The Manichaeans of Kellis : religion, community, and everyday life

Brand, M.

Author: Brand, M.
Title: The Manichaeans of Kellis : religion, community, and everyday life
Issue Date: 2019-04-10

The Manichaeans of Kellis: Religion, Community, and Everyday Life

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus Prof.mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op woensdag 10 april 2019 klokke 11.15 uur

door

Mattias Brand
Geboren te Dordrecht in 1986

Promotores	prof. dr. A.F. de Jong prof. dr. J. van der Vliet
Promotiecommissie	prof. dr. O.E. Kaper prof. dr. J.K. Zangenberg prof. dr. I. Gardner (University of Sydney) prof. dr. H.L. Murre-van den Berg (Radboud University) prof. dr. S.G. Richter (Universität Münster)

 Printing and Cover: Ridderprint BV.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

The present study is the result of the project "Manichaeans and Others in Fourth-Century Egypt: The Mechanisms of Religious Change in Late Antiquity," subsidized by the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Research (NWO). I am grateful for this opportunity to explore the everyday lives of individuals and think critically about the study of religious change. I would like to thank my colleagues at Leiden University, in particular Nathal Dessing, Markus Davidsen, Corey Williams, Jürgen Zangenberg, and, during an earlier stage, William Arfman, and Tineke Rooijakkers. They have been of great significance to the completion of this project. It was also a great pleasure to co-organize two papyrological conferences with Cisca Hoogendijk, Koen Donker van Heel, and other colleagues.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to discuss the topic of this dissertation with a number of fellow scholars and I would like to thank a few of them by mentioning their names here. For feedback and discussion of the papyri and archaeology of Kellis, I am grateful to Olaf Kaper, Klaas Worp, Iain Gardner, Majella Franzmann, Nicola Arveccchia, Colin Hope, and Gillian Bowen. I am indebted to the department of Ancient History at Macquarie University for the hospitality that I experienced during my visiting scholarship in 2016. It was a great pleasure to work with Malcolm Choat and Rachel Yuen-Collingridge, whose expertise I highly value. I thank Bronwen Neil and Amelia Brown for their hospitality in Brisbane. The financial support of the Leiden University Fund (LUF) for this research visit is greatly appreciated. For giving me access to some of their unpublished work, I thank Håkon Teigen, Nils Arne Pedersen, Rene Falkenberg, Iain Gardner, Ewa Zakrzewska, Eldon Molto, Alexandra D. Pleşa, and Rea Matsangou.

This dissertation has profited from interactions with various colleagues, as I was fortunate to receive invaluable feedback at all stages of this project. In addition to the colleagues already mentioned, I would like to express my gratitude to Annemarie Luijendijk, Paula Tutty, Jessica van 't Westeinde, Nils H. Korsvoll, Benjamin Sippel, Jennifer Cromwell, Iris Busschers, Miriam Adan Jones, Renate Dekker, Brent Nongbri, and Eline Scheerlinck for their feedback and encouraging words. I thank Marieke Krijnen for revising the English language of this manuscript.

In stating my debts, I cannot but express my deep gratitude to the two academic giants who supervised my doctoral work. Jacques van der Vliet has graciously acted as second supervisor. He tirelessly urged me to critically reexamine the Coptic texts and explore parallels with Egyptian Christianity where possible. His knowledge of the early monastic movement, commemoration rituals, magic, and linguistic developments is outstanding and has steered me forward on many different occasions. My *Doktorvater*, Albert de Jong, has always stimulated me to read widely, to face and challenge existing reconstructions, as well as to engage with academic reconceptualizations of religion beyond the trodden path. His profound insight into the Iranian background of Manichaeism aided my study, and his erudite and comparative approach guided me in my intellectual development as a scholar of religion. I feel very fortunate to have been given the opportunity

to learn from their insights, which have been invaluable for the shaping and completion of this dissertation.

Finally, this project took place at a turbulent time during which social, ethnic, and religious identifications and classifications frequently made the evening news, often in relation to violent situations. I have always felt a profound connection between my work as a scholar and these contemporary events, even though I realize that there is no way of simply learning from the past without projecting our own agendas retrospectively. Here, I would also like to stress that my life has been supremely enriched by the people of the "Jeannette Noelhuis," my parents, and, above all, by Siska. It is to you that I owe so much more than just my intellectual gratitude and admiration.

As a soundscape to this dissertation I would recommend the BBC's "Boring Talks" podcast, in which a variety of speakers use the seemingly mundane, overlooked, and "boring" features of everyday life to address our fascinating world.

Abbreviations and Translations

AA	Hegemonius, Acts of Archelaus, translation by Vermes, M. *Hegemonius Acta Archelai (the Acts of Archelaus)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2001.
BL	Berichtigungsliste der Griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten.
CDT1	Gardner, I., A. Alcock, and W. P. Funk, eds. *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.
CDT2	Gardner, I., A. Alcock, and W. P. Funk. *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 2*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014.
CFM	Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum (CFM), series published by Brepols publishers.
CMC	*Cologne Mani Codex,* publication in Koenen, L., and C. Römer, eds. *Der Kolner Mani-Kodex (Uber das werden seines Leibes), Kritische Edition Aufgrund der von A. Henrichs und L. Koenen besorgten Erstedition*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988. Additional readings in Römer, C. *Manis Frühe Missionsreisen nach der Kölner Manibiographie. Tekstkritischer Kommentar und Erlauterung zu P. 121–P. 192 des Kölner Mani Kodex*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. English translation of the larger part of the text by J. M. and S. N. C. Lieu is given in MTRE, 47–73.
Crum, CD	Crum W. E., ed., *A Coptic Dictionary.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1939) and reprints.
GPK1	Worp, K. A., ed. *Greek Papyri from Kellis I*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995.
Hom.	The Manichaean Homilies, published with an English translation by Pedersen, N. A., *Manichaean Homilies* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006) in the CFM series. The Coptic text cited in my notes derives from this English edition, rather than the older German edition.
KAB	Bagnall, R.S. *The Kellis Agricultural Account Book*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.
KLT1	Gardner, I., ed. *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1996.
KLT2	Gardner, I., ed. *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 2*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007.
MTRE	Gardner, I., and S. N. C. Lieu, eds. *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codices.
SB	Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten.
TM	Trismegistos Database, http://www.trismegistos.org, last updated July 2018. Current team includes G. Baetens, Y. Broux, W. Clarysse, M. Depauw, N. Dogaer, T. Gheldof, and H. Verreth.
1 Keph.	The Berlin *Kephalaia*, known as the "Kephalaia of the Teacher." Pages 1–295 are translated in Gardner, I., ed. *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*. Leiden: Brill, 1995. Pages 291–440 are published and translated by Wolf-Peter Funk. Individual chapters are cited with a single number, while specific passages are cited with a chapter number followed by manuscript page and line. The Coptic text cited in my notes derives from the critical editions by Ibscher and Schmidt, Böhlig, or Funk.

2 Keph. The Dublin *Kephalaia*, known as the "Kephalaia of the Wisdom my Lord Mani" was for a long time only published in facsimile editions. A recent project has led to the publication of a first volume with a critical edition and English translation. I. Gardner, J. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley, *The Chapters of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani.* Leiden: Brill, 2018.

1 PsB. First part of the Manichaean Psalmbook, currently only available in facsimile edition.

2 PsB. The Manichaean Psalmbook, published by Allberry, C. R. C., ed. *A Manichaean Psalm-Book. Part II*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938. New editions of sections of the Psalmbook are published by Richter and Wurst in the CFM series. Sometimes cited with a Psalm number followed by the specific manuscript pages. Where possible, the Coptic text cited in my notes derives from these more recent critical editions.

For the Kellis texts I have deviated slightly from the abbreviations as prescribed in the digital checklist of papyri, Founding Editors: John F. Oates and William H. Willis, *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets,* http://papyri.info/docs/checklist. I have followed the references in the editions by omitting the Roman numbers referring to the various volumes and instead included an abbreviation of the language: P.Kell.Copt. 35 instead of P.Kellis V 35. A guide to the publications of the papyrus documents from the Dakhleh Oasis Project has been included in the appendix. All other abbreviations follow P. H. Alexander, *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999.

Without further indications, all translations are from the editions listed among the abbreviations above. The Coptic and Greek text has been included in the notes to give a first indication of the primary text, even though this is not a philological or technical papyrological study. Where possible I have used Gardner's translation of the *Kephalaia*. I have removed all additional *siglora* in the translation for reasons of legibility. The square brackets in the Coptic or Greek text indicate a lacuna in the text as restored by the editors, or lacunas of a certain length. As in the editions, sublinear dots indicate uncertain readings. All instances in which I have modified the translation, or used another translation than listed above, are indicated in the notes. In all instances of double Greek/Coptic names, I have used the Coptic name (i.e. Pegosh rather than Pekysis).

Chapter 1. Introduction

> To my mother, my loved lady, very precious to me, the beloved of my heart: The one whose memory and worthy motherhood are sealed in my heart every hour; the one whose kindnesses and goodness that she performs for me at all times are sealed in my inmost thought. My mother, very precious to me, Maria. It is I, your son; in the Lord God—greetings (Matthaios to his mother).[1]

1.1 Introduction

What do you expect when you read someone else's mail? Instant recognition of a shared human bond? The same fears, hopes, or beliefs? Or rather the opposite: a profound, awkward feeling of being too privy to the interactions of others? Maybe you feel a mixture of both—curiosity and surprise, recognition and alienation—even when the letters date back more than sixteen hundred years. Papyrus letters convey the impression of close and personal information, directly from the mouth (or the pen) of an ancient author. This suggestion of intimacy creates a fiction that historians of everyday life use to familiarize the sources and subtly communicate a message of a shared human nature: even across vast distances in time and space, these people resemble us in our deepest feelings and emotions. Matthaios's letter to his mother Maria, cited at the outset of this chapter, vividly illustrates this point. A boy, traveling far away from his mother, expressing his affection for her in a most elegant manner. How different is he from you and me?

Intimate as it may feel, this passage may also surprise us, generating feelings of cultural distance and alienation. For modern readers, Matthaios's words feel over the top: too explicit and affectionate. This affectionate tone is but one indication of the cultural distance between past and present. The cited passage derives from a fourth-century Coptic letter, written on papyrus and found in an abandoned desert village in the Dakhleh Oasis. It came from a world very different from our own. It reminds us that what *we* expect to read, after sixteen hundred years, is not the same as what his mother expected to hear from him. When we use the letter to reconstruct a social and historical reality, we need to be aware of contextual factors, such as the underlying rhetorical structures and epistolary conventions.[2] Instead of offering direct insight into the emotions of Matthaios, the message was mediated through the rules and customs of ancient letter writing. The presence (or absence) of a scribe has to be taken into account, just as the epistolary conventions of the era, and the question of his mother's literacy. If she was illiterate, as most women of her time, she may have asked a

---

[1] ⲧⲁⲙⲉⲩ ⲧⲁϫⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲧⲁⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ᾽ [ⲉ]ⲧ᾽ⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̈ⲧⲟⲧ᾽ ⲧⲟⲛⲉ· ϣⲟⲩⲙⲉ̈ⲓⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲁϩⲛⲧ·ⲧⲉⲧⲉ ⲡⲥ̄ⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲧⲥ᾽ⲙ̈ⲛ̈ⲧⲙⲟ ⲉⲧ᾽ϣ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲧⲁⲃⲉ ϩ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲁϩⲛⲧ᾽ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ· ⲧⲉⲧⲉ ⲛⲉⲥⲛ̈ⲛ̈ⲧⲛⲁϥⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥⲁϩⲁⲑⲟⲛ ⲉⲧⲥ᾽ⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̈ⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲧⲁⲃⲉ ϩ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲉⲧ᾽ϩⲣⲟⲩⲛ· ⲧⲁⲙⲉⲩ ⲉⲧ᾽ⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̈ⲧⲟⲧ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ· ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ· ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉϣⲏⲣⲉ ϩ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ· ϫⲁ̣ⲓⲣⲉⲓⲛ· P.Kell.Copt. 25.1-8. The Coptic texts and most of the translations in this dissertation follow the editions, listed among the abbreviations.

[2] R. S. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History* (London: Routledge, 1995). On the role of emotions in ancient letters, W. Clarysse, "Emotions in Greek Private Papyrus Letters," *Ancient Society* 47 (2017): 63-86.

relative, or the neighbors, to read her son's letter to her. So much for an intimate letter between mother and son.

Matthaios's brother Piene also wrote to his mother with elaborate phrases: "This is my prayer every hour to the Father, the God of Truth, that he may preserve you healthy in your body, joyful in your soul, and firm in your spirit," wishing that she "may find life in the kingdom for eternity."[3] What did he mean to say? Where did these words come from? Coptic letters from the same period, of which there are only a few, use similar polite wishes and prayer formulas, but not these specific words. In fact, the "Father, the God of Truth" is only once referred to in fourth-century letters outside the oasis. The phrase is, on the other hand, common in Manichaean texts. Would the boy's father have taught him to express himself in this way? In one of his letters, he addresses his wife and her family as "the children of the living race."[4] Again, an uncommon phrase with parallels in Manichaean literature. Why was invoking a Manichaean supernatural entity, known from a long and complex cosmological narrative that originated in third-century Mesopotamia, relevant in the Egyptian desert? If indeed we recognize a Manichaean deity in the "Father, the God of Truth," how much of this tradition can we safely assume to have been present in the author's context? Should we consider these Manichaean phrases as casual or strategic references to a deeply felt religious identity? If so, how would this religious group identity have affected the lives of the two boys? Would they have played with the neighbors' children? Would their mother have attended birthday parties in the village, or is it more probable that they secluded themselves within a semiclosed religious group?

Seemingly casual references to supernatural beings or the use of extraordinary self-designators open up another world, within and beyond the context of everyday life in the Dakhleh Oasis. Sometimes explicitly religious in tone, these short references in personal letters provide insight into the daily lives of individuals in a fourth-century village. The letters were part of a stunning amount of new papyri found in several Roman houses in one of the larger villages of the Dakhleh Oasis: Kellis (modern Ismant el-Kharab in the western desert of Egypt, roughly 350 km from the Nile). These letters offer valuable insight into everyday life in a Roman village in Egypt, as well as into the daily practices of its inhabitants. In particular, we learn about people we would call "Manichaeans," a name they never used themselves. Manichaeans were made famous by the polemics of religious and imperial authorities in Late Antiquity. They were *the* religious "other," perceived as an imminent threat to the Roman state as well as to an orthodox Christian way of life. Authentic Manichaean texts in several languages have amended this perspective, even though they frequently dealt with theological or liturgical issues only. At Kellis, such documents have also been found, but primarily in the context of personal letters and business accounts. This unprecedented discovery formed the incentive for this dissertation. It stands out for two reasons. First, these personal letters and business accounts are the largest set of documentary

---

[3] ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉ̈ⲓ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ϣⲁ ⲡⲱⲧ᾽ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲉ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣[ⲣ]ⲉϥⲣⲁ̈ⲥ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩ[ⲁ]ϫ᾽ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉ̣[ⲥ]ϣ̣ⲏ̣ⲁ ⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲣⲉϣⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉ̣[ⲣ]ⲉⲧⲁϫ̣[ⲣⲁⲓⲧ᾽ ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̣ and [ⲧ]ⲉ̣ϭⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲱⲛϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ [ⲧ]ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲣ̣ⲣ̣ϱ ϣⲁⲁ[ⲛ]ⲏ̣ϩⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 29.7-10 and 12-13 (Piene to Maria) found in House 3, room 6.

