply to be kept to oneself, but rather ‘held’ (ἔχειν) in the active sense of ‘maintained’ or ‘observed’ (cf. parallel with τηρέω, Rev 12.17), which requires its prophetic recipients to communicate its contents to others (cf. Rev 11.3-13).

Whilst I do not think that the Apocalypse limits the content of ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ to ‘testimony about Jesus’ (objective genitive), there is nonetheless an overlap between testifying to the prophecy disclosed by the exalted Christ, and testifying about him.

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51 Cf. Bruce, “Spirit,” 340: “The conclusion is plain: it is not that the Spirit is identical with the exalted Lord, but that the exalted Lord speaks to the churches by the Spirit – and the Spirit can scarcely be other than the Spirit of prophecy. The words which John writes to the churches by the Lord’s command he writes as a prophet.”
52 Cf. Swete, “Holy Spirit,” 278: “To be a true prophet is to witness to Jesus [objective genitive], and to witness to Jesus is to have the prophetic spirit; testimony is the raison d’être of prophecy.”
53 Cf. Swete, “Testimony,” 106: “Christian witness in Revelation seems to be not specifically testimony to Jesus (though it may include that …) but the witness of Jesus in them, inspiring them to bear witness [Rev 19:10d].”
3.2 ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ as a self-designation for the Apocalypse in the literary frame

A subtle change of emphasis occurs in the literary frame of the Apocalypse (Rev 1.1-8; 22.6-21), however, which seeks to correlate more closely ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ with the contents of this scroll, such that this written text functions as a transcribed copy of the testimony of Jesus.

In Rev 1.1-3 the close correlation between ‘the testimony of Jesus’ (τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ) that John has received, and his own written ‘testimony’ to its contents (ἐμαρτύρησεν ὁσα εἶδεν) (Rev 1.2), indicate that the Apocalypse here characterizes itself as a written transcription of ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ. This is confirmed both by the integrity of the mediating witness, namely the exalted Christ, who reliably testifies to the full disclosure he received (Rev 1.5), and by the emphatic subordinate clause ὅσα εἶδεν (Rev 1.2), which stresses that John testifies to all that he observed.54 This generic significance is deftly captured by Mazzaferri: “…in John’s prophetic prologue, in apposition to ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ it [ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ] connotes his entire book.”55

Further confirmation is provided by comparable references to the exalted Christ’s mediation of the testimony that underpins this document, in the concluding frame (Rev 22:16, 18, 20). Particularly striking is the wording of the penultimate line of the work (Rev 22:20) in which the living voice of the exalted Christ, identifies itself as the one ‘testifying’ (ὁ μαρτυρῶν) to the contents of this written document (τὰῦτα).56

The close correlation between text and testimony in the literary frame of the work rhetorically re-focuses and redefines the meaning of phrases contained in the main body. The phrase ‘those who possess the testimony of Jesus’ (Rev 12.17; 19.10; cf. 6.9) now denotes not simply early Christian prophets who possess the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19.10d), but also all those who hold/maintain (ἔχειν) the contents of this written scroll.

54 David E. Aune, Revelation 1-5 (WBC 52a; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 19: “ὁσα … is used here to denote size or quantity and emphasizes the completeness of the revelation transmitted by John.”
56 The identification of ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα (Rev 22.20a) with Christ is verified by the immediately succeeding clause ἐρχομαι ταχύ (22.20b), spoken on four previous occasions, exclusively attributed to the exalted Christ (Rev 2.16; 3.11; 22.7, 22.12); cf. G. K. Beale, The Book of Revelation (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 1154-1155; David E. Aune, Revelation 17-22 (WBC 52c; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1232-1233.
This shift in emphasis is clearly evidenced by comparing Rev 19.10 with 22.8b-9. In Rev 19.10 οἱ ἀδελφοὶ are defined simply as ‘those who have the testimony of Jesus’ (τῶν ἔχοντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν ᾿Ησοῦ), that is those who possess the prophetic testimony of Jesus that has been entrusted to them. All may (potentially) receive the spirit of prophecy, and function as prophetic witnesses. In Rev 22.9, by contrast, οἱ ἀδελφοὶ are sub-divided into two categories: first, οἱ προφῆται, and second, “those who observe the words of this scroll” (τῶν τηροῦντων τοὺς λόγους τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου). That is to say “those who possess the testimony of Jesus” connote two subtly distinct referents in Rev 22.9: prophets, who receive the prophetic testimony of Jesus directly, and non-prophets, whose knowledge of the testimony is mediated via the contents of this written prophetic scroll. The Apocalypse itself constitutes a written record of ᾿Ησοῦ (cf. Rev 1.2; 22.16, 18, 20), mediating the prophetic testimony of the exalted Jesus.

4. ‘The Testimony of Jesus’ (ἡ μαρτυρία ᾿Ησοῦ) as an emic genre label for the Apocalypse?

ἡ μαρτυρία ᾿Ησοῦ, in apposition to ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (Rev 1.2) is used as a self-designation for the Apocalypse: it is “the word of God, that is, the testimony (i.e. prophecy) of Jesus.” Might this choice of self-designation indicate a particular type of prophetic text (cf. Rev 1.3; 22.7, 10, 18, 19), that is, a ‘testimony’ (μαρτυρία) akin to ‘The Testimony (ὅταμαρτυρία) of Enoch’ (= 1 En 1-36; 72-82; 85-90; 91-105) and/or ‘The Testimony (πρισὶς) of Moses’ (Jub 4.18-19)?

