Papyrus 72 and the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex: A study of the dynamics of early Christian identity formation

By

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This thesis is dedicated to:

My wife, Robyn. Thank you for bearing so much.

Daeven. What a journey, my friend.

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PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

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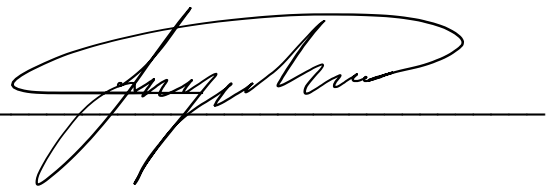
Signature 

ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this dissertation, has obtained the required research ethics approval/exemption for the research described in this work.

The author declares that they have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of ethics for scholarly activities.

SUMMARY

Early Christian manuscripts like P^{72} and the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex (BMC) offer a window into the dynamics of early Christian identity formation. Recent scholarship argues that the scribe of P^{72} was also the collector of the BMC. This allows these manuscripts to be studied together as a creation of a single person in the early 4th century. Through the utilization of social-scientific and text-critical methodologies, and with reference to social identity theory, the present study will aim to explicate the socio-historical context of these manuscripts in conjunction with their known textual features in an attempt to more fully appreciate the dynamic process of social identity and boundary formation in some early Christians. My thesis can be stated as follows: The selection of texts in the codex, as well as the marginal notes and textual emendations in 1 Peter, are indicative of a process of social identity formation, specifically an emerging orthodox Christian identity that is seeking positive distinctiveness and striving to reinforce the boundaries between an ingroup and various other outgroups.

Key words: Papyrus 72, 1 Peter, Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex, thematic unity, marginalia, investment, Christology, social identity formation, social resistance, ingroup, outgroup, early Christianity, emerging orthodox.

ABBREVIATIONS

MS	Manuscript
MSS	Manuscripts
P^{72}	Papyrus 72
BMC	Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex
BCMC	Bodmer Composite Miscellaneous Codex
CSC	Crosby-Schøyen Codex
SIT	Social identity theory
SSC	Social-scientific criticism
NA^{28}	Nestlé-Aland 28 (Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th edition)
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

> Literature has no definitive meaning or resting place, even if it allows one to explore notions of 'definitive meaning' and 'resting place' in especially critical and productive ways. The literary work never rests. It does not belong. Literature does not come home: it is strangely homeless, strangely free (Royle 2003:45).

1. Introduction

The Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex (BMC) is a 3rd-4th century CE papyrus manuscript (MS) that contains a heterogeneous compilation of texts.[1] The most famous of these texts is P^{72}, which is the nomenclature given to the copies of 1-2 Peter and Jude in the codex. Both the codex and its individual texts have been studied from a variety of angles, all of which have yielded fruitful results.[2] However, there remain further avenues of research into the codex. One that will be taken up in this thesis has to do with what the BMC reveals about early Christian identity formation.

This thesis will take an *etic* approach to the study of the dynamics of early Christian[3] identity formation, situated at the intersection of *social history* and *social theory*.[4] At this intersection is the application of social-scientific criticism (SSC),

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[1] See chapter 2, section 2 for the contents of the codex.

[2] However, the focus has been predominantly on P^{72}. See section 3.1 below for a preliminary review of recent research into the BMC.

[3] Here, I am using the term 'Christian' as a broad description, aware of the pluriform nature of Christianity in the early centuries CE (see chapter 2, section 4.3). Throughout this study, I aim to be cognisant of the multivalence of various terms and labels. See Clivaz (2011:161-86) for shortcomings of the term 'proto-orthodox', especially as it relates to the annunciation in, among others, Lk. 1:35 and the Nativity of Mary 11:2-3. See also Vinzent (2023), who considers the problem of labels in the study of early Christianity.

[4] See Clarke and Tucker (2014:67-91) for etic/ emic approaches and the combination of social history and social theory. They conclude, 'What is the use of social theory to historians, and what is the use of history to social theorists? For historians, social theory provides a framework for interpreting the evidence, and for theoreticians, social history provides the evidence needed to substantiate their purported theoretical claims' (Clarke and Tucker 2014:82). This outcome is, however, impacted by limited access to historical data (Clarke and Tucker 2014:67). Horrell (2009b:17) disagrees with the distinction between social history and social science (theory).

which allows a description of the ancient social context out of which P^{72} and the BMC arose through recourse to the social sciences.[5] More specifically, to further this description, social identity theory (SIT) has been employed.[6] To supply some of the data for analysis, a text-critical methodology[7] will be used to study particular textual features of 1 Peter in P^{72}. My overarching hermeneutical approach makes a distinction between 'history' proper and 'mnemohistory'.[8]

This chapter details the research gap to be filled by the present study, followed by a preliminary overview of the most pertinent literature related to the BMC and 1 Peter, specifically regarding identity. The objectives of this thesis and its design are also delineated below, so too are the utilised methodologies.

2. Status quaestionis

To date, modern studies of the BMC have done much to contribute to our understanding of the physical codex, namely, its construction, contents, and possible use in history. In addition, others have attempted to locate the social, historical, and geographic context of the larger discovery.[9] However, while building on this excellent prior research, the present study will focus on issues pertaining to early Christian identity and boundary formation. This thesis will operate from the position that, as copyist and collector of the BMC, the scribe of P^{72} has left material evidence of his literary and ideological interests.[10] Knowing what these might be will provide an indication of a salient social identity that has been appropriated by the scribal collector. By answering the following two research questions, I will attempt to offer a novel understanding of P^{72} and the BMC:

[5] See section 5.3 below. SSC is one avenue of the historical-critical method (Elliot 1993:7). However, SSC is itself represented by diverse views (Horrell 2009b:8).

[6] See section 5.4 below.

[7] See section 5.2 below.

[8] See section 5.1 below.

[9] Commonly known as the 'Bodmer Papyri', named after the Swiss bibliophile, Martin Bodmer. For further reading on the history of these manuscripts and their discovery, see Robinson (2011) and Nongbri (2018c:189-238).

[10] For reasons why the scribe of P^{72} and the collector of the BMC might be the same person, see Wasserman (2005:148-54). For further discussion, see chapter 3, section 2.2.

1. What do the manuscripts (MSS) reflect about social identity formation in early Christianity?
2. What kind of Christian identity is represented by these MSS?

My thesis, which will be grounded on several key lines of argumentation, can be stated as follows: The selection of texts in the codex as well, as the marginal notes and textual emendations in 1 Peter, are indicative of a process of social identity formation, specifically an emerging orthodox Christian identity that is seeking positive distinctiveness and striving to reinforce the boundaries between an ingroup and various other outgroups.

3. Preliminary literature review

3.1. The Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex: Recent research

Research into the BMC has generally attempted to answer a variant of one single question: What motivated the creation of the codex? This question is important because scholars have repeatedly remarked on the peculiar mixture of texts, some of which form part of the so-called New Testament (NT) canon, others are 'non-canonical', and a couple are Old Testament (OT) writings. Answering the question of *why* this codex was created in its known form can lead to conclusions about *who* might have constructed it, which, in turn, can aid in answering the questions of identity posed in this thesis.

The nomenclatures, 'miscellaneous' or 'composite', have been assigned to this Bodmer codex to suggest that the codex either has a unifying theme (miscellaneous) or it doesn't (composite). This was a guiding theme for a study by Brice Jones (2011-12:9-20). The question was also addressed in previous studies by Tommy Wasserman (2005:137-54) as well as Tommy Wasserman and Tobias Nicklas (2006:161-88), the latter taking this angle more specifically. David Horrell (2009:502-22) discussed thematic unity but more with a focus on 1 Peter and its function in the BMC. Brent Nongbri (2016b:394-410) contributed to our understanding of the codex, partly in the same direction, but it was more the codicological relationship of 1-2 Peter to the rest of the codex that interested him. Strickland (2017:781-91) took a unique angle on P^{72}, namely, that of legitimate Petrine authority (1-2 Peter and Jude) as a theological boundary marker. Within this framework, he juxtaposed two theoretical communities in close geographical proximity to one another, one that

possessed the Dishna Papers (or Bodmer Papyri) and one that possessed the Nag Hammadi codices. For Strickland, these groups might have been in competition regarding which texts constituted authoritative Petrine teaching.[11]

Theorising about the theological motivation and use of the BMC is dependent on conclusions about thematic unity. Simply put, if it is thematically coherent, it suggests a theological motivation; however, if there are no constant themes, it suggests a somewhat arbitrary intention and use. It was how this codex was used that motivated Jennifer Knust's (2017:99-118) avenue of enquiry into the scriptural practices of early Christians, which do not always square neatly with a sharp theoretical dichotomy between terms like 'canonical' and 'non-canonical'.[12] Ironically, this blurred line comes into sharp focus when studying the BMC, which contains both canonical and non-canonical material. Regarding the naming conventions of the BMC, my view is that the 'miscellaneous' versus 'composite' disposition has unfortunately tended to confuse issues regarding the motivation and use of this codex. Therefore, to untangle the meanings of these designations, I have relied on Nyström's (2009:38-48) important insights, which help correct our application of these terms to multi-text codices in general.

How one views the motivation and use of this codex has a direct impact on conclusions regarding what the document reveals about the dynamics of early

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[11] The Dishna Papers and the Nag Hammadi Codices were supposedly uncovered quite near to each other. In fact, the stories of both discoveries are quite intertwined. For more on this, see Robinson (2011).

[12] The issue of 'canon' is not straightforward. See Brakke (2012:263-80), Schröter (2018:233-55), and Schröter (2020:129-64) for further discussion. See also Bovon (2012:125-37, esp. 127), who distinguishes between 'canonical' (authoritative), 'apocryphal' (rejected), and other kinds of texts that were considered useful (aids to further spiritual formation) in the early centuries. Knust (2017:113-14) critiques Bovon's strict demarcation and concludes (relevantly for the present thesis), 'Texts are bound up in the lived lives of the human actors who copied them, used them, and wore them out, not so that a transcendent set of canonical books could (finally) be produced and preserved for some future Christian capable of exploiting their deep well of authority but so that specific circles of readers could amass a shared sense of having been *set apart*, properly educated, and *identifiable as a group*… As key players in the set of human-object, object-human relations that have produced modern critical editions of the New Testament, the Dishna papers and the miscellanies preserved there play a role as a *social mediator* even now' (Knust 2017:114, italics mine). See Merkt (2015:15-31) for the canonical journey of the catholic epistles, of which 1 Peter is a part.

Christian identity formation. Regarding the 'use' of the codex, I have found dialogism to be a valuable interpretive underpinning. Linell's (2009) eclectic but integrative application of dialogical perspectives can be fruitfully used in conjunction with Schnelle's (2009:30-32) connection of meaning formation and identity in NT writings. How artefacts, like the BMC, are imbued with meaning and function in a dialogical relationship with their users will be key for concluding remarks about the process of early Christian identity formation.

3.2. First Peter and identity: Recent research

Recent research into 1 Peter and identity has variously proposed that the author of the letter was invested in themes related to the identity of his audience. Several questions are important. To what extent did the scribe of P^{72} pick up on those themes? What the scribe interpreted may not have been what the author originally intended (Horrell 2013:45-72). What material evidence is available to ascertain the hermeneutical process of the scribe? By analysing the interpretive process, what observations can be made regarding social identity?

3.2.1. Authorship, date, and occasion of 1 Peter

The authorship of 1 Peter is a contested issue. Almost universally, scholars agree that 1 Peter is a pseudonymous writing, meaning it was not written by the apostle Peter.[13] Where they differ, however, is whether it was written within a *Petrine* tradition, *Pauline* tradition or a combination of both.[14] For this thesis, I will adopt the view given by Horrell (2013:12), '1 Peter is characterized by a series of intertextual relationships… and is best seen as the product of a consolidating or synthesizing form of early Christianity' rather than the product of one single stream of tradition. Of particular interest for my thesis is the significance of 1 Peter for an emerging orthodox Christianity (Horrell 2013:43).[15] Throughout this thesis, the use of Peter as a name for the author is done for convenience.

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[13] See Carson and Moo (2008:641-46) and Polkinghorne (2008:1588-89) for arguments in favour of Peter, the apostle of Jesus, as the author.

[14] For Petrine influence, see Elliot (1993:347-48). For Pauline tradition, see Horrell (2013:12-20). For Peter-Pauline tradition argument, see Schnelle (2009:484-85).

[15] See Horrell (2013:7-44) for the full argumentation. See also Wan (2020:64-65, 71), who calls 1 Peter a 'cultural amalgam' and a 'formative document' for Christianity as a whole. See Hartman

For the dating of 1 Peter, I opt for a wider date range of 65-95 CE (Hunt 2020:528). A broad date range opens up various possibilities as to the purposes for writing 1 Peter.[16] The occasion of the letter is widely regarded as persecution; however, where differences arise is in the nature and extent of that persecution.[17] For my thesis, it will suffice to say that the addressees of 1 Peter were facing social resistance related to their newfound faith. Because of this resistance, they were in a crisis, one to which Peter attempts to respond.

3.2.2. Ethnic identity formation in 1 Peter

Recent research into the rhetorical strategies of 1 Peter, as they relate to social identity formation, has generally followed two tracks. One of these tracks looks at the 'ethnic reasoning' employed by the author of this missive. Grounded in the work of Denise Buell (2005), scholars have studied how Peter might have used the language and ideas of ethnicity to negotiate the boundaries of Christian identity in contradistinction to surrounding ethnic groups such as Jews, Greeks, and Romans. Buell (2005:2) defines ethnic reasoning as follows,

> "Ethnic reasoning" refers to the modes of persuasion that may or may not include the use of a specific vocabulary of peoplehood. Early Christians used ethnic reasoning to legitimize various forms of Christianness as the universal, most authentic manifestation of humanity, and it offered Christians both a way to define themselves relative to "outsiders" and to compete with other "insiders" to assert the superiority of their varying visions of Christianness.[18]

The study of this ethnic reasoning has yielded fruitful results. For example, Horrell (2013:133-63) has applied Buell's heuristic to 1 Peter 2:9, seeking to show how the use of 'γένος', 'ἔθνος', and 'λαός' in the verse is evidence of 'construction of

(2013:20) for brief notes on the *tradition-historical* approach, out of which such observations are made.

[16] For more specific and early dating, see Carson and Moo (2008:646-47) and Polkinghorne (2008:1589-90).

[17] See Williams (2012:237-335) for a lengthy analysis of the possible causes of the persecution and the forms in which it took place. See Sargent (2015:162-69) for a brief treatment of the historical setting of 1 Peter.

[18] See Skarsaune (2018:250-64) for a critique of Buell (2005). See Gruen (2018:235-49) for a related discussion.

identity in ethnoracial terms' (Horrell 2013:135).[19] Of particular interest is how these terms arise in the context of persecution to legitimise Christian identity, positively setting them apart and redefining the hostility toward them as a point of pride and honour (Horrell 2013:159-63).

Janette Ok (2021) offers more detail by discussing what she sees as the core function of the ethnic reasoning employed in 1 Peter. The use of ethnic reasoning serves to 'create a stronger, more tangible, and fixed sense of social cohesion among people who may not otherwise see themselves as belonging to one another' (Ok 2021:9). Accordingly, the author attempts to disintegrate their readers from their old *Gentile* identity, while reintegrating them into their new identity as *God's people* (Ok 2021:2). In this way, the varied audience becomes united as one predestined people (Christians) and is enabled to withstand the trials they are facing (Ok 2021:12).

The metaphor of divine regeneration is the central focus of Katie Marcar's (2022) study of ethnic identity in 1 Peter. She emphasises that this new Christian identity required a process of rebirth, socialization, and personal formation (Marcar 2022:8). Key to this is the scholarly consensus that *ethnicity* is socially constructed and, therefore, mutable (Marcar 2022:9-14). By employing metaphorical imagery, the writer of 1 Peter uses the symbolic world of ethnicity to construct a new identity for their readers, one that mandates doing good despite suffering (1 Pt. 3:6).[20]

[19] It was Horrell (2013:133-63) who first made me aware of the work of Buell (2005).

[20] For a systematic but brief breakdown, see Marcar's (2022:10) table 1.1, *Elements of ethnic identity in 1 Peter*.

3.2.3. Social identity formation in 1 Peter

The second related but distinct track is the application of SIT to 1 Peter.[21] There have been two recent significant publications on social identity in the NT, one a handbook, Tucker and Baker (2014) and the other a commentary, Tucker, Kuecker, and Kuecker (2020), both of which contain studies of 1 Peter from the perspective of SIT.

Still and Webb (2014:640-62) orient their study in three temporal stages. The author of 1 Peter reinterprets the *past*, 'For his (largely) Gentile-Christian audience, this hermeneutical task required weaving the rich, variegated history and heritage of Israel into their own non-Jewish memories' (Still and Webb 2014:643). The *future* holds promise because their current suffering is transient; it will end, and they will be vindicated when Christ one day returns (Still and Webb 2014:649-51). Until that day, the *present* is given to ensure spiritual formation, living by a new code of ethics that stands in contrast to the old Gentile ways of living (Still and Webb 2014:651-57). Still and Webb (2014:657) conclude that 'the author of the paraenetic letter known as 1 Peter sought to shape the Christian identity of fledgling fellowships in Asia Minor in the throes of affliction and social dislocation.'

More recently, Hunt (2020:527-42) provided an extensive textual study of 1 Peter, using SIT as a heuristic tool. Among other key insights, Hunt (2020:531-32) highlights the author's attempt at social creativity, noting the powerful metaphorical language of the 'new birth' of Christians (2:1-3), their incorporation as 'living stones' into the building of God (2:4-8), their variously labelled new identity, 'γενος εγλεκτον βασιλειον ιερατευμα εθνος αγιον λαος εις περειποιησειν' (2:9-10),[22] and their diasporic status, despite which, they are called to a higher standard of ethics (2:11-12). This social creativity is an important authorial strategy that reinterprets a negative label and introduces a new superordinate identity, 'Although in their discursive environment, they are denigrated as "Christians," 1 Peter reclaims the

[21] The application of SIT to NT writings was first attempted by Philip Esler. See Esler (1994) and Esler (1998) for early iterations.

[22] 'A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession.' This reading was taken from P^{72}, hence the presence of itacisms (see fn. 220).

term as an ingroup label, and generally engages in the social creativity necessary to raise the status of the believing community' (Hunt 202:541).[23]

3.2.4. Ethnicity and social identity

Though distinct, ethnicity theory and social identity theory are both about social identity, albeit to varying degrees. Kuecker (2014:93) relates how social identity operates more generally while ethnic identity operates more specifically. He goes on to describe how the two theories dovetail (Kuecker 2014:103, parenthesis mine),

> Because ethnic identity is just one of many available layers of social identity within human societies, ethnicity can be helpfully described through the lens of social identity theory. As an explanatory theory, social identity theory provides conceptual resources (to describe the emic and etic senses of ethnic identity) …[24] Further, because social identity theory can help identify the way social identities impinge upon intergroup contact, it explains why ethnicity is such a flashpoint…

Put differently, SIT supplies a heuristic lens for understanding the disposition toward conflict at the convergence of ethnic difference.

In my study, the relevance of these identity themes is shown by discovering the extent to which they resonated with our scribal collector. The transmission of Christian texts reveals new points along the hermeneutical timeline, all distinct and significant. One can see these new points, for example, in the textual emendations of 1 Peter. Add to that the marginalia and the collection of texts that make up the BMC, a certain kind of hermeneutical framework begins to appear, one that reflects a process of social identity formation.

4. Objectives and thesis design

My thesis will proceed broadly along the following lines of argumentation. First, the scribe's choice of texts to produce the BMC is indicative of their literary interests and ideological framework. Therefore, it will be appropriate, in line with recent scholarship, to ascertain a possible *thematic unity* between each of the texts, essentially asking, 'What might the scribe have seen in each of these writings that

[23] See also Horrell (2013:165-210).

[24] See Kuecker (2014:98-103) for more on *emic* and *etic* in this context.

made the scribe combine them together?' Knowing this will focus my conclusions on the social identity in view. This first line of argumentation will be taken up in chapter two.

Secondly, the scribe made notes in the margins of 1 Peter, which are indicative of a hermeneutical process at play. By beginning with the word 'περι', the scribe was highlighting and summarising his understanding of key themes in 1 Peter. Building on the first line of argumentation, these marginalia show us what themes of 1 Peter *resonated* with the scribe, reflecting the resonances relevant to a specific appropriated social identity.[25] This idea will be expanded in chapter three.

Thirdly, similarly to the second line of argumentation, intentional scribal emendations in 1 Peter show the scribe's *investment* into the text he was copying.[26] This investment can be discussed in light of the known socio-historical context of the first three to four centuries of Christianity. In terms provided by SIT, by studying these emendations in context, observations can be made about an active salient and superordinate Christian social identity in ideological conflict with other social identities. This, too, will be discussed in chapter three.

5. Methodological overview

5.1. Biblical hermeneutics

At its core, hermeneutics refers to frameworks of understanding. Regarding biblical texts, Bernard Lategan (2009a:20) opines, 'The need for biblical hermeneutics arose from the very nature of the documents themselves.' In their writing, reading, transmission, and collation, these documents reflect the Christian attempt to understand the will of God and pursue the meaning of life.[27] Therefore, hermeneutical approaches to these scriptures operate well when they acknowledge the existential dynamic of such a pursuit. In this vein, Udo Schnelle (2009:26) remarks (italics original),

> The New Testament, as the basic documentary archive of Christianity, represents the formation of a meaning-formation or symbolic universe with an

[25] I have adopted the idea of 'thematic resonances' from Horrell (2013:66).

[26] The term 'investment' is borrowed from Haines-Eitzen (2000:74).

[27] See Lategan (2009a:20-23) for a brief discussion of the various ways this plays out as regards the *nature* of Christian Scripture.

> extraordinary history of effects… The truth claim of these texts is not to be avoided, for *"truth" is meaning that makes a binding claim.*[28]

This same existential dynamic can be applied to subsequent copies of individual NT writings, such as P^{72}. They are further products of meaning-making and embodiments of a perceived truth that is intended to make a binding claim. For example, P^{72} displays an interpretation of Christ that stood in competition with other conceptions of who (and what?) Christ was.[29] The issue of later (and divergent) interpretations informs a discussion on hermeneutics by showing that interpretation is not static; rather, it is dynamic, influenced by a variety of factors. On one level, there is the hermeneutic displayed by the first writers of 1-2 Peter and Jude. On another level, we are faced with the hermeneutic (in competition with other hermeneutics) of a 3rd-4th century agent who is separated from the first writing by large temporal chasm. On another level, the hermeneutic employed by modern scholars also comes into play, an interpretive lens that may offer a new, unique perspective.[30] In reality, each new reader approaches the biblical text with a distinct *pre-understanding* (*Vorverständnis*) that informs interpretation. Therefore, no new reader can claim to enter the continuum of interpretation *tabula rasa*—as a clean slate, with no preconceived ideas (Lategan 2009b:81). This can be a challenge to effective interpretation, with the potential for misunderstanding increasing, as the time between each new reading and the first act of writing increases.[31] It has been

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[28] For more on the idea of a symbolic universe, see Esler (1994:6-12). See also Schnelle (2009:31) for a concise description of the synchronic and diachronic interplay of symbolic universes.

[29] I am referring to the well-known Christological readings found in 1 Pt 5:1a, 2 Pt 1:2b, and Jude 5a. See chapter 3, section 4.3 for further discussion.

[30] Here, I have in mind an individual's *pre-understanding*, which is developed over time by both internal and external factors, all of which combine to either help or hinder the interpretive process. Internal factors can be thought of as the psychological processes like memories, and external factors can refer to geographical location, language, culture, etc. In addition to Lategan (2009a & b) and Schnelle (2009), my thinking in this regard is broadly influenced by popular works from Kahneman (2012), Haidt (2013), Eagleman (2015), and Barrett (2018).

[31] See Lategan (2009a:14-15) for brief comments on the 'sender' and 'receiver' challenge to effective hermeneutics, as well as Lategan (2009b:65-105), for an extensive analysis of the various stages in the hermeneutical process. See also Hartman (2013:3-12), who, while avoiding much of the philosophical framing of hermeneutics, offers a helpful way to view the interplay between senders and receivers in the past and present.

suggested that this occasion for misunderstanding is why the discipline of hermeneutics is necessary (Lategan 2009a:14-15).

Awareness of this implicit phenomenon is vitally important for historical-critical enquiry. Drawing on the past to make observations and conclusions in the present is influenced by the same pre-existing frames of understanding. To further elucidate, I offer a lengthy but eloquent quote from Schnelle (2009:27-28, italics original),

> As the present passes into the past, it irrevocably loses its character as reality. For this reason alone it is not possible to recall the past, in intact form, into the present. The temporal interval signifies a fading away in every regard; it disallows historical knowledge in the sense of a comprehensive restoration of what once happened. All that one can do is to declare in the present one's own interpretation of the past. The past is available to us exclusively in the mode of the present, and only in interpreted and selected form. What is relevant from the past is not that which is merely past, but that which influences world-formation and world-interpretation in the present. The true temporal plane on which the historian/exegete works is *always the present*, within which he or she is inextricably intertwined, so that present understanding of past events is always decisively stamped by the historian's own cultural standards… The past event itself is not available to us, but only the various understandings of the past events mediated to us by various interpreters. Things do not become what they are for us until we ascribe meaning to them. History is not reconstructed, but unavoidably *constructed*.[32]

This approach to history is known as 'mnemohistorical' (Schröter 2018:85-86).[33] In this way, Schnelle, too, calls attention to the inescapable effect of the interpreter's preunderstanding that does not grant us a disinterested reconstruction of historical events but instead presents us with a new construction.

Therefore, the hermeneutical process is dynamic rather than static. With each new reader, a new interpretation is created. These new interpretations arise as a consequence of external and internal factors acting upon the reader. Acknowledging

[32] See Destro and Pesce (2018:45-78) for a methodological approach to the creation, recollection, and transmission of early Christian memories in written texts. Through an application to the gospels, Destro and Pesce show how mutable 'history' can be. Braun (2023) offers a related discussion but with specific reference to Christianity's history of origins.

[33] The concept of mnemohistory was first developed by Jan Assman (1997).

these hermeneutical vagaries helps guard against uncritical research conclusions. With this foundation, it is now appropriate to consider the text-critical enterprise.

5.2. Textual criticism

5.2.1. The goal of textual criticism

What does textual criticism aim to do? Informed by the approach just delineated, the declared goal of textual criticism will be different depending on the scholar answering the question. For example, Jordaan writes that the goal of textual criticism is to identify the 'original' text of the Greek NT (Jordaan 2009:173). However, Ehrman (2006:100, fn. 2) asserts that such an end goal is not at all obvious, going on to highlight the difference between terms such as 'autograph' and 'transcription'.[34] Simply, what the author *originally* wrote (autograph) may have changed, to varying extents and for various reasons, in subsequent *copies* (transcriptions) of the original through the history of the text.[35] This has rightly been called a 'complicated process of engagement' (Lundhaug and Lied 2017:2) that gave rise to texts and MSS that preserve not just the historical context of the author but also of subsequent readers (Lundhaug and Lied 2017:7-8). These readers were not simply passive receivers but active participants in the diachronic transmission of the NT text. It is the awareness of this dynamic process of 'human-object, object-human' (Knust 2017:99) engagement that allows the modern scholar to observe clues about the nature of identity formation in early Christianity.[36] These clues can take the form of textual variations.

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[34] Epp says that the goal of textual criticism is to uncover the original text but that that is not the only motivation of textual criticism (Epp 2005:258). Regrettably, the most significant loss to textual criticism is that we do not possess the autographs; however, as Holmes suggests, the existence of the originals would nullify the need for textual criticism (Holmes 2012:781).

[35] Much has been written about textual criticism of the NT. For more on the complex definition of *original* and related terms, see Ehrman (2006:307-42), Epp (2005:551-94), Parker (2012), Epp (2014:35-70), and Mitchell (2019:26-47). For more on NT MS evidence, see Epp (2007:77-117), Parker (2009:327-28), and Peterson (2019:48-69).

[36] This is a key statement because textual criticism functions, in my thesis, to point out textual variations that may be *supposed* to play a role in the construction of Christian identity in these early centuries. It is not an objective of this thesis to argue for or against the merits of any theory regarding the goal of textual criticism.

5.2.2. Textual variants

Most simply, textual variants are readings that differ at the same point in a separate copy of the same writing.[37] Most variants exist in papyrus MSS from before the 4th century (Ehrman 2006:101) because in the first three centuries of Christianity, scribes were usually untrained (Jordaan 2009:177), possibly operating as members of private scribal networks (Haines-Eitzen 2000:78).[38] In these early centuries, scribes were not subject to the strict copying methods and criteria of formal scriptoria, meaning it was inevitable and natural that variant text forms would appear, opening the possibility for both intentional and unintentional variations (Haines-Eitzen 2000:106).[39] It has also been argued by several scholars that some textual variations might be direct consequences of the socio-religious environment (*umwelt*) of the scribes.[40] If this is the case, then an appropriate text-critical methodology will be required.