[4] ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̄ P.Kell.Copt. 22.5 (Makarios to Maria) found in the same House 3, room 6.

evidence for late antique Manichaeans, providing a unique, novel perspective on the role of this religion in daily life. With the exception of three Greek Manichaean letters from Oxyrhynchus, the Manichaean letters from Kellis are the *only* extant evidence of this type from the Roman era found so far. Second, they are also the oldest datable Manichaean documents.[5] Therefore, I see these new documents as an important new step in a sequence of discoveries that have transformed the academic study of Manichaeism.

These newly found Manichaean sources offer the opportunity to study Manichaeans in Egypt *from below,* adding a new layer of insight to previous reconstructions that were mainly based on texts from an elite perspective. Apart from informing us about the specificities of Egyptian Manichaeism, this discovery sheds light on fundamental questions about the transregional nature of Manichaeism, as well as its transformation in local settings. It offers new sources, of an exceptional type, to consider the specific appeal of Mani's church in the widely varied and diverse regions of the ancient world. On another level, these texts, and their material context, speak to the wider question of the impact of religion in everyday life in Late Antiquity. They enable scholars of Manichaeism to contribute to the ongoing conversations about lived ancient religion and the dynamic between individual choice and institutional religious structure(s).

1.2 Aims, Method, and Directions

This dissertation will take a two-pronged approach to these new sources. First, it brings an everyday perspective to the practices of Manichaeans in fourth-century Kellis. Developing a theoretical framework of "everyday groupness," I will explore where and how Manichaeans practiced their religion in their daily lives, a topic largely unaddressed in previous studies. Building on modern sociological theories (on identity and everyday practices, individual religious agency, and group-formation) and historical approaches (microhistory, the linguistic turn), this study places individuals at its heart. It is from the personal letters of these individuals that we can glean impressions of their religious concerns and practices. I understand these relatively new sources first and foremost as elucidating the *local* situation of these individuals, rather than representing a blueprint of a reified Manichaean tradition.

The second aim of this study is to locate and contextualize the transformation(s) of "religion" in a specific historical context, as the fourth century witnessed the rise of disembedded, group-specific religions. This transformation has been described in broad

[5] Although the documents are older than the Medinet Madi documents and predate the Iranian, Latin, Greek and Chinese sources sometimes by centuries, it remains possible to argue that other sources reflect even earlier textual traditions. A few fragmentary personal letters from Manichaeans are known from 8th–9th-century Turfan. See most recently A. Benkato, "Sogdian Letter Fragments in Manichaean Script," *Studia Iranica* 45 (2016): 197-220; W. Sundermann, "Eine re-edition zweier manichäisch-soghdischer Briefe," in *Iranian Languages and Texts from Iran and Turan: Ronald E. Emmerick Memorial Volume*, ed. M. Macuch, M. Maggi, and W. Sundermann (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 403-21; M. Y. Yoshida, "Manichaean Sogdian Letters Discovered in Bazaklik," *École pratique des hautes études, section des sciences religieuses* 109 (2000): 233-36.

typologies as one from *primary* to *secondary* religion, or from *locative* to *utopian* religion.[6] Whatever the terminology used, the difference between the traditional religious practices of Greek, Roman, or Egyptian temple cults and the religious structure of these new "religions" is remarkable. In "secondary" or "utopian" religion, religion was no longer coterminous with their village or ethnic identity, but became transportable, internalized, and conceptualized as a discrete social unit: the religious community or group (I will use these two terms interchangeably throughout this dissertation). It is against the background of this transformation that we need to understand the Manichaeans, since they have been described frequently as the first "world religion." Within academic reflections on the transformation of religion in Late Antiquity, Manichaeism is presented as the second type of religion: transregional, text-based, with universal claims, and organized in well-structured, exclusive (but syncretistic) religious communities.[7] The Kellis material offers the first documentary material of Manichaeans in the Roman Empire that can put this academic narrative about large-scale religious transformation to the test in the context of an Egyptian village.

My interest in this transition is both conceptual and historical. The new material from Kellis sheds light on the way Kellites came to understand the Manichaean religion within a local context. As they lived in close proximity to Christians and worshippers of the Egyptian god Tutu, various types of religion were practiced all around them. On a microhistorical scale, therefore, the situation in Kellis reflects developments that took place in the Roman Empire at large. By closely examining the social organization of the Manichaeans in fourth-century Kellis, we will get a glimpse of the mechanisms of religious change: the instances where a distinct religious group seems to emerge, as well as the circumstances in which this specific conceptual frame was entirely absent. The discovery of Manichaean personal letters, theological texts, and liturgical documents in the same village will facilitate this double approach. Theological and liturgical documents contain conceptualizations of a shared group identity based on (what we call) religion, while the personal letters and business accounts at times reveal how this affected their everyday life.

This study takes place at the intersection of several disciplines, each with their own focus, expertise, and language. The historical study of Late Antiquity, Egypt, and Ancient Christianity is the first context, especially now that Manichaeism is classified by many

---

[6] Jan Assmann designated this transformation as one from "primary" to "secondary" religions. The locative-utopian distinction is Jonathan Z. Smith's. The latter typology has been used extensively in modern scholarship, most recently by Greg Woolf, who stressed that "utopianism and locativism are better seen as two tendencies or emphases each offering different ritual and theological possibilities." G. Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," in *Christianity in the Second Century. Themes and Developments*, ed. J. C. Paget and J. Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 29; J. Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009); J. Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), xiii-xiv; J. Z. Smith, "Native Cults in the Hellenistic Period," *History of Religions* 11, no. 2 (1971): 236-49.

[7] This characterization is almost a stereotype, but it features widely in the previous interpretations of the Kellis material. The Chapters of Part II will highlight how this religious community has been understood as "sectarian," "exclusive," and as both persecuted and secluded. See section 1.4 on the appeal of Mani's church.

scholars as a trajectory of Ancient Christianity/ies.[8] Scholars interested in "gnosticism," monasticism, the diversity of Early Christianity, and the interplay between theological debates and lived local practices will find much that is familiar in these pages. Scholars of religion will recognize the modern comparanda, even though these are sometimes relegated to the notes, as well as the theoretical terminology that I use to describe and analyze the ancient world. As most of the inscribed Kellis material was written on papyrus, with the occasional exceptions of ostraka and wooden tablets, I share the burden of papyrologists to interpret lacunas and read beyond the fragments. The excellent editions and translations of the Kellis papyri and ostraka have greatly facilitated this study. I will frequently refer to these editions. Despite occasional differences of opinion, they remain the first set of volumes to consult on the specifics of the social, economic, and religious lives of ancient Kellites. Where possible, I have labored to include the archaeological material of the village. This material is of great importance to scholars of Ancient Christianity, who are often as unaware of the Manichaeans as they are of the early church buildings and securely datable biblical manuscripts from Kellis (see Chapter 3).

As this dissertation will provide the first book-length description of the Manichaeans of Kellis, it will add to our knowledge of how Manichaeans lived and practiced their religion. This study will contribute to wider debates on how religious identities worked inside and outside of an institutional context, taking items from the realm of theological texts and placing them amid the ordinary errands of everyday life. The notion of a coherent "Manichaean community," or an abstract "Manichaeism," will therefore be related to the everyday choices of individuals and families. This focus and theoretical background will be discussed in the next chapter. It is necessary, however, to first introduce ancient and modern perspectives on Manichaeism and its appeal as a religious option.

1.3 Manichaeism in Late Antiquity

Manichaean hagiographical texts present the Manichaean church as superior to all. Their church surpassed all previous religions, as it constituted the accumulation of all previous wisdom. This sentiment was developed in a systematized list that discussed ten aspects in which they surpassed all other religions. In this text, they praised Mani because "you have opened our eyes, that this church surpasses by its primacy over the first [*or:* previous] churches."[9] Interestingly, modern scholarship often stresses the same success factors as those listed by the Manichaeans themselves. Many of the ten aspects of the success of Mani's

---

[8] For example, in N. A. Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God. A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos: The Work's Sources, Aims and Relation to Its Contemporary Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 6-12.

[9] [..] ⲁⲕⲧⲟⲩⲓⲉⲧⲛ̄ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϫⲉ ϯⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲟⲩ[ⲁ]ⲧ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̣ϩ[ⲟⲩⲁⲓⲧ]ⲥ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛ̄ϣⲁⲣⲡ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 151, 375.11-12, translation by Gardner in I. Gardner and S. N. C. Lieu, eds., *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), no. 91. The most complete version of this list is found in Coptic (1 Keph. 151), but it has also been transmitted in a Middle Persian version, which suggests that an earlier version goes back to the third century. For the Middle Persian version, see the translation and discussion in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 109-10; S. N. C. Lieu, ""My Church Is Superior..." Mani's Missionary Statement in Coptic and Middle Persian," in *Coptica - Gnostica - Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. P. H. Poirier and L. Painchaud (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 519-27.

church relate to its character as a "secondary" or "utopian" religion. The Manichaean church, the list proclaims, will become "manifest in every country and in all languages."[10] This universal and disembedded nature, as well as the central role of texts, have also been highlighted by modern scholars as defining features of the transformation of religion in Late Antiquity.

Manichaeism came into being in third-century Mesopotamia, from where it spread over the Sasanian Empire into the Roman Empire and China, where it continued to exist for centuries. The story of its rise and decline spans a long period and a wide variety of geographical and cultural settings. Manichaeism today is an extinct religion, but a large number of sources from various regions inform us about this ancient religion. The academic study of these sources started in the eighteenth century, though mainly through the lens of anti-Manichaean polemics of Early Christian authors. New watershed discoveries in the twentieth century shifted the emphasis from the heresiology of patristic writers to the Iranian context of Mani and his scriptures. As many of these texts were written in Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, and other Iranian languages, they gave the impression that Manichaeism was in essence an Iranian religion, presumably a reform movement within Zoroastrianism.[11] Inevitably, scholars with knowledge of Syriac Christianity began to notice similarities between Mani's teachings and those of Marcion and Bardaisan, which led to an emphasis on the Christian nature of Manichaeism.[12] Textual sources from Turfan, Dunhuang (modern China), Medinet Madi, and Ismant el-Kharab (Egypt, ancient Narmouthis and Kellis) have fueled the continuous study of this religious tradition throughout the twentieth century, both by specialists in the philology of various languages (including Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Bactrian, Turkish, and Chinese) and by church historians or scholars of religion (whose expertise has tended to include knowledge of Greek, Latin, Coptic, or Syriac). In recent years, the center of gravity of Manichaean Studies has shifted away from the Iranian interpretations (even though excellent text editions are still produced), as many scholars now consider Manichaeism a trajectory of Ancient Christianity, a classification that we will consider in more depth later.[13]

Named after founder Mani (the "Apostle of Light," born on April 14, 216 CE), the term "Manichaean" carries a mixture of ancient and modern derogatory connotations. Greek

---

[10] M5794 and M5761, translation in Garder and Lieu, *MTRE*, 109.

[11] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 27. Geo Widengren, for example, repeatedly argued that all features of the Manichaean cosmology are strongly related to Zurvanism. G. Widengren, *Mani und der Manichäismus* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1961), 48-52. The existence and status of Zurvanism is, however, contested. A. F. de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 63-68, 330-38. More studies stressing the Iranian background of Manichaeism are listed in J. C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992), 5n5.

[12] F. C. Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 71-86; C. W. Mitchell, ed. *S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1912-21).

[13] For a critique on the history of study in relation to essentialized Gnosticism, see N. J. Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism. An Ancient Faith Rediscovered* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 5-15; M. A. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

heresiological texts often played with the Syriac title "Manichaios," which probably meant something like "Mani the Living," to associate it with μανείς, foolishness.[14] The modern label "Manichaeism" is not as derogatory as its ancient equivalents, but it tends to conceal the fragmentary, diverse, or random nature of most of our knowledge. As Jason BeDuhn points out, by hallowing it with a modern "–ism," the Manichaean tradition has been "comfortably nested in a web of interpretation that locates Manichaeism in its relation to other, better-known dualisms, asceticisms, gnosticisms, mysticisms, and syncretisms."[15]

Two fundamental obstacles hinder the study of this religion (see section 2.4 on the concept of "religion"). The first obstacle consists of the polemical strategies and cultural adaptations within the textual sources themselves. A second obstacle is the diversity of perspectives in sources hundreds of years apart, which makes it difficult to approach this religion as one single tradition. Mostly, the texts derive from two main clusters: the oldest documents are from fourth- and fifth-century Egypt (Medinet Madi and Kellis), while the majority of texts were found at Turfan and Dunhuang (modern China), and stem from the eighth to the eleventh century.[16] Apart from these main clusters, authentic Manichaean texts

---

[14] J. K. Coyle, "Foreign and Insane: Labelling Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," in *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, ed. J. K. Coyle (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 3-24; J. Tubach and M. Zakeri, "Mani's Name," in *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, ed. J. van Oort and O. Wermelinger (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 272-86 considers the original title to mean something like "the living, or hidden, vessel." Shapira proposes to render "The Living Self." D. Shapira, "Manichaios, *Jywndg Gryw* and Other Manichaean Terms and Titles," in *Irano-Judaica IV*, ed. S. Shaked and A. Netzer (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 1999), 122-50. Although 14 April 216 CE is commonly taken as Mani's birth, alternative chronologies are possible, see T. Pettipiece, "Mani's Journey to India: Mission or Exile?," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 507n24 and the appendix.

[15] J. D. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), x. Richard Lim has also articulated similar critique on the academic construction of Manichaeism: "The term 'Manichaeism' evokes a sense of conspiratorial solidarity and coherence throughout the area of its considerable diffusion." R. Lim, "Unity and Diversity among Western Manichaeans: A Reconsideration of Mani's *Sancta Ecclesia*," *Revue des études augustiniennes* 35 (1989): 231; R. Lim, "The Nomen Manichaeorum and Its Uses in Late Antiquity," in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, ed. E. Iricinschi and H. M. Zellentin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 143-206.