Affinities between these three documents are evidenced in their respective content and forensic function. All three testimonies relate the orderly course of human history up to the eschaton, disclosed in advance to a privileged ‘witness’ (μάρτυς) on the basis of his celestial ascent and/or sight of the heavenly tablets (Jub 1.26-29; 4.19, 21; Rev 1.5; 1 En 93.1-2). Furthermore, all three testimonies undertake a forensic role, providing an ethical standard against which human behaviour is to be assessed at the final judgment (Jub 4.19; 1 En 104.9-105.2; Rev 1.3; 22.7).

57 Cf. Aune, Revelation 17-22, 1034-1039; Beale, Revelation, 1128-29.
But to what extent may the original target audience of the Apocalypse have been persuaded that the “testimony” of Jesus (= the Apocalypse) has generic affinities with the former written “testimonies” of Enoch and Moses? Is the “volume” of implicit intertextual verbal echoes of Jubilees and 1 Enoch in the Apocalypse sufficient to corroborate the explicit generic cue (μαρτυρία) that points in that direction?\(^{58}\) Further research is required to fully investigate this crucial issue, but initial intimations suggest that 1 Enoch, and specifically The Epistle of Enoch, merits renewed study as a potential generic intertext for the Apocalypse.\(^{59}\)

Study of intertextual verbal echoes of Jubilees in the Apocalypse is severely hampered by the fragmentary state of extant Greek fragments of Jubilees surviving only in short patristic (cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion*) or Byzantine excerpts (George Syncellus, 9th century CE), with a resultant lack of knowledge as to the existence of Greek versions of the Hebrew original in the Second Temple Jewish period.\(^{60}\) Doubts as to the “availability” of a Greek version of Jubilees for the original target audience of the Apocalypse, coupled with the practical difficulties of assessing the “volume” of intertextual echoes of Greek versions of Jubilees in the Apocalypse create significant obstacles to assess this line of enquiry.\(^{61}\)

A more viable line of research is that the Apocalypse’s use of μαρτυρία as a self-designation may indicate a generic affinity with Enochic literature, perhaps most plausibly the Epistle of Enoch (1 En 91-105). A considerable portion of the Epistle of Enoch is preserved in the 4th century CE Chester-Beatty-Michigan-Papyrus (1 En 97.6-104.13; 106.107.3).\(^{62}\) George Nickelsburg concludes that extensive allusions to 1 Enoch

\(^{58}\) On the significance of ‘volume’, ie. the extent and prominence of explicit verbal parallelism, as one of the key variables in detecting intertextual echoes (including availability, recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation and satisfaction), cf. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, (New Haven, Yale, 1989), 29-32.


\(^{61}\) Consequently further research would require a careful assessment of potential verbal echoes of the Greek text of the Apocalypse with Greek translation equivalents of the Ethiopic text of Jubilees, compared with the fragmentary Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.

by patristic and NT writers “indicate that the [Greek] translation was in place by the end of the first century [CE]”, making a plausible case for the “availability” of the text to the implied audience of the Apocalypse. 63

The Epistle of Enoch explicitly refers to its contents as a ‘testimony’ (διαμαρτυρία, cf 1 En 104:11), and is twice described as a ‘testimony’ (תעודה) by Jubilees, one of its earliest interpreters (Jub 4:18, 19). Like the Apocalypse, the Epistle of Enoch claims to recount the course of human history, and bases its knowledge on privileged visions of the celestial realm. Furthermore, the Epistle of Enoch, like the Apocalypse contains formal epistolary characteristics, at least in its Greek version (cf. 1 En 92.1; 100.6). 64 Finally, there are verbal and thematic affinities between the literary frame of the Apocalypse and the Epistle of Enoch, most notably in the prohibition of scribal alteration to this pair of revealed ‘testimonies’ (1 En 104.11; Rev 22.18-19).

Proposing that the Apocalypse may contain intertextual echoes of Enochic literature is not a novel idea. 65 What is distinctive about this proposal, however, is the intimation that the Apocalypse may indicate a generic affinity with the Epistle of Enoch, not by means of its self-description as an ἀποκάλυψις (Rev 1.1), but rather by its self-designation as a μαρτυρία.

Further research is required to carefully scrutinize this proposal, but the marked affinities that have been noted in this paper between the content and forensic function of the ‘testimonies’ of Enoch and Moses and the ‘testimony of Jesus’ in the Apocalypse, suggest that the issue merits further critical enquiry. The potential benefit of further research may be an enhanced appreciation of the generic self-designation of the Apocalypse that is outlined in its literary frame, and signalled by its own emic categories.

108”, 185-6 for further bibliography on the Chester Beatty-Michigan papyrus, and who also provides a translation of the Greek text in his Commentary on 1 En 97:6-103:14.

63 Nickelsburg, “1 Enoch 1”, 13-14.


That is to say, the Apocalypse may depict itself not simply as a work of ‘prophecy’, but more specifically as a prophetic ‘testimony’ (cf. fig. 2), analogous in part to the testimony of Enoch (cf. especially 1 En 91-105), functioning as a witness in advance to divinely disclosed eschatological and cosmological mysteries.

Fig. 2 The Apocalypse as “The Prophecy and the Testimony”? (Rev 1:2, 1:9, 12:17, 19:10, 20:4)