5.2.3. Reasoned eclecticism[41]

The most widely practiced form of textual criticism today is known as 'reasoned eclecticism' (Holmes 2012:771).[42] The term 'reasoned' serves to describe the way this methodology handles a variety of evidence; it attempts to strike an even balance between internal and external evidence (Holmes 2012:771). Internal evidence refers

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[37] See chapter 3, section 4 for specific examples of this in P^{72}.

[38] Mitchell confirms the operation of scribal networks by referring to them as the avenues through which requests for copies of texts were made (Mitchell 2019:30-31). See Schmid (2008:9-13) for a rebuttal of Haines-Eitzen's scribal networks thesis. The field of NT textual criticism is obviously divided on this issue. For a recent brief discussion on this divide, see Farnes (2019:1-7).

[39] Chapter 5 of Haines-Eitzen's book considers to what extent the lack of scriptoria might have led to uncontrolled copying efforts.

[40] The most famous work on this subject being Bart Ehrman's, *The orthodox corruption of scripture* (1996). For a brief rebuttal of Ehrman's methodology, see Malik (2019:152-70) and Marcello (2019:211-27).

[41] It has been noted that reasoned eclecticism should be regarded as an interim text-critical methodology rather than a permanent one (Epp 2005:267-68). This appears to be due, in part, to the lack of precision in the application of the method (Wasserman 2012:594-95). However, it can be argued that, in fact, the reasoned eclectic model should be given a permanent status (Holmes 2012:781) on account of its ability to deal so well with an *open* or *mixed* textual tradition, a key feature of the New Testament's history of transmission (Holmes 2012:782-84).

[42] Also known as the 'local-genealogical method' (Holmes 2012:774).

to the self-contained textual features of a MS, like the author's characteristic style, the scribe's idiosyncratic habits, etc.[43] On the other hand, external evidence denotes information related to the date of readings, the geographical distribution of readings, and genealogical relations.[44] The pursuit of balance in these contingencies is what makes reasoned eclecticism different from other methodologies.[45]

This model is then also suitable for my thesis, using P^{72} and the BMC to observe the dynamics of early Christian identity formation. How is it suitable? We recall that a goal of textual criticism is to determine the original or earliest form of the text. P^{72} has been classified as 'Alexandrian';[46] however, it contains variants which are not attested in other Alexandrian witnesses and are, therefore, unique to the scribe of P^{72}. Naturally, we are thus compelled to consider the idiosyncrasies of the scribe who penned 1-2 Peter and Jude.[47] In the application of reasoned eclecticism, I will be drawing on prior scholarship rather than offering new text-critical insights. My point of departure, and the novelty intended by my study, will be the application of

[43] Epp (2005:748) writing about 'thoroughgoing eclecticism', defines internal evidence by saying that scholars 'select the variant reading that best suits the context of the passage, the author's style and vocabulary, or the author's theology, while taking into account such factors as scribal habits, including their tendency of conformity to Koine or Attic Greek style, to Semitic forms of expression, to parallel passages, to Old Testament passages, or to liturgical forms and usage. This method, therefore, emphasizes internal evidence and is called "rigorous" or "thoroughgoing" eclecticism, and also "rational" or "impartial criticism" by its proponents.'

[44] Many factors are considered in the text-critical process, too many to recount here. See Metzger and Ehrman (2005) for a guide to the rules of textual criticism. For very detailed discussions of the history of textual criticism, from the 'textus receptus' to modern critical editions, see Aland and Aland (1995:3-47), Metzger and Ehrman (2005:137-249), and Jordaan (2009:183-96).

[45] Within the guild, there are several text-critical methodologies to which a scholar can turn, each one handling the evidence differently. For 'thoroughgoing eclecticism', see (Elliot 2012:745-70). For 'reasoned eclecticism', see (Holmes 2012:771-802). For the 'majority model', see Wallace (2012:711-44). For an overview of the various models, including the 'historical documentary', see Epp (2005:227-84) and Jordaan (2009:196-209). Finally, for the newest methodology, the 'coherence-based genealogical model', see Wasserman and Gurry (2017).

[46] One of several text-types that are anachronistically labelled to classify readings. For a brief description of the various text-types and their function, see Jordaan (2009:197-98).

[47] See chapter 3, section 2. See Royse (2012:461-78) for 'scribal tendencies' in general.

SIT as a heuristic tool to textual variants (and other scribal practices evident in the BMC). This heuristic tool will be applied alongside insights from SSC.

5.3. Social-scientific criticism

John Elliot was the first to use the term 'social-scientific criticism' (Van Aarde and Joubert 2009:423). Elliot gives the following definition for SSC, emphasising the *social* element of biblical exegesis (Elliot 1993:7),

> Social-scientific criticism (SSC) of the Bible is that phase of the exegetical task which analyzes the social and cultural dimensions of the text and of its environmental context through the utilization of the perspectives, theory, models, and research of the social sciences. As a component of the historical-critical method of exegesis, social-scientific criticism investigates biblical texts as meaningful configurations of language intended to communicate between composers and audiences.[48]

SSC, then, functions as a critical methodology that incorporates several other hermeneutical frameworks to 'enable a fuller and better appreciation of the biblical texts and community ties within their historical, social, and cultural setting' (Horrell 1999:3).[49] From Elliot's definition, we can say that SSC seeks to explore the dynamic

[48] See Elliot (2011:1-10) for a repeat of this definition and an application to the NT book of Galatians. Horrell (2010:6-20) challenges the tendency toward placing clearly defined boundaries around which sociological approach does and does not constitute social-scientific criticism.

[49] This emphasis on the social world of biblical writings arose as a direct consequence of the social world of modern interpreters. For more on this, see Theissen (1993:1-29), who traces the rise (1870-1920), decline (1920-1970), and then rise again (1970 onwards) of sociological biblical interpretation of the NT. His focus is, however, primarily on German-speaking scholarship. Elliot (1993:17-35) breaks down this development by pointing to studies done in the late 19th and early 20th centuries but locates the beginning of the latest renewal with Gerd Theissen in 1973. In a similar fashion, Horrell (1999:3-27) considers the contributions of social-scientific criticism in the past and how it will benefit biblical exegesis in the future. More recently, Van Aarde and Joubert (2009:419-25) briefly surveyed the catalytic factors for SSC as a legitimate critical methodology. They have helpfully noted that SSC 'represents such a rich and diverse field of scholarship that differences and disagreements abound' (Van Aarde and Joubert 2009:441), but nevertheless, 'A growing awareness of ethnocentrism is perhaps one of the main advantages of social-scientific criticism' (Van Aarde and Joubert 2009:443). To help dismantle various ethnocentric interpretations of the Bible, works like Malina (2001) and Crook (2020) are indispensable.

interaction between texts and social contexts by using the theoretical resources supplied by the social sciences. What is written is, therefore, both a product of an author's social world and a response to it. The writing is a product that is produced through the author's relationship to their environment. It is a response in that the text serves to influence the social world of the author and their audience. Importantly, in studying P^{72}, this research project is only secondarily concerned with the world of the original authors of these works and primarily focussed on the 3rd-4th century social context of the scribe who copied these writings.

5.4. Social identity theory

5.4.1. The foundations of the theory

SIT was first developed by Henri Tajfel (1919-1982), whose ideas began forming out of the crucible of personal experience.[50] During the Second World War, Tajfel, a Polish Jew, found himself socially categorised, not as a Jew but as a French soldier. Serving in the French army, he was captured by German military forces. Rather than being killed or sent to a concentration camp for being a Jew, he was housed as a prisoner of war because his salient identity was that of a French soldier. Fortuitously, his Jewish identity was never revealed, and because of it, his life was saved.[51] Tajfel learned that 'neither his personal qualities nor his relationship with the guards were important determinants in their response to him; rather, it was his group category' (Russell 2020:8). This experience would go on to influence his understanding of group identities and intergroup relations.

Besides his personal experience, Tajfel made several other important observations. One of these was the predisposition of people toward group formation, the distinctive categorisation of *us* and *them*, and the drive toward maintaining that distinctiveness (Esler 2014:31-32). The reasons for this predisposition were often

[50] My understanding of the origin of Tajfel's theory of social identity is informed by Hogg (2006:111-36), Elser (2014:29-65), and Russell (2020:1-24).

[51] In my reading to date, there appears to be some confusion on this point. Russell notes that being mistaken for a French person and not a Jew was what saved him (2020:8), while Esler (2014:13,16) observes that the distinction between *Polish* Jew versus *French* Jew was the important classification. I have opted to agree with the former. The distinction is, however, largely irrelevant here; the fact is that the German soldiers' behaviour toward Tajfel was guided by their perception of his social group membership.

located, by previous experimental social psychology research, in the assumption 'that individuals affiliate with each other for a variety of reasons… for the satisfaction of needs, attainment of goals or consensual validation of attitudes and values', writes Turner (1982:15). Having these prerequisites in place, a group would form, and behaviour based on group membership would follow. However, Tajfel wondered if there was a more basic requirement for this intergroup behaviour, one that was more primitive than common cause. In a series of experiments and subsequent publications in the early 1970's he found that intergroup behaviour and discrimination could arise from simple categorisation into groups, apart from any pre-existing common goals, value-laden traits, or attributes (Esler 2014:30).[52] Therefore, John Turner, a student of Tajfel, advocated for the 'social identification' model, which identifies a group as multiple individuals that simply share a *cognitive sense* that they are a group (Turner 1982:15). Consequently, it can be conceived that the creation of psychological ingroups and outgroups may not require any pre-existing external motivations; rather, all that is required is a mutual psychological ascent to common group membership. Tajfel recognised the significance of this categorisation when he said, 'Perhaps the most important principle of the subjective social order we construct for ourselves is the classification of groups as 'we' and 'they'—as ingroups (any number of them to which we happen to belong) and outgroups' (Tajfel 1970:98).[53]

Another key initial observation made by Tajfel was the distinction between social and personal/ individual identity (Tajfel 1981:255). The strict focus of the theory is intergroup relations that arise from membership in a social group. SIT was and is not concerned to explicate all the derivations of identity, for example, personal identity. Rather, only the *social* elements of identity are studied and explained.

Such an observation might assist in delimiting the present study in the following way: We are addressing early Christian identity formation in terms of the *social*. In other words, we are not concerned to make any declarations about personal identity

[52] In addition to Tajfel (1970:96-103), see Tajfel *et al.* (1971:149-78) and Billig and Tajfel (1973:27-52); these have become known as the 'minimal group experiments' (Esler 2014:14).

[53] To be sure, the result of the minimal group studies are the products of controlled experiments, and real-world applications would certainly be more complex, a point that Tajfel noted early on (Tajfel 1970:102).

of ancient believing individuals. Any concessions made regarding scribal/ collector behaviour in 1 Peter are viewed on the level of *group* behaviour. Therefore, any behaviours exhibited by an individual should be conceived of in terms of that individual's membership to one or another Christian group or identity.[54] Since SIT is the primary hermeneutical framework employed in this thesis, I have opted to give a detailed description of the theory in operation.

5.4.2. Social identity theory in operation

SIT is best understood as an interpretive framework that combines multiple theories to explain the phenomenon of socially determined identity and its corresponding behaviours.[55] It is best described as a dynamic *approach* rather than a static *theory* (Tajfel 1982:1).[56] Since several scholars have already undertaken to give a detailed account of SIT, its origins and key themes, I will not repeat their work here.[57] Instead, what follows are operational models of SIT (see figures 1 and 2) designed to help guide this thesis.

One of the strengths of SIT is its recognition that intergroup relations are plagued by a tendency toward favouritism of the ingroup and discrimination toward the outgroup.[58] This favouritism and discrimination denote the *collective* behaviours of *individual* group members, resulting in behaviour by a unified whole, the group. Individuals act not on the basis of individual attributes and identity but rather on the basis of attributes and identity imputed from the group. Tajfel, having observed this,

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[54] In saying this, I am not advocating for a physical *community* of which the scribe was a part, only that they have assimilated a social identity. See Stowers (2011:238-56), whose paper deals with the pitfalls of assuming a coherent community behind the creation of each literary work.

[55] Hogg notes how the explanatory scope of SIT is sometimes limited to only one element of social behaviour when, in fact, it has developed many conceptual aggregations, hence his preference for the term 'social identity approach' (Hogg 2006:111).

[56] Tajfel (1982:1) believes, 'Intergroup relations represent in their enormous scope one of the most difficult and complex knots of problems which we confront in our times. Therefore, their study in social psychology (and in other disciplines) has been more a matter of "approaches" or perspectives than of tight theoretical articulations.'

[57] See fn. 50.

[58] Intergroup contact is not always referred to in terms of discrimination and favouritism. Tajfel (1982:1-2) invokes Sherif (1966), who refers simply to 'intergroup behaviour'. I have not consulted Sherif's work.

wrote, ‘an individual strives to achieve a satisfactory concept or image of himself’ (Tajfel 1981:254). The individual will attempt to do this by seeking out a group or groups whose perceived identity in society is positive. Therefore, through membership in a positively distinctive group, the individual assumes for themselves a positive social identity.[59]

This organisational process is a ‘system of orientation’ known as ‘social categorization’ (Tajfel 1981:255). Concomitant to this social organisation is the operation of three internal dimensions: first, there is the *cognitive* sense of belonging to a group; second, a positive or negative *evaluation* of a group’s social status; third, an *emotional* response to the cognitive and evaluative elements (Tajfel 1981:229). Social categorisation is, thus, a prerequisite to a socially defined self-concept (social identity) that simultaneously resembles a group (the *ingroup*) and is distinct from another group (the *outgroup*).

Tajfel defines social identity as, ‘that *part* of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership’ (Tajfel 1981:255, italics original). There are many groups to which one can belong, such as the social demarcations of gender, race, religion, political party, vocation, etc.[60] One

[59] Tajfel (1981:254) defines a group as a ‘*cognitive entity* that is meaningful to the individual at a particular point…’ (italics mine). Hogg (2006:120) makes an important point here, ‘Self-enhancement is undeniably involved in social identity processes. However, the link between individual self-esteem and positive group distinctiveness is not always that tight. Although having a devalued or stigmatized social identity can depress self-esteem, people are exceedingly adept at buffering themselves from the self-evaluative consequences of stigma.’ Hogg (2006:121) goes on to say that people may be motivated toward ‘optimal distinctiveness’, seeking to be distinct but not too distinct.

[60] With regard to this, I am aware of intersectionality, which grants a theoretical framework for understanding lived experiences, for example, of identity as informed by more than just one of these social demarcations. Intersectionality is rooted in the work of Kimberle Crenshaw (1989:139-67), who argues against ‘single-axis’ thinking, more specifically conceiving of gender experiences as distinct and separable from experiences of race. Intersectionality is, however, more than just a theory; it is inherently ‘anti-subordination’, seeking to build a world that is more equal (May 2015:4-5). For a correction to the misunderstandings and misapplications of intersectionality, see May (2015). Intersectionality is useful for NT studies because it helps to guard against the anachronistic imposition of modern theories and theologies on the lives of early Christians, especially where these theologies and theories are used in a subordinating fashion, whether implicitly or explicitly. For more on this, see

person can belong to multiple groups, and depending on the social situation, which varies in the natural course of life, a person will operate out of the social identity that is the most *optimal fit* for any given social context (Hogg 2006:119).[61] Whichever identity is most *salient* at any given moment will determine a range of behaviours on the part of the individual that are *prototypically* ascribed to the group. A prototype is an almost nebulous cognitively aggregated representation of the ingroup's norms (Esler 2014:51).[62] Hogg discusses the relation of social categorisation to depersonalisation (Hogg 2006:118-19). The latter works in two directions: inwardly, by seeing oneself first as a member of a group and outwardly, by seeing others first as members of a group. Interpersonal relations, therefore, proceed *primarily* based on group identity as opposed to individual identity.[63]

As figure 1 illustrates, social comparison links social categorisation to social identity (Tajfel 1981:256). Elsewhere, Tajfel (1982:24, italics original) writes, 'In conditions in which social interactions are determined to a large extent by the individuals' (sic) reciprocal group memberships, positive social identity can be achieved, in a vast majority of cases, only through appropriate inter*group* social comparisons.' To put it differently, a distinct and positive social identity is possible only in the presence of a psychological (or otherwise) ingroup and a psychological (or otherwise) outgroup. Moreover, the existence of a *group* is contingent upon the existence of other *groups* (Tajfel 1981:258), which are, in turn, contingent upon the individual's predisposition to categorise their social world based on the 'dimensions of comparison which are available to them' (Tajfel 1982:24). Therefore, individuals are predisposed to relate to one another, not as individuals but, 'as members of well

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Kim and Shaw (2018:65-76), especially as it relates to being cognisant, as modern interpreters, of our 'social locations', with their intersections that are different to those described in biblical texts, with their intersections. The use of social-scientific approaches is key in this regard.

[61] The phenomenon of multiple social identities, with certain ones becoming salient depending on the social context, has been studied. See Roccas and Brewer (2002:88-106) for an introduction to social identity complexity. See also Kok (2014:1-19), who discusses the heuristic utility of social identity complexity theory for New Testament studies.

[62] Esler (2014:52) briefly mentions the polarising effect, which describes how norms and prototypes are formed in a direction that moves away from outgroups.

[63] Depersonalisation should not be confused with 'dehumanization' and 'deindividuation'. See Hogg (2008:118-19) for a brief discussion of both concepts. Also, see Esler (2014:31-33) and Russell (2020:12-16) for more on prototypes.

defined and clearly distinct social categories' (Tajfel 1981:228). The individual compares those categories, choosing to fit into the ones that contribute positively to their identity.

Once the social world of the individual has been organised, the various categories compared, and a favourable social identity assimilated, a new possibility arises, known as relative deprivation. Tajfel, with reference to Gurr (1970)[64] defines relative deprivation as, 'a failure of expectancies' (Tajfel 1981:261). I understand this to mean that, in terms of the pursuit of a positively distinct social identity, expectation does not concur with reality.[65] Here, Tajfel introduces a new continuum (see figure 1). At the point where intergroup social comparison takes place, and a sense of intergroup relative deprivation is awakened, there is, at the same time, between groups, both similarity and dissimilarity (Tajfel 1981:265-67). Simply, there are features of the social reality that are common to competing groups, while simultaneously, there are features which mark the groups as distinct from one another.[66] Mediating between the two is the 'perceived illegitimacy of an intergroup relationship…' (relative deprivation), which is then 'socially and psychologically the accepted and acceptable lever for social action and social change in intergroup behaviour' (Tajfel 1981:267).

I now refer the reader to figure 2, which is a model of various continua of social relations as described by Tajfel (1981:238-52). There are several belief structures that are informed by social identity, thereby influencing certain social behaviours. Key determinants of these behaviours will be the various psychological states of groups. Tajfel (1981:245-56) lists four such states. Firstly, a group may view the current social situation as both legitimate and fixed. Secondly, the social context may be viewed as illegitimate and changeable. Thirdly, a group may recognise the *status quo* to be illegitimate but fixed. The last combination is one where the social situation is perceived to be legitimate, but the possibility of change

[64] Gurr, T.R., 1970, *Why men rebel*. I have not consulted this source.

[65] Relative deprivation also occurs on a personal and interpersonal (intragroup) level (Tajfel 1981:261), but I have restricted my focus to intergroup relative deprivation.

[66] A case in point can be the issue of human rights. In an ideological construction like 'all people are equal', two race groups may be highly dissimilar in terms of their race, culture, and economic standing while at the same time, they are similar or the same in terms of their being 'human'. As part of the larger discussion, see Tajfel's example from South Africa (Tajfel 1981:264).

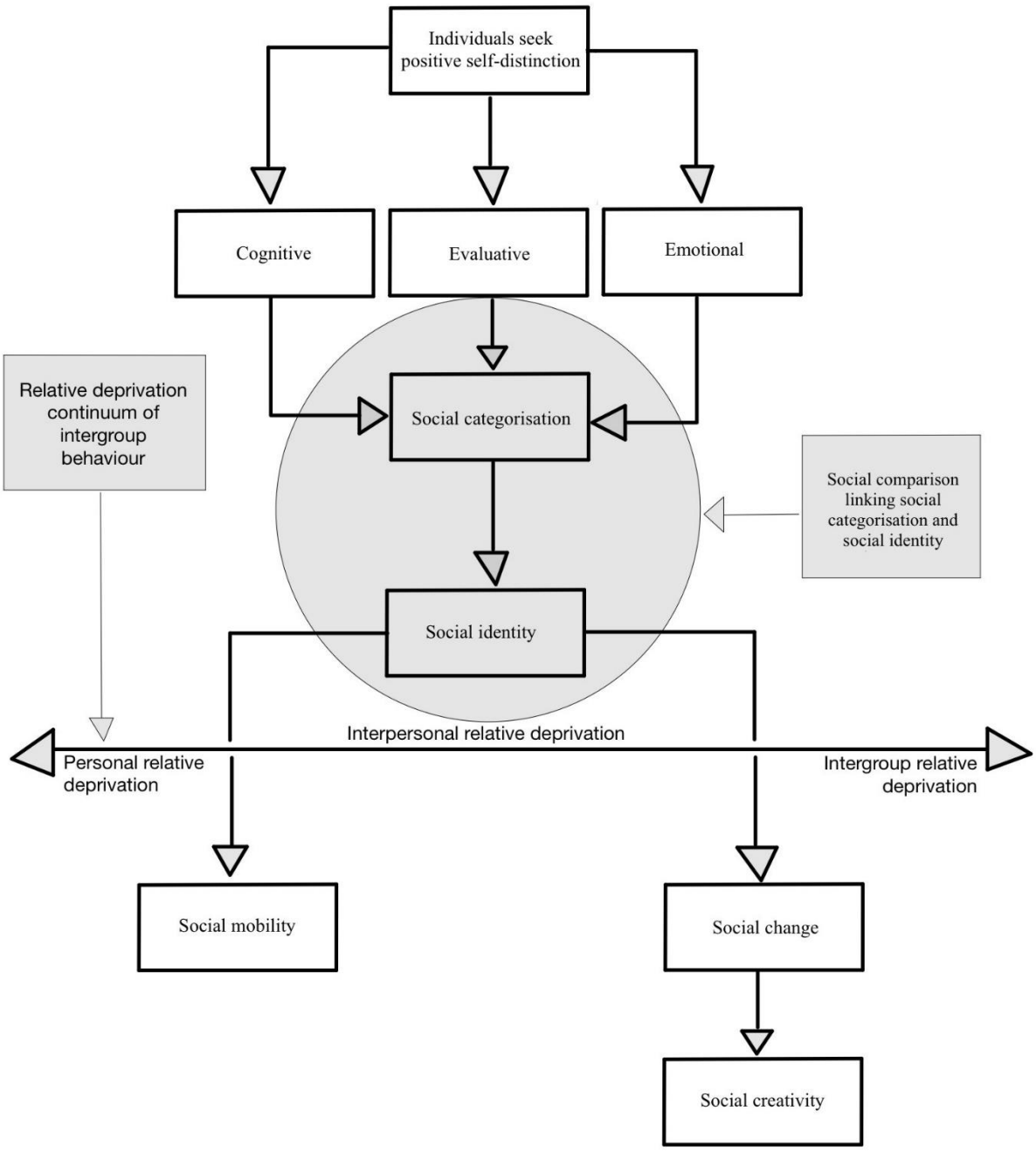
still exists. These various psychological states reflect how the relevant groups view their current ‘social stratifications’ (Tajfel 1981:245).

Depending on what kind of group consensus prevails, one might expect social interaction to range along a continuum of ‘social mobility’ on one extreme and ‘social change’ on the other extreme (see figure 2). Social mobility refers ‘to the movement of individuals and families… from one social position to another… from one social group to another’ (Tajfel 1981:264). Where individuals feel that the demarcations between groups are relatively porous, one can expect social mobility to be more frequent. By contrast, social change takes place when an individual is convinced that the boundaries between groups are sharply and impermeably drawn, such that their only available option is to act with the group as a unit to bring about a preferred social situation (Tajfel 1981:246-67).

As figure 2 indicates, this structure of belief continuum stands in a causal relationship to the interpersonal-intergroup continuum (Tajfel 1981:246). Therefore, social mobility is associated with more interpersonal behaviour, while social change corresponds to increased intergroup behaviour. A third continuum is thus discerned from the relationship of the first two (Tajfel 1981:243). Where social mobility is exercised and interpersonal behaviour increases, one can expect to find a greater variability of social behaviour (see figure 2). On the other extreme, where social change is exercised, and intergroup behaviour is increased, a greater uniformity of behaviour is likely (see figure 2). The pertinent question that now arises is this: How are scribal habits and SIT connected?

FIGURE 1

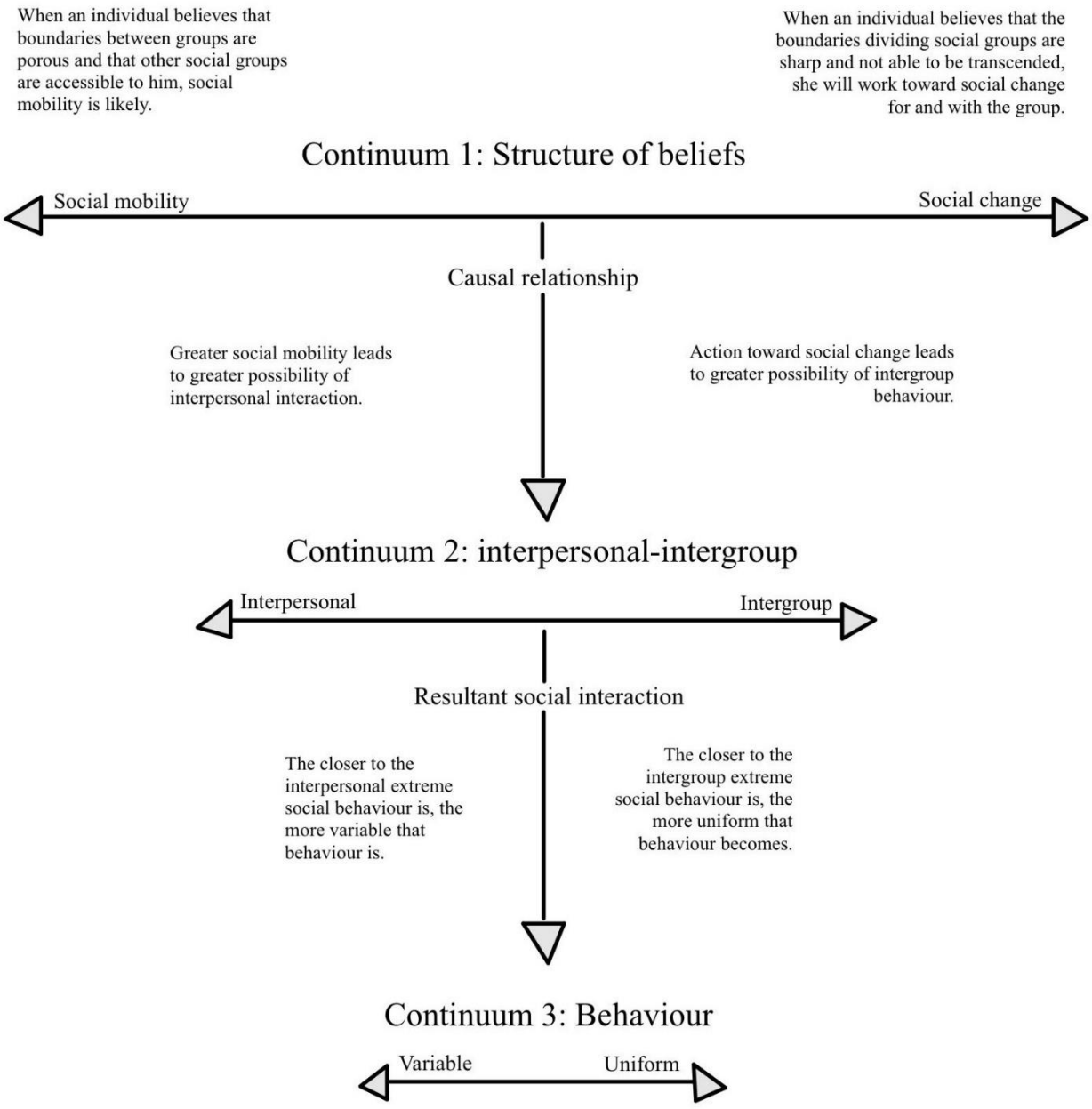
FROM SELF TO GROUP: AN OPERATIONAL MODEL OF SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY[67]



[67] © N. Oliveira. This operational model is my own graphic representation of research by Henri Tajfel (1981:254-67).

FIGURE 2

CONTINUA OF SOCIAL RELATIONS[68]



[68] © N. Oliveira. This 'Continua of Social Relations' is my graphic representation of research by Henri Tajfel (1981:238-52). In addition to the perceived illegitimacy and/ or instability of the relevant social stratifications, Tajfel (1981:247-48) identifies three additional variants of social change. He argues that social change does not always exclude the possibility of social mobility. Moreover, social change isn't always due to naturally occurring unchangeable group circumstances.