[16] W. Sundermann, "Manichaean Literature in Iranian Languages," in *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran*, ed. R. E. Emmerick and M. Macuch (London: I.B.Tauris, 2008), 197-265. Manichaeism flourished during this period and was became the state religion in a Uighur kingdom between 762 and 840 CE. In 840 CE the empire was annihilated, but the Manichaean presence continued until in the tenth century it was largely been surpassed by Buddhism. W. Sundermann, "Manichaeism on the Silk Road: Its Rise, Flourishing and Decay," in *Between Rome and China. History, Religion and Material Culture of the Silk Road*, ed. S. N. C. Lieu and G. B. Mikkelsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 84-87. For the Medinet Madi documents, see C. Schmidt and H. J. Polotsky, "Ein Mani-Fund in Ägypten," *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, in Kommission bei W. de Gruyter, 1933), 4-90. On its dating, J. D. BeDuhn and G. Hodgins, "The Date of the Manichaean Codices from Medinet Madi, and Its Significance," in *Manichaeism East and West*, ed. S. N. C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 10-28. A full discussion of the discovery can be found in J. M. Robinson, *The Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013). Only two sections of a historical codex (presumably the Acts) have been published. N. A. Pedersen, "A Manichaean Historical Text," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 119 (1997): 193-201.

have been found in Latin (Tebessa, Algeria, 1918), Greek (*Cologne Mani Codex*, bought in Egypt by the University of Cologne in the 1960s), and Chinese.[17] This abundance of new Manichaean sources, most of which became available in the twentieth century, has often vindicated the polemical accounts of heresiologists, while now exposing the internal logic of authentic Manichaean discourse in liturgical, theological, and historical documents.[18]

Theologically, the documents relate a strongly dualistic world view in which Light and Darkness stood against each other in a primordial cosmological battle, a conflict that continued to define all of reality. Humankind could participate in this battle through revealed knowledge (gnosis) and by following the rules and regulations of the Manichaean church, either as members of the elect, or as Hearers (in Western sources often called catechumens). The reciprocal relation between these two classes of Manichaeans stood at the core of their religious life. The elect needed the financial and material support of the Hearers, because they had to keep strict behavioral rules. By following these rules, the elect could purify themselves and liberate the supernatural elements of Light trapped inside defiling matter (often called the Living Soul, 1 Keph. 79). Simple acts of agriculture, sexual immorality, or wine consumption, could hurt the Living Soul (1 Keph. 80). Therefore, Hearers, or catechumens, were expected to bring food for a daily ritual meal as alms gifts, which will be the topic of Chapter 6. Sources from the East and from the West attest to the widespread practice and alimentary logic of this meal, which was considered to not only contribute to the liberation of Light, but also to individual salvation (see Chapter 8 on the relation between collective and individual eschatology).[19]

The Manichaean myth circled around the fate of the Living Soul, ensnared in the material world. This Living Soul originated from the Father of Greatness, who through a series of emanations surrounded himself by Light beings acting on his behalf (he himself is praised in hymns like T.Kell.Copt. 1 and P.Kell.Gr. 92 as hidden and exalted, while P.Kell.Gr. 98 contains prayers praising all the emanations). The First Man, one of the beings from the first emanation, descended to wage war against the realm of Darkness. He was captured, stripped from his five sons (his armor, also perceived of as supernatural Light beings), and trapped in Darkness. Light beings from the second emanation came to the rescue: they awakened him by reminding him of his true destiny and origin (1 Keph. 72 and 85). In the process they fashioned the universe, which despite its nature (made from Darkness), was

---

[17] S. N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 49-54 on the discovery of these texts and their earliest translations. For recent discoveries and literature, see M. Xiaohe, "Remains of the Religion of Light in Xiapu (霞浦) County, Fujian Province," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S. G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 228-58.

[18] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 25-45 on the impact of these discoveries on the study of Manichaeism. An English translation of some of the Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian and Turkic texts is found in H. J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

[19] Studies of the Manichaean ritual meal include H. C. Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles dans le manichéisme (Collège de France, 1952-1972)," in *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais*, ed. H. C. Puech (Paris: Flammarion, 1979); BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body;* N. A. Pedersen, "Holy Meals and Eucharist in Manichaean Sources. Their Relation to Christian Traditions," in *The Eucharist – Its Origins and Contexts*, ed. D. Hellholm and D. Sänger (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 1267-97.

considered as working toward the liberation of the last elements of Light that remained after the ascent of the First Man (without his five sons).[20] This cosmological narrative was told with variations, but can be summarized in two catchphrases, the "two principles" and the "three times," which referred to the worlds of Light and Darkness and the three temporal stages of the cosmological drama: before the mixture, mixture, and the separation at the end of times.[21] There can be no doubt that both notions had roots in Zoroastrian cosmology.[22] The enchained elements of Light received various names: they were called the Living Soul, the Cross of Light, or in some western sources the Suffering Jesus (*jesus patibilis*). In the Psalmbook, for example, the Living Soul is identified with the Suffering Jesus: "Jesus that hangs to the tree, Youth, son of the dew, milk of all trees, sweetness of the fruits"[23] and "the trees and the fruits, in them is thy holy body, my Lord Jesus."[24]

This last example may illustrate why the Manichaean missionary technique has often been considered as a type of syncretism. Manichaean texts from various regions were written in the local languages and adopted religious analogies from the new religious environments. As a result, Manichaeism in the West used Christian terminology, while in the East it resembled Buddhism and in Iran, Zoroastrianism.[25] The extent to which these adaptations influenced the system of Manichaean thought has been the subject of considerable debate, in

---

[20] Bermejo-Rubio points to structural parallels between the Christian son of God and the Manichaean Primal Man. F. Bermejo-Rubio, "Primal Man, Son of God: From Explicit to Implicit Christian Elements in Manichaeism," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S. G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 34-46. Similar parallels exist, however, with the Zoroastrian myth of the original conflict. J. D. BeDuhn, "The Leap of the Soul," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della ricerca*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 22-25; M. Heuser, "The Manichaean Myth According to Coptic Sources," in *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*, ed. M. Heuser and H. J. Klimkeit (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 3-108. On the positive view of the cosmos, L. Koenen, "How Dualistic Is Mani's Dualism?," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis - Atti 2*, ed. L. Cirillo (Cozenza: Marra Editore, 1990), 13-24.

[21] On short summaries of Manichaeism, see I. Colditz, "The Abstract of a Religion Or: What Is Manichaeism?," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S. G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 52-56. The three times and two principles are discussed, for example, in CMC 132.11-13, Hom. 7.11-15, 2 PsB. 9.8-11, 11.30-1, 1 Keph. 5.27-8, 15.19-20, 16.20-21, 73.28, and discussed in full in 1 Keph. 55.16-57.32. N. A. Pedersen, *Studies in the Sermon on the Great War* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1996), 172-76.

[22] M. Hutter, "Manichaeism in Iran," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism*, ed. M. Stausberg, Y. S-D. Vevaina, and A. Tessmann (Chichester Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 477-90.

[23] ⲓ[ⲏ̅ⲥ̅] ⲉⲧⲁϣⲉ ⲁⲡϣⲉ: [ⲡ]ⲗⲓⲗⲟⲩ ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̀ⲧⲓⲱⲧⲉ: [ⲡ]ⲉⲣⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̀ⲛ̀ϣⲏⲛ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ· [ⲡϩⲗ]ⲁϩ ⲛ̀ⲛ̀ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ. 2 PsB. 155.24-27.

[24] ⲛ̀ϣⲏⲛ ⲙⲡ̀ⲛ̀ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̀ⲧⲁⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲕⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲛ̀ϩⲏⲧ̀ⲟⲩ ⲡⲁϫⲁⲓ̀ⲥ̅ ⲓⲏ̅ⲥ̅. 2 PsB. 121.32.

[25] W. Sundermann, "Manicheism IV. Missionary Activity and Technique." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: July 20, 2009, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/manicheism-iv-missionary-activity-and-technique- (accessed on 27 May 2015); Koenen, "How Dualistic Is Mani's Dualism?," 1-34. Explicitly on "syncretism" is P. Bryder, "Transmission, Translation, Transformation. Problems Concerning the Spread of Manichaeism from One Culture to Another," in *Studia Manichaica II*, ed. G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 334-341; P. Bryder, "The Zebra as a Chameleon. Manichaean Missionary Technique," in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Preißler and H. Seiwert (Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994), 49-54. On the impact of Buddhism on Mani (or vice versa), T. Pettipiece, "A Church to Surpass All Churches: Manichaeism as a Test Case for the Theory of Reception," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 61, no. 2 (2005): 253.

particular because it is so hard to determine a baseline that may go back to Mani himself. One could wonder whether it is even proper to regard the local variants as somehow adapted from a previous tradition, as there are few fragments ascribed to Mani, and none of these are free from redaction in the later textual traditions. This makes it difficult to estimate to what extent certain elements belonged to the original "core" of Mani's teaching, or represented secondary layers of syncretic additions; to discern "Urform" from "Fortbildungen."[26] How much, for example, did the first generation of Manichaeans know about Buddhism? Are typically Buddhist phrases such as "Buddha," or "nirvana" in Chinese Manichaean texts examples of appropriation for missionary purposes or do they reflect Mani's own knowledge?[27] Are the hagiographical stories of Mani's journey to India historically accurate, and therefore proof of long-distance religious exchange?[28]

The diversity of the sources, the strategy of adaptation, as well as the modern perspectives on this transmission process have made it difficult to define Manichaeism's "core." What is the core? Gábor Kósa helpfully illustrated the reconstruction of the Manichaean cosmological system with the metaphor of a "gigantic three-dimensional puzzle, the different layers of which are the disparate linguistic traditions and the puzzle pieces being the individual Manichaean concepts."[29] Some of the puzzle pieces, like the fundamental concepts of the two principles and the three times, are present at all levels. Other pieces are only known from one or two regions and are therefore only present at some levels of the puzzle. "Naturally," Kósa states, "the closer the analogy, the more secure the explanation is, thus researchers of Manichaeism attempt to recover the philologically secure antecedents of respective texts."[30] The procedure of finding parallels and identifying them as probable antecedents is, however, a problematic one, especially when there are Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian antecedents available. For the western Manichaean material, which provides the first context of the Kellis documents, the distinctions are hard to draw:

---

[26] H. H. Schaeder, "Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems," in *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, ed. F. Saxl (Leipzig: Teubner, 1927), 65-157.

[27] G. B. Mikkelsen, "Skillfully Planting the Tree of Light: The Chinese Manichaica, Their Central Asian Counterparts, and Some Observations on the Translation of Manichaeism into Chinese," in *Cultural Encounters: China, Japan and the West*, ed. S. Clausen, R. Starrs, and A. Wedell-Wedellsborg (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1995), 102-3; G. Kosa, "The Sea of Fire as a Chinese Manichaean Metaphor: Source Materials for Mapping an Unnoticed Image," *Asia Major, Third Series* 24, no. 2 (2011): 1-52.

[28] Although some have argued that Buddhist/Jainist influence derived from Mani's own journeys into India. I. Gardner, "Some Comments on Mani and Indian Religions According to the Coptic *Kephalaia*," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della richerca*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 123-36; M. Deeg and I. Gardner, "Indian Influence on Mani Reconsidered: The Case of Jainism," *International Journal of Jaina Studies* 4-6 (2011): 158-86. Henrichs has suggested that the doctrine of the transmigration came from India, but this has not commonly been accepted. A. Henrichs, ""Thou Shalt Not Kill a Tree": Greek, Manichaean and Indian Tales," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 16 (1979): 99. Refutation in W. Sundermann, "Mani, India, and the Manichaean Religion," *South Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (1986): 16.

[29] Kosa, "The Sea of Fire," 9.

[30] Kosa, "The Sea of Fire," 10. Compare the methodological introduction by BeDuhn, in which he formulates his aim as establishing what "remains negotiated in local conditions." BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 5.

which elements belonged to the secondary garb of missionary adaptations and which belonged to the shared commonality of the Manichaean tradition as a whole?

As indicated, the hunt for parallels is strongly tied to the vexed question of origins. Parallels between Iranian and Coptic sources may point to roots in early traditions, as for example the list of ten advantages of the Manichaean church cited earlier. Previous generations of scholars, in fact, interpreted the Christian terminology of some of the Greek, Coptic, and Latin Manichaean sources as the result of strategic missionary adaptation. Some of them even considered the Jesus figure a secondary layer of cultural adaptation.[31] More recent scholarship has readdressed this misconception and has shown the centrality of Jesus as a soteriological figure throughout the Manichaean tradition.[32] The texts from Kellis have contributed to this understanding because they included a Coptic version of some of the canonical *Epistles* of Mani (P.Kell.Copt. 53). According to Iain Gardner, the Kellis version of Mani's *Epistles* reveals his "authentic Christian voice," which can be used to differentiate between the primary tradition of Mani and secondary, "scholastic" developments.[33] The Holy Spirit, for example, features in the *Epistles*, but is almost entirely replaced with the Light Mind in the *Kephalaia*. Apparently, Gardner suggests, the Manichaean scribal tradition quickly erased the most Christian elements and replaced them with a more profound, alternative Manichaean framework.[34]

A decisive moment in the quest for origins, however, occurred long before the discovery of the Kellis papyri, with the acquisition and translation of a Greek biography of Mani, the *Cologne Mani Codex* (CMC), in 1970.[35] This text describes Mani's youth and upbringing. Despite the obvious hagiographical models involved in this "biography," the information regarding the community of his upbringing has generally been accepted as

---

[31] Sundermann, for example, observed how several attributes of Jesus were ascribed to other supernatural figures in the Manichaean pantheon. W. Sundermann, "Christianity V. Christ in Manicheism." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: October 18, 2011, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/christianity-v (accessed January 10, 2017). Previous positions are discussed in M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 2-6 which includes a discussion of Widengren's statement in 1977 that Christian elements were merely "Stilelementen."

[32] The most recent contribution, arguing for the essential unity of the Jesus-figure in Manichaeism, is J. D. BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Jesus," in *Alternative Christs*, ed. O. Hammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 51-70.

[33] I. Gardner, "Towards an Understanding of Mani's Religious Development and the Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," in *Religion and Retributive Logic: Essays in Honour of Professor Garry W. Trompf*, ed. C. M. Cusack and C. H. Hartney (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 149.

[34] Gardner, "Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," 149-50.

[35] The edition was published as L. Koenen and C. Römer, eds., *Der Kolner Mani-Kodex (Uber das werden seines Leibes), kritische edition aufgrund der von A. Henrichs und L. Koenen besorgten Erstedition* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988). Further additions were published by C. Römer, *Manis frühe Missionsreisen nach der Kölner Manibiographie. Tekstkritischer Kommentar und Erlauterung zu P. 121 - P. 192 des Kölner Mani Kodex* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994). Unfortunately, there is no consensus on whether this text was produced in the fourth century or during the seventh century, which would explain other accurate details as well as Byzantine-looking features. S. N. C. Lieu, "Manichaeism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, ed. S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 224.

historical. We learn that Mani was raised among baptists, a community that may have considered "Alchasaios" one of their founding fathers. The name "Alchasaios" has led to the (mis)interpretation of the community as "Jewish-Christian," and specifically "Elchasaite," in many modern studies, despite the critical evaluation of this identification by Gerard Luttikhuizen, Albert de Jong, and others.[36] The text continues to relate how Mani rebelled against the community's rules, after having received two revelations of his supernatural twin (*syzygos*). He set out to reform the community, but his revelation and novel practices were not appreciated by his fellow baptists, forcing him to take his message to the streets. With his father and a few disciples, Mani entered a new itinerant missionary phase. The CMC describes Mani's missionary work in the Sasanian Empire, where he found the imperial support of Shapur I, which enabled him to travel freely throughout the East and into India. This initial success, however, stirred up Zoroastrian priest Kerdir, who convinced the new king Vahram I to imprison Mani, which led to his death in the year 276 or 277 CE.[37]

This hagiographical origin story has been awarded central importance in the reconstruction of the rise of Manichaeism, as it revealed the Christian nature of the community of Mani's youth.[38] Indeed, the CMC contains a short quote from Mani's *Living*

---

[36] G. P. Luttikhuizen, "The Baptists of Mani's Youth and the Elchasaites," in *Gnostic Revisions of Genesis Stories and Early Jesus Traditions*, ed. G. P. Luttikhuizen (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 170-84; A. F. de Jong, "A Quodam Persa Exstiterunt: Re-Orienting Manichaean Origins," in *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovations in Antiquity*, ed. A. Houtman, A. F. de Jong, and M. Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2009): 81-106. The association with the Elchasai of the patristic sources has been made in A. Henrichs and L. Koenen, "Ein griechischer Mani-Codex (P.Colon. Inv. Nr. 4780) Περὶ τῆς γέννης τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ: Edition der Seiten 72.8-99.9," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 32 (1978): 183-4; A. Henrichs, "The Cologne Mani Codex Reconsidered," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 83 (1979): 339-67. Contra these studies, I see few traces of Judaism in the CMC. Food and purity rules, as well as "keeping the rest of the hands" are not exclusively Jewish practices, but featured more widely among minority religions of the region, see J. Maier, "Zum Problem der jüdischen Gemeinden Mesopotamiens im 2. und 3. Jh. n. Chr. im Blick auf den CMC," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986), 37-67.

[37] The CMC does not discuss Mani's demise, but accounts have been preserved in a Coptic homily and various Middle Persian texts. On the reconstruction of his final days, see I. Gardner, "Mani's Last Days," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 159-208.

[38] "Man wird folglich die christlichen Elemente im Manichäismus nicht mehr als sekundäre Zutat des westlichen Manichäismus abtun dürfen…" A. Henrichs and L. Koenen, "Ein Griechischer Mani-Codex (P.Colon. Inv. Nr. 4780)" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 5 (1970): 40. A strong Christian interpretation is presented in J. van Oort, "The Emergence of Gnostic-Manichaean Christianity as a Case of Religious Identity in the Making," in *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation*, ed. W. Otten, J. Frishman, and G. Rouwhorst (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 275-88; J. van Oort, "The Paraclete Mani as the Apostle of Jesus Christ and the Origins of a New Church," in *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought*, ed. A. Hilhorst (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 139-57. The first sentence of Lieu's summary in the Cambridge History is "The religion of Mani arose from a Judaeo-Christian milieu in southern Mesopotamia in the third century – a time of both cultural and religious syncretism." S. N. C. Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. A. Casiday and F. Norris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 279. Baker-Brian is critical of the possibility of composing a "positivist account of Mani's life." Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 33-60 on the role of biographical writings in Manichaean identity-formation. Literary models,

Gospel, in which he self-identifies as the apostle of Jesus Christ.[39] Combined with the strongly "Christian" vocabulary of some of the Medinet Madi texts, like the Psalms to Jesus, these passages are now commonly taken as original or primary to the Manichaean system of thought. As mentioned, the Kellis version of Mani's *Epistles* seems to confirm this reconstruction. A curious trend in this respect is the intrinsic connection between the postulated Christian nature of Manichaean thought and the person of Mani. A recent introduction, for example, states that there is "less scope in the study of Manichaeism to trace the evolution of doctrine, since all teaching was rigidly tied to the very details of the divine word in Mani's scriptures."[40] In fact, "Mani took great pains to establish a total religion based upon his own comprehensive scriptures and preaching."[41] Clearly, these scholars portray Manichaeism as a designed religion in which all features came from Mani himself, a notion actively propagated by Manichaean literature. Manichaeans themselves stressed that Mani wrote his own wisdom down, thereby preventing the corruption of his scriptures, as had happened to the message of Jesus and Buddha (1 Keph. 151).[42] However, uncritically accepting insider claims would be naïve. Do we really believe that all tenets of Manichaean religion had their origin in Mani's own blueprint? In defense of these scholars, it should be said that at least one of them has retracted this position and stressed in a more recent publication that "Mani was not really different from other supposed religious 'founders'."[43]

In sum, there are two different perceptions of the Manichaean tradition: one in which a hypothetical "Urform" is subjected to countless cultural adaptations, and one in which there is limited room for profound developments because the center of gravity is located in Mani's own design, his books, and his personality.[44] The problem with the latter is apparent—it cannot account for diversity—while the difficulty with the former approach lies in the scarcity of third- (or even fourth-)century Manichaean sources. As indicated above, I

---

and sources, for Mani's life are discussed by A. F. de Jong, "The *Cologne Mani Codex* and the Life of Zarathushtra," in *Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. Religious Dynamics in a Sasanian Context*, ed. G. Herman (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2014), 129-47; Cf. D. Frankfurter, "Apocalypses Real and Alleged in the Mani Codex," *Numen* 44 (1997): 60-73.

[39] CMC 66.4, this introduction has parallels in two middle Persian and one Sogdian version. Koenen, "How Dualistic Is Mani's Dualism?," 2-3; Henrichs and Koenen, "Ein Griechischer Mani-Codex," 189-202.

[40] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 1.

[41] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9. Cf. similar statements on page 151. With Baker-Brian, I think we see here "the related assumption that Mani's teachings appeared fully formed, systematized and institutionally-implemented from the very earliest days." Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 23.

[42] The Iranian variant of this text is given in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 109-10 and the Coptic version on page 265-8, no. 91. A full discussion is found in Lieu, "Mani's Missionary Statement," 519-27.

[43] Gardner, " Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," 147n1.

[44] L. J. R. Ort, *Mani: A Religio-Historical Description of His Personality* (Leiden: Brill, 1967). Which was reviewed severely (but for good reasons) by Mary Boyce the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. Tudor Sala cites Polotsky and Klimkeit as examples of the tendency to think about the "monolithic coherence" of Mani's religion, an approach which he regards as the construction of a "homogeneous and and invariable ideology and social entity called 'Manichaeism'." T. A. Sala, "Narrative Options in Manichaean Eschatology," in *Frontiers of Faith: The Christian Encounter with Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 52.

will examine the Kellis letters first and foremost in their local and regional context, without tracing all antecedents back to earlier Mesopotamian traditions. It is not our purpose to determine whether local Kellite practices were in truth "Christian" or "Manichaean," as these two categories overlap and boundaries are difficult to draw. In the three-dimensional conceptual puzzle, the Christian elements are not necessarily more authentic. Instead, both Christian traditions and Sasanian Zoroastrianism must be taken into account when the origins of Manichaeism are explained.[45]

The continuity and diffusion of the Manichaean tradition is often associated with its canonical books. Mani was remembered as the author of his own set of sacred scriptures (either listed as a Pentateuch or Heptateuch), including the *Living Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Treatise (Pragmateia)*, the *Book of Mysteries*, the *Book of Giants*, the *Epistles*, and the *Psalms and Prayers*.[46] With these books, he was said to have restored Jesus's wisdom (2 PsB. 224, 12.31). Not only did he write his words of wisdom, but he also depicted them in his *Picturebook*.[47] Unfortunately, few of these canonical works survived, apart from brief citations by other authors. In contrast to the Manichaean claims about Mani as a prolific writer, modern scholars depend largely on the works of his disciples. Among the works of the first generations of disciples, for example, are collections of Mani's sayings and lectures, which were subsequently circulated in sermons, hagiographical stories, and question-and-answer-literature (known as *Kephalaia*: "Chapters"). The *Kephalaia* is of importance because of its sheer size (both volumes held about five hundred pages, slightly less than the Manichaean Psalmbook but still constituting the second largest papyrus codex of the ancient world) and systematized character.[48] As a genre, Manichaean kephalaia were known as early as the 340s CE, and several Iranian texts contained traces of hagiographical homilies that correspond to

---

[45] An example of this dual context is BeDuhn's examination of Christian and Zoroastrian ritual meals as models for the Manichaean food rituals. J. D. BeDuhn, "Eucharist or Yasna? Antecedents of the Manichaean Food Ritual," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 14-36.

[46] Hom. 25.2-5, cf. 1 Keph. 148, 355.4-25. The information about these books and their content is discussed in Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 66-95. The concept of a canon is suitable only in so far it designates lists of Mani's writings that carried a certain authority. The implicit comparison with Christian canon formation, as well as the relation to this set of text is complicated. Cf. N. A. Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition. The Sources in Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, New Persian, and Arabic* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), xii.

[47] Z. Gulácsi, *Mani's Pictures: The Didactic Images of the Manichaeans from Sasanian Mesopotamia to Uygur Central Asia and Tang-Ming China* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). In general on textuality in Ancient Christianities, see now G. G. Stroumsa, *The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016). A comparative perspective on canon formation and religious networks is pursued in P. Dilley, "Religious Intercrossing in Late Antique Eurasia: Loss, Corruption, and Canon Formation," *Journal of World History* 24, no. 1 (2013): 25-70.

[48] Pettipiece has shown the systematic redaction process behind the *Kephalaia*, which was probably meant to fix problems in the interpretation of the Manichaean canon. T. Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction in the Manichaean Kephalaia* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

Coptic kephalaia.[49] If these texts go back to the late third or early fourth century, they may have belonged to an early phase before the collection and redaction of these texts into the two volumes found at Medinet Madi: the *Kephalaia of the Teacher* and the *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani* (see Table 1 for an overview of the texts found at Medinet Madi).[50] For our purposes, I will refer to the *Kephalaia* as a systematization of which elements may have been known to Manichaeans in fourth-century Egypt (such as the ideology of gift-giving examined in Chapter 6), even though the text in itself cannot be taken as a neutral representation of any local Manichaean way of life.

Title	Description
Kephalaia of the Teacher	1 Keph. Edition published with a German translation. The largest part is also translated in English.
Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani	2 Keph. A first section of a critical edition is now published with an English translation.
Psalmbook	1 PsB. Is unpublished, but some sections have been published in individual articles. The second part (2 PsB.) is published with an English translation.
Synaxeis codex	Unpublished.
Acts	A codex with a historical narrative. Presumed lost, although some pages remained.
Mani's *Epistles*	Unpublished, although other versions and citations of this text are known.
Homilies	Hom. Edition with a German translation and a more recent edition with an English translation.

Table 1: List of the Medinet Madi texts.

[49] On the early date of the *Kephalaia*, see Gardner, "Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," 148n4. The *Kephalaia* is mentioned in Hom. 18.6 and the *Acta Archelai*. On the early fourth-century date of the latter, see S. N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia and the Roman East* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 135-40. The Iranian "*Kephalaia*" are generally of late date. They correspond to the Coptic texts in content and enumerative structure, but the two texts are never in agreement more closely. Sundermann, "Manichaean Literature in Iranian Languages," 224-27; W. Sundermann, "Iranische Kephalaiatexte?," in *Studia Manichaica II*, ed. G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 305-18.

[50] I. Gardner, ed. *The Kephalaia of the Teacher* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), xxiv calls it an "evolving and fluid discourse." See also his forthcoming I. Gardner, "Kephalaia," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, ed. E. Yarshater (Forthcoming). In particular the parallels between the Chinese *Traité* and the *Kephalaia* suggest the existence of Iranian *Kephalaia* traditions. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 59-75. Funk argues that a single author or compiler was responsible for the final Medinet Madi versions. W. P. Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean *Kephalaia*," in P. Mirecki, J. BeDuhn, *Emerging from Darkness. Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources* (Leiden, 1997), 154. Most recently, the reflections on the forthcoming edition of the Dublin *Kephalaia* (2 Keph.) have offered new thoughts on the evolving collection of *Kephalaia* traditions in relation to the coherence of a Manichaean tradition. P. Dilley, "Mani's Wisdom at the Court of the Persian Kings: The Genre and Context of the Chester Beatty Kephalaia," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. P. Dilley, J. D. BeDuhn, and I. Gardner (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 15-51; J. D. BeDuhn, "Parallels between Coptic and Iranian Kephalaia: Goundesh and the King of Touran," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 52-74.

Manichaeism spread over the entire ancient world through books and preaching. Historical narratives inform us about the heroes of the first generation of missionaries: Sisinnios, Mani's successor, Mar Adda, and Pattek traveling to the Eastern Roman Empire, Mar Ammo to Parthia and Central Asia. Authentic Manichaean sources also derive from all these regions, from North Africa to Greece, and from Egypt to China. Where they portrayed their religion as truly universal (again, in contrast to their predecessors: Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism), the diffusion patterns of their texts seem to agree.[51] Manichaeans belonged to the ancient world from the third century onwards, until they started to disappear from the face of the Roman Empire during the fifth and sixth centuries. In the East, especially in Central Asia, Manichaeism flourished, and even became the state religion of the Uighurs in the eighth and ninth century. The veneration of "Mani the Buddha of Light" seems to have continued in China for centuries. A UNESCO-sponsored project is currently looking into a temple near Quanzhou (Zayton, in the Fujian province), as there are indications for the continuation of this cult in the religious practices of some of the villagers.[52]

1.4 The Appeal of Mani's Church

About fifty years ago, Peter Brown answered the question of what it meant to become a Manichaean with reference to a strong communal group identity. In his interpretation, to "favour the Manichees meant favouring a group. This group had a distinctive and complex structure. Because of this structure, the Manichaean group impinged on the society around it in a distinctive way; and this structure, in turn exposed it to distinctive pressures from its Roman environment."[53] With its structural differentiation between the wandering elect and their supporters, Manichaeism's success was based on the existence of communities of Hearers, who were mostly "indistinguishable from their environment" and sheltered the "vagrant" and "studiously ill-kempt" elect.[54] Manichaeism had a different appeal for

[51] Pivotal are the historical studies by Sundermann. W. Sundermann, "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer I," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13, no. 1 (1986): 40-92; W. Sundermann, "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer II," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13, no. 2 (1986): 239-317; W. Sundermann, "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer III," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 14, no. 1 (1987): 47-107. More recent are S. N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, 2nd edition ed. (Tübingen Mohr Siebeck, 1992); Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia;* I. Gardner and S. N. C. Lieu, "From Narmouthis (Medinet Madi) to Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab): Manichaean Documents from Roman Egypt," *Journal of Roman Studies* 86 (1996): 146-69. Various theories about the introduction of Manichaeism into Egypt are discussed in the second chapter of J. A. van den Berg, *Biblical Argument in Manichaean Missionary Practice* (Leiden: Brill, 2010). This will not be repeated in this dissertation.

[52] This was even announced as the discovery of a "living Mani cult" in M. Franzmann, I. Gardner, and S. N. C. Lieu, "A Living Mani Cult in the Twenty-First Century," *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 41 (2005): vii-xi. See the contributions in the final report S. N. C. Lieu, ed. *Medieval Christian and Manichaean Remains from Quanzhou (Zayton)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012).

[53] P. Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 59, no. 1 (1969): 99. Where used to designate the Manichaean group, "distinctive" should mean "different" or "discernable because of its specific characteristics" and not unique.