6. Scribal habits and social identity theory

At a foundational level, SIT recognises that human beings are constantly predisposed toward creating and preserving differentiation between themselves and other proximate social groups (Esler 2014:31-32). However, this raises the question about the extent to which a modern social theory, of which the primary foci are social groups more contemporary to the 21st century, can reasonably and accurately be applied to ancient social groups. This is especially problematic if access to historical data is limited (Clark and Tucker 2014:67). The problem can be solved by placing history and theory into a dialogical relationship (Clark and Tucker 2014:69).[69] On one level, descriptions of social phenomena can be interpreted through a social theoretical heuristic, making the social historical data more explicable. On a corresponding level, the explanatory utility of a social theory can be either verified or repudiated based on its ability to handle the social historical data. Clark and Tucker (2014:69) note the potential pitfalls of the enterprise while still advocating for this dialogical interaction. On the one hand, anachronism and ethnocentrism are always possibilities; therefore, a cautious and non-universalist heuristic approach is required. On the other hand, I would add social theories can become part of the defences against interpretations that stand, as it were, 'out of time'.[70]

Persons of the ancient Mediterranean world have been shown to be typically dyadic persons as opposed to the more individualistic persons of the 21st century (Malina 2001:60-61).[71] Malina (2001:62) writes, 'The dyadic person is essentially a group-embedded and group-oriented person… Such a group-embedded, collectivistic personality is one who simply needs another continually in order to know who he or she really is.'[72] The group-oriented existence of ancient persons, therefore, makes them suitable for the application of SIT, which is concerned

[69] See Linell (2009:7) for a brief differentiation between 'dialogism' and 'dialogicality'.

[70] For brief remarks on the usefulness of SIT in both the modern and ancient social world, see Russell (2020:19-21).

[71] For a recent study on the social dynamics of the ancient Mediterranean world, see Crook (2020).

[72] See Malina (2001:1-26) for an introduction to his methodological approach. See Malina (2001:58-80) for a detailed discussion of dyadic personalities. To be sure, Malina's primary focus is the 1st century Mediterranean world; however, as Duling & Rohrbaugh (2020:96) note, anthropological studies have found significant continuity in collectivistic societies from ancient to modern times.

primarily with identity that is derived from group membership. Thus, SIT is a practical and useful heuristic tool for the study of early Christian identity formation.[73]

The following chapters will be dedicated to showing how P[72] and the BMC are both products of and instruments for social identity formation. This opens the way to conceive of scribal and collector patterns from a sociological perspective. Viewing textual variants sociologically, Bart Ehrman presents his thesis (Ehrman 1996:3-4),

> Did the scribes' polemical contexts influence the way they transcribed their sacred Scriptures? The burden of the present study is that they did, that theological disputes, specifically disputes over Christology, prompted Christian scribes to alter the words of Scripture in order to make them more serviceable for the polemical task. Scribes modified their manuscripts to make them more patently "orthodox" and less susceptible to "abuse" by the opponents of orthodoxy.[74]

These thoughts are similarly shared by Kim Haines-Eitzen, who theorises, in part on the basis of her argumentation for scribal networks (Haines-Eitzen 2000:77-104), that scribes produced variants not only because they were humans who make mistakes but also because they were influenced by their socio-religious world (Haines-Eitzen 2000:106-107). She advocates for the benefit of (Haines-Eitzen 2000:107, parenthesis mine),

> contextualizing these manuscripts within the arena of discursive contests over self-definition, questions of theology and Christology, as well as debates over the practice of Christianity, (in doing so) we illumine not only the role of scribes but also the role of texts in the various discourses of the second- and third-century church.[75]

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[73] See Malina's (2001:1-26) introductory chapter on the use of anthropological *models* for effective interpretation of the NT. In this case, models are functional abstractions of complex data that allow deductions to be made, which are intended to remove the temptation to think of early Christian's behaviour in terms of our 21st century lives.

[74] See also a later publication by Ehrman (Ehrman 2006:100-19) where he writes, 'Changes that scribes made in their texts frequently reflect their own sociohistorical contexts.'

[75] See also Haines-Eitzen's (2012:479-95) more recent paper titled, 'The Social History of Early Christian Scribes'. This work is a survey of recent scholarship (up to 2012) that looks at what extant

In my opinion, these statements reflect convincing perspectives on some habits or patterns of behaviour that were displayed by at least some scribes. Based on the preceding discussion and for the remainder of this investigation, several assumptions seem appropriate: First, from the perspective of SIT, I assume that the scribal collector of the BMC was concerned to appropriate a social identity that was evaluated positively. In subscribing to a social identity, he would have had a cognitive sense of belonging to a group.[76] The emotional attachment to this identity would have motivated certain scribal patterns that can be studied today. This allows for a second assumption that due to membership in a group, at least some scribal habits were influenced by ideological commitments inherited by membership in that group. This allows that these scribal patterns took place on the intergroup level. In other words, they were certainly enacted by an individual (in the case of P[72]), but their basis is the sense of belonging to an ingroup in competition with an outgroup or outgroups. Third, in response to their social world, I also assume that the scribe's habits are indicative of the appropriate social avenues open to social groups, such as social mobility or social change.

MSS might tell us about the social worlds of these early scribes and 'how books intersected with religious identity' (Haines-Eitzen 2012:486).

[76] 'Group' here is not being used to describe a physical community, only the cognitive sense of belonging to a 'group'.

CHAPTER 2

THE BODMER MISCELLANEOUS CODEX

> All that we have are the witnesses to the text, and it is in them, in their physical reality, that we will find what there is to find... (Parker 2009:333).

1. Introduction

The focus of the following chapter is the BMC and the texts contained within. Initially, I will appeal to the debate regarding the nomenclature of the codex, whether to call it 'composite' or 'miscellany'. After a resolution has been reached, the codex will be contextualised within the larger Bodmer discovery and the socio-historical world within which the BMC was created and used. Having established a name and its context, we will be in a better position to determine a thematic unity between the individual texts.

2. Contents of the codex

The Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex was originally comprised of a seemingly disconnected set of texts.[77] Three of these writings eventually became a part of the later NT canon, while others were not included. The editor of the codex, Michel Testuz, proposed that the collection could be divided into three sections, as seen below.[78] The texts of the codex, in the order proposed by Testuz (1959a:8), are as follows:

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[77] This apparentness is made more pronounced by the codex's disassembly prior to publication. Tommy Wasserman (2005:137-38) laments that, worse still, scholars have, at one time or another, been guilty of studying individual texts to the exclusion of the remaining codex, a pattern that conceals the comprehensive picture of the historical context in which the codex once existed.' However, it must be said that since Wasserman's study, there have been several attempts to analyse the codex holistically; this thesis is intended to be the latest contribution to that important academic goal.

[78] Though a caveat by Pasquale Orsini (2019:37) seems requisite, 'In codicological terms, how these pieces were put together is unclear.' The order in which the different works appear in the codex is a debated matter. Wasserman (2005:145-46) argues for three sections, where section one is immediately followed by section three, with section two probably at the beginning. Orsini (2019:37) weighs in: 'at least two main *nuclei* can be identified.' Brent Nongbri (2016b:410), referring to P^{72}, is

- Section 1
    - The Nativity of Mary (P. Bodmer V)
    - Correspondence between the Corinthians and the apostle Paul (P. Bodmer X)[79]
    - The 11th Ode of Solomon (P. Bodmer XI)
    - Jude (P. Bodmer VII)
    - Melito's homily on the passion (P. Bodmer XIII)
    - A hymn fragment (P. Bodmer XII)
- Section 2
    - The Apology of Phileas (P. Bodmer XX)
    - Greek (LXX) translations of Psalms 33:2-34:16 (P. Bodmer IX)
- Section 3
    - 1-2 Peter (P. Bodmer VIII)

Despite being disassembled, the above list of contents is almost universally agreed upon in academia.[80] However, there has been significant debate over what to call the codex, either a 'miscellany' or a 'composite', with no clear resolution reached to date. Below, I will present the debate and attempt to untangle the use of these labels.

2.1. Designation: 'miscellany' or 'composite'

It is my contention that what one calls this codex, namely, 'miscellaneous' or 'composite', will impact the conclusions of this thesis. In my view, the name implies a purpose, and a purpose implies a social context. In defence of my contention, I offer the following words from two scholars who have studied the BMC in detail. First,

convinced that 'The codicological connection between P.Bodmer VII (Jude) and P. Bodmer VIII (1-2 Peter) is… secondary.'

[79] For brevity, I will refer to this correspondence as '3 Corinthians' or 'third Corinthians' throughout.

[80] Nongbri (2016b:395, f. n. 4) believes that P. Bodmer IX and XX may not have originally been part of the codex. In a blog post, giving his inventory of the Bodmer Papyri, Nongbri (2017) seems more certain when referring to IX and XX, 'Originally believed to be part of the Composite Codex (P.Bodmer V+X+XI+VII+XIII+XII+VIII), but recent studies suggest that this was not the case. This seems to have been an independent papyrus booklet.' In successive blog posts another year later (Nongbri 2018a, 2018b), he delineates his rationale for this opinion.

referring to both the BMC and the Crosby-Schøyen Codex (CSC), Brice Jones (2011-12:10) asserts,

> The designation ‘miscellaneous’ rests on the belief that the individual texts in each of the two codices share a common theme, which served as the initial impetus for the codices’ formation. This motivation would explain, it has been argued, why such a diversity of texts appears together in the same codex.

Second, at the turn of the millennium, Kim Haines-Eitzen (2000:104) recognised that, ‘The Bodmer "miscellany" provides illumination of the process of transmission, the motivations and impetuses behind transmission, as well as doctrinal, theological, and social issues facing Christianity in the late third and early fourth centuries.’

When applied to the BMC, so far as can be determined, ‘miscellaneous’ describes a construction that contains texts penned by different authors, through which a common theme can be detected. In contrast, ‘composite’ identifies a codex whose texts, written by different authors do not display any traceable common theme (Wasserman 2005:142).[81]

However, this definition is not obvious when thinking of multi-text codices in general, evidenced by the fact that outside studies of the BMC, there are different understandings of what ‘composite’ and ‘miscellany’ mean. Regarding miscellany, Nyström (2009:44) laments that the term (and ‘miscellaneous codex’), ‘seems to have been given as many definitions as there are scholars in this area.’ Nyström (2009:45) emphasises that, ‘miscellany’ should only apply to the content and not the structure of the codex, going on to say, ‘some kind of heterogeneity in its contents is needed for a book to be called a miscellany, and the texts which are gathered should normally have a tradition of being transmitted separately, outside of this collection’ (Nyström 2009:46).[82] In fact, contrary to the position taken by scholars of P^{72} and the BMC, Nyström (2009:48) concludes that a miscellany codex contains texts that are *unrelated* to each other.

[81] See also Jones (2011-12:9-10).

[82] Which is precisely what the BMC is. Consensus views the BMC as a codex made of previous codices. See Testuz (1959a:9), Haines-Eitzen (2000:100), Wasserman (2005:154), Nongbri (2016b), and Knust (2017:107-108).

Armando Petrucci (1995:1-2) defines the miscellany similarly to Nyström, 'in which several texts of different authors are more or less coherently juxtaposed in a single container' and the composite as, 'being written separately in successive phases over time.' Edoardo Crisci (2004:109) describes, more broadly, the nature of miscellaneous codices, 'come contentitore di testi eterogenei, di volta in volta, per autore, tipologia, genere letterario di appartenenza…'[83] He appears to offer a contrary opinion to Nyström, suggesting that, in fact, 'miscellany' refers to the structure of the codex (Crisci 2004:109). Crisci (2004:110) offers a helpful elucidation,

> Il codice, incvece - sia esso di papiro o di pergamena - è strutturalmente adatto a favorire aggregazioni testuali, la cui logica può essere, di volta in volta, di indole diversa: non più solo opere dello stesso autore, selezionate o meno in base a criteri che potremmo definire 'tematici', ovvero opere di autori diversi, ma accomunate da più o meno marcate analogie di contenuto, bensì anche testi apparentemente dismogenei, la cui aggregazione può dipendere da fattori non sempre facilmente individuabili e talora tanto sfuggenti da sembrare frutto di giustapposizioni meramente casuali.[84]

The problem of definition applies to 'composite' as well.[85] Nyström (2009:44) defines a composite codex as one that, 'contains two or more codicological units', which is an almost entirely different idea to the definition given in the context of the BMC. In fact, for Nyström, composite and miscellany are not at odds with one another, describing two very different types of MSS. Rather, the former refers to structure (a codex made up of multiple codicological units), while the latter denotes content (heterogenous, unrelated material); moreover, miscellany is really a sub-category

[83] 'as containing texts that were heterogeneous, from time to time, in terms of author, type, literary genre to which they belonged…'

[84] 'The codex, on the other hand - be it papyrus or parchment - is structurally suited to favour textual aggregations, the logic of which may be, from time to time, of a different nature: No longer only works by the same author, selected or not on the basis of criteria that we might define as 'thematic', or works by different authors, but united by more or less marked similarities in content, but also apparently inhomogeneous texts, whose aggregation may depend on factors that are not always easily identifiable and sometimes so elusive as to seem the result of merely random juxtapositions.'

[85] That the relationship between different texts in a single codex is not always readily apparent could be one reason why we are faced with this problem of definitions (Nyström 2009:44).

falling within the broader composite category (Nyström 2009:47-48). A composite can be a miscellany in so far as a codex is constructed with multiple codicological units that contain texts for which a unifying theme is not necessarily discernible. However, Nyström (2009:47) warns that just because the modern observer cannot discern a unifying theme does not mean that its creators and first users did not see one. This aligns with Wasserman's (2005:147) suggestion that, 'The final collector may have had one particular theme in mind, but more probably this person somehow found a common denominator in the texts…'

2.2. Arguments in favour of 'miscellany'[86]

Junack and Grunewald (1986:24) suggest that the codex could possibly have been compiled around the Apology of Phileas; it might have been the impetus for the creation of the codex. In Crisci's (1995:125) view, P. Bodmer V, X, XI, VII, XIII, XII, are a single unit and in their combination, he detects, 'un programma editoriale volto ad aggregare in un unico codice contenitore un certo numero di testi di carattere dottrinale e apologetico, alcuni dei quali chiaramente rivolti a denunciare dottrine aberranti rispetto all'ortodossia della vera fede.'[87] Despite some of the codicological difficulties in linking section two (P. Bodmer XX and IX) and section three (P. Bodmer VIII) with section one, he seems fairly certain that the three sections are ultimately connected to each other (Crisci 1995:125-26).

Haines-Eitzen (2000:103) identifies the 'body' as a common theme running through the codex 'a theme that became so crucial for the early church with the emergence of a bewildering variety of ascetic choices.'[88] Besides the hymn fragment, she believes she can detect references to the body in every text (Haines-Eitzen 2000:103-104).[89] Wasserman (2005:147) remarks, 'the rich amount of

[86] It must be noted that not every scholar mentioned in this section used the word 'miscellany', but their arguments favour the label as it has been applied to the BMC.

[87] '… a publishing program designed to aggregate into a single container codex a number of doctrinal and apologetic texts, some of them clearly aimed at denouncing doctrines aberrant to the orthodoxy of the true faith.'

[88] Haines-Eitzen (2000:96) is sympathetic to the Pachomian provenance hypothesis. See section 3.2 below for more.

[89] See Wasserman (2005:147) and Horrell (2009a:514-15) for counterpoints to Haines-Eitzen's *body* thesis.

scriptural cross-references and common theological themes in the codex does support the notion of a consciously theologically motivated collection, even on the part of the final collector.' However, finding a theme that accounts for all the texts in the BMC is not straightforward, leading Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:185-88) to conclude their study with the simple recognition that for some questions, we may never find the answers. Referring to P^{72}, Horrell (2009a:513) writes (italics original), 'But it is hard to see any reason, in terms of closely shared theme or common outlook, for linking these three texts with the *Nativity of Mary*, *3 Corinthians* and the 11th *Ode of Solomon.*' Thus, he may prefer the label 'composite'.[90] Knust (2017:107) offers the following description of a miscellany, 'a single collection that appears to display some underlying principle of organization capable of explaining the book's physical format and content.'[91] For Knust (2017:108), the codex's very existence implies that at some point in the 4th century, someone made a concerted effort to construct it in its current form, which indicates something about intention or purpose. Knust (2017:107, fn. 37) stops short of saying that there is an evident unifying theme holding the codex together; for her, 'miscellany' refers to a multi-text codex that reflects some kind of organisational purpose, aside from any insistence on a thematic unity.[92] Strickland (2017:785) notes that 'the Miscellaneous Codex' is a title given to the BMC because of, 'The seemingly hodgepodge nature of this collection of texts…' Though he does not go into detail about which naming convention is to be preferred,[93] Strickland (2017:791) determines that affinity for the apostle Peter and his writings acted as social and literary catalysts for the construction of a codex that

[90] Assuming that one holds strictly to the definitions of the two terms as they have come to be used in studies of the BMC. However, Horrell's focus is less about thematic unity and more about how those texts give insight into what early users of the codex might have taken to be important themes in 1 Peter (Horrell 2009a:518).

[91] In fn. 37, Knust (2017:107) recognises the argument made by Brice Jones (2011-12:9-20) as helpful but feels that 'miscellany' being used 'loosely' here can still apply to the BMC. Jones' position will be presented in section 2.3 below.

[92] This reasoning sits more happily with Nyström's description of a miscellaneous codex. See section 2.1 above.

[93] He does, however, address Jones' conclusions, arguing that economy is not a sufficient holistic explanation for the BMC's construction, suggesting that Jones' rather has in mind a 'more banal and arbitrary process' behind its formation, thereby coming to his conclusion that the codex is a 'composite' (Strickland 2017:785-86).

contained P[72] alongside other 'non-canonical' texts. This being a reaction to a possible gnostic community that owned the Nag Hammadi codices (Strickland 2017:788-90). He argues that the community that possessed the BMC saw P[72] as texts which, 'affirmed for them the boundaries of orthodoxy within the NT's Petrine tradition.' (Strickland 2017:791).[94]

2.3. Arguments in favour of 'composite'

Eric Turner prefers the 'composite' designation. He sees economy as a potential reason for the construction of the BMC; scribes did not wish to be wasteful with their papyri (Turner 1977:81). The very tentative conclusion[95] he draws is that this codex is not a single composite codex[96] produced, 'in front of our eyes' (rather quickly?)[97] and is rather a composite document to the degree that it is made up of multiple codicological units.[98]

To reiterate, with regard to the BMC, 'composite' has come to designate texts that are compiled into a codex, among which *no* unifying theme can be detected. For Brice Jones, this is precisely the point of departure from other scholarly opinions (2011-12:10).[99] Jones (2011-12:19-20) points to economy as the reason for a codex

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[94] Filson (1961:51-57) seems to imply that the codex may have been a work of wholly non-canonical writings when he says, referring to 1-2 Peter and Jude, 'Papyri VII-VIII give an early indication of their recognition, but the fact that this early copy of these three Epistles occurs in a collection of liturgical, apocryphal, homiletical, and apologetic works could make us wonder if they were really considered to be fully canonical by the fourth century Christian who made up this codex.' In contrast, King (1964:54) regards the existence of 2 Peter and Jude alongside 1 Peter as proof of their canonicity.

[95] 'For want, therefore, of positive evidence of linkage, it cannot be taken as demonstrated that we have in this series a single composite codex that has, as it were, grown in size and content in front of our eyes. The absence of demonstration is a loss to the palaeographer in particular' (Turner 1977:80).

[96] Defined by Haines-Eitzen (2000:99) as, 'a codex produced over time in precisely the order in which it was found…'

[97] Ascribed to Turner is the term, 'gradual-growth', which appears to be taken as 'produced within a short period of time', see especially Wasserman (2005:141-42, 147) and Jones (2011-12:15-17,19). Turner himself does not use this term and he feels that his conclusions are far from proven. In fact, it appears to me that Turner (1977:80) acknowledges the paucity of evidence pointing to such a process of construction.

[98] See Turner (1977:79-81) for a fuller appraisal of his thoughts regarding the BMC.

[99] Perhaps only with Jones are such specific definitions for 'composite' and 'miscellaneous' so highlighted when referring to the BMC.

consisting of variable texts. Jones (2011-12:18, 20) is convinced that the BMC is a product of a purposeful[100] move to obtain and reproduce as many texts as possible, maximising the number of texts in the codex. Concluding his article, Jones (2011-12:20) writes (parenthesis mine),

> In sum, all of the above is, in my opinion, a persuasive rationale for the dismissal of the identification of the BC (Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex), CSC (Crosby-Schøyen Codex) and similar multi-text codices from Upper Egypt as miscellanies, a term that carries with it an association with thematic coherence. The term composite, in my opinion, better represents these codices for what they are—multi-text codices with no common theme.

Is so much ado about a name necessary? Certainly, a name is just a name, and it probably counts for little in the final analysis; what really matters is whether there is, in fact, a discernible common theme or not. It is, however, important to use the name correctly so that all are sure what we mean when the name is used. Since the nomenclature carries with it significant potential for confusion, as shown above, I would like to propose a new name for this particular codex, at least for the remainder of this thesis, the Bodmer Composite Miscellaneous Codex (BCMC). I am not convinced, considering the preceding discussion, that the codex is *either* a miscellany *or* a composite. In my estimation, the use of both descriptors together more accurately describes the codex, one term referring to its structure and one term referring to the literary content contained within, but neither necessarily pointing to thematic unity. Therefore, it is a composite in that all scholars agree to a construction made up of multiple codicological units, and it is a miscellany in so far as it contains a heterogenous collection of literary works. In section four below, I will discuss thematic unity in the BCMC (BMC) more specifically.

It is not uncommon to find the opinion that the BCMC (BMC) existed as distinct codices prior to its final combination,[101] which, if true, shows that these texts were previously transmitted separately, a scenario that agrees with Nyström's (2009:46)

[100] Contrary to Strickland, who reports that Jones has in mind a 'more banal and arbitrary process' (Strickland 2017:785), which is to say that Jones is advocating for a construction of the codex that is simplistic with no obvious system.

[101] See Testuz (1959a:9), Haines-Eitzen (2000:100), Wasserman (2005:154), Nongbri (2016b), and Knust (2017:107-108).

description of a miscellany. We are thus left with an important question; as Knust (2017:108) observed, someone from the 4th century studiously brought these texts together into one MS. Why? It seems to me the best way to answer that question would be to first answer the question of *who*. If we can answer the latter, we may begin to gain insight into the former. It follows then, if we can discern who and why, we will be on our way to a clearer picture of what this document reveals about the dynamics of early Christian identity formation. To determine who stands behind this codex, it is to the history of the Bodmer Papyri that we must now turn.

3. THE DISCOVERY OF THE BODMER PAPYRI[102]

3.1. Archaeological provenance

When attempting to contextualise the BCMC (BMC) and its accompanying MSS, it is important to distinguish between archaeological provenance and historical provenance, a caveat suggested by Robinson (2011:16). In other words, the location where a document was unearthed may not be the same as where it was produced and used in history. Internal and external evidence can suggest that for both cases, a single location is possible, or they can point to multiple places (Robinson 2011:16). In the case of the Bodmer discovery, there is internal evidence that points to a pair of potential locations while external evidence presents with a third credible alternative. In what follows, I will avoid any significant discussion about the archaeological sense of provenance and focus predominantly on the historical sense. Thus, my focus will be on the owners and users of these documents. However, to properly situate the conversation, I will say a little about the archaeology.

It is unfortunate that we are unable to be certain about exactly where these documents were found, as this misfortune blurs our view of their historical context. Since the time that these MSS were found, there have been three main proposals put forward:[103] ancient Thebes (present-day Luxor),[104] ancient Panopolis (present-

[102] It has been noted that the term 'Bodmer Papyri' is misleading because not all the MSS of the find were made of papyrus; some texts were written on parchment (Robinson 2011:9-10).

[103] I hasten to add a caveat here: in some cases, the differentiating line between historical provenance and archaeological provenance gets blurred.

[104] See Testuz (1959a:9-10), Beare (1961:253), Kilpatrick (1963:34), King (1964:55-56), and Junack and Grunewald (1986:24-25).

day Akhmim),[105] and Dishna.[106] Thebes was the favoured provenance early on; however, the proposal is no longer defended. The area of Dishna and Pachomian ownership, popularized by James Robinson and his investigative work, enjoyed some popularity[107] but despite the extensive nature of his work, Robinson received strong opposition early on.[108] Even today, elements of his thesis have been forcefully set aside.[109] The Panopolite provenance has garnered significant support in recent academia; Agosti (2015:96) believes that a consensus has been reached for the area around Panopolis. To my knowledge, the most recent contribution to the search for the Bodmer Papyri provenance is an extensive chapter by Brent Nongbri in his 2018 book, *God's Library*, where he attempts to, 'untangle the problems associated with these manuscripts…' (2018c:190). Jean-Luc Fournet (2015:17-20) provides a very helpful summary of the opinions since the publication of the Bodmer Papyri began.

In what remains of this chapter, I will accept as inconclusive the exact site of the find, but I still locate it somewhere between Panopolis and Thebes, including the area of Dishna. What will occupy my argumentation going forward is the socio-historical context of the persons who produced and used these MSS. As Nongbri (2018c:238) insightfully writes, 'Paying more attention to how the individual books fit into this larger grouping promises to yield still more insights into the social world of Christians in Egypt.'

3.2. The diversity of the manuscripts and the historical provenance

The diversity of the full assemblage is inescapable. Whether one is inclined to agree with a minimalist or maximalist accounting of this Bodmer discovery, the diversity is very apparent.[110] To reflect this diversity, consider just four proposed inventories. First, Migeuélez-Cavero's (2008:218-21) list of MSS coming out of Panopolis, which

[105] See Martin (1958:7) and Turner (1968:51-53).

[106] See Robinson (1980:6-7), Robinson (1986:2-25), Robinson (1990:1-21), and Robinson (2011).

[107] Piwowarczyk and Wipszycka (2017:455) think that his proposal did not receive wide approval, while Agosti (2015:96-97) and Fournet (2015:17) believe the opposite.

[108] Rodolphe Kasser was Robinson's most outspoken detractor. Robinson records an example of this opposition in Appendix 1 of the book, *The story of the Bodmer Papyri* (2011:179-80).

[109] Nongbri (2018c:214-15) considers some of the problems with Robinson's Pachomian thesis.

[110] I have borrowed the terms 'minimalist' and 'maximalist' from Lundhaug (2020:375).

includes a significant amount of classical material mixed in with OT and NT texts, 'non-canonical' writings, alongside homilies, poetry, and school exercises.[111] Second, Robinson's distinctive list has many of the same features as the one put out by Migeuélez-Cavero, except that Robinson (2011:169-72) also includes nine Pachomian items.[112] Third, Fournet (2015:21-24) offers a list of forty-nine items,[113] most of which are certain and some of which may be doubted, but overall the list reflects that same mixture. Fourth, Nongbri (2018c:203-209, 217-18) offers a minimalist list, also on which we find evidence of diversity.

The majority of biblical material across the inventories points to a milieu characterised by, at a minimum, an interest in Christian writings. If the owners of the library were Christians, one wonders what type of Christians they might have been. One could ask the following questions: Are these MSS the remains of some personal library or of a larger community? If a community, could they be monastic, as some have argued? If so, what kind of monastic community is in view? There are numerous proposals that have been made based on the evidence; however, it is precisely at the moment where one might attempt to be more exact that certitude evades. Nongbri (2018c:238) captures this well when he says, 'Until some semblance of a consensus is reached on the contents of the Bodmer Papyri, its

[111] Situating these MSS in Panopolis makes sense in light of Migeuélez-Cavero's (2008:199) description of the city, 'a thriving city in which several languages… and cults (traditional Egyptian and Greek religion, Christianity) coexisted and interreacted, though the gradual christianisation of the area, complete in the sixth century, causes a more homogeneous image to appear.' She shows that in the city, pagan religion held sway over Christianity at the start of the 4th century (Migeuélez-Cavero 2008:207) and that even though Christian education eventually grew to prominence (as Egypt became more Christian), classical training was still very much part of the education system of Panopolis (Migeuélez-Cavero 2008:211).

[112] Robinson (2011:52) acknowledges that the inclusion of these items is based on conjecture, but he argues, so would positing a separate find location and collection. Nongbri (2018c:373, note. 75) believes Robinson's defence here is, 'a false equivalence' and offers a brief refutation in chapter 5 of his book (Nonbri 2018c:189-238).