[54] Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism," 99.

different people. Those attracted to rigid asceticism found a place among those who lived more flexible or worldly lives. Highfliers could embrace the Manichaean rigid behavioral expectations and affirm their critique of lax Christianity, while others could live more comfortably as part of a community facilitating the ascetic lifestyle of the elect.[55] This ingenious structure made both classes of Manichaeans dependent on each other. Only together they could achieve salvation.[56]

Much has changed in the study of Manichaeans in the last fifty years, but the emphasis on the group structure of Manichaeism has remained. This is for good reasons, as the newly discovered sources of the twentieth century inform us in more depth about the structure and hierarchy of the communities. One recent study has even highlighted Manichaean reflections on the "time management" of catechumens, who had to balance all the obligations of their secular lives with the required prayers and almsgiving.[57] At the same time, Peter Brown continues to stress the strong group identity of Manichaeans. In his opinion, reasons why Augustine stayed among the Manichaeans were a deep sense of intimate friendship and an "intense experience of bonding in one of the most starkly countercultural groups in the Latin West."[58] Manichaeism's structure captured his sense of "elitism," which remained influential in Augustine's life even after his conversion to Nicene Christianity.[59]

To be sure, Manichaean hagiographical narratives point to the community's structure and its wisdom as causes for success. One of the Middle Persian historical texts (M2) attributes the introduction of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire to Mar Adda's books, the conversion of imperial figures as catechumens, and the establishment of monasteries. Adda was said to have "laboured very hard in these areas, founded many monasteries, chose many elect and hearers, composed writings and made wisdom his weapon."[60] By bringing a scribe and several Manichaean books, the Manichaean missionaries engaged in doctrinal disputes and opposed other religious groups. They went as far as Alexandria and claimed to have received support from the Queen of Thadmor (the famous Zenobia of Palmyra?) after they healed her.[61] The patronage of royal benefactors was consistently mentioned in Manichaean

---

[55] H. Chadwick, "The Attractions of Mani," in *Pleroma: Salus carnis: homenaje a Antonio Orbe S.J.*, ed. E. Romero-Pose (Santiago de Compostela: Publicaciones Compostellanum, 1990), 203-22.

[56] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 65.

[57] I. Colditz, "Manichaean Time-Management: Layman between Religious and Secular Duties," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 73-100.

[58] Interestingly, Brown already described Manichaeism as a strong current of new spiritual Christianity in his biography of Augustine, P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 43-44; P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 159; P. Brown, *Treasure in Heaven: The Holy Poor in Early Christianity* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), 43-50.

[59] J. D. BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373-388 C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 35.

[60] M2 I R 1-33 cited in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 21 which also includes the Parthian and Sogdian version of the same narrative. On the identification of Adda and Adimantus, as well as the most probable historical diffusion of Manichaeism in Egypt, see van den Berg, *Biblical Argument*, 31-48.

[61] Text translated in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 22.

histories, which suggests it was pivotal to their representation of missionary success.[62] These narratives framed the diffusion of Manichaeism as the result of a centralized missionary approach, directed by Mani and his first generation of disciples. Its appeal, they suggest, lay in their wisdom and books, while the communities were socially structured in monasteries supported by local royalty.[63]

In reality, no trace of Manichaean monasteries is found in the Roman Empire, nor in the Coptic and Greek Manichaean literature of the region. Quite clearly, the authors of the historical narrative retrojected their local variant of Manichaeism back unto Mar Adda's adventures.[64] The literary representations of missionary success are first of all rhetorical and hagiographical accounts, which do not directly correspond to the experiences of real Manichaeans in the Roman Empire.

Thus, if we cannot be sure about the existence of intense emotional group bonds and the establishment of monasteries in Egypt, what about the doctrinal debates? Stories about public disputations abound in Christian representations of Manichaean missionaries. In their version of events, Manichaeans were formidable debaters, often only defeated by the power of supernatural miracles. Such stories include those about Egyptian holy men like Copres, who could not outargue a Manichaean missionary at Hermopolis and therefore challenged

---

[62] Other examples are discussed in Sundermann, "Manicheism IV. Missionary Activity and Technique." These Middle Persian texts are believed to date back to the ninth or tenth century, but might go back to earlier accounts. The fourth- or fifth-century material from the historical codex in the Medinet Madi collection (now largely lost) seems to have contained similar stories. Pedersen, "A Manichaean Historical Text," 193-201. Dilley describes Mani and other itinerant religious specialists as conduits in a web of Eurasian courts. Dilley, "Religious Intercrossing," 62-70. On Mani's journeys to the courts of the Sasanian empire, see the contributions in I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley, eds., *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

[63] Sundermann, "Kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur III," 71-72 suggests that the account reflects "mittelasiatisches Selbstverständnis" but keeps the possibility of Manichaean monasticism in Egypt open. Berg, *Biblical Argument*, 45 accepts the account as historical for the larger part. N. Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire. A Study of Augustine's Contra Adimantum* (Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 47 does not comment on the tradition of establishing monasteries, but points to the "plasticity of the cultural memories surrounding Adda."

[64] This subject will return in Chapter 7, since the Kellis material now plays a key role in the discussion. Positive arguments for the existence of Manichaean monasteries in the Roman Empire have been made by various scholars, see G. G. Stroumsa, "The Manichaean Challenge to Egyptian Christianity," in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, ed. B. A. Pearson and J. E. Goehring (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 307-19; L. Koenen, "Manichäische Mission und Klöster in Ägypten." In *Das römisch-byzantinische Ägypten: Akten des internationalen Symposions 26.-30. Sept. 1978 in Trier*, ed. G. Grimm, H. Heinen, and E. Winter (Mainz am Rhein: Phillip von Zabern, 1983), 93-108; S. N. C. Lieu, "Precept and Practice in Manichaean Monasticism," *Journal of Theological Studies* 32, no. 1 (1981): 153-73. Others have called the existence of Manichaean monasteries in this region into question. According to Asmussen, monasteries were a Buddhist influence to early Manichaeism. J. P. Asmussen, *Xuāstvaānīft: Studies in Manichaeism* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1965), 200.

him to a trial by fire.[65] Around the same time, a biblical commentator in Rome warned against the "deceitful" practices of proselytizing Manichaeans. Instead of public debates, these sneaky Manichaeans used "persuasive and crafty words," approached vulnerable women, and allegedly said other things in public than in private.[66] This warning has a parallel in a papyrus letter, commonly believed to have come from bishop Theonas of Alexandria (r. 282–300? CE), which targeted the ascetic biblical exegesis of Manichaean missionaries (P.Ryl.Gr. 469).[67] Such accounts, as well as Alexander of Lycopolis's critique of the Manichaeans in his philosophical circles, highlight small-scale preaching as well as public disputations.[68] Fourth- and fifth-century Christian authors continued to debate Manichaeans, whether real or imaginary, with new heights in the accounts of the debates of Augustine with Fortunatus and Felix and the polemical *Acta Archelai* (AA).[69] According to Richard Lim, some of these records became part of a "deliberate strategy in which written accounts were used to displace actual events."[70] Therefore, Lieu's observation that "the Manichaean missionaries in the Roman empire were noted for their zeal as door-to-door Gospel-peddlers and skilled debaters" may be most telling for the Early Christian image of the Manichaean threat.[71]

While the historicity of some of these reports on debates is called into question, there is a strong tradition of looking for the intellectual involvement of Manichaeans in their cultural environment. For Augustine, the appeal of Mani's church lay in its philosophical attitude and its answer to the problem of evil. Manichaeism in North Africa "looked more like a philosophical system than a religion."[72] Initially, the mythic nature of Mani's discourse

---

[65] *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* X.30-5. Translated in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 29. The well-known account by Mark the Deacon of the debate between Julia and Porphyry of Gaza is another example of supernatural intervention during a disputation.

[66] Pseudo-Ambrosiaster, *In Ep. Ad. Tim.* II.3.6-7.2 translated in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 26.

[67] Translated in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 23. Original published in C. H. Roberts, *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1938), 42-43; Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 95-7 with few new insights. This papyrus requires further study, as it has not been exhaustingly studied.

[68] Alexander of Lycopolis, *Contra Manichaei Opiniones Disputatio* 2, translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 24. Note that Mark Edwards, most recently, has argued in favor of the previous Christian identification of Alexander of Lycopolis. M. Edwards, *Religions of the Constantinian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 140. Contra P. W. van der Horst and J. Mansfeld, *An Alexandrian Platonist against Dualism* (Leiden: Brill, 1974).

[69] Doctrinal debates are discussed by Richard Lim, who states that "we have no basis for assuming that the Manichaeans engaged others in public debate in the usual sense as a regular part of their missionary activity." R. Lim, *Public Disputation, Power, and Social Order in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 70-71; Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 192-201.

[70] Lim, *Public Disputation*, 71.

[71] Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 119. Caroline Humfress notes that at least some of the described disputes could have taken place in the context of legal trials rather than theological debates. C. Humfress, *Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 251.

[72] BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 31. For a critique on BeDuhn's reconstruction of Augustine and Faustus" Manichaeism, see J. van Oort, "Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma in Context," *Vigiliae*

may have appealed to Augustine's interest in astronomy and philosophy, but eventually these traditions seemed to be at odds (*Conf.* 5.3.4).[73] In other regions, the intellectual involvement resulted in the adaptation of elements from this environment in Manichaean texts. For the situation in Egypt, it has been argued that Manichaeans "may have contacted priests and bombarded them with questions," only to incorporate whatever they found to be "sympathetic to their own religious system."[74] Similarities between Manichaean documents and traditional Egyptian religious texts may have been the result of their belief that the Manichaean church came to encompass all previous religions: "[T]he writings and the wisdom and the revelations and the parables and the psalms of all the first churches have been collected in every place. They have come down to my church."[75] Even though some of the similarities may be farfetched, and evidence for transmission is often lacking, the appeal of Mani's church must have been located in the combination of exotic newness and familiar aspects. As Rodney Stark posits for the growth of Early Christianity: "[A] new religion is more likely to grow to the degree that it sustains continuity with the religious culture of those being missionized."[76]

If we, then, return to the initial question of what it meant to join the Manichaeans, or consider what may have appealed to outsiders, these narrative representations point to two potential answers. First, Manichaeism was portrayed as a highly textual phenomenon, both in its own accounts and in the Christian resentment. Therefore, it was strongly tied to an upper layer of society: those with the time and resources to engage in cosmological and philosophical speculation. Second, the community structure and organization of the Manichaean church were considered essential for its diffusion, a process that has also been described by modern scholars as centralized, organized, and intense. This understanding of

---

Christianae 65 (2011): 543-67. Manichaean texts also stress the intellectual involvement of elect, for example in 1 Keph 103 and 140.

[73] BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 29-31; J. D. BeDuhn, "Am I a Christian? The Individual at the Manichaean-Christian Interface," in *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Rüpke and E. Rebillard (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 42. The initial layer of scientific exploration and explanation in Manichaean thought is, however, one of the ways in which they appropriate the language of their environment to reflect supernatural mythic events. G. Kosa, "The Manichaean Attitude to Natural Phenomena as Reflected in the Berlin Kephalaia," *Open Theology* 1 (2015): 255-68.

[74] L. Depuydt, ""Wisdom Made a Weapon": On Manichaeism in Egypt," *Chronique d'Egypte* 64 (1993): 310.

[75] 1 Keph. 151, 372.11-14. Parallels with Egyptian traditions are discussed in J. Vergote, "Het Manichaeisme in Egypte," *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch genootschap Ex Oriente Lux* 9 (1944): 77-83; Depuydt, ""Wisdom Made a Weapon"," 301-15; D. McBride, "Egyptian Manichaeism," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 18 (1988): 80-98. A key role is attributed to the Manichaean notion of the eschatological fire taking 1468 years, which is taken to correspond to the Egyptian Sothis period. L. Koenen, "Manichaean Apocalypticism at the Crossroads of Iranian, Egyptian, Jewish and Christian Thought," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986), 321; G. G. Stroumsa, "Aspects de l'eschatologie manichéenne," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 198, no. 2 (1981): 167.

[76] R. Stark, *Cities of God. The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 127. Critique on Stark's methods is laid out in the third part of L. E. Vaage, ed. *Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006).

Manichaeism is not without its critique, but is highly coherent with ancient insider and outsider descriptions. As an example of a disembedded and utopian religion with universal claims, Manichaeism stressed its superior structure and the strong ascetic and intellectual commitments of (some of) its members. This introductory sketch, however, requires immediate questioning. Attractive factors must have been different for members of the elect, and what attracted Augustine and other literate individuals to Manichaeism may not have been the same factors as those that appealed to people from other social strata.

In summary, the twentieth-century discovery of a wide array of Manichaean sources is both a blessing and a challenge. It is a blessing because it has enabled us to move away from heresiological perspectives, but it is also a challenge because of the problems it presents to modern scholarship. First, there is the constant urge to explain the unknown in terms of the known, as BeDuhn complained with regards to the interpretations that nested Manichaeism in relation to "better-known dualisms." The complexity of Manichaeism is sometimes domesticated into the familiar category of Ancient Christianity, as if this allocation diminished the interpretive challenges. Second, the reconstruction of Manichaeism as a coherent system of beliefs and practices (echoing Geertz's definition of religion) within the bandwidth of Ancient Christianities and originating (in its entirety) with Mani himself seems oblivious to the literary and historical problems of the earliest Manichaean history. The evaluation of the sources for this period could do with an infusion of some of the skepticism of the linguistic and cultural turn in the study of Late Antiquity, as too few studies have taken into account the rhetorical nature of hagiographical or polemical sources.[77] In particular, the absence of secure third-century sources prevents us from establishing a baseline for cross-cultural comparison. The third problem lays in the way in which the available sources have been harmonized into one coherent system or tradition. Therefore, despite the rich philological tradition and the continuous effort put into the translation of ancient sources, there remains a need for overarching studies with more sophisticated and explicitly defined theoretical frameworks.[78] Within the history of the study of Manichaeism, the Kellis finds present a new opportunity to reexamine previous reconstructions. The secure archaeological find location and the nature of these sources are promising. Never before were Manichaeans visible in their daily affairs or at the village level in the Roman Empire.

---

[77] Baker-Brian's discussion of the life of Mani is an exception, although his introduction into Manichaeism has the downside of almost entirely ignoring the history of the Manichaean church. See also on the rhetorical nature of the sources, N. Baker-Brian, "Between Testimony and Rumour: Strategies of Invective in Augustine's *De Moribus Manichaeorum*," in *Purpose of Rhetoric in Late Antiquity*, ed. A. J. Q. Puertas (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 31-53. On the impact of the linguistic and cultural turn on the study of religion in Late Antiquity, see E. A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text. Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); D. Martin and P. Cox Miller, eds., *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies: Gender, Asceticism, and Historiography* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

[78] BeDuhn's work is an example of new comparative perspectives. More comparative is his, J. D. BeDuhn, "Digesting the Sacrifices: Ritual Internalization in Jewish, Hindu, and Manichaean Traditions," in *Religion and Identity in South Asia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Patrick Olivelle*, ed. S. Lindquist (London: Anthem, 2011), 301-19.

1.5 Caveat on the Nature of the Sources

This dissertation will develop a theoretical framework attuned to the fundamental incompleteness of historical sources, as well as to the questions and approaches from contemporary social-scientific studies. In this way, it will provide a framework for future cross-cultural comparison between textual or institutional Manichaeism and the lives of Manichaeans in various regions. The new documents from Kellis inform us in depth about the social setting of Manichaeans in Egypt. It is to be hoped that future discoveries will do the same for Manichaeans elsewhere.

Before engaging with modern academic theories about the impact of religion on everyday life, there are a number of methodological caveats to be made about the historical nature of our sources. Papyrological and archaeological sources come in many shapes and forms. Some of these sources adhere to strictly regulated expectations, genres, and models, while others reveal a more personal touch. Using such documentary sources is stimulating, as it may bring everyday life closer to the surface, but it also comes with great difficulties. At the outset of this introduction, I have already warned against a naïve reading of emotions in papyri and the use of modern concepts to interpret fragments of ancient correspondence. Despite the abundant display of emotional attachment, Matthaios's letter to his mother was constrained by epistolary conventions.[79]

Papyrus letters, moreover, are notorious for their ambiguity. Authors hardly ever sketch the entire situation, which is even more difficult as we often only have one side of the correspondence. As a result, as pointed out by David Frankfurter, the interpretative framework of the historian can obscure the meaning of papyrus letters.