[113] Actually, forty items; Fournet's (2015:19) inclusion of the nine Pachomian pieces are, 'mentionnées pour mémoire: elle n'appartiennent pas, selon moi, à cette bibliothèque.' This can be translated as, 'mentioned for the record: they do not, in my opinion, belong to this library.'

ancient context will continue to remain in question.'[114] Years before, Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:187, fn. 104), referring to the BCMC (BMC), recognised the difficulty with being certain about precisely who owned and used these documents. Yet, despite this, we are richly supplied by the MSS themselves. Below is a summary of some scholarship over the last two decades related to who might have owned and used the Bodmer Papyri. I begin with comments from Testuz (1959a:9-10) regarding the BCMC (BMC),

> Le contenu de cette anthologie démontre que le livre fut exécuté par des chrétiens d'Egypte, probablement sur l'ordre d'un membre obulent de leur communauté. oui le destinait à sa brobre bibliothèque. Le petit format du codex (environ 15,5 cm X14,2 cm) indique qu'il avait été fait pour un usage privé, plus que pour la lecture à l'église. Nous croyons pouvoir ajouer que, selon toute vraisemblance, il fut copié par des scribes coptes, et peut-être dans la région de Thèbes… Nous dirons aussi que ces chrétiens d'Egyple n'étaient pas des gnostiques, mais qu'ils appartenaient sans doute à la grande Eglise : la teneur de certains textes transcrits ici, violemment antignostiques, nous permet cele affirmation.[115]

Cribiore (2001:200) views the diversity of the collection as pointing to a 'Christian school for advanced learning.' Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:187), referring specifically to the BCMC (BMC) but in its larger context, believe the codex could be the product of 'entstehenden ägyptischen kirchlichen Proto-Orthodoxie nahe stehenden Kreisen zuzuordnen.'[116] As alluded to earlier, Miguélez-Cavero (2008:218-21) has in view a large, diverse library coming out of Panopolis, of which the BCMC (BMC) is a part and whose codicological features, 'suggests that a

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[114] He also highlights the problems caused by the illegal trade and distribution of antiquities, which blurs the perspective of the historian (see the full chapter by Nongbri 2018c:189-238).

[115] 'The contents of this anthology show that the book was made by Christians in Egypt, probably at the behest of an obedient member of their community, who intended it for his brief library. The small size of the codex (about 15.5 cm x 14.2 cm) indicates that it was made for private use rather than for reading in church. We believe we can add that, in all likelihood, it was copied by Coptic scribes, and perhaps in the region of Thebes... We will also say that these Christians of Egypt were not gnostics, but that they probably belonged to the great Church: the content of certain texts transcribed here, violently anti-gnostic, allows us this affirmation.'

[116] 'emerging Egyptian ecclesiastical circles close to proto-orthodoxy.'

religious community produced it to meet its own needs' (Miguélez-Cavero 2008:223). Her suggestion is couched in a discussion of the vibrant cultural and educational environment of Panopolis in the 3rd-6th centuries (Miguélez-Cavero 2008:210-26). Through a systematic comparison of four codices[117] generally accepted to be a part of the larger discovery, Camplani (2015:134) is not convinced that Pachomian monks would have owned these codices and suggests rather a unique, educated and philanthropic lay congregation.[118] Also against Pachomian ownership is Agosti (2015:96-97), who argues that the Pachomian order would not possess classical works or Christian poems influenced by classical thought. His proposal is that these MSS could have been owned by a Panopolite monastic-looking community led by a person named Dorotheus (2015:95-97).[119] Fournet appears to have little sympathy for Robinson's Pachomian thesis, indicating that Robinson's argument is not only, 'pás crédible'[120] but the presence of certain secular texts would have been significantly at odds with Pachomianism, which was generally considered to be antagonistic to classical Greek culture (Fournet 2015:16-17). In view of the various proposals for a community and the problem of uncertainty, I submit Fournet's (2015:17) necessary caveats,

> Le terme même de communauté n'est-il pas abusif en sous-entendant un profil homogène pour l'ensemble de ses utilisateurs? De plus, nous avons vu que cette bibliothèque s'est constituée sur trois siècles et qu'elle était donc susceptible d'être l'agrégat de plusieurs fonds d'origines diverses qui ne reflètent pas nécessairement l'état d'esprit de l'ensemble des usagers à la fin de son histoire. Enfin, elle peut avoir donné lieu à plusieurs activités, qui ne sont pas exclusives l'une de l'autre: création, lecture édifiante et instruction scolaire.

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[117] The Bodmer Codex of Visions, The Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex, The Crosby-Schøyen Codex ms 193, and the Barcelona-Monserrat Miscellaneous Codex.

[118] In fact, he argues against Robinson's theory that certain codices might have entered the monastery through the generosity of new members (Robinson 1990:4-5) by noting the problem of classical work being codicologically related to Christian material (Camplani 2015:127).

[119] Yet, he makes clear that this monastic-looking definition should be understood very generally (Agosti 2015:96). Agosti offers two important caveats: δῖκαιοι should be understood broadly, and the existence of a collection of texts does not automatically reflect the existence of a whole community (Agosti 2015:96).

[120] 'not credible.'

> Autrement dit, l'hypothèse d'une bibliothèque d'école n'est pas incompatible avec un milieu religieux. En l'absence d'une étude globale de la 'Bibliothèque Bodmer' sous tous ses aspects, il me paraît impossible d'être affirmatif dans un sens ou dans l'autre.[121]

Nongbri (2018c:238) is inclined to advocate for a monastic ownership of the MSS while conceding that what we know about monasticism in the 4th century is not complete. What appears to be a more daring proposal is that these MSS, in some way, share a common owner with the Nag Hammadi codices, namely, Pachomian monks. Lundhaug (2020:374) concludes that the perceived dissimilarity between the two finds should not be an obstacle to common ownership, 'On the contrary, I would argue that this is what one should expect within a young community comprised of a large percentage of recruits from all over Egypt and beyond, moving together within a short period of time.'[122] While some would struggle to connect these 'gnostic' texts with Pachomian monks, other scholars have noted how complex the situation regarding Pachomian orthodoxy was.[123] Whether one is inclined to see the happy coexistence of the Nag Hammadi codices and the Bodmer Papyri, the internal evidence of the latter does not afford us an easy picture of whoever owned them.

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[121] 'Is the very term community not abusive in implying a homogeneous profile for all its users? Moreover, we have seen that this library was built up over three centuries and that it was therefore likely to be the aggregate of several collections of diverse origins which do not necessarily reflect the state of mind of all users at the end of its history. Finally, it may have given rise to several activities, which are not mutually exclusive: creation, edifying reading and school instruction. In other words, the hypothesis of a school library is not incompatible with a religious environment. In the absence of a comprehensive study of the Bodmer Library in all its aspects, it seems to me that it is impossible to be conclusive in a one way or the other.'

[122] Piwowarczyk and Wipszycka (2017:455-56), responding to an earlier work by Hugo Lundhaug and Lance Jenott, are not convinced by this line of reasoning. See also Lewis and Blount (2014:399-419).

[123] Rousseau (1985:19) says, 'Pachomius and his associates were markedly attached to orthodoxy.' He also notes, however, that some gnostic influence may have been retained (Rousseau 1985:22). Brakke (1998:111-12, 116) argues that Pachomius was simultaneously in step with emerging orthodoxy while retaining autonomy within the order. Orthodox Pachomian monasticism came into full fruition only with Theodore (one of Pachomius' successors) and beyond (Brakke 1998:112). However, Piwowarczyk and Wipszycka (2017:439-41) are not convinced that monastic ownership, let alone Pachomian ownership, of the Nag Hammadi codices, is assured. For more on Pachomius, see Goehring (1986:236-57) and Goehring (2017:1021-35).

What we can say with relative certainty about the collector(s) is that they were (1) educated in both Christian and Classical literature, versed in multiple languages,[124] (2) they displayed variegated literary interests, (3) and were therefore not monolithic, neither ideologically nor socially.[125] It appears then that some sort of connection between the Nag Hammadi codices and the Bodmer Papyri is thus not unthinkable; however, a detailed line of inquiry in that direction is beyond the scope of this thesis. It will suffice to reiterate that the collection of MSS originating from somewhere between ancient Panopolis and ancient Thebes, including the region of Dishna, are heterogeneous in a way that throws up many questions about *who* owned and used them.[126]

4. The thematic unity of the BCMC (BMC)

4.1. Intended or *post-hoc*?

The BCMC (BMC) is itself a container of diverse literature. The codex contains a proto-Gospel narrative (the Nativity of Mary), epistles (3 Corinthians, Jude, and 1-2 Peter), poetic allegory (Ode of Solomon), homiletic material (Melito's homily on the passion), liturgical texts (the hymn fragment and most of Psalms 33 and 34), and martyrology (the Apology of Phileas). Scholars have noted the eclectic contents of

[124] The issue of education is important but cannot be explored in this thesis. The nature of these writings implies an educated ownership, which implies a level of wealth. See Huebner (2019:18-28) for examples of early Christians in Egypt (3rd century CE) who had both wealth and education and who might have owned a significant amount of written material. See also Nongbri (2018c:236-38).

[125] Knust makes a helpful observation, comparing four composite codices used by early Christians, 'the reading habits of the collectors responsible for these assemblages were not particularly influenced by the canonical norms of the day…' going on to say that how texts were used was 'far more complex than a canonical lens would allow' (Knust 2017:111, 114).

[126] To echo Stowers (2011:238-56) and Fournet (2015:17), this is why it is important to be cautious about recourse to specific 'communities' that might have owned and used certain MSS. It appears that behind this recourse is the assumption of an ideologically coherent group who 'most certainly would have' or 'most certainly could not have' owned a specific set of texts simply because their contents are ideologically opposed to what we (in the modern world) think a group would have believed. The problem is one of circular reasoning; these MSS exist, therefore, proving the existence of such-and-such a community, followed by this community existed, therefore, the creation of such-and-such a library of MSS.

both the larger find and the BCMC (BMC).[127] With such diversity, is it possible to discern a unified theme or themes?

Since the *editio princeps* of Michel Testuz (1959a), there has been considerable thought dedicated to structural features of the BCMC (BMC). The conversation has been carried forward by the consideration of several pieces of evidence, namely, the links between each text, the variety of scribal hands, pagination sequences, etc.[128] Figure 3 displays Testuz's understanding of the codex.

The reason for dividing the codex into three sections is simple: the links between each text are conclusive when one text ends on the same sheet as the next one begins (Orsini 2019:38). Where links between texts are certain, those texts form a section. Where the links are uncertain, a separate section begins. New proposed variations to Testuz's structure have since arisen. Haines-Eitzen (2000:100) noted that the link between Jude and Melito is inconclusive and thus indicated that the latter may previously have been part of a different codex. Consequently, Melito and the hymn would form a separate codicological section.[129] However, more recently, Nongbri (2018a) has shown that Jude and Melito are certainly connected.[130] Wasserman (2005:145-46) argued that section two should rather be seen to occupy the first or last position in the final codex, allowing sections one and three to be immediately connected. On certain codicological grounds, Nongbri (2018a & c) has

[127] In my view, the textual diversity of the BCMC (BMC) is precisely why such a debate over 'composite' vs. 'miscellany' has arisen.

[128] These features have been thoroughly discussed in several of the publications cited in section 2 above, so I will not revisit the debate except to highlight the major discussion points that help answer the question of thematic unity.

[129] If this were correct, it would agree with Turner (1977:80), who noted that, 'there are four series of ancient paginations in this complex of manuscripts.' This would have been contrary to the standard three section construction.

[130] For Haines-Eitzen (2000:100), the combined weight of the first two 'missing' pages from the homily, the unique pagination sequence, and the different page dimensions threw doubt on the connection. However, since then, the missing pages have been found. See Bodmer Lab (n.d.) for photographs of page 1 and page 2. See Nongbri (2015:171) for brief comments on these pages. Nongbri and Hall (2017) have published a paper titled, 'Melito's *Peri Pascha* 1-5 as Recovered from a "Lost" Leaf of Papyrus Bodmer XIII'. I have unfortunately not been able to access a copy of this publication.

concluded that section two may never have been part of the BCMC (BMC).[131] In addition, remembering that Nongbri (2016b:394-410) showed, also on an examination of codicological features, that P. Bodmer VII and VIII are not primarily connected. In other words, the epistles of Peter and Jude were separate from one another even *before* this codex was created. Orsini (2019:37) agrees with Crisci (2004:122-26) that there are at least two codicological sections; the first made up of P.Bodmer V, X, XI, VII, XIII, XII and the second consisting of P.Bodmer XX and IX, while P.Bodmer VIII falls, 'outside these two groups' (Orsini 2019:42).[132] The issue of codicological sections is tied to the presence of different scribal hands. Testuz (1959a:8) identified four individual copyists, Turner (1977:80-81) expanded that to six, which Haines-Eitzen (2000:98-99) confirmed, while Orsini (2019:38-43) reduced the number to five. Orsini's (2019:43) opinion that Jude and 1-2 Peter were written by the same scribe is significant for understanding the codex as a whole. At the very least, if section one was a codex by itself and section three also a distinct codex prior, then it can be argued that the BCMC (BMC) was indeed formed in a *shorter* time span.

[131] As already noted, the unfortunate disassembly of the codex will forever obscure our view on this point.

[132] Orsini (2019:42) remarks about P. Bodmer VIII (1-2 Peter), 'It should be remembered that this small codex has been regarded as the final piece in the reconstruction of a single codex including all nine Bodmer Papyri on the sole and rather weak grounds that there are two blank pages at the end. Yet, as the editor of the Papyrus has acknowledged, the single pieces were originally independent of each other and were only put together subsequently.'

FIGURE 3

SCRIBAL HAND AND PAGINATION SEQUENCES IN THE BMC[133]

Text	Scribal hand	Pagination
Section 1		
Nativity of Mary	A	1-49
3 Corinthians	B	50-57
11th Ode of Solomon	B	57-62
Jude	B	62-68
Melito's homily on the passion	A	1-63
Hymn fragment	A	64
Section 2		
Apology of Phileas	C	129-146?[134]
Psalms 33:2-34:16	D	147-151?[135]
Section 3		
1-2 Peter	B	1-36

Thus, the balance of evidence renders it unlikely that the codex was constructed, with each text written in this order from start to finish.[136] Haines-Eitzen (2000:104) advocated to conceive of the BCMC (BMC) as a product of scribal networks, a proposal I find compelling, though it has not been taken up and explored in detail by other scholars.[137] The implication of her thesis is that some texts were written by

[133] Adapted from Haines-Eitzen (2000:97) and Wasserman (2005:140), who both adapted from Testuz (1959a:8).

[134] The Apology is highly fragmentary, with the result that the page numbers are not clear, requiring the pagination to be reconstructed.

[135] The top margins of the Psalms are mostly missing, requiring pagination to be reconstructed. Wasserman (2005:140) tentatively has the Psalms ending on p. 151, while Nongbri (2018a) ends the sequence on p. 150.

[136] A situation recognised very early on (Turner 1977:80).

[137] Haines-Eitzen (2000:84) offers this suggestion (as the possible origin of other early Christian texts as well) as an alternative to professional scriptoria saying, 'we have no secure evidence of early Christian scriptoria, and that what remains constantly before us are circles of readers and scribes who transmitted Christian literature individually and privately.' This conclusion is strengthened by Timothy Mitchell's (2019:30) recent arguments. Schmid (2008:9-13) argues against the scribal network thesis, at least as far as the introduction and transmission of variants are concerned.

different scribes at different times and then finally brought together in a form that made sense to the collector. Therefore, it appears that this construction should be understood as *post-hoc*. Wasserman (2005:147) noted that a probable scenario was that the final collector, 'somehow found a common denominator in the texts…' which inspired the new collection. Thus, the assemblage was created based on the compiler's literary interests and ideological framework; any common denominator that can be discerned is *in the eye of the reader*. In my view, Jones' (2011-12:18, 20) argument seems plausible in so far as we might say that the compiler of the BCMC (BMC) sought to obtain as many texts as possible in one container—and I add—that pertained to certain perceived ideological resonances.

4.2. Common threads between the texts

There have been several proposals for what exactly unifies all the texts of the codex. I offer a summary of the main opinions. Victor Martin (1964:9) suggested, rather broadly, that all the texts lend themselves to a theological outlook. Haines-Eitzen (2000:103-34) felt that was too general and proposed a theme of the *body* that permeated all the works. Against her objection, Wasserman (2005:147) believed Martin's thesis was not too unspecific, pointing out that, 'several characteristics typical of incipient orthodoxy are prominent in the texts, especially in the area of Christology.' Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:185) dedicated a more in-depth study to test Haines-Eitzen's thesis, ultimately concluding that a common denominator between each one of the texts is not apparent; rather, a number of the works have a 'polemisch-apologetisch'[138] character. Junack and Grunewald (1986:23-24) saw the Apology of Phileas as 'schlüssel und crux'[139] to the collection, indicating that Michel Testuz must have viewed this text as the reason for the final compilation. Merkt (2015:35) views that impetus as unlikely, suggesting rather that, '1 Pt dazu geeignet war, die apologetische, paränetische und martyrologische Thematik der Apologie, die Standhaftigkeit in Drangsalen, die Treue zu Christus und das Vorbild seiner Passion zu unterstreichen.'[140] Horrell (2009:503, 518) views the reception of 1 Peter as a key motivator for the diverse assemblage. He, too, sees benefit in Martin's

[138] 'polemic-apologetic.'

[139] 'Key and crux.'

[140] '1 Pt was suited to emphasize the apologetic, paraenetic and martyrological themes of the Apology, steadfastness in tribulations, fidelity to Christ and the example of His Passion.'

proposal but criticises it and Haines-Eitzen's thesis as, 'too diffuse to capture any supposedly clear common thread' (Horrell 2009:514-15). As already discussed, Jones (2011-12:19-20) rejects the notion that the BCMC (BMC) was created around a common theme; rather, he advocates for a codex that was intended to simply have as many texts as possible. Since 1 Peter is the focus of my thesis, Horrell's findings are worth reproducing below. While he does not see how to unassailably connect every text, he suggests two aspects of the BCMC's (BMC's) content that may give insight into which themes in 1 Peter would have *resonated* with this Christian collector. The following quote is lengthy, but it carries the point well. Horrell (2009:518) writes,[141]

> First, linked with 2 Peter, and then with the other texts in section I of the codex, 1 (and 2) Peter provides a body of Petrine teaching which is valuable and instructive for an emerging Christian orthodoxy, not least in its battles against what is perceived as false teaching and heresy. Second, there is the prominent focus on Easter themes central to Christian faith and discipleship. As in C-S, there is the striking collocation of 1 Peter and Melito's *Peri Pascha*. This would seem to indicate that early editors, like modern scholars, recognised the thematic (and textual?) resonances connecting the two works, and their common focus on the themes of Christ's suffering, death and vindication. The linking of 1 Peter with Psalms 33–34 not only highlights still further the paschal theme, but also connects this christological motif with the suffering of God's people in a hostile world, their following of the one who suffered for them and their hope of salvation and vindication. Given the clear use of Psalm 33 in 1 Peter, there is also an intertextual as well as a thematic relationship. The inclusion of the Apology of Phileas, perhaps the key to the making of the final collection, indicates, as in C-S, the thematic link between the suffering of Christ and the suffering of God's faithful people. In short, while the clear thematic coherence that characterises C-S is less evident in BMC, there is still a good deal to suggest a similar focus linking a number of texts with themes central to 1 Peter.

It has not escaped me that should Nongbri be correct in his assessment that section two probably never belonged to the codex, Horrell's conclusions above would be in peril. However, it is important to remember that Nongbri's findings, though

[141] The 'C-S' he refers to is the Crosby-Schøyen ms 193.

compelling, cannot be proven decisively. In fact, as will be shown below, the themes of the Apology and the Psalms fit so well with themes in the other texts that their inclusion is equally compelling.

Therefore, in my view, it would not be incorrect to view the BCMC (BMC) as a general collection of many texts. However, also in my view, it would be incorrect to say that the collector of the codex had no theological motivation in mind whatsoever. The BCMC (BMC), like other theological works penned by early Christians, gives us a sense of the 'doctrinal, theological, and social issues facing Christianity in the late third and early fourth centuries' (Haines-Eitzen 2000:104). And by studying them we, 'unlock a world of texts and readers that remain mysterious nonetheless. As embodiments of the technologies and social relations of some ancient Egyptian reading circle, they materially mediate the desires and textual priorities of that group,' writes Knust (2017:114). The theological battles of the early Christian centuries, as well as the persecution faced by Christians, are well documented.[142] Siker (2017:197) writes, 'Christianity in the second and third centuries was a time of both significant fluidity and consolidation of Christian identities at the same time.'[143] It is out of this socio-religious context that the codex arises. With most of the texts having some apologetic character, it is not unreasonable to suppose that whoever compiled the codex sought to have as many such writings together in one container, an apologetic anthology, if you will.

4.3. A codex and social resistance

To remind the reader, the argumentation of this thesis is built on three legs. First, is the scribe's choice of collected texts and any possible thematic unity between them. Second, is the marginalia present in 1 Peter, the clearest example of the scribe's hermeneutics.[144] Third, linked to the marginalia, is the scribe's redactional activity when copying 1 Peter. The first avenue will be studied shortly below, while the second and third avenues will be studied in in chapter three. Taken together and analysed through a social theory heuristic lens, what will become evident is how

[142] See section 4.3 below.

[143] See fn. 154.

[144] The marginalia in 2 Peter are addressed peripherally.

these three areas reflect identity boundary formation and preservation amid social resistance.[145]

From the time of the first writing of 1 Peter to the time P^{72} was copied, Christians were in social competition with both themselves and the Roman social world. On the one hand, Christians held competing beliefs about Jesus Christ, the resurrection, and so on. On the other hand, Christians were an oppressed social group, marginalised for reasons related to their faith commitments. In this section, I will briefly address both of these elements that occurred in the Christian social world.

To begin, I will discuss persecution. 1 Peter is written to an audience who are suffering for being Christians; they are facing resistance, possibly ranging from informal social rejection to official censuring and punishment. The context of persecution extends to the writing of P^{72} and the construction of the BCMC (BMC). The social resistance described in 1 Peter bears similarities to the legal proceedings described in the letters between Pliny, the Younger and Emperor Trajan (Horrell 2013:183-97, esp. 197). The current consensus grants that official, empire wide persecution was not instituted until Emperor Decius' legislation in 250 CE (de Vos 2017:817). Up until this point, social censuring occurred as and when accusations were brought against Christians by members of the local populace.[146] The reasons for the persecution have been variously suggested[147] but, for this thesis, it will suffice

[145] Travis Williams (2012:37-40) uses the term, 'social conflict'. He defines social conflict as, 'the strategic interaction between individuals or groups which results from a (perceived) deprivation by an interdependent other' (Williams 2012:39). In the case of 1 Peter, the interdependent other would refer to the Romans in Anatolia. See Williams (2012:35-59) for his use of modern conflict theory.

[146] Horrell connects official and non-official public persecution in the following way, 'To depict these as two alternatives does not rightly appreciate the legal status of Christianity in the first three centuries, nor the connections between public hostility and the accusatorial process, which remained the route through which Christians generally came to judicial attention… The occasional and local nature of Christian persecution does not mean that there was no official stance towards Christianity, but is in fact reflective precisely of that stance' (Horrell 2013:197).

[147] That the persecutions even took place has been noted as an unusual phenomenon on the part of the Romans; they were typically tolerant of diverse cultural and religious practices (Moss 2017:783). Why, then, did they persecute Christians? Craig de Vos (2017:817-34) notes the typical reasons cited but suggests that underlying them all was the anti-social disposition of Christians, which was perceived by the Romans as a threat to societal stability. This is confirmed by Horrell (2013:193).

to say that social opposition toward Christians was not unusual from the time of writing 1 Peter to the time the BCMC (BMC) was constructed. In fact, until the time of Constantine, Christians were largely a marginalised minority social group. More specifically, the Decian persecution (250 CE) and the Edict of Milan (313 CE) probably bracketed the copying of P^{72} and the death of Phileas (306/ 7 CE). Candidly stated, at the time of making the BCMC (BMC), social opposition to Christianity was acutely felt. The following questions are thus pertinent: What was the role of this social opposition in the formation of Christian social identity? What recourse did this oppressed group have available for the preservation of its distinctive identity? What evidence do we have any chosen recourse?

To answer the first question, SIT assumes the presence of multiple groups; one group requires the existence of at least one other group in order for it to develop distinctiveness.[148] Positive social identity (distinction) is the aim of all individuals and groups. Conflict threatens the sustainability of a social group and thus forces a reinterpretation of the social engagement as well as identity. This takes place through *social comparison*. Christian groups no doubt sensed an illegitimate social status quo; compared to other social groups (Jews, Gentiles, etc.), they were *relatively deprived*. In response, several options were open to them, which answers the second question. On the one hand, they could engage in *social mobility*, renouncing their faith, taking up membership in a non-Christian group.[149] This would

Williams (2012:240-58) considers the withdrawal, by Anatolian Christians, from voluntary associations, imperial cult worship, and the veneration of traditional Roman gods, all of which would have had negative effects on social, political, and economic dynamics of society in Asia Minor. Such a society would have been a collectivistic one, living by the core values of honour and shame, and made up of dyadic persons. This meant that the behaviour of early Christians would have been socially unacceptable and seen as dangerous. See Crook (2020) for various contributions to key social dynamics (honour, shame, kinship, collectivism, etc.) in the ancient Mediterranean world. See Malina (2001:58-80) for dyadic personalities. See Simmons (2017:796-816) for a discussion about the philosophical opposition Christians faced from the likes of Celsus, Sossianus Hierocles, and Porphyry of Tyre. See Wan (2020) for the intergroup contestation over time and space between the Christians of 1 Peter and the Imperial cult of the time.

[148] See chapter 1, section 5.4.2.

[149] The letters between Pliny and Trajan indicate that this did indeed take place (Horrell 2013:194-95).

have saved them from stigmatisation and its social consequences.[150] On the other hand, they could embark on *social change*, choosing to stay Christian, but now recreating/ reinterpreting a positive social identity (*social creativity*) thereby renegotiating the terms of the social engagement between themselves and other non-Christian groups. This is how oppression functions in the formation of social identity, it forces social groups into one of several avenues. The avenue chosen by the author of 1 Peter was social creativity. Furthermore, as will be argued shortly, the apologetic construction of the BCMC (BMC) seems to suggest a similar process taking place, some two to three centuries later. From a social theory perspective, each text seems to display an interest in renegotiating the terms of intergroup relations, whether that be between proto-orthodox Christians and 'heretical' groups or between Christians and non-Christians, like the Roman officials who are persecuting them. Together, these texts formed an apologetic anthology that appears to clearly define the social identity of the ingroup over against that of the outgroup.[151] This, in part, answers the third question above, about what evidence there might be of any chosen recourse. I will consider this evidence in more detail shortly. First, I must remark briefly on competing Christian ideologies.

From its beginning, Christianity was a pluriform religion (Luomanen 2012:8),[152] such that talking of 'Christianity', for example, in the 1st century is problematic if one is referring to a monolithic belief system (Kok and Roth 2014:2-4).[153] Beyond the 1st

[150] See Horrell (2013:197-202) for social creativity and stigmatisation in 1 Peter. See Moss (2017:783-95) for the concept of dying well. According to Moss, this was prevalent amongst Christians (martyrdom) and in the general Greco-Roman culture.

[151] See section 4.4 below.

[152] This subject has generated no small amount of debate. Walter Bauer (1934) was the first to systematise the view by attempting to show which forms of Christianity were early and strong in different geographical locations. New works have since followed, revising and building on his thesis. One famous work is by James Robinson and Helmut Koester (1971). Bauer's thesis was not without strong opposition, however. Two systematic refutations are Colin Roberts (1979:49-73) and Thomas Robinson (1988). In more recent times, Bart Ehrman (2005) is a widely known scholar who advocates for an early Christian plurality. However, as Jeffery Siker acknowledges, Christians were able to retain an overarching unity despite this diversity (2017:197-219).

[153] When the term 'Christian' first came to be used, as well as its initial connotations and eventual reappropriation, is the subject of an article by David Horrell (2007:361-81) and republished in Horrell (2013:165-210).

century, Christian diversity seems to have been a defining feature in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, so much so that scholars now talk of 'Christianities' as opposed to a single, self-contained Christianity (Siker 2017:197-98).[154] The themes found in different places throughout the BCMC (BMC) indicate that the 4th century, at least in close geographical proximity to the where the codex was first formed, was no different. The 39th festal letter written by Athanasius, where he lists off the 27 books of the NT, is a 'fencing off' exercise that reveals a diversity, not only of belief but also in the esteem ascribed to different 'sacred' texts.[155] It will be my argument that the BCMC (BMC) is also a fencing off exercise, with many of its texts displaying a tendency toward ingroup boundary reinforcement and outgroup villainisation.

4.4. Thematic resonances and social identity theory

It is now pertinent to apply SIT to the known thematic resonances evident in the BCMC (BMC). Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:161-88) have already undertaken to analyse a *leitmotif* in the codex, so I will not attempt to repeat their work. However, below, I will be following Wasserman's (2005:145-46) proposed reordering of the codex sections, section two, followed by section one, followed by section three.

4.4.1. The Apology of Phileas

According to Wasserman (2005:145), the Apology probably either began the original codex or concluded it.[156] If it were the first text, the codex would have been introduced by the word, 'απολογεια', emphasising the apologetic design of the construction (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:167). There are several witnesses to the text of the Apology.[157] Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:168) believe that the version in the BCMC (BMC), P. Bodmer XX, gives 'eine Textform, in der hagiographische und

[154] See Siker (2017:197-219) for Christian fluidity and persecution. For more on Hellenists and Marcion, see Klutz (2017:142-68). For Marcion specifically, see Lieu (2014). For Jewish Christianity, see Luomanen (2012), Bird (2017:84-94), and Broadhead (2017:121-41). For Gnostics, see Brakke (2010) and Logan (2017:850-66). For persecution and opposition to Christianity, see Moss (2017:783-95), Simmons (2017:796-816), and de Vos (2017:817-34).

[155] See Brakke (1998) for more on Athanasius.

[156] See fn. 80. I am inclined to take the codicological evidence with the nature of the content in the Apology and conclude that it is still, in some way, a part of the codex.

[157] See Pietersma (1984).

apologetische Interessen mehr im Mittelpunkt stehen'[158] than comparable MSS, possibly lending itself to a liturgical context.[159]

Bishop Phileas was from the Egyptian city Thmuis, born into a noble and wealthy family, and was later beheaded in 307 CE (St Jerome 1999:110).[160] In the Apology, Phileas is ordered by the prefect Calcianus on six separate occasions to make sacrifices to Roman gods. Each time, he refuses. As the narrative develops, Phileas stresses the divinity of Jesus, his physical suffering and death, and how Jesus stands as an example to suffering believers.[161]

Moss (2017:783-95) details the significance of martyrdom in shaping early Christian identity. She writes, addressing the problem of evidence (Moss 2017:783),

> The majority of Christian stories describing the deaths of Christians in the second to fourth centuries CE were edited, if not composed, after persecution had ended… We are dealing not with eyewitness accounts of legal procedures, but with stories that shape memories and create identity for later generations of Christians. The prevalence of the refrain 'I am a Christian' demonstrates the extent to which Christian histories of martyrdom are about identity formation…[162]

This is a key insight in understanding how the Apology of Phileas functions in the BCMC (BMC). The trial and death of Phileas followed the group prototype embodied by Jesus. Moss (2017:787) continues, 'Without a doubt, however, the most influential model for the formation of theologies of martyrdom was the death of Jesus himself… Martyrs were cast as second Christs, soldiers, manly men, examples of virtue, philosophers, and sacrificial victims.' Phileas himself pointed to the example of Christ (Eusebius of Caesarea 2005:181). As such, martyrdom accounts, like the Apology of Phileas, serve to reinforce the prototypical ethos[163] (of the ingroup) around suffering

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[158] 'a text form in which hagiographic and apologetic interests are more central.'

[159] See Martin (1964:12-15) for more on the theological tendency of the Greek MS versus the Latin version of the same account.

[160] Other scholars give a date range of 304-307 CE for his death. See Wasserman (2006:167-68). For more on Phileas, see also Eusebius of Caesarea (2005:181-83).

[161] Because P. Bodmer XX has many lacunae, conjectures must be made as to what the document records in some places. For more, see Pietersma (1984:18-19).

[162] As a caveat to this, Martin (1964:15-20) believes that the earlier versions of the Apology were closer to the original minutes of the trial as opposed to much later accounts.

[163] See chapter 1, section 5.4.2.

well for Christ. These accounts and the 'noble and philosophic' (Eusebius of Caesarea 2005:180)[164] way that martyrs conducted themselves provided a valorised alternative to the stigma intended by non-believers (outgroups).[165]

4.4.2. Psalm 33 and 34

In early Christianity, the psalter was an important source of theological reflection on Jesus Christ (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:169). Following are two examples of this reflection in 1 Peter.[166] First, at 2:3, 'ει εγευσασθαι επειστευσατε οτι $\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$ ο $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$'[167] there is an allusion to Ps. 34:8.[168] Believers are spiritually formed through the consumption of spiritual milk (1 Pt. 2:2), tasting the goodness of Jesus. Second, appealing to the prototypical Christian ethos, at 1 Pt. 3:10-12, the writer quotes Ps. 34:11b-16a.[169] Those who suffer should not retaliate (1 Pt. 3:9); rather, they should count themselves blessed because they have suffered for being righteous (1 Pt. 3:13). They can rest assured that God is watching over his suffering people and his judgement is rendered against those who are evil (1 Pt. 3:12). Similarly, Ps. 33 takes up the providential watchfulness of God; he will deliver those who fear him through his steadfast love.[170] Ps. 34 is also concerned with this theme, though with more emphasis on the punishment of evildoers.[171] Ultimately, those who avoid evil and do good, trusting in God through suffering and trials, will taste the goodness of God.

Peter links his readers' suffering to Jesus, who is their example (1 Pt. 3:18). In this way, Ps. 33-34 become aides to the interpretation of his reader's suffering in the light of Jesus Christ. In terms of social identity, this hermeneutic offers a valorisation

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[164] In martyrdom, Christians creatively reinterpreted the ancient concept of a good death. Dying for Christ was imbued with social value. In the context of Martyrdom, Moss (2017:784) writes, 'The good death also provided an opportunity to prove, decisively, one's worth and manliness. Dying well with dignified self-control was long considered the mark of a good soldier.'

[165] See fn. 150.

[166] The Psalms being only one source of reflection. In fact, Horrell (2013:37-39) argues that 1 Peter displays a mixture of Christian traditions.

[167] 'If you have tasted that the Lord is good'. The reading is taken from P^{72}. Interestingly, the scribe writes 'Χρηστος' as a nomen sacrum. On this, see Wasserman (2005:153).

[168] See Sargent (2015:112-14) for a brief commentary on this allusion.

[169] Possibly alluding to Ps. 33:13-18a. See Sargent (2015:78-85) for further discussion.

[170] P. Bodmer IX does not contain v. 1.

[171] P. Bodmer IX does not contain vv. 17-22.

of the ingroup and a villainising of the outgroup. On the former, the general ideas of suffering, trusting God amid their trials, and God blessing his people are at home in both Psalms as well as in 1 Peter (and the Apology of Phileas). These writings creatively reinterpret the social censoring being faced, turning it into a reason to rejoice and praise. Much like in the Apology of Phileas, the shame of persecution is socially renegotiated to hold existential meaning and value. It is not to be avoided; rather, it should be sought. This is reinforced through villainising the outgroup, whose behaviour is delegitimised and, therefore, God's punishment is warranted.[172]

4.4.3. The Nativity of Mary

One of the functions of infancy gospels is to provide theological information about Jesus where the NT gospels say almost nothing (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:171-72). The 'γενεσις Μαριας αποκαλυψις Ιακωβ'[173] account offers background information on the births of both Mary and Jesus. Mary is conceived when God answers the prayers of her parents, Joachim and Anna (Nativity, 1-5). From very young, Mary is kept from any form of defilement (Nativity, 6). She grows up in the temple and is later betrothed to a widower, Joseph (Nativity, 7-9). After Mary draws the lot to make a purple and scarlet curtain for the temple (Nativity, 10), she is visited by an angel and told how she will, as a virgin, give birth to Jesus (Nativity, 11). When Joseph discovers her pregnancy, he becomes afraid and questions Mary's virtue before God reveals to Joseph, in a dream, how this is all part of his plan to bring salvation to his people (Nativity, 13-14). No small misunderstanding occurs when both Joseph and Mary are hauled before the priest for judgement but are eventually vindicated (Nativity, 15-16). Jesus is then born in a cave under miraculous circumstances (Nativity, 18-20). After his birth, various events are described, both like and different to those described in Luke and Matthew (Nativity, 21-24). Finally, the author reveals himself as James, writing from Jerusalem (Nativity, 25).[174]

The story vindicates Mary's purity and Jesus' virgin birth. Notice, for example, 'και εισηλθην και [η] σχηματισεν αυτην και ηραυνησε η σαλωμη την φυσιν αυτης'

[172] The divine fate of evildoers (the outgroup) is taken up in Melito's homily, Jude, and 2 Peter (See sections 4.4.6, 4.4.7, and 4.4.8 below).

[173] Reading taken from P. Bodmer V.

[174] For further introductory remarks on this proto-Gospel, see Ehrman (2003:63) and Lapham (2003:62-65).

(20:1).[175] The humanity (bodily reality) of Jesus is proved when he suckles, 'και ελαβη μασθον εκ τες μητρος αυτου μαριας' (19:2).[176] Perhaps, not to mention the annunciation (11:2-3), his divinity is also shown when Salome's hand is healed after the angel's instruction, 'προς ελθουσα αψε του πεδιου και αυτος εσωτε σοι η σωτηρια και εποιησεν ουτω και ιαθη σαλωμη καθως προσεκυνησεν' (20:3).[177] This scenario emphasises ingroup beliefs while implying punishment for those who doubt.

This infancy narrative was probably written in the 2nd century, with P. Bodmer V being the oldest known copy (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:171), assigned between the close of the 3rd century and the beginning of the 4th century (Orsini 2019:39). However, it is possible that this infancy story was a compilation of previously distinct narratives that were ultimately brought together into a unified whole (Zervos 2019:19-21). Given the pluriformity of Christian belief during these centuries, a text such as this would have been useful in countering alternate Christologies that, to varying degrees, rejected either the divinity of Jesus or his humanity.[178] This

[175] Testuz (1958:109) translates this as follows, 'Et elle entra (dans la grotte), et fit un geste inconvenant, et Salomé vérifia sa nature.' In English, 'And she entered (the cave), and made an unseemly gesture, and Salome verified her nature.' Ehrman (2003:70) translates 20:1 as, 'The midwife went in and said to Mary, "Brace yourself, for there is no small controversy concerning you." Then Salome inserted her finger in order to examine her condition' Ehrman's translation primarily follows the text of Émile de Strycker (1961), whom I have not consulted.

[176] Testuz (1958:107) translates, 'Et il vint prendre le sein de sa mère Marie'. In English, 'And he came to take the breast of his mother Mary'.

[177] Translated by Testuz (1958:109, 111) as, '"Approche-toi, touche l'enfant et celui-ci sera le salut pour toi." Et elle fit ainsi et Salomé fut guérie tandis qu'elle se prosternait.' In English, '"Come closer, touch the child, and this one will be salvation for you." And so she did, and Salome was healed as she bowed down.'

[178] For example, docetic or adoptionist views. Broadly, docetic views held that Jesus only appeared to be human and was really a spirit (Siker 2017:214). Adoptionist views, also described broadly, saw Jesus as only a human who later acquired divine sonship (Bird 2017:16). Vuong (2011:419-32) argues that the positive portrayal of the temple and priests in the Nativity reflects a sympathetic, rather than an antithetical attitude towards Jewish beliefs and traditions. This raises a question about the presence of this narrative in the same codex as Melito's homily, which is decidedly accusatorial of the Jews (see section 4.4.7 below). Space limits a comprehensive answer, but assuming Vuong is correct, it seems that the positive portrayal lends itself to what we see in other texts of the codex, an authoritative appeal to ancient traditions and origins. For example, in Melitio's homily, Jesus was

'genesis' story would have granted its readers an intellectual basis from which to argue for the legitimacy of their version of the Christ event, which would have reinforced the boundaries around a Christian proto-orthodoxy that saw Christ as both fully God and fully human.[179] Specifically, this account dovetails well with the inclusion in the codex of 3 Corinthians.

4.4.4. Third Corinthians

P. Bodmer X has been paleographically dated between the 2nd half of the 3rd century and the early 4th century (Orsini 2019:39). The original text, penned in the name of the apostle Paul, was probably written in the 2nd half of the 2nd century, and is primarily concerned with the conflict between proto-orthodox and gnostic belief over the bodily resurrection of the dead (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:174).[180] The first chapter is a letter written by the Corinthian church elders to the apostle 'Paul'.[181] They present the theology of two teachers for Paul to examine. Chapter two is a response from Paul to the elders, refuting the corrupted teachings.

It is not difficult to see how this letter fits well with the Nativity of Mary. For example, the Nativity emphasises Jesus' virgin birth by Mary while in 3 Corinthians Stephanas and various elders write to Paul about, 'ανγδρες δυω…οιτινες την τινων πιστιν ανατρεπουσιν φθορειμεοις' (3 Cor. 1:2)[182] by saying, among other things, 'ουδ' οτι εις σαρκα ηλθεν ο $\overline{\text{κς}}$ ουδ' οτι εκ μαριας εγεννηθη' (1:14-15).[183] Paul responds by refuting this claim, 'ο $\overline{\theta\varsigma}$ ο παντοκρατωρ δικεος ων και μη βουλομενος

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prefigured in the Passover lamb (Pascha 1-6) and in the Nativity, Jesus was born of Mary, who was kept ritually pure (Nativity 6).

[179] In fact, Zervos (2019:20) suggests that the final compilation (before P. Bodmer V) was the work of a 2nd century individual whose redaction, 'exhibited his own orthodox leanings.'

[180] See Hovhanessian (1998) for a comprehensive study of this letter. See pp. 109-113 for his English translation of P. Bodmer X. See also Testuz (1959b:6-45).

[181] That the actual apostle Paul was not involved in this interaction is virtually undisputed. See Hovhanessian (1998:123-39) for relevant arguments. For convenience, I will refer to the author simply as Paul.

[182] Hovhanessian (1998:109) translates, 'Two men… who overturned the faith of some with corrupted word.' See Testuz (1959b:31-44) for Greek transcription of P. Bodmer X, as well as a French translation.

[183] Hovhanessian (1998:110) translates, 'that the Lord did not come in the flesh nor was he born of Mary.'

ακυρωσαι το ιδιον πλασμα κατεπεμσε $\overline{\pi\nu\alpha}$ δια πυρος εις μαρειαν την γαλειλεαν…τω γαρ ϊδιω σωματι $\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$ $\overline{\iota\eta\varsigma}$ πασαν εσωσε σαρκα' (2:12-13, 16).[184]

That 3 Corinthians and The Nativity of Mary appear together in a 4th century codex is unsurprising when one accounts for the nearby discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices. Gnostic ideas[185] were represented geographically near the collector of the BCMC (BMC). The suggestion seems plausible that the BCMC (BMC) could have been created as a reference work, used in a liturgical context, that served to reinforce boundaries of identity and belief between proto-orthodox believers and alternative Christianities, especially where Christology was concerned.[186] Furthermore, notice the villainising labels attached to the antagonists of 3 Corinthians, 'του πανηρου' (2:2-3), 'παραχαρασοντων τα λογεια αυτου' (2:3-4), 'τεκνα οργης' (2:19), and 'τεκνημα τα εχειδνων' (2:38-39).[187] Paul fences off his readers from the outgroup by candidly exhorting, 'απο της διδασκαλειας αυτων απο φευγετε' (2:21).[188]

[184] Translated by Hovhanessian (1998:111) as, 'God the almighty, being righteous, and not willing to make void his own creation, sent down the Spirit through fire in Mary the Galilean… For, through His own body, Christ Jesus saved all flesh.'

[185] See (Logan 2017:851-55) for the problems defining gnostic terms and ideas.

[186] This point is highly contestable. For example, Strickland (2017:781-91) would be sympathetic to the view just stated, whereas Lundhaug (2020:329-86) is inclined to view gnostic ownership of the Bodmer Papyri (this would include the BCMC (BMC)) as plausible.

[187] Hovhanessian (1998:110-12) translates these as 'the wicked', 'falsifiers of his words', 'children of wrath', and 'children of vipers', respectively.

[188] Hovhanessian (1998:112) translates, 'Avoid them and stay away from their teaching.'

4.4.5. The 11th Ode of Solomon

Several observations are requisite to contextualise the Odes of Solomon. P. Bodmer XI is the earliest textual witness to the Odes (Lattke 2009:3), having been paleographically dated between the 2nd half of the 3rd century and the early 4th century (Orsini 2019:39). The Odes were probably originally penned between the 2nd and early 3rd century (Lattke 2009:6).[189] Their authorship is unknown, still their unity is suggestive of production by a religious community of some sort (Lattke 2009:4).[190] There geographic origin is also not known with any certainty (Lattke 2009:11-12). 'They are a unique collection of religious poems or songs "characterized by a particularly large overlap or mixture of Judaism, Gnosticism and Christianity"', writes Lattke (2009:12), quoting himself.[191]

The inclusion of this text in the BCMC (BMC) is, on the surface, relatively obscure. Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:176) write, 'Ob sich der Text aber als Zeugnis chrislicher Proto-Orthodoxie, als Text mit Interesse am "Leib" oder an hoher Christologie einordnen lässt, darf u.E. bezweift warden.'[192] However, this particular Ode was possibly not offensive, in any way, to emerging orthodoxy, and so its inclusion is not necessarily a difficulty (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:176). I would go further, proposing that the 11th Ode's inclusion is in step with specific themes evident in the other texts of the codex. Consider, for example, the title given by Lattke (2009:149), which describes the main rhetoric employed in this Ode, 'A Redeemed One Witnesses in Metaphorical Speech'. The use of metaphorical speech is also common in 1 Peter, for example, new birth into God's family (1 Pt. 1:3, 2:2), living stones (2:3), a nation of priests (2:9-10), aliens and exiles (2:11-12). Metaphor is a powerful rhetorical device that sparks the imagination and helps to create meaning. Marcar (2022:51) notes, 'language can *concurrently* be metaphorical, identity-

[189] See Lattke (2009:6-10) for further argumentation about potential dating.

[190] 'Solomon' is a pseudonym (Lattke 2009:5).

[191] See Lattke's (2009:12-14) brief remarks on the Jewish, Gnostic, and Christian influences in the Odes of Solomon.

[192] 'But whether the text can be classified as a testimony of Christian proto-orthodoxy, as a text with interest in the "body" or in high Christology, may be doubted in our opinion.'

constructing and theologically profound in a way that cannot be rephrased in non-figurative terms' (italics original).[193]

Furthermore, there are themes in the 11th Ode that are relevant to 1 Peter. The main idea in the first stanza of the Ode is that of redemption (Lattke 2009:153), particularly circumcision of the heart (Ode 11:1-3a). Similarly, 1 Peter describes the new birth that the readers have undergone (1 Pt. 1:3-12), which is the precursor to their living holy lives (1 Pt. 1:13-21). These Christians have been made pure by their 'υπακοη της αληθιας' (1 Pt. 1:22),[194] while in the 11th Ode, the writer, 'εδεδραμον οδον αληθιας' (v. 3b).[195] One could also appeal to the plant imagery used across both works. 1 Pt. 1:24-25 compares the physical body to grass that will eventually die, which can be juxtaposed with the eternality of the garden paradise of the Lord in stanza 6 of the 11th Ode (v. 16).

The use of metaphor inspires the imagination and helps to creatively reinterpret the social situation of those who might have found comfort in this Ode. The writer declares, 'κ̅ε̅ μακαρειοι οι πεφυτευμε[ε]ν[ιο]ι επει της γης οι εχοντες τοπον εν τω παραζισω σου και αυξανομενοι εν τη αυξησει των δενδρων σου μεταβληθεντες απο σκοτους εις το φως' (Ode 11:18a-19b).[196] The sense of comfort and joy ends in praise, 'δοξα σοι τω θ̅ω̅ παραδισω σου τρυφης εωνιας αλληλουϊα' (Ode 11:24).[197] Therefore, in my view, Ode 11 functions to compliment the apologetic design of the codex by using powerful metaphorical imagery to describe and valorise, in poetic/ hymnal form, the desirable redemption journey of believers. In so doing, it assists in the production of meaning and the reinforcement of ingroup identity boundaries.

4.4.6. The Epistle of Jude

Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:177) write, 'Mit dem pseudepigraphischen Judasbrief möchte eine christliche Gruppierung ihre Glaubensidentität gegenüber häretischen

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[193] This is a concluding remark from Marcar in a chapter titled, 'A Field Guide to Metaphors' (Marcar 2022:24-51). The context is an ethnic identity study of 1 Peter.

[194] 'Obedience to the truth'.

[195] 'Ran the way of truth', translation by Lattke (2009:149). See Testuz (1959b:61-68) for a Greek transcription of P. Bodmer XI as well as a French translation.

[196] 'Lord, blessed are those planted on the earth, who have a place in thy paradise and grow in the growth of thy trees, turned from darkness to (the) light.' Translation by Lattke (2009:150).

[197] Lattke (2009:150) translates, 'Glory to thee, God, by thy paradise of eternal delight. Hallelujah.'

Strömungen—wohl in ihrer Mitte oder ihrer unmittelbaren Nähe—sichern.'[198] Jude 4, 12-13 certainly implies that the threat is a covert one, hidden in plain sight amongst the believers. The original letter can be broadly dated from the mid-50s CE to the late 1st century (Streett 2020a:575).[199] Orsini (2019:39) assigns Jude (P. Bodmer VII) to the same hand (B) as the 11th Ode (P. Bodmer XI). The letter does not provide any specifics about the addressees. Streett (2020a:576) writes, 'While no regional setting is mentioned, we can assume the addressees are part of a house church or group of house churches that meet regularly for communal meals and ministry.' The primary focus of Jude is 'επαγωνιζεσθε τη απαξ παραδοθεισηι τοις αγιοις πειστει' (Jude 3).[200] From the perspective of SIT, this contention is made by villainising the outgroup, ascribing to them a variety of creative labels (Jude 12-13, 16)[201] while encouraging the 'αγαπητοις' (Jude 17) to stay faithful, 'προσδεχομενοι το ελεος του $\overline{\text{κυ}}$ εις ζοην ημων $\overline{\text{ιηυ}}$ $\overline{\text{χρυ}}$ αιωνιον'[202] (Jude 21).[203]

Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:177) note the close relationship between Christology and eschatology in Jude. The 'Christologischen Tendez' of P. Bodmer VII is seen in two important Christological variants (Wasserman 2006:177-79). At Jude 5b, the scribe has written that it was 'θεος Χριστος' who saved Israel from

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[198] 'With the pseudepigraphic Epistle of Jude, a Christian group wants to secure its identity of faith against heretical currents - probably in its midst or in its immediate vicinity.'

[199] A more specific date will be based on whether one is inclined to take the letter's proclaimed authorship as correct or if one prefers to assign the letter to pseudepigraphy (Streett 2020a:575).

[200] 'To contend earnestly for the faith entrusted once for all to the saints.' Greek reading taken from P^{72}. I have followed the scribe by leaving out 'πειστι' after 'παραδοθεισηι' as the former appears in the MS with a strikethrough.

[201] Bazzana (2020:225-26) writes, 'All cultures and societies construe their own identity by highlighting their opposition to an *other* that paradigmatically reverses all the behaviors and values presented as ideologically "normal" and normative in the mainstream. In ancient Mediterranean cultures, the construction of this oppositional other was particularly evident in ethnographic writing… Of course, since what would become Christianity grew within the sociocultural context of the Mediterranean world, Christ-following writers too adopted and adapted these widespread ideological and rhetorical models.'

[202] Readings taken from P^{72}, 'Beloved' and 'Awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life', respectively.

[203] See Williams (2014:716-36), who draws on social memory studies to discuss the construction of social identity in Jude. See Streett (2020a:575-84) for a social identity commentary on Jude.

Egypt.[204] This reading equates God with Christ; the Father and the Son are not differentiated (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:178).[205] At this point, a clearer picture of the ideological motivations of the scribal collector is beginning to develop. It is apparent in the codex that there is a strong desire to set the boundaries of a 'correct' conception of who Jesus Christ was. Not only is one understanding of Christ being presented, but other understandings are being explicitly rejected. In my view, this shows how the BCMC (BMC) functions as both a product of and an instrument for the formation and reinforcement of social identity boundaries, particularly in the area of Christology. From Jude, I will make a final observation. The various mentions of Jesus like, 'ημων δεσποτην και $\overline{\text{κν ιην}}$ χρν ημων'(Jude 4)[206] and the doxology in Jude 25 are, in my view, additional indications of why this letter resonated with the collector of the BCMC (BMC). Not simply because they mention Jesus (NT texts all do) but because they appear in the context of explicit outgroup designations and the villainising of the outgroup's behaviours.[207]

4.4.7. Melito's homily on the passion

This homily was possibly written in the 2nd half of the 2nd century (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:179). Orsini (2009:39) paleographically dates P. Bodmer XIII to the 4th century. Melito's sermon is generally taken to be anti-Jewish, accusing the Jews of deicide, killing their God (Ehrman 1999:116). Melito declares that in killing Jesus, 'God has been murdered' (Pascha, 96).[208] Here again, Jesus is equated with God. As a basis for linking Jesus and God, Melito reinterprets the Old Testament (Exodus 12:1-30) account of the Passover meal, showing how Jesus' death was prefigured in the death of the lamb at the Passover (Pascha, 1-10).[209]

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[204] See Wasserman (2005:152) for alternative readings that occur in the MS tradition.

[205] See Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:178-79), who suggest a second but perhaps less compelling Christological variant at Jude 25.

[206] 'Our Master and our Lord, Jesus Christ.' Reading taken from P^{72}.

[207] One could also note the textual affinities between 1-2 Peter and Jude that might have been significant for the scribal collector. See Hultin (2014:27-45) for a detailed study of the textual relationship between these three letters.

[208] Translation by Ehrman (1999:127). See also Pascha 72-105.

[209] See Cohick (2020) for a recent and comprehensive study of Melito and his homily.

The most striking feature of the homily is its high Christology that carries apologetic force, seeking to defend an emerging Christian orthodox ideology against 'heretical' theologies about Christ. Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:180) suggest which 'heresies' might have been addressed,

> Einerseits wird—gegen mögliche gnostische Gegner?—die Realität des Leidens Christi im Fleisch betont, andererseits Christus—gegen markionistische Tendenzen?—als der Herr der Geschichte gezeichnet, der sich schon im Alten Testament als solcher geäußert hat.[210]

This, again, suggests the possibility of gnostic Christianity in close proximity to our scribal collector. In terms of SIT, Melito emphasises the ingroup prototype embodied by Jesus (as in the Apology and 1 Peter). The prototype is legitimised by an appeal to ancient origins; Jesus was prefigured in the OT account of the Passover meal. The outgroup is clearly defined as the Jews who killed Jesus. They are villainised and demeaned while Jesus is elevated to equality with God (reminiscent of the Christological changes in 1-2 Peter and Jude), thereby granting him the right of authority to enforce the Christian emerging orthodox prototype.[211] Cohick (2020:152-53) suggests that the Jews referred to in the homily are specifically NT Jews and that the rhetoric employed is really intended to 'score theological points over other Christians and/ or to reinforce to the homilist's community that Christianity has replaced Judaism as the "true" community of God.'

I will say a brief word about the hymn that follows Melito's homily. To my knowledge, beyond Testuz (1959b:70-77), there is so little written about the hymn that it does not warrant a section of its own.[212] Testuz (1959b:74) wondered if it might have been an unfinished Easter hymn that was sung after a sermon like Melito's. This would support the notion of a liturgical context for the BCMC (BMC). He also explicitly notes the absence of gnostic themes, which he sees as support for

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[210] 'On the one hand-against possible gnostic opponents?—the reality of Christ's suffering in the flesh is emphasized; on the other hand Christ-against Marcionist tendencies?—is drawn as the Lord of history, who already expressed himself as such in the Old Testament.'

[211] This is to say that an understanding of Jesus was *used* to enforce a Christian emerging orthodox prototype.

[212] See also Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:182).

an orthodox Christian context (1959b:74). What intrigues me, in line with an emphasis on Christ in the codex, is the reference to Christ as the betrothed (line 5).

4.4.8. 1-2 Peter

1 Peter is a letter of encouragement and comfort to those who are suffering persecution for their faith, while 2 Peter is a denunciation of those who would 'distort' or 'corrupt' the belief system that certain Christians have inherited.[213] In the context of persecution and pluriform Christianity, 1 Peter legitimises the ingroup despite attempts at stigmatisation from outsiders, while 2 Peter delegitimises the actions and goals of those who are deviant (the outgroup).[214]

Regarding the transcription of 1-2 Peter, the scribe created variants that revealed something of his ideological stance on the nature of Jesus Christ, like at Jude 5b. I will avoid the variant in 1 Peter for now.[215] In 2 Pt. 1:2, the scribe omits the conjunction, 'και', between God and Jesus,[216] changing the meaning of the sentence. Now, grace and peace are obtained 'in the knowledge of God our Lord Jesus' (Wasserman 2005:153) as opposed to 'in the knowledge of God *and* Jesus our Lord.'[217] God and Jesus are thus equated once again. This variant may seem to be a simple scribal error, but taken together with the similar variants at Jude 5b and 1 Pt. 5:1, that seems unlikely (Royse 2008:612). I would go even further by saying that these variants, in light of the other MSS in the codex, demonstrate the Christological framework at the heart of the scribal collector's construction, namely one that fits the theological thought world of emerging orthodoxy and one that both encourages the ingroup and delegitimises the outgroup.

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[213] Second Peter has a similar focus to that of Jude, and the former appears to be heavily reliant on the latter (Streett 2020b:543). See also Hultin (2014:27-45).

[214] Streett (2020b:543) writes, 'Second Peter purports to be a farewell letter written to those who will survive the author's death (1:12–15). It serves to remind those left behind that Christ will return to set up his kingdom, but during the interim false teachers will infiltrate the church, pervert the truth, and turn many to their pernicious ways. Therefore, the recipients must protect the apostolic tradition and guard against adopting aberrant doctrines and behaviors that will bring shame to the cause of Christ.' See Streett (2020b:543-54) for a social identity commentary on 2 Peter. See Streett (2014:664-91) for a social identity analysis of 2 Peter in terms of meal practices in a Graeco-Roman empire context.

[215] See chapter 3, section 4.3 for a fuller discussion.

[216] For easy reference, see the minuscule copy of P^{72} by Comfort and Barrett (1999:480).