> Indeed, it is in the nature of papyri that, within some limitations, one can make the evidence mean whatever one wants to make it mean: a collection of classical literature from Oxyrhynchus can suggest a thriving and broadly literate gymnasium culture or an insular elite; a profusion of "magical" texts can mean a cultural decline into occult and selfish concerns or the ongoing attention to private ritual; a derogatory aside about "Egyptians" can signify an overarching Hellenistic racism or one person's frustrated attempt at cultural self-definition in a far more complex ethnic situation.[80]

Without a doubt, this admonition is valid for all historical work on papyri. As these sources characteristically offer information without describing the context or situation, they tend to be selected and interpreted within preexisting analytical frameworks. In this chapter and the next, I will be as explicit as possible about my theoretical framework. By defining my concepts and questioning my theoretical predispositions, I hope to escape the trap of selection bias or interpretation through colored lenses. Four methodological principles will therefore guide my examination of the Kellis papyri: (1) methodological agnosticism; (2) contextual situations; (3) minimalist religious interpretation; and (4) consistent non-eclectic reading.

---

[79] On emotions in papyrus letters, see Clarysse, "Emotions in Greek Private Papyrus Letters." 63-86.

[80] D. Frankfurter, "Review of Roger S. Bagnall, Egypt in Late Antiquity. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993," *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 94.03.19 (1994).

First, as a historical analysis of an ancient religion, this dissertation will not touch upon the existence or nonexistence of the supernatural world. Its fundamental perspective is one of methodological agnosticism, indicating that religion is only studied where it can be observed through general scientific analysis. The truth about the supernatural world is outside the realm of historical scholarship. The religious claims of believers are not.[81] The existence of supernatural beings or the truth of the revelation will be bracketed, and instead I will examine the social, cultural, and historical features of Manichaeism.

Second, particular truth claims or practices have to be evaluated within their specific context or situation. Despite the claims of a coherent religious tradition, we cannot simply assume the similarity of Manichaean practice in various regions and periods. Just like the theological logic and hermeneutics of American Protestantism cannot be used to explain Greek Orthodox practice, so we cannot borrow freely from the more abundant Iranian, Arabic, or Chinese accounts of Manichaean practice to elucidate Manichaeism in Kellis. The natural inclination to combine various strands of evidence, despite their geographical and historical differences, is a risky academic strategy. This way of filling gaps suggests a postulated coherent social entity that either never existed, or cannot be proven beyond speculation. It merely presents Manichaeism as it ought to have been like, rather than as how it was. Meanwhile, abstaining from such harmonization does not exclude explicit comparison between sources from various regions, but rather allows the Kellis texts to challenge previous reconstructions.

Third, I will tread carefully when interpreting fragmentary passages in relation to Manichaeism. Instead of equating all ambiguous phrases with Manichaean practices, I propose to work with a minimalist religious interpretation, in which these practices actually have to be attested in the sources.

This also means, fourth, that I will seek to avoid eclectic readings or cherry picking. The less tantalizing passages and options have to be examined, as well as the instances of marked Manichaeanness (a term that will be defined more closely in the following chapter, but designates instances in which the Manichaean group affiliation was considered relevant). With Rogers Brubaker, whose work will be discussed more closely in Chapter 2, I think we should also be prepared to see how little Manichaeanness may have mattered, instead of focusing on the most explicit and breathtaking evidence only.[82] In effect, Manichaean

---

[81] The outside perspective of the scholar is *agnostic* in principle, as we cannot know whether or not the supernatural exists. On the other hand, I agree with Davidsen that the scholarly outsider perspective is *atheist* or *naturalist* in practice. The supernatural interpretation is not an option that can be pursued in the religious studies. Davidsen, *The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu*, 30-32 arguing for "methodological naturalism or non-supernaturalism"; J. Platvoet, "Theologie als dubbelspel: over verscheidenheid en dynamiek van theologie en godsdienstwetenschap," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 63, no. 3 (2009): 234 for the "agnostic" study of religion; J. Platvoet, *Comparing Religions: A Limitative Approach. An Analysis of Akan, Para-Creole, and Ifo-Sananda Rites and Prayers* (The Hague: Mouton, 1983), 4-5, 21, 29 on emic and etic distinction, and pages 15-17 on theological, positivist-reductionists and religionist approaches; W. Hanegraaff, "Empirical Method in the Study of Esotericism," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 7, no. 2 (1995): 576-605.

[82] R. Brubaker et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 206.

practices that left no trace in the papyri will not be discussed at length. The possibility that Manichaeanness was sometimes entirely invisible and unidentifiable, because it adhered to local convention without any need of distinction, leaves us in the precarious situation that the absence of evidence may or may not be considered as evidence. This uncertainty, however, is to be preferred to the unwarranted stretching of sources from elsewhere in the world. With these four principles, I will analyze the Kellis material as carefully and accurately as possible, in conversation with both scholarship on the local Egyptian setting and the wider transhistorical Manichaean tradition.[83]

Despite some of these caveats, I will not only analyze the sources in their own right and on their own terms. Although I sympathize with the ambition of historians like Edwin Judge to analyze the ancient world on its own terms, I approach the ancient world with a different register: that of the critical terminology of the social-scientific study of religion. While Judge considers modern concepts unhelpful in his emic, or descriptive, analysis of Ancient Christian communities, I generally find them both useful and necessary as outsider, or redescriptive, concepts.[84] I consider comparison a necessary process, the fundament of all (historical) knowledge, which makes the unfamiliar familiar and the particular understandable to outsiders. Our concepts and definitions may be external to the people and period we study, but as long as they are not used as "predetermined pattern[s] of explanation" they can serve as *tertia comparationis* to highlight similarity and difference.[85] By actively reflecting on some of the fundamental terms and assumptions of the study of religion (first of all the notion of "religion" itself and second also the notion of "groups") I will walk the tightrope between ancient vocabulary and modern concepts. Therefore, while stressing the processual and performative nature of Manichaeanness, I will sometimes refer to these individuals as simply "Manichaeans" for the sake of brevity.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of This Study

The skeleton of this dissertation consists of three parts. Part I starts with the groundwork of introducing the theoretical framework, as well as the social and economic context of the Kellis. Building on this groundwork, the chapters of Part II delve into the world of individual Kellites, their letters, and the formation of a local religious community. Part III will

---

[83] Compare the approach and results of Karen Stern's investigation into the Jewishness of North-African Jews, K. B. Stern, *Inscribing Devotion and Death: Archaeological Evidence for Jewish Populations of North Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 47.

[84] Many of Edwin Judge's articles have now been reprinted. E. A. Judge, "Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture*, ed. J. T. Fitzgerald, T. H. Olbricht, and L. M. White (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 501-24; E. A. Judge, "The Beginning of Religious History," in *Jerusalem and Athens: Cultural Transformation in Late Antiquity*, ed. A. M. Nobbs (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 11-31; E. A. Judge, "The Social Identity of the First Christians: A Question of Method in Religious History," in *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays by E. A. Judge*, ed. D. M. Scholer (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008), 128 where he coined "the sociological fallacy" for the transposition of social theories across centuries without verification.

[85] Judge, "The Social Identity of the First Christians," 135. On the comparative method, see D. Frankfurter, "Comparison and the Study of Religions in Late Antiquity," in *Comparer en histoire des religions antiques*, ed. C. Calame and B. Lincoln (Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2012), 83-98.

subsequently summarize the main findings, in order to analyze the most noteworthy patterns and return to some of the broader questions about the study of ancient religions and everyday life.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework that structures my examination of the Kellis letters. I will highlight several academic theories that together provide the building blocks for a consideration of religion's impact on everyday life. These building blocks center around three key themes: everyday life, individuals, and religion. By combining recent studies into lived religion with the strong historical challenge of "groupism," I will identify opportunities and pitfalls for the examination of religious choices in ancient source material. Individuals and families draw on multiple repertoires in their decision-making process. These include late antique religions such as Manichaeism, but local village expectations and the particular needs of a situation were also taken into account. Religious choices, in consequence, are the result of an explicit or implicit negotiation of group norms, social identifications, and situations. The work of scholars like Rogers Brubaker, Bernard Lahire, and Ann Swidler lead the way in stressing the dynamics between agency and structure, offering critical insight that can be used to examine where, when, and how religion mattered in everyday life. I will propose the concept of "Manichaeanness," following Brubaker's "groupness," to distinguish situations in which the affiliation with the imagined Manichaean community mattered most. In this chapter, moreover, I define my concept of religion and sketch the fundamental transition from a society characterized by religions associated with preexisting social formations to a society that saw a rise of autonomous religions.

Chapter 3 consists of a detailed introduction to the social and economic setting of Kellis, introducing the archaeology of the Roman houses in which Manichaean texts were found, as well as the papyrological and material evidence for multiple and diverse cultural and religious repertoires in the village. Despite its remote location in the desert, Kellis was not a rural backwater. Rather, the architectural and artistic remains reveal that it was firmly connected to the Nile valley, as well as the Roman Empire at large.

The body of Part II of this study is built around five key themes of Manichaean life: self-designation, gift-giving, death ritual, communal gathering, and book writing. These themes logically follow from the current state of Manichaean studies and can be informed by the new sources from Kellis. Chapter 4 begins with the letters of Makarios, Pamour, and both of their families. These letters inform us about many aspects of their lives, including their relatives, businesses, and interaction with the Manichaean elect. The letters sometimes employ Manichaean phrases and terminology that directly correspond to well-known Manichaean liturgical texts, while at other occasions they use vocabulary derived from a religious repertoire that was shared with fourth-century Christians. Despite previous claims that these people belonged to a sectarian and persecuted group, I will show that they had direct contact with some of the local and regional administrative and military elite. Some religious maltreatment may have occurred in the Nile valley, but I contend that Makarios and Pamour lived in relative peace.

Chapter 5 is devoted to particular items of the Manichaean linguistic repertoire. I will examine the various self-designators used in the corpus of personal letters. In some of the

phrases, the authors draw on an explicit Manichaean repertoire, while in others they quite frequently opt for more neutral designators associated with the village, family, or neighborhood. Likewise, I conclude that the use of Coptic was a marked option in this early period, but rather than corresponding to a solid and sectarian religious group, I conclude that it marks a more ambiguous network connoting family, regional, and religious affiliations.

Chapter 6 focuses on the gifts and economic transactions that lay behind most of the letters. In particular, I will reexamine the passages that have been read as evidence for the Manichaean system of almsgiving to the elect, facilitating their daily ritual meal. Against previous reconstructions, I will argue that many of these passages attest to less clear-cut situations in which economic interactions, village support, and religious obligations blended. More importantly, I contend that the passages pertaining to the *agape* do not inform us about the performance of a Manichaean ritual meal. As the elect spent most of their time outside the village, traveling in the Nile valley, alms were given over a distance and the ritual meal was not (or infrequently) performed in the Kellis community.

Chapters 4 to 6 stress the multi-interpretable nature of the sources and the infrequency of explicit Manichaeanness. Chapters 7 to 9 highlight the other side of the equation. Chapter 7 treats the evidence for specific Manichaean gatherings. Although it is tempting to import insights from Manichaeism in other regions, I will only examine the local evidence for such communal gatherings. This includes the liturgical texts found at Kellis, in particular many psalms and prayers, some of which have direct parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi or the wider Manichaean tradition. The ritual performance of these psalms and prayers, I will argue, contributed to Manichaeanness and therefore to a distinct group-identification.

Chapter 8 deals with a very specific situation, in which Manichaeans gathered and commemorated the departed. I will show that there is evidence for at least two distinct rituals pertaining to death: one a ritual at the deathbed, and the other a commemorative event. No distinct Manichaean evidence, on the other hand, is found among the burials or in the two large cemeteries of Kellis. Rather than engaging in an extensive and elaborate treatment of the body, these families probably chose to follow the customs of their neighbors and perform Manichaean rituals at other occasions.

Chapter 9 focuses on the frequent references to books and scribal culture. Combining papyrological evidence with the archaeological finds at the site shows the prominence of books and written texts in Kellis. Apart from Classical literature, Christian and apocryphal texts were found. It is not unlikely that some of the Manichaeans read, or even copied, these texts, as their letters allude to some of them. I will argue that Manichaean catechumens were not only involved in the production of these texts, but also copied Manichaean books, including books that may have belonged to the Manichaean canon. Against previous assertions, I see no reason to think that these texts were secret or concealed from catechumens. As there is no evidence for missionary work, I propose to consider these scribal actions a ritual performance in itself, bringing the religious authority of Mani close to the village context in absence of the elect.

Part III consists of one concluding chapter, which is followed by a number of appendices that supplement the foregoing chapters. Chapter 10 will summarize where and when Manichaeanness was deemed relevant and visible in the Kellis sources. Drawing on the theoretical framework, it will highlight instances in which Manichaeanness was constituted in talk ("talking Manichaeanness"), in choices ("choosing Manichaeanness"), in performances ("performing Manichaeanness"), and in consumption ("consuming Manichaeanness"). The specific outcome will also ask for a shift in the evaluation of the new type of religions common in Late Antiquity ("secondary religion").

To preserve the focus on Manichaeanness in the Greek and Coptic papyri from Kellis, the study put certain limitations on the scope of the material that could be included. Frequent references will be made to the specific fourth-century documents from the village, as well as the early fifth-century Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi. Readers interested in Augustine, Leo the Great, or other polemicists against Manichaeans will find only a few references to their works. Likewise, eastern Manichaean sources will only infrequently be cited, mostly because an exhaustive evaluation of the history of Manichaean communities or the development of a Manichaean tradition is beyond the scope of this dissertation.[86]

Because of the various and distinct audiences, I have tried to make this book accessible to papyrologists, historians, and scholars of religion. Therefore, substantial attention is given to elements that may be familiar to the individual specialists in either discipline, but not to other scholars. By bringing these disciplines together, I hope to shed light on an otherwise little-known religion on the fringes of the Roman Empire.

[86] Regarding secondary literature, I have not attempted to include a full bibliography on all aspects of Manichaean life. Secondary literature is cited *in relation to* the Kellis material. The fundamental contributions of earlier generations (Böhlig, Burkitt, Widengren, Henning, Puech, Decret, Ries, Sundermann and others) have been consulted but could not be cited at each instance. For a critical review of previous scholarship on Manichaean rituals, see BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 211-22.

Part I.
Approaching Religion in Everyday Life

Chapter 2. Everyday Groupness: Theoretical Perspectives on Religious Groups and Everyday Life

> In the laudable effort to emphasize the diversity of early Christian groups and movements, we tend to create stable "name brands," which interact and compete with each other like so many brands of breakfast cereal on a grocery store shelf (David Brakke).[1]

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have set out a challenging task: to find and reconstruct the religious practice of individuals at a village level on the basis of fragmentary ancient material, against the backdrop of fundamental changes in the type of religion attested over the course of Late Antiquity. In this chapter, I will introduce "everyday groupness" as a feasible approach undergirded by current debates in religious studies and sociology.[2] As William H. Sewell Jr. points out: "It now appears that we should think of worlds of meaning as normally being contradictory, loosely integrated, contested, mutable, and highly permeable."[3] These characteristics ask for an alternative approach in which the historical existence of coherent religious groups, cultures, or traditions is no longer naively accepted, nor aggressively rejected as an essentialist construction. Religious affiliations and individual practices of meaning-making in antiquity were both strongly linked to social and conceptual groupings, as well as permeable, flexible, and contradictory. To fully appreciate these complex dynamics, this chapter will outline a number of fundamental academic debates under three headers: everyday life, individuals, and religion. Together, these insights will enable us to critically reflect on the common-sense notion of religious groups and lay the groundwork for Part II, the chapters of which will build a more detailed historical analysis of Manichaeism in a local village setting.