[217] As it would be if translated from the NA^{28}.

FIGURE 4[218]

Social identity theory and the BCMC (BMC)		
Thematic resonances	**Intertextual**	**Social identity function**

Origin story
• Jesus was prefigured in the Passover lamb
• Appeals to OT stories
• Jesus is God
• Jesus prophesied about by the prophets
	Apol. 3
	Nativity 1:1-3, 9:2, 10:1, 13:1
	Jude 5-11, 14-15
	Pascha 1-45, 57-65
	1 Pt. 1:10-12, 19-20
	2 Pt. 1:19-21, 3:2
		• Anchoring in the <u>past</u>: A narrative structure connects the present believers to an ancient and holy people of God.
		• Jesus is the ultimate embodiment of the ingroup prototype—he suffered as the Passover lamb.
		• Contesting the nature of Jesus legitimises and valorises an interpretation of him.
		• The provided narrative structure, the portrait of Jesus as prototypical, and 'correct' beliefs about his nature function as follows:
		  ○ Intragroup: Provides a 'myth' of common origins. Defines distinctive ingroup attributes and beliefs.
		  ○ Intergroup: Clearly demarcates deviant outgroup members and delegitimises their beliefs

Human/ divine nature of Jesus and virgin birth	**Apol.** 3 **Nativity** 11-20 **3 Cor.** 2:5 **Pascha** 9, 66, 70-71	
Martyrdom and suffering well	**Apol.** 5 **Pascha** 1-10, 31-35, 44-47 **1 Pt.** 1:3-8, 2:13-3:22, 4:12-19 **2 Pt.** 1:13-15	• Comfort for the <u>present</u>: The narrative provides encouragement and guidance amid suffering. • Suffering is prototypical to certain Christian groups. Jesus functions as the ultimate embodiment of that prototype. • Through 'new birth' and recourse to fictive kinship, believers are given a new identity as members of God's family. • In the 'now but not yet', they live by certain norms and an ethos delineated by leaders ('Peter'/ 'Paul'/ 'James') and embodied by Jesus. • Intragroup: Suffering well for 'doing good' is creatively reinterpreted as an avenue to glory. • Intergroup: Stigmatisation intended by the outgroup is reversed.
Encouragement for those who suffer	**Pascha** 47 **1 Pt.** 1:3-8, 4:12-14, 19, 5:6-10 **Ps.** 33:18-22, **Ps.** 34:4-10, 15-16	
Rebirth Light/ Darkness	**Ode 11:** 11-13, 19b **1 Pt.** 1:3, 2:2, 9	
Holiness	**Ode 11:** 1-4 **1 Pt.** 1:13-18, 22-23, 2:1-12, 4:1-11 **2 Pt.** 1:3-11, 3:11, 14,17	
Paradise	**Ode 11:** 16-24 **Pascha** 47	
Eschatological hope	**1 Pt.** 1:3-5, 13, 5:10 **2 Pt.** 1:11, 14, 3:1-12	• Hope for the <u>future</u>: The narrative is continuous and ends with a hopeful expectation of resurrection after death and the judgement of the unrighteous. Those who will be judged are 'deviant' Christians and non-Christians who persecute the faithful. • Intragroup: The identity and ethos of the ingroup is vindicated. • Intergroup: Various outgroups are delegitimised and villainised. • The narrative is cognitively accepted, positively evaluated, and emotionally desired, with the latter being expressed through praise.
Resurrection of the dead	**Apol.** 2 **3 Cor.** 2:6 **Pascha** 70-71, 100-101 **1 Pt.** 1:3, 21, 3:21	
Judgement of the unrighteous	**Ps.** 33:10, 16-17, **Ps.** 34:16 **Jude** 4, 8-12 **Pascha** 49-53, 72-99 **2 Pt.** 2:1-22	
Praise/ Doxology	**Ps. 33:**2-3, 8-9, **Ps. 34:**1-3 **Ode 11:**17-24 **Jude** 24-25 **1 Pt.** 1:3a **2 Pt.** 3:18b	

[218] © N. Oliveira. This table is informed by my research in section 4.4 above as well as the research to come in chapter 3.

I have provided a table (figure 4 above) that offers a snapshot view of the intertextual thematic resonances between the texts of the BCMC (BMC). The table is a high-level analysis and so is not intended to be exhaustive; however, it does serve to point out several key thoughts. Firstly, it shows that a single unifying theme is unlikely. Secondly, there are enough thematic resonances that are aligned with an apologetic interest to show that the 4th century collector who combined these texts did so out of an ideological motivation. Thirdly, viewed through the heuristic lens of SIT, the table offers us a window into something of the dynamics of early Christian identity formation.

5. Conclusion

The BCMC (BMC) displays a *post-hoc* thematic unity. In other words, the texts, already written, were combined based on themes that resonated with the compiler of the codex. The codex should not be regarded as *either* a 'miscellany' *or* a 'composite'; rather, I have argued that the codex is both a miscellany and a composite codex, hence my proposal for a new nomenclature, the Bodmer Composite Miscellaneous Codex (BCMC). 'Composite' refers to codicological structure (3 distinct sections) and 'miscellany' refers to the content contained within (a heterogeneous collection of texts). Any themes to be divined are in the eye of the reader.

The diversity of the Bodmer discovery reflects an ownership of eclectic interests. The MSS were found somewhere between Luxor and Panopolis, including the region of Dishna. Who exactly owned these MSS is difficult to ascertain, but the presence of classical works is out of step with Pachomian monasticism (the most well-developed proposal). However, monastic ownership of a sort cannot be completely set aside, nor can some of the other hypotheses which have been suggested. What is certain, however, is the broad literary interest exhibited by the MSS themselves.

The eclecticism continues with the BCMC (BMC). On the surface, the writings seem unrelated. However, closer inspection reveals a scribal compiler whose Christological ideology falls within the stream of emerging Christian orthodoxy. Through an analysis of the texts and using SIT as a heuristic lens, I have attempted to show the themes that resonated with our scribal collector. Each of the texts can be shown, in one way or another, to be reinforcing the boundaries between social

groups by valourising the group prototype (embodied by Jesus Christ), encouraging the ingroup amid suffering, and/ or villainising the outgroup for their ‘deviant’ ways.

Continuing with SIT, I will now turn to the copy of 1 Peter found in the codex to analyse, the various *investments* deposited onto the MS and into the text.

CHAPTER 3

MARGINAL NOTES AND TEXTUAL VARIANTS IN 1 PETER

> Beloved, no speech or event takes place without a pattern or design… (Melito of Sardis, Pascha, 35a).[219]
>
> There is no such thing as a message without a context (Linell 2009:17).

1. Introduction

1 Peter in P^{72} contains both notes in the margins of the copy and variants in the text. Initially, I will present the arguments for a common scribe for both Jude and 1-2 Peter. Consequently, this will lead to a discussion of the scribe's particular transcriptional habits. Following this, the marginal notes and textual variants will be analysed through a social identity heuristic lens and will be described using the relevant terms. The thesis of this chapter is as follows: These scribal habits are indicative of a hermeneutical process that seeks to create meaning as part of the preservation of a particular social identity, namely, an emerging orthodox Christian identity.

2. The scribe of P^{72}

2.1. The argument for 'scribe B'

As of the most recent scholarship, the consensus is that both the epistles of Peter and the epistle of Jude were penned by the same scribe. The editor of these texts, Michel Testuz, was the first to suggest that they are the work of the same person (Testuz 1959a:8). Years later, Eric Turner cautiously suggested that Jude and 1-2 Peter were written by different scribes (Turner 1977:79-80). Later, Kim Haines-Eitzen built on Turner's position by making, among others, three important observations. First, a palaeographic analysis of the three epistles suggested different scribes for Peter and Jude (Haines-Eitzen 2000:98-99). Second, itacistic differences in the titles, 'ιουδα επ<u>ει</u>στολη' vs 'πετρου επ<u>ι</u>στολη' pointed to separate scribes (Haines-Eitzen

[219] Translation by Ehrman (1999:119).

2000:99).[220] Third, variation between 1-2 Peter and Jude in the use of *nomina sacra* were indicative of the same conclusion (Haines-Eitzen 2000:99).[221] She sees this evidence as sufficient to prove that the one scribe copied Jude and another copied the epistles of Peter.[222] Alternative to the six-scribe and four-scribe theses for the codex is Edoardo Crisci's identification of five scribes, ascribing P. Bodmer VIII (1-2 Peter) to the same copyist as P. Bodmer VII (Jude), though he leaves open the idea that they may be different (Crisci 2004:125-26).[223] Among other observations, Wasserman applies the principle of Occam's razor to suggest[224] that the three theological variants in P^{72} are most simply identified as the work of a single scribe (B) as opposed to evidence of a '*Tendenz*' of multiple scribes (Wasserman 2005:153).[225] The most recent scholarship, however, appears to have reached a consensus in favour of a single scribe for Jude and 1-2 Peter. Royse (2008:547) states, 'And, despite some earlier doubts, this now seems to be an assured result.' Orsini (2019:43) has probably settled the debate (italics original), 'on closer examination it can be seen that the copy of the *Epistles* of Peter in P. Bodmer VIII… was done by the same hand B which wrote P. Bodmer X, XI and VII…' Taking all these opinions into account, alongside my own examination of the high-resolution images, it seems reasonable to conclude that Jude and 1-2 Peter were written by one and the same scribe at some time in the late 3rd or early 4th century.[226]

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[220] Itacism refers to an orthographic idiosyncrasy to which some scribes were prone, where vowels would be mixed up. In P^{72}, the interchange of ει/ι is consistently problematic. See Haines-Eitzen (2000:99), Wasserman (2005:150), and Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:163-64) for a treatment of this phenomenon in P^{72}, especially as it relates to Haines-Eitzen's argumentation.

[221] See the same page (Haines-Eitzen 2000:99) for additional evidence for different scribes.

[222] Therefore, according to her, Turner was correct in identifying six scribes for the entire codex in contrast to Testuz's proposal of four scribes (Haines-Eitzen 2000:99). See Testuz (1959a:8) and Turner (1982:79-80).

[223] See Crisci (2004:122-26) for his argumentation for five scribes.

[224] In contrast to Haines-Eitzen's scribal networks thesis (Haines-Eitzen 2000:77-104).

[225] Wasserman does not entirely reject the argument, as a theoretical possibility, that multiple scribes could be responsible for very similar theological emendations (Wasserman 2005:153).

[226] For images of P. Bodmer VII, see Bodmer Lab (n.d.). For images of P. Bodmer VIII, see Digivatlib (n.d.). See Orsini (2019:39) for his comparanda for dating the writing style of hand B. While palaeographic dating of MSS can be done with reasonable confidence, the process is not

2.2. The scribal habits in P^{72}

Royse (2008:545-614) has offered an extensive analysis of the scribal characteristics evident in P^{72}. He notes that the scribe of P^{72} is the 'least accurate' out of the other five he studied (Royse 2008:579).[227] Several explanations for the scribe's lack of precision have been posited. Testuz considered that the frequent misspelling of words might be the product of a scribe whose first language was Coptic, not Greek (Testuz 1959a:10).[228] Royse (2008:580) references Carlo Martini (1968) who says, 'gli errori veri e propri dello scriba sono assai numerosi, e dimostrano una diligenza assai mediocre e una conoscenza piuttosto incerta della lingua greca.'[229] The scribe's inaccuracy may also be related to the disputed canonical status of each of these epistles (Royse 2008:582).[230] This possibility might be strengthened when we remember that outside of Jude, 1-2 Peter, and the Psalms, all of the other texts in the codex were not accorded canonical authority.[231] In addition, there is the possible use of the codex; Wasserman (2005:154) suggests that (parenthesis mine), 'the informal and personal character of the scribe's hand, and the many errors and irregularities in his text, suggest that at least these parts (P^{72}) were probably produced for private, rather than liturgical use'. The small size of

straightforward, and conclusions are the subject of intense debate. For comprehensive research into the palaeographic analysis of Greek and Coptic majuscules, see Orsini (2019). For recent challenges to the dating consensus of important early NT MSS, see Nongbri (2005:23-48), Nongbri (2014:1-35), Nongbri (2016a:405-37), and Nongbri (2020:477-99). See Orsini (2018) for responses to Nongbri (2014:1-35) and Nongbri (2016a:405-37).

[227] See Royse (2008) for his study of P^{45}, P^{46}, P^{47}, P^{66}, and P^{75}.

[228] See also Francis Beare (1961:253). This is related specifically to sound confusion between the Greek letters γ and κ. Haines-Eitzen (2000:99) defends this connection, while Wasserman (2005:150) offers a correction to her point. To lend support to the idea that the scribe was a native Coptic speaker, there is a Coptic gloss at 2 Pt. 2:22, and the marginal notes are written in irregular Greek (Wasserman 2005:138-39).

[229] 'the true and proper errors of the scribe are rather numerous, and demonstrate a rather mediocre diligence and a quite uncertain knowledge of the Greek language' (Translation taken from Royse, fn. 207). I have not consulted Martini, C., 1968, *Beati Petri apostoli epistulae ex Papyro Bodmeriana VIII transcriptae*.

[230] See Royse (2008:582), Horrell (2013:56-60), Knust (2017), and Strickland (2017) for discussions of the canonicity of 1-2 Peter and Jude as it relates to the BCMC (BMC).

[231] Although 3 Corinthians (P. Bodmer X) did enjoy canonical status for some time in the Syrian and Armenian churches (Hovhanessian 1998:16-25).

the codex (15.5-16 x 14-14.5 cm) suggests that private use was likely (Testuz 1959a:9-10).[232] The presence of texts with a more formal handwriting style in the codex (e.g. P. Bodmer V) does not wholly count against private use.[233] As has already been argued, it might been the case that the scribe of P^{72} was the final collector of the codex, bringing together previous collections to form a new compilation that reflected their personal interests (Wasserman 2005:148).[234]

Royse makes the following points about the scribe (Royse 2008:614). Firstly, due to the exceptionally incautious nature of the scribe's work, he introduced many spelling variations and nonsense readings into the texts of P^{72}. The scribe attempted to correct his errors but left many unchecked.[235] Secondly, in the creation of meaningful singular readings, the scribe tended to omit more than he added new words to the texts. By way of comparison, of the 74 significant singular readings evident in P^{72}, 22 are omissions (Royse 2008:586), and 14 are additions (Royse

[232] Brice Jones (2011-12:17-18) proposes that the BCMC (BMC) and the CSC were the direct results of solicitation by wealthy Greek-speaking Egyptian Christians. This view would find common ground with Huebner's (2019:18-28) observations about wealthy and educated Egyptian Christians in the 3rd century.

[233] Orsini (2019:32) writes about the Bodmer Papyri in general, 'the differing qualities of execution show that, in most cases, the producers of these manuscripts were not professional scribes but individuals whose writing abilities varied and who were producing books intended for practical use, by other individuals or groups, in daily life.'

[234] The fact that Jude and 1-2 Peter do not stand next to each other in the codex has been noted as a strange occurrence. Wasserman (2005:144) draws attention to the conversation. This may be further confusing if scribe B was the one who assembled the BCMC (BMC). The question that is asked is, why would a scribe separate his own work? As already discussed, to make sense of the issue, Wasserman suggests that Testuz's envisioned structure (sections I-II-III) could be reordered to allow for 1-2 Peter to follow immediately after Jude (sections I-III-II). Such a construction speaks in favour of Wasserman's thesis that perhaps scribe B was the one who collected and collated the codex. See Wasserman (2005:137-54) for his argumentation. See Nongbri (2016b:410) on his opinion that the 'codicological connection between P.Bodmer VII and P.Bodmer VIII is… secondary' and his comments on whether or not the same scribe is responsible for both MSS. In reality, since the codex was not preserved in bound form, there are proposals that remain both probable and conjectural.

[235] Wasserman (2005:150-51) has discovered similar tendencies in the other texts of the codex that are typically assigned to the same scribe (P. Bodmer X and XI).

2008:582).[236] Thirdly, the scribe is adept at harmonisation[237] to the context,[238] to parallels,[239] and to general use.[240] All of these contribute to the overall number of 74 meaningful singular readings identified by Royse. Importantly, as already mentioned, Royse (2008:582) explains that the scribal habits are more than just a product of a Copt badly replicating Greek; rather, the 'negligence' by the scribe could be owing to the disputed canonical status of 1-2 Peter and Jude or that the codex was intended for personal use.[241]Finally, the scribe displayed a proclivity toward making changes that have theological implications.[242] It is precisely this proclivity that suggests that the scribe of P^{72} might also be the final collector of the codex (Wasserman 2005:148). Considering the apologetic nature of BCMC (BMC), it is not unrealistic to suppose that the scribe and collector are the same person.[243]

As a counterpoint, one might appeal to Haines-Eitzen (2000:99), who sees the presence of marginal notes in 1-2 Peter but not in Jude as a reason why two separate scribes copied these epistles.[244] On the surface, this appears to create a

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[236] See Royse (2008:582-86) for a delineation of the significant singulars created by addition. For a discussion of the omissions, see Royse (2008:586-89).

[237] See Haines-Eitzen (2000:68-73) for a discussion on harmonisation under the heading, 'A materialist and sociohistorical approach to earliest Christian papyri'.

[238] Harmonisation to the context refers to the tendency of scribes to correct perceived syntactical issues in their exemplar. See Metzger and Ehrman (2005:261-62) for a brief analysis. See Royse (2008:605-608) for specific examples in P^{72}.

[239] Harmonisation to parallels denotes the assimilation of passages from elsewhere in the NT that are related to the text being copied, generally from memory. See Metzger and Ehrman (2005:257-58, 262-63) for a brief analysis. See Royse (2008:604-605) for specific examples in P^{72}.

[240] Harmonisation to general usage is when readings are changed in favour of more common (to the scribe) readings. See Haines-Eitzen (2000:73) and Royse (2008:608) for specific examples in P^{72}.

[241] See Royse (2008:580) for a tabulated analysis of the concentration of singular readings across P^{72}.

[242] See section 4.3 below.

[243] To be sure, this would necessitate a later dating for P^{72} (Wasserman 2005:148). This is especially the case when we consider that the copying of the Apology of Phileas may have been done up to, but not later than, 350 CE (Martin 1964:11).

[244] Not least because, for example, at 1 Peter 2:9, there is an itacism in the text (ιερατευμα) but not in the marginal note (ἱερατευμα). How does the same scribe make that kind of mistake? A simple explanation may be recourse to the generally poor skill level of the scribe—irregularity in copying is a

difficulty for my thesis. If two individual scribes were at work here, does that not weaken the argument for a theological tendency on the part of a single scribe? If so, would my argument for a scribal collector be undermined? I do not think so. Should the epistles be the work of two different scribes, a simple recourse to Haines-Eitzen's (2000:77-103) scribal networks theory would be sufficient to show that 'some fourth-century agent went to considerable trouble to gather these books into a single codex, suggesting some kind of underlying intention' (Knust 2017:108). One could extend that agency to *multiple* persons, operating as members of a *single group membership*, reinforcing their social identity boundaries related to their beliefs about Jesus Christ. From the perspective of SIT, certain beliefs about Jesus would draw sharp, impermeable group boundaries that would necessitate social change (rather than social mobility) and where social change is likely, uniform intergroup behaviour typically follows (see chapter 1, figure 2). Early Christian MSS could be both products of and instruments for this social change.[245] The BCMC (BMC) is a case in point.

Haines-Eitzen argues for certain defining characteristics of the scribe. She (Haines-Eitzen 2000:68) writes,

> The scribe of P^{72} does not manifest the characteristics of an experienced or highly trained scribe; rather the scribe here appears to be a nonprofessional copyist… there are also indications that this particular scribe was a Christian, for embedded within the text that this scribe preserves are hints of a specific knowledge of early Christian liturgical "texts."[246]

For Haines-Eitzen (2000:72), the scribe's frequent harmonisation to remote parallels is an indication that he is influenced by Christian services. The combination of

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feature of this manuscript. Note, for example, in the very same marginal note, there is another variance of spelling, 'περειποιησειν' (note the itacisms) in the text, versus 'περιποησιν' in the marginal note.

[245] Here, I am thinking of dialogicality and the use of early Christian artefacts in meaning formation. See chapter 4.

[246] 'Texts' refers to oral traditions shared in the context of church services (Haines-Eitzen 2000:72). I am also aware of the apparent inconsistency in Haines-Eitzen's view here, speaking of a single scribe for P^{72} as opposed to two different scribes for 1-2 Peter and Jude (Haines-Eitzen 2000:98-99). Notice, however, that her argument for two separate scribes appears later in her study.

harmonisation and the handwriting skill exhibited by the scribe indicates, 'a private, non-professional, Christian who undertook to copy certain Christian texts' (Haines-Eitzen 2000:73).[247] Furthermore, and significantly for this thesis, the scribe 'has a particular investment in the text…' (Haines-Eitzen 2000:74). This investment is displayed in a variety of ways as I shall now seek to show. Throughout the proceeding section, unless otherwise stated, when citing the biblical texts, I have given the text of the P^{72} in order to give the reader a clearer sense of the scribe's copying abilities and proclivities.

3. The marginal notes in 1 Peter

Aside from the textual changes made in the copying process, perhaps our closest contact point with the scribe of P^{72} and his thought process would be the notes made in the margins of the MSS. Like the mistakes in the text of 1 Peter, the marginalia are also written in poor Greek (Wasserman 2005:138), lending support firstly, to the identification of the copy's scribe with the person who penned the notes (the same person)[248] and following this, lending support to the consensus that the scribe was probably a Coptic speaker and not a native Greek speaker.

For the purposes of this thesis, I will limit my focus to those in 1 Peter.[249] The significance of the marginal notes is that they shed light on what were taken by the scribe to be important themes in the letter (Horrell 2013:58). Therefore, by highlighting certain themes, these notes are possible evidence of a hermeneutical process at work. In chapter one, I showed that no person comes to a biblical text

[247] Attempting to depict who scribes were and their specific social context is not simple. Haines-Eitzen (2000:35-40) makes general observations about early Christian scribes (prior to Constantine), namely, they operated privately, were sometimes non-professional, and generally had a close connection to church leaders in their area. She builds on these observations in later chapters of her book. Developing a sociology of early Christian scribes has become a fruitful area of study. See also Haines-Eitzen (2012:479-95). Contributing to a social profile of users of early Christian MSS, Hurtado (2012:49-62) and Brakke (2012:263-80) study the reading/ scriptural practices of early Christians. Schmid (2008:1-23) offers a cautioning argumentation to some recent sociological proposals.

[248] Even if this were not the case, it would not necessarily be an obstacle to my argumentation. Once again, simple recourse to 'agency' from within a single group membership would remove the obstacle (see section 2.2 above).

[249] There are notes in 1-2 Peter but not in Jude. This adds weight to the proposal that the letters of Peter formed a separate codex prior to the final constructions (Horrell 2013:57).

tabula rasa. This applies to our scribe; his notes in the margins of 1 Peter show that he is approaching his copy with pre-existing frames of understanding. The marginalia are attempts at summarising, making sense, or making meaning of the text based on prior knowledge. Meaning-making and identity formation are inextricably connected. Schnelle (2009:30-31) writes,

> Meaning-formation is not an option that human beings may choose or decline, but something inevitable, necessary, and natural… meaning-formation is always bound to the projection of identity and succeeds only by projecting a convincing identity.[250]

The marginal notes are attempts at making meaning and are, therefore, indicative of identity formation. What kind of identity is forming? To answer this, I will now turn to the notes themselves.

Of the nine marginalia in 1 Peter, four explicitly refer to the 'holiness'/ 'purity' (1:15, 1:22, 2:5, 2:9), a key identity marker for Christians. The 'flesh' is highlighted in the three of the nine (3:18, 4:1, 4:6), 'suffering in the flesh' being prototypically embodied by Jesus Christ and sought after by early Christians.[251] 'Christ' is mentioned in one (4:1), 'God' as creator in another (4:19), and 'love' is also noted (4:8). Each of these themes is related to Christian (ingroup) identity formation and not unimportant to Christian orthodoxy.

In 2 Peter, there are four marginalia, three of which refer to 'false prophets' (2:1), 'cursed children' (2:15), and 'scoffers' (3:3). Each term is a clear outgroup designation that has to do with deviance.[252] The final note is about 'peace' (3:14) in the context of living holy and peaceful lives amongst the 'ungodly' (3:7), waiting for

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[250] Schnelle's comment here is in the context of personal and collective identity and the formation of meaning. He also points out the importance of the 'symbolic universe' that meaningfully organises and structures the external world for the individual and the group (Schnelle 2009:31-32). The marginal notes of 1 Peter reflect the meaningful organisation and structuring. See Schnelle (2009:47-51) for comments on the intersection of theology and meaning formation in the NT texts generally. Schnelle (2009:47) writes, 'The writings of the New Testament are the result of a comprehensive and multi-layered process of meaning-formation. Religious experiences of groups and individuals always generate such processes of meaning-formation, and these are then expressed in narratives, rituals, and the composition of texts to facilitate their communication.'

[251] See section 3.2 below.

[252] See Bazzana (2020:225-35) for deviance in the ancient Mediterranean world.

the promise of God to be fulfilled. I will now consider the notes in 1 Peter in the context of the verses they highlight. Merkt (2015:32) comments on the marginal notes, 'die Randnotizen oft nicht das Thema des gesamten Abschnittes wiedergeben, sondern nur einzelner Verse.'[253]

3.1. Holiness and purity: A reinterpretation of origin and kinship

In noting holiness and purity, the scribe very interestingly highlights passages where Peter connects the present story of his readers to the past story of Israel, their relationship to God and his providence for them. Peter's call to holiness is in the context of a reinterpretation of origins (1:10-12, 20-21).[254] Ostmeyer (2021:40) notes, 'Dem Autor ist wichtig, mit seiner Darstellung nicht das Alte durch etwas Neues zu ersetzen, sondern das Tradierte zu bestätigen… was schon vor der Schöpfung von Gott festgelegt war…'[255] Peter looks back to the OT and applies God's command of holiness to his Anatolian audience, thereby connecting the two social realities, past and present, into one continuous and uninterrupted narrative[256] that creates meaning and forms identity.[257] Schnelle (2009:32-33) connects narrative, meaning, and identity as follows,

> A historical event is not meaningful in and of itself, nor does it play a role in the formation of identity, until its meaning potential has been inferred and established… The fundamental construct that facilitates this transfer is narration, for narrative sets up the meaning structure that makes it possible for human beings to come to terms with historical contingency… A particularly important feature of narratives is the capacity to form, present, and stabilize identity. Narratives establish and authenticate a complex of meanings that leads through

[253] 'The marginal notes often do not reflect the theme of the whole section, but only of individual verses.'

[254] Peter's theological hermeneutic is deeply influenced by his awareness of the OT. A key feature of his rhetorical strategy is the many citations and allusions to it. See Sargent (2015) for an extensive study on Peter's use of scripture.

[255] 'It is important for the author not to replace the old with something new, but to confirm the traditional… what was already established by God before creation…'

[256] This contrasts with Sargent (2015:18-49), who argues that Peter's theological hermeneutic has in view a discontinuity between Israel and the community to which he is writing.

[257] For example, 1 Pt. 1:16 is a citation of Lev. 19:2. See Sargent (2015:54-58) for an analysis of how this citation functions in 1 Peter.

> particular instances of identification to the formation of identity… Narratives bind people together in one socio-cultural fabric and lay the foundation for joint action in the present and a common perspective on the future.[258]

Connecting the past and the present in this way allows Peter to help his readers, 'come to terms with historical contingency', the social resistance they are facing. Their persecution was not random and out of control; rather, God was acutely aware of their suffering and was, in fact, using it to grow their faith (1:3-8). Furthermore, their salvation is rooted in the one who was foreknown in ages past, Jesus Christ (1:10-12).[259] Because of this, they have an anchor in the past, direction for the present and cause to be hopeful about the future (1:21).[260] Due to similar social resistance, this rhetoric seems to have *resonated* with the scribe of P^{72}, and he is perhaps placing himself within the same narrative stream as Israel and these residents of Anatolia. Like Peter, it seems the scribe is, on some level, tapping into the cultural memory of Israel,[261] creating meaning and strengthening identity amid social resistance. To be holy is to conform to the ingroup prototype that is rooted in ancient Israel and exemplified in Jesus Christ.[262] In my view, by highlighting holiness and purity, the scribe indicated a theme that was both positively evaluated and emotionally desirable.

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[258] See also Reicher and Hopkins (2001:151), who write (parenthesis mine), 'The past is powerful in defining contemporary identity because it is represented in terms of a narrative structure which invites those in the present to see themselves as participants in an ongoing drama. This narrative structure is all the more potent because it is typically construed in a most personalized form: the activities and achievements of individuals who embody the nation's (group's) qualities.' See Schnelle (2009:33-34) for more on memory and narration. This is, of course, connected to the concept of 'cultural memory'. See Huebenthal (2018:17-43) for early Christian writings as collective memory that helps shape identity. See Destro and Pesce (2018:45-78) for the multi-stage use of memory in the writing of texts. See Lieu (2019:133-143) for how letters functioned in the formation and preservation of early Christian memory. See also Schröter (2018:79-96).