2.2 Everyday Life

The conventional focus on Manichaeism as a religious system has for a long time prioritized the theological and cosmological texts of the elite, with the downside that everyday life remained elusive. These sources primarily represent the perspective(s) of the theological and institutional elite.[4] The way in which a Manichaean way of life was experienced by ordinary

---

[1] D. Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 9.

[2] The specific phrase and the approach are strongly influenced by the work of Eric Rebillard, for example in his *Christians and their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE* (London: Cornell University Press, 2012).

[3] W. H. Sewell, "The Concept(s) of Culture," in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, ed. V. E. Bonnell and L. Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 53. Inconsistency and ancient religion are explored by H.S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion: Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes. Three Studies in Henotheism* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 1-35.

[4] This conventional focus is visible in the various introductions to Manichaeism. M. Tardieu, *Manichaeism*, trans. P. A. Mirecki (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008). He hardly treats Manichaeism as a

people, or put into practice outside theological debates, has often been left unexplored. The reason for this negligence is the scarcity of source materials, which mostly derive from religious specialists or individuals with access to enough resources to produce tangible artifacts that could stand the test of time.[5] Of course, theological tractates and liturgical documents are not unimportant, since they had bearing on the daily lives of all Manichaeans. At the same time, however, these texts are deeply colored by rhetorical and theological agendas. They did not aim to faithfully represent the practices of ordinary villagers, peasants, woolworkers, merchants, or slaves. Instead, they sought to redefine and refocus these practices. One of the central concerns of this dissertation is to shift the focus of study away from these documents, toward the religious lives of ordinary people, following the so-called "quotidian turn."

2.2.1 The Quotidian Turn: Toward Everyday Life

In the last decades, the intersection of daily life and religion has returned to the forefront of the study of religion. Topics previously associated with the German *Alltagsgeschichte* of the 1970s or the French *Annales* school of the 1960s have been revived in the late 1980s and '90s by historians and sociologists interested in "local religion," "lived religion," or "everyday religion."[6] In his landmark volume *Lived Religion in America*, David Hall argued that historians of religion became aware that they "know next-to-nothing about religion as practiced and precious little about the everyday thinking and doing of lay men and women."[7] Along similar lines, Robert Orsi, Nancy Ammerman, and Meredith McGuire decided to refocus on what living religious lives in the midst of society meant for individuals.[8] They raised questions about the practices of the laity instead of those of the preachers and about religion in almost mundane places: at home, the workplace, or the garden, instead of at the centers of religious learning.

---

historical and social movement (with the exception of a section on the church hierarchy). Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism* has a short section on the community, but primarily focused on the relation with the cosmological myth. Both introductions do not discuss the history of the Manichaean religion.

[5] With terms like "institutional" and "elite," I also refer to the wealth standing behind elaborate written documents. Wealthier people are, moreover, more frequently visible in papyri because their societal role and property often involved interactions put into writing. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History*, 14-15.

[6] T. A. Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn: Interpretive Categories and Scholarly Trajectories in the Study of Religion since the 1960s," *Journal of Religion* 95, no. 3 (2015): 365n16 cites the relevant literature. For late antique history, we now have K. Sessa, *Daily Life in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[7] D. D. Hall, ed. *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), vii.

[8] R. Orsi, "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion," in *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice*, ed. D. D. Hall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 4-12; R. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); M. B. McGuire, *Lived Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); S. Schielke and L. Debevec, "Introduction," in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, ed. S. Schielke and L. Debevec (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 1-16.

This dichotomy between "ordinary" people and the religious "elite" is highly problematic. There can be no denying that preachers or religious leaders have a different perspective on religion than slaves, merchants, or women, but the emphasis on lived religion should not drive a wedge between different social strata. Therefore, adherents of the "quotidian turn" have stressed the dialectical relationship between everyday behavior and textual, institutional elite religion. Scholars should discern religion and religious practices in the unmarked moments and places that are not traditionally associated with religion, while still recognizing the role of religious leaders, texts, and institutions. The challenge in many of these studies lies in the combination of a firm shift in focus toward non-institutional, everyday experiences and a dialectical notion of tradition. This results in two methodological challenges. The first is that scholars of lived religion have to "excavate" the factors involved in the negotiations of what we call "religion" in the context of complex, overlapping social relations and affiliations. The complex mosaic of relations, expectations, and individual choices stands in strong contrast to the straightforward discourse of (some of) the religious specialists, who tend to work with a perspective of coherence and perfection.[9] By critically reading against the grain and focusing on alternative types of source materials, we can sometimes reconstruct everyday realities behind the elite discourse. To recover a "people's history" of Christians in Late Antiquity, Burrus and Lyman state: "[W]e must learn to interpret the surviving texts and other artefacts with less reliance on patristic categories and limits."[10] To achieve this shift in focus, papyri offer excellent source material, allowing us to reach beyond the theological, cosmological, or literary representations into the messy reality of daily life.

The second methodological challenge is to avoid an easy nineteenth-century dichotomy, where "popular religion" becomes "presented as in some way a diminution, a misconception or a contamination of "*un*-popular religion."[11] Many individuals had a certain level of agency in the complex world of late antique religions, but this should not result in a

---

[9] The "complex mosaic" is Meskell and Preucel's term for overlapping identities. L. Meskell and R.W. Preucel, "Identities," in *Companion to Social Archaeology*, ed. L. Meskell and R. W. Preucel (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 129. A stimulating illustration of the difference in approach is found in the *Warner v. Boca Raton* trial (1999) in Florida. The court was asked to define "religion" and to rule whether or not certain vertical memorials on graves were "religious." Winnifred F. Sullivan described: "for the City, religion was something that had dogmas and rules and texts and authorities. Religion was something you obeyed, something about which you had little choice because of the imposition of an external authority. For the City, religious people were passive agents of their traditions. For the plaintiffs, religion was field of activity, one in which an individual's beliefs and actions were the result of a mix of motivations and influences, familial, ecclesiological, aesthetic, and political." W. F. Sullivan, *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 36. In the end the court recognized the "religious" nature of the plaintiffs' choices, but decided it was not a central tenet of their "religion" and was therefore not protected by the law(s) on religious freedom.

[10] V. Burrus and R. Lyman, "Shifting the Focus of History," in *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 5.

[11] P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 19.

negative evaluation of the educated elite or the texts they wrote.[12] Most everyday religious practices draw upon the repertoire of institutional or textual religion, even when ordinary people adapt and appropriate elements according to their own needs.[13] Archaeological and papyrological finds can therefore reveal otherwise invisible religious choices or practices, but these always stood in relation to more institutionally defined religion. One of the common strategies to neutralize the negative effect of the dichotomy is stressing how doctrine, regulations, and institutions belong to the circumstances of everyday life.[14] To make this point, scholars of lived religion draw on practice theories: a highly diverse set of authors and ideas that share a common shift from "culture as discourse to culture as practice and performance."[15] They build on the central premise that "through their activities, individuals internalize cultural symbols and meanings" and at the same time, through these activities "they also reproduce and transform these symbols and meanings in the social world."[16] This recursive and re-creative nature of tradition is central in the work of Giddens, Bourdieu, Sahlin, Sewell, and others. When applied to everyday religious choices, it becomes apparent that individuals not only draw on cultural and religious repertoires, but by doing so also replicate and transform these repertoires or traditions. To study "everyday religion," according to Nancy Ammerman, does not exclude religious institutions, but primarily deals with them "once they get used by someone other than a professional."[17] In this way, the aim is to look *beyond* the scope of officially sanctioned beliefs and practices, not to exclude or discredit them beforehand. The more institutional features of a religion are still studied, but now primarily when they are "appropriated" and put into practice by individuals, an approach Jörg Rüpke propagates for the study of lived ancient religion.[18]

---

[12] W. A. Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); E. Badone, ed. *Religious Orthodoxy & Popular Faith in European Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 12; Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn."; S. Sharot, *A Comparative Sociology of World Religions. Virtuosos, Priests, and Popular Religion* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 13-19.

[13] "Ordinary people" is used as a shorthand for ancient individuals who did not write elaborate religious treatises, nor held religious positions of power. As Bagnall and Cribiore state, we must keep in mind that the real majority of "ordinary people" are invisible in our ancient sources. Most written accounts, even in the exceptional case of the papyri from Egypt, derive from a well-to-do subsection of society. R. S. Bagnall and R. Cribiore, *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt. 300 BC-AD 800* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2006), 10-11.

[14] R. Orsi, "Afterword: Everyday Religion and the Contemporary World: The Un-Modern, or what was supposed to have disappeared but did not," in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, ed. S. Schielke and L. Debevec (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 152.

[15] G. M. Spiegel, "Introduction," in *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, ed. G. M. Spiegel (London: Routledge, 2008), 3.

[16] H. Kupari, *Lifelong Religion as Habitus: Religious Practice among Displaced Karelian Orthodox Women in Finland* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 10; M. Polyakov, "Practice Theories: The Latest Turn in Historiography?," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 6 (2012): 218-35; S. B. B. Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, no. 1 (1984): 144-57.

[17] N. Ammerman, "Introduction: Observing Religious Modern Lives," in *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*, ed. N. Ammerman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5.

[18] The Lived Ancient Religion project (LAR) was announced in J. Rüpke, "Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning 'Cults' and 'Polis Religion'," *Mythos* 5 (2011): 191-203. Further publications include: J. Rüpke,

Two recent studies of Ancient Christianity may illustrate the dialectic between institutional or textual religion and its local, appropriated versions. Kim Bowes has studied private churches and devotion in the fourth and fifth century. In this period, domestic rituals and spaces constituted a major force, which nurtured the first rural Christian communities and often had an uneasy relationship with episcopal authority and clerical hierarchy. Sometimes this led to conflict and accusations of heresy, while in other instances the "exemplary piety" of those with private churches was praised by the very same ecclesiastical authors.[19] Aristocrats, with their resources and care for the preservation and self-promotion of the household, "were not bishops' natural allies, they were their competition, fostering powerful spiritual coteries whose relationship with the episcopal church was ambiguous at best."[20] The lived religion of the elite, so to say, could bring them into direct conflict with the nascent institutional church. The same was true for the practices of the majority of the population, since Ramsay MacMullen has shown that only a small minority—five percent in his calculations—of the ancient urban Christians could gather in episcopal basilicas. The majority of the Christians gathered at alternative places like graveyards, shrines of the saints, or other outdoor locations. Such gatherings could be presided over by ecclesiastical authorities. Augustine is known to have preached at large gatherings in martyr shrines. But these authorities also attempted to regulate and restrict these practices and gatherings, and embed them in their institutional framework.[21] The worlds of institutional religion and the

---

"Individualization and Individuation as Concepts of Historical Research," in *The Individual and the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. J. Rüpke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3-38; J. Rüpke, "Religious Agency, Identity, and Communication: Reflections on History and Theory of Religion," *Religion* 45, no. 3 (2015): 344-66; J. Rüpke, *On Roman Religion: Lived Religion and the Individual in Ancient Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016). Key publications from this research perspective are published in the new journal *Religion in the Roman Empire.* Several conference proceedings have contributed: J. Rüpke and W. Spickermann, eds., *Reflections on Religious Individuality* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012); J. Rüpke, ed. *The Individual and the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); E. Rebillard and J. Rüpke, eds., *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press 2015); R. Raja and J. Rüpke, eds., *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World* (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2015). The final publication (with further references) is J. Albrecht et al., "Religion in the Making: The Lived Ancient Religion Approach," *Religion* 48, no. 2 (2018): 1-26. On Manichaeism, see BeDuhn, "Am I a Christian?," 31-53. The same angle is pursued for a different region in L. K. Bailey, *The Religious Worlds of the Laity in Late Antique Gaul* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016). The relation between structure and agency was, of course, a frequently returning topic in various types of (micro)historical work on everyday life, where seemingly unique cases are taken to illustrate underlying structures. A. I. Port, "History from Below, the History of Everyday Life, and Microhistory," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. J. Wright (Oxford: Elsevier, 2015), 108-13. Specifically focused on (Christian) Late Antiquity are the contributions in P. Eich and E. Faber, eds., *Religiöser Alltag in der Spätantike* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013). Unfortunately, this last volume fails to establish a theoretically informed common ground.

[19] Kim Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values and Religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 2 and passim.

[20] Bowes, *Private Worship*, 219.

[21] R. MacMullen, *The Second Church. Popular Christianity AD 200-400* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 60-67 on Augustine and Carthage. For a critical evaluation of this thesis, see the appendix of T. A.

everyday religious practices of ordinary people overlapped, but also collided, in Late Antiquity as well as in modern times.

With its focus on everyday life, the quotidian turn has the potential to bring an unexplored side of Manichaeism to the fore. Jason BeDuhn—reflecting on his study of the cosmology, anthropology, and ritual of ideological rationales and Manichaean regulations — has hinted at this omission. In retrospect, what was missing from his previous work

> [was what] allows us to explore how other religions actually lay out in practice, what they actually mean to their living adherents, how they are integrated into daily lives, how their ideals are modified by local conditions and expediencies—in short, the human reality of a lived religion.[22]

To fill this gap, he offered an in-depth study of Augustine as one single individual looking back on his life and constructing a narrative about his conversion(s) to Manichaeism and Nicene Christianity. Augustine, however, can hardly be considered a figure representative of all Manichaeans. With his education in rhetoric, his high social position, and role as bishop in the church of Carthage, he does not represent the lives of ordinary Manichaeans. Augustine's everyday religion was not the same as the everyday religious practices of other Manichaeans. The Kellis letters, on the other hand, offer valuable insights into the world of lay Manichaeans, who, as we will see, were not constantly in the process of constructing a religious narrative, but occasionally referred to its impact on their lives.

2.2.2 Challenging Groupism

Where the quotidian turn and the current lived-religion trends build on a shift in focus toward individuals, the contemporary critique on "groupism" entails a more fundamental sociological and philosophical questioning of the role of individuals and groups. Pivotal is the work of Rogers Brubaker, who defined "groupism" as "the tendency to take discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups as basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis."[23] While Brubaker's warning was directed to scholars working on ethnicity and nationalism, I see the same tendency in the study of late antique religions. David Brakke has, for example, questioned the marketplace or horse race model(s), both of which presuppose bounded groups: "In the laudable effort to emphasize the diversity of early Christian groups and movements, we tend to create stable 'name brands,' [MB: such as Gnostics, Montanists, Marcionites, Encratites] which interact and compete with each other

---

Robinson, *Who Were the First Christians? Dismantling the Urban Thesis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 225-42. Discussions about the impact of preaching and the knowledge of the general ancient audience are introduced in J. Maxwell, "Popular Theology in Late Antiquity," in *Popular Culture in the Ancient World*, ed. L. Grig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 278, arguing against "the separation of theology from popular religion implies that… most people were only interested in 'popular' practices, such as exorcism, and never concerned about questions about the nature of God….."