[259] This calls to mind Melito's appeal to ancient origins; Jesus was prefigured in the Passover lamb (see chapter 2, section 4.4.7).

[260] See also Still and Webb (2014:643-57).

[261] See fn. 258.

[262] Esler (2014:50-57) discusses the function of intragroup features like norms and prototypes, leadership, beliefs, and time in the creation of social identity. See also Russell (2020:15-16).

The first marginal note occurs at 1 Pt. 1:15, which reads, ‘περι αγειοσυνη’, referring to ‘holiness’.[263] The scribe appears to be summarising 1:14-16, which follows the reference (1:6-7) to a multiplicity of trials (‘πολλοις πειρασμοις’) that come about to prove the authenticity of the believer’s precious faith (‘δοκειμον της πειστεως υμων πολυτειμοτερον’). These trials (persecution) inspire images of the suffering Israel in Egypt and their readiness, during the Passover meal, to depart soon afterwards (1:13, 19).[264] It is those who are prepared or girded (‘αναζωσαμενοι’) who are ready for the difficult journey ahead, living a holy (set apart for special use) life. Ostmeyer (2021:36) writes, ‘Darauf bezieht sich das Motiv des Umgürtet-Seins (13a): Wer gegürtet ist, is bereit.’[265] Encouragement and comfort are offered by the conviction that the physical world is not a permanent residence, meaning believers may depart for their real home at any time (Ostmeyer 2021:37). This is applicable for both the Jewish and Gentile addressees (Ostmeyer 2021:39), who are now united through the appeal to familial imagery (1:14, 17).[266] In their readiness, the Father’s children are to reject their former lives (former social identities) and emulate him, living holy (new social identities) lives in all they do (1:15-16).[267]

[263] In P^{72}, v. 15 reads as follows (parentheses mine): ‘αλλα κατα τον καλεσαντα υμας αγιον (not itacised) και αυτοι αγειοι (itacised) εν πασει αναστροφη γενηθητε’. Compared with the Nestlé-Aland 28 (NA^{28}), the only variations are the itacised ‘αγειοι’ and ‘πασει’. Notice how, in the very same verse and separated by a few words, the scribe avoids itacism in one word but then itacised almost the same word shortly afterwards. Notice also the itacism in the marginal note. As already mentioned, scribal irregularity is a feature of P^{72} (see fn. 244).

[264] See Sargent (2015:111) for brief comments on this possible allusion.

[265] ‘The motif of being girded (13a) refers to this: He who is girded is ready.’

[266] See comments regarding fictive kinship below.

[267] Their former social identities are labelled through the lens of deviance, ‘προτερον αγνοια’ (1:14) and ‘ματεας υμων αναστροφης πατροπαραδοτου’.

At 1 Pt. 1:22, the scribe notes, ‘περι αγνια’. The scribe is likely referring to ‘ηγνικοτες’ in the text, meaning ‘having purified’.[268] Purity (holiness)[269] is expressed in the interaction between obedience and love (1:22).[270] This obedience (‘υπακοη’) is to a new revealed truth (‘αληθιας’) and the love is between members of a new ‘family’ (‘φιλαδελφιαν’), whose care for one another is fervent (‘εκτηνως’) and pure-hearted (‘καθαρας καρδιας’). Importantly, as seen in 1:23, the basis for this command to love is a common imperishable (‘αφθαρτου’) rebirth (‘αναγεγεννημενοι’) from the divine seed (‘σπορας’). In this way, a sense of solidarity is created between people who are socially displaced from their former transient social identities and reoriented within their new everlasting social identity as members of God’s family.

The employment of seed imagery (1:23) calls to mind the seed of Abraham (Ostmeyer 2021:41).[271] However, believers are reborn from the indestructible seed (1:23) that extends further back than Abraham, both from eternity past (1:20-21) and into eternity future (1:25). On this, Sargent (2015:59) comments, ‘The communities are told that they have experienced a new birth or begetting from imperishable seed through the word of God and hence have a quality of permanence which distinguishes them from their social setting.’[272] Thus, their purity has an intransient and eternal facet to it. This would certainly have been a cause for celebratory joy (‘αγαλλειασαντες’) despite their suffering (1:6).

At 1 Pt. 2:5, there is the following marginal note, ‘περι ϊερατευμα αγιον’, which translates to ‘about a holy priesthood’.[273] In 2:5, Peter invokes temple imagery,

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[268] Besides the lacunae in the MS (damage obscures ‘ψυχας’ and ‘αλληλους’) and the itacism of ‘αληθιας’ (it should be ‘αληθειας’), P^{72} is identical to the NA^{28} at 1:22. The verse contains a correction *in scribendo*, ‘υμων’, but with the ‘ν’ written superlinearly. See Royse (2008:560) for a relevant discussion.

[269] The words ‘ηγνικοτες’ (‘αγνιζω’) and ‘αγιος’ have similar connotations. See Mounce (2011) for dictionary definitions.

[270] If 1 Peter is written not only to Gentiles, then 2:4-8 and 3:8 suggest that Peter has in mind a love that binds together, despite diverse ethnic backgrounds.

[271] See Gn. 13:14-17, 15:18.

[272] See Sargent (2015:58-64) for a discussion on the citation from Is. 40:6b, 8.

[273] In P^{72}, this verse reads, ‘και αυτοι ως λιθοι ζωντες οικοδομεισθε οικος $\overline{\pi\nu\alpha}$τικος εις ειερατευμα αγιον ανενεκκαι $\overline{\pi\nu\alpha}$τικας ευπροσδεκτους τω $\overline{\theta\omega}$ δια $\overline{\iota\eta\upsilon}$ $\overline{\chi\rho\upsilon}$.’ There are a few variations to briefly note as compared with the NA^{28}. First, the itacism of ‘ειερατευμα’ (it should be ‘ιερατευμα’). Secondly, the

saying that his readers are being built into a spiritual house (‘οικοδομεισθη οικος πνα̅τικος’), the foundation stone (‘ακρογωνειεον’) of which is Jesus Christ (2:6). This is significant for several reasons. First, as a spiritual house of worship, they supersede the temple and its cultic practices (Ostmeyer 2021:46). Second, depending on one’s dating of 1 Peter, the metaphor can be seen as either an opposition to the legitimacy of the Jerusalem temple religious practices (pre 70 CE dating) or as an assertion that the temple’s destruction (70 CE) was ordained by God (post 70 CE dating) and therefore legitimate (Ostmeyer 2021:47). Third, by seeing both Christ and believers as part of the same spiritual building, the Christians are taught to understand their suffering as an offering/ sacrifice acceptable to God (Ostmeyer 2021:47). Therefore as a holy priesthood and spiritual building, they are more than just a beleaguered, sorry group of people; rather, they are chosen by God to fulfil a special role (holy), one that is fulfilled through their suffering (purified).[274] It is not difficult to see how this imagery would be cathartic in the 3rd-4th century context, where Christians were consistently marginalised as a people of shame.[275]

At 1 Pt. 2:9, the scribe has noted, ‘περι γενος εγλεκτον βασιλιον ϊερατευμα εθνος αγιον λαον περιποησιν’,[276] highlighting various terms that refer to ethnicity.[277]

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incorrectly spelled ‘ανενεγκκαι’ (it should be ‘ανενεγκαι’). Thirdly, the omission of ‘θυσιας’. None of these textual variations suggest an ideological motivation.

[274] See Sargent (2015:114-19) for an analysis of the Old Testament allusions in 1 Pt. 2:5. He suggests that the verse as, ‘a description of Israel’s status is applied directly to the communities addressed by 1 Peter, reflecting the theological narrative that places these communities at the pinnacle of salvation history, exalted above prophets and angels’ (Sargent 2015:119).

[275] See Ostmeyer (2021:48-49) for how the context of persecution is relevant to the use of this imagery.

[276] The verse in P^{72} reads, ‘υμεις δε γενος εγλεκτον βασιλειον ειερατευμα εθνος αγιον λαος εις περειποιησειν οπως τας αρετας εξανγειλητε του εκ σκοτους υμας καλεσαντος εις το θαυμαστον φως.’ Comparing P^{72} to the NA^{28}, one notices the following variants. First, the itacisms of ‘ειερατευμα’ (it should be ιερατευμα) and ‘περειποιησειν’ (it should be περιποιησιν). There is also the misspelled ‘εξανγειλητε’ (it should be ‘εξαγγειλητε’). Lastly, the omission of ‘αυτου’. None of these appear to display any ideological motivation.

[277] Horrell (2013:133-63) offers an extensive analysis of the function of these words in 1 Pt. 2:9. However, Skarsaune (2018:255-57) does not believe that 1 Pt. 2:9-10 exhibits ethnoracial discourse. See Horrell (2020:67-92) for a more recent treatment of the language of ethnicity and race. See Ok (2021:2-10) for definitions of these words.

Ostmeyer (2021:49) notes the special social position that is thus appropriated, 'Wurden sie in Vers 5 noch als *heilige* Priesterschaft bezeichnet, so haben sie laut V. 9 als "*königliche* Priesterschaft und heilige Nation" auch noch herrschaftlichen Rang'[278] (italics original). However, importantly for Peter (and probably the scribe of P^{72}), it is not physical descent or succession that grants these titles; rather, it is the believer's faith in God (1:7) that secures them such a place of honour (Ostmeyer 2021:50). Physical descent is temporary while faith is eternal. In the same way as 2:5, these terms offer a reinterpretation of suffering as well as comfort that, in all things, God has called and ordained these believers for his holy purposes.[279] The suffering of God's special people is not a cause for shame; rather, it is to God's glory (4:16), 'οπως τας αρετας εξανγειλητε του εκ σκοτους υμας καλεσαντος εις το θαυμαστον φως' (2:9).[280]

Ethnicity studies of 1 Peter have attempted to show that the authorial strategy of 1 Peter is to describe Christianity using the language of peoplehood ('γένος', 'ἔθνος', and 'λαὸς').[281] A social-scientific sketch of an ethnic group includes several features, namely (as applied to 1 Peter), a common proper name (Christian), narrative of common ancestry (born of God, the Father), shared memories of the past (Christ's atoning work that has ancient origins), common cultural features (holiness), a connection to territory (the dispersion in Asia Minor),[282] and a sense of

[278] 'If in verse 5 they were still called the holy priesthood, according to v. 9 they also still have lordly rank as "royal priesthood and holy nation".'

[279] 1 Pt. 2:9 is a possible allusion to Is. 43:20b-21, Ml. 3:17, or Ex. 19:5-6. 1 Pt. 2:10 is an allusion to Hs. 1:6, 9 and 2:23. See Sargent (2015:119-23) for an analysis of the function of these allusions. See also Sargent (2015:64-78).

[280] 'That you may proclaim the virtues of the [one] who called you out of darkness into the wonderful light.' Reading taken from P^{72}.

[281] See Horrell (2014:133-63), Ok (2021) and Marcar (2022) for recent studies of ethnicity in 1 Peter. See also Buell (2005). See Horrell (2020) for a recent contribution on ethnicity with a focus on Christianness and whiteness.

[282] However, Marcar (2022:56) notes that although fashioned after the Jewish dispersion experience, the Christian dispersion mentioned in 1 Peter, 'does not refer to the geographical dispersion of believers, though that is its starting place… Believers' diaspora existence is the direct result of their divine regeneration. Based on their regeneration, all believers' familial, ethnic, and corporate relationships are reconstructed.

solidarity (fictive kinship).[283] As part of this strategy, Peter employs several metaphors (briefly discussed above) in the first two chapters. Marcar (2022:257) writes, '1 Peter 1:3-2:10 established a framework for imagining Christian identity in terms of a family and an ethnic group.'[284] Some of the marginal notes appear in close proximity to these metaphors, suggesting they resonated with the scribe. Metaphors are powerful imageries that can assist in the conception and assimilation of a new social identity in general and an ethnic identity in particular.[285] Space does not allow me to study every metaphor used, so I will consider the most prominent one, family.[286]

Peter's readers are likened to newborn children ('αρτιγεννητα βρεφη') (2:2), who are characteristically obedient ('τεκνα υπακοης') (1:14), who have a father-child relationship to God (1:17), and who interact with one another through the sibling ('φιλαδελφιαν') bond (1:22). The family here is not a biological one, instead, they share a common spiritual descent (the divine seed) from God (Marcar 2022:14) and they are ultimately bonded to each other through the ransoming blood of Jesus Christ (1:19).[287] This kind of familial appeal is known as fictive kinship and in 1 Peter it serves to provide a 'surrogate family' for those who have been socially displaced (Vearncombe 2020:54).[288] Lest we lose the effect (and affect) of this designation, it must be added that for Peter, God's family is not simply a new family for displaced people; through the appeals to ancient origins (see fn. 258), it is hierarchically placed

[283] For tabulated descriptions, see Horrell (2013:159) and Marcar (2022:10).

[284] See Marcar (2022:25-51) for the mechanics of metaphors in general and in 1 Peter specifically.

[285] See Kuecker (2014:92-116) for the connection of ethnic identity and social identity in this way.

[286] See Hunt (2020:531-33), who points out four metaphors in 1 Pt. 2:1-12. Peter likens his readers to a spiritual building (1 Pt. 2:5) that is founded on Jesus Christ (1 Pt. 2:6-8). As mentioned above, this metaphor draws on temple imagery, shown in the reference to priests and sacrifices (1 Pt. 2:5). The cornerstone, Jesus, is highly valued (1 Pt. 2:4) and was predicted in the 'γραφε', the prophets (1 Pt. 2:6-8).

[287] See Ok (2021:35-61) for more on ethnic identity and the spiritual family of God.

[288] Vearncombe (2020:51) writes, 'Far beyond biology, the kinship matrix located the person in social space, influencing and influenced by constructions of gender and the body, economics, politics, and religion. The social group is the constant frame of reference.' Being adopted into the family of God allowed these readers to access 'acquired honour' through their virtuous lives (1 Pt. 1:13-16, 3:13-17). This type of honour (versus 'ascribed honour') was especially significant in the ancient Mediterranean world (Rohrbaugh 2020:74).

above former families and social allegiances, to the extent that former group memberships are remarkably delegitimised (1:14, 18).[289] The fulcrum upon which the family metaphor rests is that of divine rebirth (1:22-23), the benefaction ('κληρονομιαν') of which is eloquently labelled in 1:3 as 'αφθαρτον' (imperishable), 'αμιαντον' (undefiled), 'αμαραντον' (enduring). This family is not new but was foretold in the OT (1:10-12) and was intended by God from the start (1:20-21).

Peter's metaphor of divine regeneration is central to the construction and preservation of a Christian social identity.[290] It serves to highlight Christian's common ancestry and inspire kinship solidarity, which was highly valued in the ancient Mediterranean social world.[291] It also paves the way for a group ethos (common culture) to develop.[292] The outward expression of this familial relationship is determined by a common ascent to the ethos of holiness—as God is holy, so are his children (1:15-16). A holy ethos offers Peter's readers guidance to navigate their difficult social context. In terms of SIT, it grants them a cognitive framework[293] of

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[289] In my view, descriptions like 'προτερον αγνοια' ('former ignorance') and 'της ματεας υμων αναστροφης πατροπαραδοτου' ('the futile way of life handed down from your ancestors') really carry this point across.

[290] See Marcar's (2022:63-117) full chapter for a detailed analysis of the divine regeneration metaphor.

[291] See Vearncombe (2020:50-62) for kinship in the Mediterranean social world.

[292] For 1 Pt. 1:13-25, Hunt (2020:530-51) makes an important distinction between general *ethos* and specific *ethics*. Zimmermann (2010:20-23, 26) explicates the difference between these two. I am using ethos here in the sense adopted by van Rensburg (2006:490), who says, 'The way the specific community bring its ethics into practice, is the ethos.' See Zimmermann (2010:20-21), who describes ethos as the morality of a certain group. For Christian morality and a holistic moral vision, see de Villiers (2010:61-65, esp. 65). Van der Watt (2006: vii) defines ethos, 'not only as the specific, unique, and repetitive actions of a particular group or community, … but it is also used as a broader description of the behaviour as it is presented in the different books of the New Testament.' See van Rensburg (2006:473-509) for the interplay of identity, ethics, and ethos in 1 Peter. In terms of social identity theory, Esler (2014:51) emphasises that ethics (norms) should not be isolated from their function in the 'creation and maintenance of a group identity', focussing primarily on their individual content. For a recent short discussion on ethics in 1 Peter, related to the diasporic status of its readers, see Konradt (2022:453-70).

[293] Peter writes in 1:13, 'δι ο αναζωσααμενοι τας οσφυας της διανοιας υμῶν…' ('Therefore, having girded up the loins of your mind…').

belonging to a holy Christian group (family) that is positively evaluated[294] and carries emotional significance.[295] This takes place in the context of social comparison, where old identities have been devalued in light of their new group membership. Individuals have been moved (social mobility) from one group membership (new outgroup) to another group membership (new ingroup).[296] In the process, despite attempts from outgroup members, this new identity is ascribed substantial value (social creativity).[297] This new identity is critical to survive the social conflict these readers are facing (Ok 2021:54-58) and to realise their eschatological hope (Still and Webb 2014:651-53).

Returning to the scribe of P^{72}, they appear to have taken explicit notice of the references to holiness and the language of peoplehood, which are intimately intertwined with the familial imagery (fictive kinship) used by Peter. These themes appear to have strongly resonated with the scribe. Horrell (2013:59) writes, referring to all the marginalia in 1-2 Peter, 'Whatever their combined doctrinal force, the summary notes certainly reflect an interpretive reading of the text which, by identifying and summarizing topics, influences subsequent readings.' He goes on to point out that one of these notes (at 2:9) highlights, 'the declaration of the identity of the new people of God…' (Horrell 2013:59). Thus, by penning a summary note that clarifies and makes meaning at the place where we find a key description of the believer's new identity in God, it suggests that this description was significant for the scribe, likely revealing the social identity to which the scribe belonged. Based on what has been observed up until this point (including chapter two), that identity appears to be more specifically an emerging orthodox Christianity.[298]

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[294] Peter exhorts in 1:13, 'τελειως ελπεισατε…' ('set your hope fully…').

[295] For example, note in 1:6 how the readers 'αγαλλειασαντες' ('rejoice'). Or in 1:22, the Christians 'Αλληλους αγαπησατε εκτενως…' ('love one another fervently').

[296] In negatively stereotyping their previous lives, Peter draws sharp social identity boundaries (Hunt 2020:530).

[297] See chapter 1, section 5.4.2.

[298] This conclusion is in line with recent scholarship; see Wasserman (2005:147-48, 154), Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:185-88), and Horrell (2013:59).

3.2. The flesh: Prototypical suffering

Three of the nine marginalia in 1 Peter serve to highlight and summarise verses that relate to the topic of the 'flesh' (σαρξ). They are as follows: At 3:18, the scribe wrote, 'περι θανατου εν σαρκι και ζωοποιου και ακεκλεισμενοις', which translates to, 'about death in the flesh and made alive and called out.'[299] At 4:1, the scribe wrote, 'περι $\overline{\chi\rho\upsilon}$ παθος εν σαρκι', which translates to, 'about Christ's suffering in the flesh'.[300] The third marginal note highlighting 'flesh' is found at 4:6, which reads simply, 'περι σαρκος'.[301]

Key to Peter's admonishment to suffer well physically is the idea that Christ also suffered physically (2:21, 3:18, 4:1). The ingroup prototype now comes to the fore.[302] Why should servants suffer well? Because Jesus Christ did (2:21). Why should wives bravely endure suffering? Because Jesus Christ did (3:18). Why should Christians, in general, rejoice despite being 'unjustly' persecuted? Because Jesus Christ did (4:1, 12-13). In each of the marginal notes about the 'flesh', the scribe is drawing attention to texts where the prominent theme is of Jesus as an example to emulate. Jesus is the model of how to both simultaneously die to the flesh while living in it. Ostmeyer (2021:77) writes,

> Sein Autor möchte verdeutlichen, dass Leiden für Christen nicht atypisch, sondern im Gegenteil wesentlich sind. Gerade durch ihre Leiden stehen sie in

[299] I am not sure about the translation of 'ακεκλεισμενοις'. V. 18, in P^{72} reads as follows, 'οτι ο $\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$ απαξ περι αμαρτιων υπερ υμων απεθανεν δικεος υπερ αδικων ινα [δικων ινα] υμας προσαγαγη τω $\overline{\theta\omega}$ θανατωθεις σαρκει ζωοποιηθεις δε εν $\overline{\pi\nu\imath}$.' In P^{72}, 'δικων ινα' has been erased. The NA^{28} is quite different here, it reads, 'ὅτι καὶ Χριστὸς ἅπαξ περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἔπαθεν, δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων, ἵνα ὑμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ θεῷ θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκί, ζῳοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι.' In P^{72}, the addition of the article, 'ο', possibly serves to emphasise Christ. The addition of, 'υπερ υμων', seems to clarify who Christ suffered for. In addition, 'μεν' is omitted and 'εν' is added.

[300] V. 1 in P^{72} reads as follows, '$\overline{\chi\rho\upsilon}$ ουν παθοντος σαρκι και υμεις την αυτην εννοιαν οπλισασθε οτι ο παθων σαρκει πεπαυται αμαρτιας.' There is no need to cite the NA^{28} as the only variation is the itacised 'σαρκει' (σαρκι).

[301] In P^{72}, v. 6 reads, 'εις τουτο γαρ και νεκροις ευηγγελεισθη εινα κριθωσι μεν κατ ανθρωπους σαρκι ζωσει δε κατα $\overline{\theta\nu}$ $\overline{\pi\nu\tau\imath}$.' There is no need to cite the NA^{28} here as the only variations are spelling and itacism errors, 'ευγγελεισθη' (ευγγελισθη), 'εινα' (ινα), 'κριθωσει' (κριθωσιν), and 'ζωσει' (ζωσιν) are itacisms. Three words are missing their final letters (possibly attempts at polishing up the Greek?). 'κριθωσει' is missing a *nu* at the end, 'κατ' is missing an *alpha*, and 'ζωσει' is missing a *nu* as well.

[302] See chapter 1, section 5.4.2.

> der Nachfolge Chisti (2,21-24). Seine Passion war keine geistlich-theoretische, sondern eine konkret leibliche. Den Christen bietet das Leiden als Ausweis der Nachfolge Christi (2,22) die Gewähr dafür, nicht mehr der Sünde unterworfen zu sein (4:1b).[303]

For Peter, following the example of Christ is antagonistic to the prevailing way of life in the social world around them and in 4:3, he calls for an end to following the Gentile way of life, listing off their deviant behaviours, 'ασελγειαις, επειθυμιαις, οινοφρυκειαις, κωμοις, ποτοις, και αθεμιετοις ειδωλολατριαις.'[304] Peter knows that this will probably raise some eyebrows (4:4), so he encourages his readers to always be ready to explain why they are living in such a contrary fashion (3:15). This new life and identity will continue to alienate the Christians from their former social groups and, 'muss von denen, die an der alten Existenz festhalten, als Anklage empfunden werden'[305] (Ostmeyer 2021:78). In an incisive appeal to authority and legitimacy, Peter declares that God will be the final arbiter between all people (4:5).[306]

In some ways, the marginalia referring to the 'flesh' are more significant than those highlighting holiness. This is especially true when considered with the other texts found in the BCMC (BMC). The flesh is a prominent theme in several of the writings (Haines-Eitzen 2000:103). For example, the Nativity of Mary addresses the physical existence of Jesus[307] and 3 Corinthians emphasises the physical resurrection of the dead.[308] Furthermore, the prominence of apologetically inclined references to Jesus,[309] as well as the evidence of Christological variants (in 1-2

[303] 'Its author wants to make clear that sufferings are not atypical for Christians, but on the contrary essential. It is precisely through their sufferings that they follow Christ (2:21-24). His passion was not a spiritual-theoretical one, but a concretely bodily one. For Christians, suffering as a proof of following Christ (2:22) offers the guarantee that they are no longer subject to sin (4:1b).'

[304] 'Licentiousness, lust, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idol worship.'

[305] 'must be perceived as an indictment by those who cling to the old existence.'

[306] See Ostmeyer (2021:77-78) for further commentary on the contrast between the godly and ungodly.

[307] See chapter 2, section 4.4.3.

[308] See chapter 2, section 4.4.4.

[309] See chapter 2, section 4.4.

Peter and Jude),[310] are further indications of the significance of the 'flesh' for this scribe.

As already mentioned, Christian suffering is a key theme in 1 Peter. It also features in 3 Corinthians (2:1), Melito's homily,[311] the Apology of Phileas,[312] and Psalms 33 and 34.[313] Taking into account the evidence of persecution prior to the fourth century[314] and that Christians were predisposed to seek martyrdom,[315] it is quite evident how 'suffering in the flesh' functions as a feature of the ingroup prototype, which is reinforced by the prominence of this theme in the BCMC (BMC). Jesus Christ, who embodied the prototype pre-eminently, exists as a symbol and example of the legitimate kind of suffering that Christians are to endure. Christ's suffering corresponds to the suffering of the believer. Moreover, suffering in the flesh becomes the goal to which Christians strive so that they might conform more closely to the group prototype. For this Christian scribe, the gravity of this theme is thus apparent.

3.3. Love and God, the Creator: Ethos and legitimisation

The final two marginal notes in 1 Peter are found at 4:8, 'περι αγαπη', and 4:19, 'περι θυ κτειστη'.[316] These marginalia are unique in that they have no counterpart notes made by the scribe. However, they are unsurprising as they highlight key features of Christian belief, namely, love and the idea that God has created humanity.

In this world of sojourning (2:11), these believers ('παρυκους και παρεπειδημους') are called to live out love in all things (4:8). It is also the ultimate example set by Christ that Christians should strive to follow; they should think just as

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[310] See chapter 2, section 4.4.6, 4.4.8, and section 4 below.

[311] See chapter 2, section 4.4.7.

[312] See chapter 2, section 4.4.1.

[313] See chapter 2, section 4.4.2.

[314] See chapter 2, section 4.3.

[315] See chapter 2, section 4.4.1.

[316] 4:8 in P^{72} reads, 'προ πᾱτων την εις αυτους αγαπην εκτενη εχοντες οτι αγαπη καλυψει πληθος αμαρτιων.' Compared with the NA^{28}, there are no meaningful variations. There is no epsilon in front of the 'αυτους' and 'καλυψει' is written instead of 'καλυπτει'. The line drawn superlinearly above the alpha of 'πατων' is unusual. 4:19 in P^{72} reads, 'ωστε και οι πασχοντες κατα το θελημα του $\overline{\theta\upsilon}$ πιστω κτειστη παρατιθεσθωσαν τας ψυχας αυτων εν αγαθοποιει.' Compared with the NA^{28}, there are no meaningful variations. The spelling of 'κτειστη' (κτιστη) is an itacism.

he did (4:1). Just like holiness, this love does not describe specific actions; rather, it denotes a comprehensive attitude to be displayed (Ostmeyer 2021:80-81). It is endless in its ability to overpower sin (καλυψει τληθος αμαρτων) (4:8), not efficacious in only half measures (Ostmeyer 2021:80). A community that lives out this ethos of love becomes a safe haven for those who are socially displaced (Ostmeyer 2021:80).[317]

Though these Christians suffer, they can rest assured that the creator of the world is faithful and looks after them (4:19). The impending judgement is not a cause for fear; rather, they have confidence that they will be found in right standing with God, if they have continued to do good (Ostmeyer 2021:86).

Beliefs about love and the creation of the world by God are definitive features of the ingroup identity. They also form part of the prototype. Love is the broader ethos of Christianity that guides specific actions like hospitality (4:9) and the use of gifts to build the community of believers (4:10-11), etc. God as Creator is the ultimate ingroup legitimisation; the suffering of God's people is not beyond God's control but is, in fact, part of God's will (4:19). This guards against narratives of shame intended by members of the outgroup; they do not suffer because they deserve it, instead, God has allowed this persecution to prove the authenticity of their faith and consequently they have celebratory joy (1:6-7).

4. Social identity and selected textual variants in 1 Peter

It is difficult to say with absolute certainty which variant readings displayed by 1 Peter in P^{72} were products of a superordinate Christian identity. However, having noted that the BCMC (BMC) appears to be an apologetic anthology, addressing themes that were relevant to emerging Christian orthodoxy and that the marginalia complement those themes, it now seems safer to argue for intentional emendations that are dynamically related to the creation and preservation of social identity boundaries. Below, I have chosen to highlight only those singular readings[318] that might reflect something of the sense-making frames at work, thus invoking (again) the connection between meaning-making and identity. In making the following changes to the text, the scribe imposed a new meaning on the text that reflects the

[317] See fn. 292 for more on ethos.

[318] See Royse (2008:582-614) for these and other variants.

process of social negotiation that some Christians undertook in the development of their social identity. While the following may not all be clear examples of ideologically motivated variants, they are examples of the scribe's 'investment' into the text. What I will seek to show relates to both specific conclusions about theological changes and the *social* reality of the scribe. For example, and with regards to the latter, I will make mention of harmonisations, which can suggest that the scribe was influenced by a liturgical context (Haines-Eitzen 2000:72).[319] A liturgical context is key for the appeal to the *social* aspect of this thesis.[320]

I have already noted the scribal habits displayed by this scribe[321] so I will not repeat that here. Additionally, while relying on Royse's (2008:545-614) study of the various significant singulars in P^{72}, I will not be addressing them in the same fashion as he did. Rather, I will present the readings filtered through frames of understanding provided by SIT. Finally, the readings I have selected are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all the readings that reflect social identity formation; only that from the readings selected, it is possible to view something of how early Christians formed and preserved their social identity through interaction with their texts.

4.1. Harmonisations: Social conformity

By definition, to 'harmonize' is to make things 'work well together and produce and attractive result…' (Hornby and Turnbull 2011:710). Without changing the sense of that definition, I would suggest that harmonisation brings about intended agreement or desired conformity. The idea of conformity is key to the following section on harmonisations, as well as the other emendations that I will mention. SIT is a social-psychological theory that seeks to explicate the dynamics of social identity formation and its concomitant behaviours. This includes expressions of both group identity, where a group acts as a group, as well as the expressions of group identity by individuals, where an individual behaves in conformity with their group membership. The influence of a social group on the behaviour of individuals is known as 'social influence', and it fosters a sense of 'conformity' (Esler 2014:50-51). With that in mind, one can say that the scribe of P^{72} was concerned to harmonise their text to produce

[319] This, of course, accounts for 'texts' as 'oral' as well (Haines-Eitzen 2000:72).

[320] This will be explained more fully below and in chapter 4, section 1.

[321] See section 2.2 of this chapter.

a desired conformity (an attractive result) to their group membership. Figure 5 shows the spread of harmonisations by the scribe across P^{72}.

The first type of harmonisation, probably least important for my purposes here, is harmonisation to the immediate context. However, it is useful to show part of the scribe's investment in the text. The main concern is to show that the scribe was an active interpreter, not just a reader.[322] For example, the scribe is known to have made additions to the text. One such addition is found at 1 Pt. 2:3, where the scribe has inserted the word, 'επειστευσατε' (itacism). The verb functions as an effective aorist.[323] In P^{72}, the verse is, 'ει εγευσασθαι επειστευσατε οτι $\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$ ο $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$…' It can be translated as, 'if indeed you have tasted believed that the Lord is good.' Intriguingly, the scribe wrote 'χρηστος' ('good'),[324] as a nomen sacrum '$\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$', showing the emphasis on Christ for the scribe.[325] The addition of 'επιστευσατε' seems to be a harmonisation to the context, smoothing out the text to clarify meaning.[326] Therefore, how does one taste and see that the Lord ('Christ') is good? By believing in him (Wasserman 2005:153).

In two places in 1 Peter, the scribe has harmonised to parallels, preferring a word from other verses in scripture. These are not suggestive of theological motivation; however, they serve to make the point about a liturgical context. Influenced by the reading of scripture in church services (which are inherently social activities), the scribe has opted for words that they felt were more 'correct' or communicated an idea in a way that they already understood. First, in 5:9b, the scribe has written 'εδρεοι' (incorrect spelling of 'εδραιοι') instead of 'στερεοι'. The verse in P^{72} reads, 'αντιστητε εδρεοι τη πειστει ειδοτες οτι τα αυτα των παθηματων τη εν τω κοσμω υμων αδελφοτητι επειτελειται.'[327] It can be translated as, 'you should

[322] See chapter 1, section 5.1 for the impact of pre-understanding on the hermeneutical process.

[323] See Black (2009) for the definition of the effective aorist.

[324] Found in the NA^{28}.'

[325] See Wasserman (2005:153) for more on this. See also section 4.3 below.

[326] Royse (2008:583) does not label this as a harmonisation to the context, but, in my view, it should qualify.

[327] The scribe has omitted 'ω', which would have referred to the one that should be resisted. Itacised words are 'πειστει (πιστει)' and 'επειτελειται (επιτελειται)'. The scribe has added 'οτι', which appears to be a simple smoothing out of the text, explaining the basis for a firm faith. Finally, 'επειτελειται' is a different verb form compared with 'επιτελεισθαι', which is given in the NA^{28}.

resist, immovable in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being endured in your brotherhood throughout the world.' The word is paralleled in Col. 1:23. 'Στερεος' ('firm') is similar in meaning to 'εδραιος' but less dynamic.[328]

A second harmonisation to parallels is at 5:12, where the scribe has chosen 'βραχεων' as opposed to 'ολιγων', which is found in the NA[28]. The verse in P[72] is, 'δια σιλουανου υμιν του πειστου αδελφου ως λογειζομαι δια βραχεων εγραψα παρακαλων και επειμαρτυρων ταυτην ειναι αληθη χαρειν θῡ εις ην στετε.'[329] It can be translated as, 'Through Silvanus, the faithful brother as I regard [him], I have written briefly to you, exhorting and testifying this to be [the] true grace of God, in which you stand.' 'Βραχέων' is paralleled in Heb. 13:22, and is similar in meaning to 'ολιγων'.[330]

FIGURE 5[331]

P[72] harmonisations			
Type of harmonisation	Number of harmonisations	% of 74 total significant singulars	% of 22 total harmonisations
To context	12	16.2%	54.5%
To parallels	7	9.5%	31.8%
To usage	3	4.1%	13.6%
Total harmonisations	22	29.7%	

The scribe of P[72] also harmonised to general usage, preferring an understanding that would have been more familiar to them. The scribe has used the more commonly used 'ζοης αιωνιου' at 3:7c,[332] which Royse (2008:583) translates as 'eternal life'. The adjective functions superlatively.[333] The verse in P[72] is, 'οι ανδρες ομοιως συνοικουντες κατα γνωσειν ως ασθενεστερω σκευει τω γυνεκειω τιμην απονεμοντες ως κε συνκληρονομοις χαριτος ζοης εωνιου εις το μη εκκοπτεσθε τας προσευχας

[328] See Schmidt (2018:490).

[329] Various itacisms include 'πειστου' ('πιστου'), 'λογειζομαι' ('λογιζομαι'), 'επειμαρτυρων' ('επιμαρτυρων'), 'χαρειν' ('χαριν'). The scribe has also omitted *του* between 'χαρειν' and 'θῡ'.

[330] See Schmidt (2018:373).

[331] Adapted from Royse (2008:609). See another table on the same page where Royse shows the spread in terms of substitutions and additions, essentially describing how the scribe harmonised.

[332] The scribe has misspelled 'ζωης'.

[333] See Black (2009) for the superlative function of the adjective.

υμων…'[334] This can be translated as, 'husbands likewise dwelling with the wife as with the weaker vessel, according to knowledge, rendering honour as also joint heirs of [the] grace of life so as for your prayers to not be hindered.' Haines-Eitzen (2000:73) notes that this 'ζωης αιωνιου' is both widely attested and used in liturgical contexts. Therefore, in the three harmonisations just mentioned, one can see the impact of the social context or group membership on the transcriptional proclivities of the scribe.

4.2. Omissions: Making meaning

Two interesting omissions that Royse (2008:586-87) notes but does not classify as harmonisations are found at 1:5 and 4:16. Because of what scholars have said concerning these omissions, it seemed pertinent to briefly discuss them. In both cases, one gets the sense that they were intentional. First, at 1:5, the scribe has omitted 'θεου'. The verse in P^{72} is, 'τους εν $\overline{\text{δυμι}}$ φρουρουμενου[ς] δια πειστεως εις σωτηριαν ετυμην αποκαλυφθηναι εν κερω εσκατω…'[335] It can be translated as, 'who [are] being guarded by power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in [the] last time.' About this omission, Beare (1961:254) writes, 'This would give the sense of "mightily guarded," instead of "guarded by God's power."'

Second, the scribe has omitted 'ως' at 4:16. The verse in P^{72} is, 'ει δε χριστιανος μη εσχυνεσθω δοχαζετω δε τον $\overline{\theta\nu}$ εν τω ονοματι τουτω.'[336] It can be translated as, 'if now a Christian, let him not be ashamed, however, let him glorify God in this name.' This omission seems to be ideologically significant. Beare (1961:255) writes, 'This changes the sense of the passage; it is no longer: "If he be made to suffer for professing the Christian faith," but "if he be a Christian" (let him glorify God in his Name).' Royse (2008:587, fn. 233) disagrees, believing this to be a simple scribal error. Kok and de Winter (2017:1-10) argue that 'ονοματι' (4:16) is not original, suggesting that the word carries more specific connotations as opposed to 'μερει' (Kok and de Winter 2017:4), for which the NA^{28} has opted, based on the use

[334] Itacisms include 'γνωσειν' ('γνωσιν') and 'γυνεκειω' ('γυναικειω'). The following are also spelling errors (the correct spelling is in brackets): 'κε' ('και'), 'ζοης' ('ζωης'), 'εωνιου' ('αιωνιου'), and 'εκκοπτεσθε' ('ενκοπτεσθαι').

[335] Itacisms and sound confusions occur in the following words, 'πειστεως' ('πιστεως'), 'ετυμην' ('ετοιμην'), and 'κερω' ('καιρω').

[336] Notice 'εσχθνεσθω' ('αισχυνεσθω') is misspelt. The scribe has opted for 'ονοματι' instead of 'μερει'.

of the CBGM.[337] That 'ονοματι' might be an emendation makes sense in the context of Christian persecution that was purely *nomen ipsum*. As I have already discussed, 'Χριστιανος' was intended as a stigmatisation by outsiders, attempting to cast shame on those who bore the name. By omitting 'ως' and opting for 'ονοματι', the scribe of P^{72} may have attempted to express a clearer sense of the nature of the social resistance that was common to Christian experience at the time, purely *nomen ipsum*.

The significance of these two variants is that they reflect, once again, the scribe as interpreter or context-bound interactor.[338] The scribe has chosen to communicate the meaning of their text in ways that stand out from other MSS of the same text, and in doing so, created a new meaning that was relevant to the scribe's socio-religious context. Similarly, as shall be shown below, the choices display a theological stance that reflects the characteristic beliefs of the group to which the scribe belongs.

4.3. Christological changes: Defending ingroup beliefs

P^{72} is famous for, among other things, three Christological changes, one in each of 1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude. I will only mention the emendation in 1 Peter.[339] At 1 Pt 5:1a, the scribe has opted for 'θεου' instead of 'χριστου', which is what is found in the NA^{28}. P^{72} reads, 'πρεσβυτερους ουν εν υμιν παρακαλω ο συνπρεσβυτερος και μαρτυς των του $\overline{\theta\upsilon}$ παθηματων ο και μελλουσης αποκαλυπτεστε της δοξης κοινωνος',[340] which may be translated as, 'I exhort [the] elders among you, [as] a fellow elder and witness of God's sufferings, who [is] also a partaker of the glory about to be revealed.' Beare (1961:255) questioned if the variant at 5:1a was, 'an unconscious inclination to Patripassianism?' King (1964:57), taking the other theological changes in P^{72} into account, saw 'evidence of the fullest acceptance of the deity of Christ by the scribe (or one of his predecessors) and the church in his area.' Ehrman (1996:88) believed this to be an anti-adoptionistic emendation that

[337] See Wasserman and Gurry (2017) for the CBGM.

[338] See my reflections on dialogicality in chapter 4.

[339] See chapter 2, section 4.4.6 and 4.4.8 for the similar variants in Jude and 2 Peter.

[340] The scribe has substituted 'ουν' for 'τους'. He has also misspelt 'συνπρεσβυτερος' ('συμπρεσβυτερος'). Additionally, 'αποκαλυπτεστε' is a different verb form compared with the NA^{28}, which has 'ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι'.

stressed that *God*, in Christ, suffered.[341] Haines-Eitzen (2000:115), citing Ehrman (1993),[342] writes, ‘Like the reading in Jude 5, this change serves a dual function: it affirms “that the one who suffered was God (against adoptionists)” and it stresses "that this God, Christ, really did suffer (against, e.g., various groups of Gnostics).”’ Addressing the addition at Jude 25b, Royse (2008:585-86) adds further weight to the sense that the scribe was concerned to, ‘give glory to God and Jesus Christ in a completely parallel manner.’

The definition and defence of theological beliefs are important for identity formation and preservation. Esler (2014:53) writes that for social groups, ‘beliefs underlie their “we-ness” and uniqueness and define the social identity they derive from belonging to that group.’ They are also significant for effective understanding of and navigation through the world (Esler 2014:54). Conceptualising the role of beliefs in this way offers us a way to understand the motivation behind theological emendations. Defending group beliefs is one way of preserving the psychological integrity of group identity.[343] Bringing Christology into conformity with pre-existing beliefs not only functions to reinforce social identity but also serves to delegitimise competing Christologies in the discursive environment.

5. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that at least one scribe was not simply a copyist. The scribe was *invested* in the texts they were transcribing (Haines-Eitzen 2012:489). Using the idea of investment, I have sought to show that the scribe of P^{72}, specifically in 1 Peter, displayed a tendency to *interpret* the texts being copied. The marginalia reflect thematic resonances, and the textual variants serve to conform the

[341] I represent Ehrman’s (1996:3) thesis as follows, ‘The New Testament manuscripts were not produced impersonally by machines capable of flawless reproduction. They were copied by hand, by living, breathing human beings who were deeply rooted in the conditions and controversies of their day. Did the scribes' polemical contexts influence the way they transcribed their sacred Scriptures? The burden of the present study is that they did, that theological disputes, specifically disputes over Christology, prompted Christian scribes to alter the words of Scripture in order to make them more serviceable for the polemical task. Scribes modified their manuscripts to make them more patently "orthodox" and less susceptible to "abuse" by the opponents of orthodoxy.’

[342] The first publication of Ehrman (1996).

[343] Here, I am thinking of psychological states like cognitive dissonance. To see how this relates to the development of SIT, see Russell (2020:4-6).

meaning of the text to the understanding already present in the mind of the scribe. This is not to say that the scribe was unbounded and unrestricted; rather, the scribe was constrained and compelled by their socio-religious context. Haines-Eitzen (2000:106-7) puts this clearly by saying that scribes were generally (parenthesis original),

> limited by their geographic, social, religious, and ideological (con)texts; the freedom that they sometimes took with their texts was not unbounded but rather was shaped and formed by the various and discursive controversies that engaged the second- and third- century church.

They were also aware, if even just implicitly, of accepted standards and rules for copying texts (Haines-Eitzen 2000:106). Most importantly, these scribes (Haines-Eitzen 2000:111, parenthesis original),

> in a very real sense, were readers of the texts; and in the process of copying, they left the traces of their "readings" (interpretations)… the manuscripts they produced bear the markings of their interpretations/readings of the texts and illustrate the scribal contests that took place over the interpretations/readings of texts.[344]

I remind the reader of the connection between the making of meaning and identity.[345] Like the marginal notes, the textual emendations evident in 1 Peter (and P^{72}) are indications of a hermeneutical process that is inextricably linked to the salience of a superordinate identity. What is this identity? Testuz (1959a:9) identified the producers of the codex as Christians. Haines-Eitzen (2000:73-74) concludes that the producer was a Christian influenced by a Christian liturgical context. Wasserman (2005:154) notes the 'influence of incipient orthodoxy'. Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:185) point out the polemical nature of the codex, one that is easily linked to theological concerns of proto-orthodox Christians. Strickland (2017:791) makes a similar claim but more specifically shows the interest in 'authentic and authoritative Petrine tradition' displayed by a potentially proto-orthodox group of Christians. Knust

[344] Haines-Eitzen's comments here are in the context of scribal emendations in Codex Vaticanus but are later applied to P^{72}. See the full chapter for her complete argumentation (Haines-Eitzen 2000:105-27).

[345] See section 3 in this chapter.

(2017:107-108) emphasises what the contents of the codex reflect about the scriptural practices of early Christians; scriptural choices were not as neat as a simple dichotomy between ‘canonical’ and ‘non-canonical’. Miguélez-Cavero (2009:218-21) has in mind a religious community influenced by a vibrant cultural and educational environment. Camplani (2015:134) suggested a unique, educated, and philanthropic lay congregation. Agosti (2015:96) argued for a, ‘fisionomia “quasi monastica”’.[346] Fournet (2015:17) problematizes the use of the term ‘community’, pointing out the process of aggregation that characterises the Bodmer Papyri and that the documents may not be suggestive of a unified ideology. This last point is important for the label, ‘emerging’. The BCMC (BMC) is also diverse, but it certainly displays a degree of motivational and thematic unity. Taken in the context of the larger discovery, the picture of an emerging, still forming social identity is in view; one that is in the process of creating and preserving identity boundaries within its discursive environment, using the written text as a medium of social identity negotiation. Finally, based on the findings of chapters two and three, it is apparent that the BCMC (BMC) reflects an emerging orthodox Christianity whose salient identity spilled over into their scriptural choices and onto the texts they transcribed.

[346] ‘“quasi-monastic” physiognomy’.

CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSIONS

1. Using a dialogical perspective in summary of my findings[347]

This thesis has used an ancient MS to investigate early Christian identity formation. In chapter one, I laid out the methodological approach used throughout the study. The subsequent investigation followed three lines of argumentation. Firstly, in chapter two, I argued that whoever collected the BCMC (BMC) in the 4th century did so with a certain apologetic-theological motivation, particularly in the area of Christology. Each of the texts can be shown, in one way or another, to be concerned with themes that reinforce the boundaries between social groups by valourising the ingroup prototype embodied by Jesus Christ, encouraging the ingroup amid suffering, as well as villainising non-Christians and alternate Christianities (the outgroups) for their 'deviant' ways of life. Secondly (and thirdly), in chapter three, I showed how the scribe of P^{72} displayed a tendency to interpret the texts being copied. I described two ways that this interpretive activity is evident, namely, the marginalia and textual emendations in 1 Peter. Like the individual texts in the codex, the marginalia reflect thematic resonances, while the textual variants serve to conform the meaning of the text to the understanding already present in the mind of the scribe. To present the significance of this, I connected the creation of meaning to the formation of identity; meaning formation and identity formation are inextricably linked to the salience of a superordinate identity, which, in this case, suggests an emerging orthodox Christian social identity.

In consideration of the above, one can say that early Christians stood in a dialogical relationship with their social contexts and the artefacts they created and used. Per Linell's description of the ontological underpinning of dialogicality is useful to keep in mind; he writes (Linell 2009:11), 'a human being, a person, is interdependent with others' experiences, actions, thoughts and utterances…'[348]

[347] In opting for the term 'dialogical perspective', I have in mind a general or loose application of dialogical theorising. See Linell (2009:433) for his eclectic but integrative approach to dialogical theory. See Linell (2009:400-404) for 'The Diverse Trends of Modern Dialogism'.

[348] See Linell (2009:3-10) for a brief study of words like, 'dialogue', 'dialogical theory', 'dialogism', etc.

Without reference to dialogism, some scholars have theorised that Christian scribes in the early centuries were in a dynamically interactive relationship with their social contexts in a way that influenced the creation and use of literature and literary artefacts. Put more simply, these scribes were influenced by their social world, which, in turn, influenced how they preserved and transmitted their religious literature.[349] Knust (2017:99) described NT MSS as objects or keys that can unlock the scriptural practices of early Christians, 'playing roles as primary and then secondary social mediators'.[350] The BCMC (BMC), by the nature of its compilation, acts as a social mediator, indicating how early Christians interacted with their texts. Linell (2009:345) describes the relationship between artefacts (which, when applied in this thesis, would refer to the codex) and human beings in the pursuit of meaning-making, 'Artifacts are deeply involved in human interaction; many forms of human cognition and communication cannot occur without artifacts. Artifacts are assigned affordances for meaning-making and become parts of an extended mind…' An 'affordance' is the *potential meaning* that a human being can generate from his/ her context or the artefacts with which they interact (Linell 2009:332-33).

The discussion about objects and making sense brings to the fore several related but distinct streams of argumentation. One such stream is *ontological*. Schnelle (2009:30) talks about the pursuit of meaning as inescapable for all human beings.[351] To be human, whether in the 3rd -4th century or in the 21st century, is to create meaning out of the affordances of our reality at any given moment in time.

This existential claim allows for a smooth transition to another stream of argumentation, namely, *readers* as *interpreters*. The act of reading is inextricably linked to the act of interpreting and, therefore, creating meaning. Haines-Eitzen (2000:105-27) makes a similar claim in the context of early Christian writings and their textual variants. Essentially, variants are the result of interpretation. As discussed in the section on hermeneutics,[352] no reader approaches a biblical text as a blank slate; they are always influenced by prior frames of understanding (Lategan 2009b:81). In fact, even those who first wrote the NT texts were operating under the

[349] This view is explicitly stated by, among others, Ehrman (1996) and Haines-Eitzen (2000).

[350] See Knust (2017:99-118) for her full argumentation.

[351] Linell (2009:221-24) holds the same view.

[352] See chapter 1, section 5.1.

influence of a pre-understanding as they attempted to 'construct' a new Christian history (Schnelle 2009:26-28).

As a 3rd-4th century reader, the scribe of P^{72} and collector of the BCMC (BMC) is also an interpreter. The clearest example of their interpretive activity is the marginal notes of 1-2 Peter (Horrell 2013:57-59). Another example that is less obvious, though a consensus appears to have been reached,[353] is the apparent thematic coherence of the codex, one that is apologetically inclined (Nicklas & Wasserman 2006:185). The various themes evident across the different writings in the codex suggest a calculated attempt by some 4th century 'agent' (Knust 2017:108) to serve as an anthology of literature that defends 'correct' belief about Jesus Christ, the resurrection from the dead, the judgement of unbelievers, etc.[354]

Therefore, the marginalia and the textual emendations in 1 Peter, *as well as* the thematic unity of the codex, can be conceived of as the scribal collector's attempt to make meaning. To return to this relationship between object and human in meaning-making, I offer the following from Linell (2009:346, italics mine),

> Artifacts are not just (physical or abstract) objects to be conceptualized in isolation from their human users. Instead, they are inscribed with meaning potentials, or rather: affordances. Affordances… have opportunities for use (potentialities) that are selected and realized by human agents, who deploy and understand them in special ways… When artifacts are being actually used and made sense of, they become artifacts-in-use, rather than just artifacts "as such"… They become artifacts-in-specific-contexts (in-use) with special affordances, which are attended to and realized by users. Artifacts are appropriated by users in different ways in different contexts. When they are appropriated, they are typically assigned local and situated meaning. Appropriation implies making artifacts into something that users "own" and *integrate with their activities*.[355]

[353] See Haines-Eitzen (2000:96-104), Wasserman (2005:137-54), Nicklas and Wasserman (2006:163-88), Horrell (2013:45-72), and Strickland (2017:781-91).

[354] See chapter 2, section 4.4.

[355] I remind the reader of the helpful article by Destro and Pesce (2018:45-78).

This process of meaning-making is not done in complete isolation from the external world (only in the mind of the scribe), untouched by the influence of other persons.[356] Rather, this process is a dialogical one, meaning that every action of the scribe is both interactional and contextualised. In other words, the scribe, through his literature, is interacting with a variety of 'others', while compelled and constrained by the social context in which they live.[357] Haines-Eitzen (2000:116) remarks,

> the discursive debates in the second and third century intersected with textual transcription in the activity of copying and the (re)production of texts and creation of new readings. Intentional scribal changes did not occur in a vacuum, nor were they random in nature; rather, they were constrained by the discursive contexts of the scribes themselves.

The argumentation above allows us to speak of this scribe's actions in terms of social context and interaction rather than purely in individualistic and autonomous terms. The application of social identity theory as a heuristic lens, thus, becomes more natural. In the case of P^{72} and the BCMC (BMC), the MSS function as instruments for social contest in response to the social resistance faced by some Christians in 3rd -4th century. This function illuminates something of the dynamics of early Christian identity formation.

In chapter one, I mentioned that SIT assumes that 'an individual strives to achieve a satisfactory concept or image of himself' (Tajfel 1981:254).[358] Since, 'No human being is autonomous from others; on the contrary, we are strongly interdependent with others' (Linell 2009:12), it makes sense that to achieve this positive self-image, humans might look to other human beings, specifically in a group context, hence the designation 'social' in SIT.[359] This is not to say that all aspects of a person's identity are necessarily and indiscriminately group-dependent. In fact, humans appear to be relatively selective about which group identities they assimilate (Hogg 2006:120). Their identity is, however, to a large extent, dependent upon the

[356] See Linell (2009:134-37) for a dialogical explanation of this.

[357] See Linell (2009:14-18) for 'interactionism' and 'constructionism'.

[358] See chapter 1, section 5.4.2 for SIT in operation.

[359] I remind the reader that the existential foundations of SIT grew out of Tajfel's personal experience in WWII (see chapter 1, section 5.1). See Linell (2009:134-37) for an explanation about how the individual 'self' arises out of a learning relationship with 'others'.

existence of external social groupings. ‘Thus, the individual’s identity is both unique and shared; the individual has a dialogical self…’ (Linell 2009:137).[360]

Group identity is key to orientation in the world because it grants access to a group narrative that helps to, ‘form, present, and stabilize identity’ (Schnelle 2009:33). Group narratives undergird identity generally but also have a more particular outworking, namely, providing a group prototype and group ethos, issuing ethical proscriptions and prescriptions, as well as defining the outgroup. Each of the texts in the BCMC (BMC) deals with issues that can be understood in terms of at least one of these features of SIT. Furthermore, to reiterate, four of the nine marginal notes in 1 Peter highlight the ingroup ethos of holiness, while three highlight the prototypical suffering in the flesh, and[361] several textual variants suggest a scribe in a liturgical (social) context, while other variants display an intentional conformity to explicit proto-orthodox beliefs about Jesus Christ.

Much of the definition and preservation of social identity is done in a struggle for distinctiveness, in competition with proximate social identities in the same social space. Consensus holds that the addressees of 1 Peter were facing persecution (social resistance) that was a direct response to the expression of their faith system.[362] Evidence suggests that similar circumstances were being faced by our scribal collector.[363] The combination of social resistance and competing ideologies (whether Christian or not), can be viewed as an identity crucible that inspired both the creation and use of the BCMC (BMC). Therefore, the artefact becomes a social mediator or vehicle for social change.[364] It becomes an anchor point for social creativity, helping to renegotiate the terms of social (intergroup) interaction. For the

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[360] See Hermans (2002:147-60) and Linell (2009:109-113) for the concept of the dialogical self. Though I cannot go into detail here, it is my sense that a theory of the dialogical self is helpful, at least in the background, to conceive of a 3rd-4th century agent who was embedded in a social context where various ‘others’ (internal ‘I-positions’ or real external persons) are in dialogue with one another over competing conceptions of Christ.

[361] Three of the four marginal notes in 2 Peter are designations that label outgroup members as deviant, ‘false prophets’ (2:1), ‘cursed children’ (2:15), and ‘scoffers’ (3:3).

[362] See chapter 1, section 3.2.1.

[363] See chapter 2, section 4.3.

[364] Perhaps it also ensures that reverse social mobility, renouncing Christ and returning to former social allegiances, is rejected as an illegitimate social option. See figure 1, in chapter 1 for an operational model of SIT.

persecuted Christian, the intended stigma is neutralized, and the experienced social reality is reinterpreted as intended by God for the purifying of faith and his glory (1 Pt. 1:7).

The codex can, thus, be conceived of as an instrument for social contest in response to the social resistance faced by some Christians in the 3rd -4th centuries. Through the inclusion of certain texts (with their salient themes), it helps define the boundaries of an emerging orthodox Christian identity. The scribal notes and textual emendations in 1 Peter are evidence of an interactive relationship between human and object in the process of meaning-making and identity formation. Taken together, these three lines of argumentation make the case that this codex offers a window, not just into the social world of early Christians generally, but also into the explicit activities of the early Christian's creation, preservation, and transmission of their social identity.

2. Avenues for further research

Due to limited scope, the following avenues of research were not pursued in this thesis but can prove fruitful in future scholarship. Firstly, research into the BCMC (BMC) will benefit from a full collation of each text in the codex. As the codex is almost universally considered to be a unity, a single volume that contains the Greek texts and English translations, respectively would be useful not only for the academic but also for the layperson. Secondly, and maybe as a chapter in the same volume, an exhaustive analysis of each thematic resonance among the individual writings could be achieved. This would significantly bolster our understanding of the codex. As part of the chapter, a data tool could be produced that would show, using percentages, where these resonances concentrate. A tool like this might offer us a more conclusive view of the motivation behind the codex. Another benefit of this single-volume work would be to balance out the underrepresentation, in scholarship, of the other texts in the codex.

Following this, another volume could offer an exhaustive application of social identity theoretical frames to the thematic resonances in the codex. Doing this would contribute to studies of social identity formation in early Christianity, particularly in the first four centuries prior to Constantine. The marginal notes in 2 Peter can then be added to the study in the same fashion as I have done in chapter three. If a clear and theoretically sound model can be developed, where social identity theories are

applied to scribal habits and patterns, it would provide fresh academic ground to break. Not least, it might help with a middling perspective that would mediate between two academic positions: one which argues that scribes were mostly concerned to faithfully copy their exemplars and one which finds the evidence to be in favour of scribal practices that were actively influenced by discursive environments. My own sense is that a more persuasive argument lies somewhere in between these positions.

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