[22] BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 2.

[23] R. Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," *Archives européennes de sociologie* 43, no. 2 (2002): 164.

like so many brands of breakfast cereal on a grocery store shelf."[24] Stanley Stowers has, likewise, suggested that we need to make an explicit distinction between religion and "a religion," which requires "that the actual social and mental cohesion of claimed groups become variables that must be proven by the scholar rather than postulates from which the reality is deduced."[25]

What is it that makes these scholars of ancient religion doubt the existence of a fundamental social unit such as the religious group? First, many of the claims about communities and their characteristics derive from the heresiological rhetoric of ancient authors. In this sense, religious groups are categories of practice, invoked by people for specific polemical or political reasons, or simply to classify and explain their everyday life experiences. They attempt to establish what Benedict Anderson has called "imagined communities" with "a temporary connection between people combined with the absence of direct or daily contact."[26] Such categories of practice influence the outside world, but they do not correspond one-on-one to social formations *out there*. While theological texts appear to revolve around unified Christian or Manichaean groups, these texts may at times have been ineffective in evoking the groups they claim to represent. This became apparent with the twentieth-century discoveries, like the Nag Hammadi Library, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Medinet Madi library, showing the existence of a considerable diversity of religious discourses involved in the operative framework of identity politics and group formation.[27] The triumphal normative Christianity of Eusebius and Epiphanius was but one of the Christian narratives. These twentieth-century discoveries contain similar discourse. Rather than directly deriving from competing and homogeneous groups, these texts also constructed and evoked imagined communities. We cannot a priori assume that individual

---

[24] Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 9.

[25] S. K. Stowers, "The Religion of Plant and Animal Offerings Versus the Religion of Meanings, Essences, and Textual Mysteries," in *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice*, ed. J.W. Knust and Z. Varhelyi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 36. The boundaries of religious groups in Late Antiquity are frequently discussed in the context of the interaction between Jews and Christians. D. Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 2 "Once I am no longer prepared to think in terms of preexistent different entities – religions, if you will – that came (gradually or suddenly) to enact their difference in a 'parting of the ways,' I need to aks who it was in antiquity who desired to make such a difference…." This is the topic of the contributions in A. Y. Reed and A. H. Becker, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

[26] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6.

[27] K. L. King, "Factions, Variety, Diversity, Multiplicity: Representing Early Christian Differences for the 21st Century," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 23, no. 3-4 (2011): 219-20; K. L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 20-54; K. L. King, "Which Early Christianity?," in *The Oxford Handbook to Early Christian Studies*, ed. S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 71-72.

readers would have made the text's group-identifications central to their self-understanding.[28]

Second, a large number of studies have pointed to the fuzzy boundaries between late antique religious groups, and to the existence of a wide array of shared practices that were not always approved by religious leaders. Not only was the lived experience of most individuals different from the normative theological perspective found in our sources, but inscriptions, papyri, archaeology, and other finds show crossovers and alternative demarcations.[29] Christianness, Jewishness, and Manichaeanness were occasional constructs, or to cite Sewell's adagium again, they were "contradictory, loosely integrated, contested, mutable, and highly permeable."[30] The groups or communities found in our sources are not neutral representations. Therefore, I would rather not start with the assumption of competing homogeneous groups or traditions.

The sociological work of Brubaker offers an important alternative. Rather than embracing the first-order classification and representations in our sources—speaking about "church," "religion," or ethnic "group"—Brubaker focuses on "groupness" to think about "phase[s] of extraordinary cohesion and moments of intensely felt collective solidarity."[31] This allows us to move beyond the common thesis of the discursive construction of groups into the realm of social practices; practices through which the imagined community became real. This study will look for the situations in which a Manichaean group identity became salient in Kellis. When would the Manichaeans of Kellis have felt this "Manichaeanness"?

As concepts, groupness or Manichaeanness are meant to allow for a continuum model in which practices, moments, expressions, or ideas can be more or less group-specific, more or less associated with each other and the notion of the "imagined community."[32] The term "community" is used for social constellations of various scales. It refers mostly to first-order communities of local residence and regular face-to-face interaction, but thereafter also to the transregional communities with an imagined character. A gathering during which several people come together and read from Mani's *Epistles* could activate Manichaeanness, even if we allow for a range of different individual responses to these readings. The sheer fact of the communal gathering around these texts—the act of reading and the postulated

---

[28] Karen King has argued, for example, that the constructed character and rhetorical utility of categories as "Gnosticism" and "Jewish-Christianity," has been "obscured by naturalizing them as distinct social groups." King, "Factions," 224.

[29] R. Boustan and J. E. Sanzo, "Christian Magicians, Jewish Magical Idioms, and the Shared Magical Culture of Late Antiquity," *Harvard Theological Review* 110, no. 1 (2017): 217-40; I. Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[30] Sewell, "Concept(s) of Culture," 53.

[31] Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," 168.

[32] A. P. Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Routledge, 1993). For a focus on the material culture of ancient imagined communities, see E. Mol and M. J. Versluys, "Material Culture and Imagined Communities in the Roman World," in *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*, ed. R. Raja and J. Rüpke (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 451-61; J. Scheid, "Community and Community. Reflections on Some Ambiguities Based on the Thiasoi of Roman Egypt," in *The Religious History of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. North and S. Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 366-82.

intentionality—brings the participants closer to each other in a moment of connectedness and (more or less) commonality with distant people that shared in the same imagined community. Exactly how and when this groupness took place is subject to social, cultural, and historical contingencies. Understanding a group-identification as an event allows us to see shifting affiliations and the negotiations between multiple expectations. When the "Manichaeans" leave the room and go their own ways, this temporal awareness of a shared affiliation may fall apart or remain influential in other behavior. Some other practices, such as visiting a ritual specialist and purchasing a horoscope or a spell against fever, may have been recognized as associated spheres or could have been regarded without any connotation of Manichaeanness (see Chapter 3).

A second and related concept is the notion of social networks. While building on the relational and situational nature of groupness, it is still evident that a fundamental structure undergirds the way individuals interact. Social network theory and social network analysis have increasingly contributed to the analysis of large historical datasets, such as for example the prosopography of Oxyrhynchus and Aphrodito or the epistolary interactions of the Egyptian bishops Abraham and Pesynthius, to highlight connections that are not necessarily group-specific or defined by religious affiliation.[33] These studies conceptualize individuals, objects, and communities as interconnected nodes in a network, whose ties are either "strong" or "weak," indicating the intimacy and reciprocity of the connection, as well as the amount of time invested in interactions. Strong ties lead to cohesive groups and commonality, while weak ties are important for the emergence of potential new information and innovation in a particular section of a network.[34]

The continuum model of more-or-less groupness has been used as a lens for ancient religious practice and identification once before. Eric Rebillard, in his slim but influential *Christians and their Many Identities in Late Antiquity*, has studied the different choices made by Christians in North Africa during the persecutions. He shows how individuals could have evaluated the situation (consciously or unconsciously) and acted on one of their membership affiliations.[35] Either they thought of themselves as Christians and acted out of resistance toward the call to sacrifice, or they switched their self-identification to another identity and affirmed their membership of the imperial world by making the required sacrifices. According to Rebillard, they made the sacrifice "either unaware that it might be contradictory to their Christian membership, or because they simply did not activate their Christian membership in this context, at least not until they were challenged to do so by

---

[33] G. R. Ruffini, *Social Networks in Byzantine Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); R. Dekker, *Episcopal networks and authority in Late Antique Egypt: Bishops of the Theban Region at Work* (Leuven: Peeters, 2018).

[34] A. Collar, *Religious Networks in the Roman Empire. The Spread of New Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 10-11 on weak and strong ties, building on the pivotal work of Granovetter.

[35] Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*. Douglas Boin has recently called them the "quieter Christians," as their behavioral choices were less outspoken. They "juggled their identities in highly creative ways," although less focused on the confrontation with society. A. C. Jacobsen, "*Coming out Christian in the Roman World: How the Followers of Jesus Made a Place in Caesar's Empire* by Douglas Boin (Review)," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24, no. 2 (2016): 302-03.

Cyprian and his clergy."[36] From this perspective, these ancient individuals *were* not Christians, they *did* Christian or they *became* Christian by each time embracing this specific group-identification, with its socializations. Rebillard argues that church leaders considered their Christian identity (or membership) the highest and most universal part of their identity, the one that provided unique coherence. However, it is likely that this did not yet influence all of their followers. While the opinion and writings of religious leaders may have informed practice, there are many instances in which these opinions could be neglected or rejected in favor of other relevant membership categories.[37]

2.3 Individuals and Their Agency

Individual agency is central in Brubaker and Rebillard's approach. Instead of regarding individuals primarily as members of a religious community, e.g., Christians or Manichaeans, they are acting subjects who can identify themselves with a group or choose to behave according to different schemes of social expectations. To understand the shift from solid group identities and corresponding behavior to a more dynamic model of inter- and intrapersonal behavior, we need additional sociological and psychological theories about group-identification and the way in which individuals draw on various cultural repertoires. Bernard Lahire's sociology of the individual and Ann Swidler's theory of culture in action will provide further building blocks for an approach toward everyday groupness.

In an effort to initiate a sociology of the individual, Bernard Lahire suggests following individuals through several fields of life to see them "switching" their behavior in different

---

[36] Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 60. In a similar analysis, Rebillard points out how Augustine promoted to the status of martyr "the Christian who sticks to his or her Christian identity as his or her unique principle of action." E. Rebillard, "Religious Sociology. Being Christian in the Time of Augustine," in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. M. Vessey (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 49. Further examples of these "hierarchical and lateral arrangements of category membership sets" in Augustine's letters and sermons are discussed in E. Rebillard, "Late Antique Limits of Christianness: North Africa in the Age of Augustine," in *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity*, ed. E. Rebillard and J. Rüpke (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 293-317. A similar critique on postulated groups is visible in Heidi Wendt's approach to Roman religion and Christianity, which she approaches through freelance religious experts and the way they produce social formations. H. Wendt, *At the Temple Gates: The Religion of Freelance Experts in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). The strongest difference between the quotidian turn and Rebillard's analysis is the absence of "resistance" in Rebillard's work. Christians could have sacrificed to the emperor as little acts of resistance against Cyprian's totalizing discourse, but in light of the power relations it is more likely they felt the need to identify themselves in relation to the ideology of empire.

[37] E. Rebillard, "Everyday Christianity in Carthage at the Time of Tertullian," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 2, no. 1 (2016): 92. The same themes reappear in his other work, E. Rebillard, "Popular Hatred against Christians: The Case of North Africa in the Second and Third Centuries," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 16, no. 1 (2014): 283–310; E. Rebillard, "Becoming Christian in Carthage in the Age of Tertullian," in *Conversion and Initiation in Antiquity. Shifting Identities – Creating Change* ed. B. S. Bøgh (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014), 47-58; E. Rebillard, "Material Culture and Religious Identity in Late Antiquity," in *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*, ed. R. Raja and J. Rüpke (Chichester Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 427-36; E. Rebillard, "Expressing Christianness in Carthage in the Second and Third Centuries," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 119-34.

situations and in various types of interactions. Building on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and in particular on his notion of a *habitus* constituted of multiple dispositions, Lahire describes individual action as the result of a match between situations and acquired dispositions. Dispositions are the result of socialization, in which the individual has learned how to think and behave as a Manichaean catechumen, an inhabitant of Kellis, or as a grandfather.[38] These dispositions are latently available, ready to be activated in matching circumstances. According to Lahire:

> [B]ringing them back to activity may depend on the social micro-situation, (e.g. interaction with a particular actor, a certain situation, permitting schemes or habits to be actualized that are inhibited in some other type of interaction and/or with some other actor), on the domain of practices (e.g. applying in relation to food consumption different cultural schemes from those applied in relation to cultural consumption), on social universe (e.g. doing in the family or leisure world what one cannot do in the professional world), on the social group (e.g. doing in a certain social group what one would not do in some other social group), or again on the moment in the life cycle….[39]

This is what I have called the "situatedness" of religious gestures or language, activated or considered salient in a specific time and place. For Lahire, "the activation of a particular disposition can be conceived of as the product of *the interaction of (relations between) internal and external forces*."[40] The elements of the context or situation (external forces) combined with the dispositions that have been established during past socializations (internal forces) together provide the fertile ground for the activation of the dispositions. If, however, the dispositions do not match with a particular situation, this could lead to feelings of discomfort or crisis, in particular when there is a plurality of investments or problematic engagements with competing social investments in people or groups.[41] This plurality of investments is of foremost importance when studying the role of religion in everyday life. Conflicting expectations about family life, for example, caused a stir in antiquity. This resulted in fictional biographies of apocryphal Christian heroes who dealt with family conflicts after choosing an ascetic lifestyle.[42] While these biographies may have been fictional or

---

[38] B. Lahire, "From the Habitus to an Individual Heritage of Dispositions. Towards a Sociology at the Level of the Individual," *Poetics* 31 (2003): 351. Bourdieu defines *habitus* as "an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted; the habitus engenders all the thought, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions and not others." P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 95.

[39] B. Lahire, *The Plural Actor* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), 57.

[40] Lahire, "Habitus," 353 (his italics). Many of these insights are, of course, deeply related to the more recent literature in symbolic interactionism. I. Tavory, "Interactionism: Meaning and Self as Process," in *Handbook of Contemporary Sociological Theory*, ed. S. Abrutyn (Cham: Springer, 2016), 85-98.

[41] Lahire, "Habitus," 353-4.

[42] M. Frenschkowski, "Domestic Religion, Family Life and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 18-19, no. 1 (2017): 123-55.

hagiographical, their message and attraction derived from the mismatch between various socializations.

Ann Swidler, in her ambitious theory of the influence of culture on action, suggests that in "unsettled life," culture's influence on social action becomes very explicit, frequently part of a "battle to dominate the world-views, assumptions, and habits of [individuals]."[43] During these uncertain periods, new strategies of action are developed so that people know how to behave. Explicitly formulated ideologies characterize this phase, rather than the traditions and common-sense notions of settled life.[44] When unsettled lives have changed into settled lives, culture acquires another type of influence on action. Many cultural elements, by then, have become part of the unspoken natural way of seeing the world. In "settled life," this repertoire is a toolkit from which people draw, even though it is difficult to disentangle specific cultural elements from the structural circumstances. Swidler has convincingly shown that people invoke elements from the available repertoires intermittently and often implicitly, as part of the unquestioned features of daily life.[45] Of course, the toolkits or repertoires people draw on are rarely singular or simple. They derive from various sources, become adapted to new purposes, and together create a multitude of resources and strategies. These repertoires provide individuals with multiple metaphors they can use to understand and articulate their life choices. People prefer this multiplicity because it helps them to approach situations from different angles, with the possibility to shift to other metaphors when deemed necessary, which Swidler calls "strategies of network diversification."[46] These strategies, and the process by which this multiplicity can disappear, have been observed by scholars of religion, who observed the way their interlocutors "played" with identities, tried them on, before wholeheartedly embracing a group-identification.[47] This means that single "scenes," "strategies," or narratives are good for one particular aspect of life, but carry contradictory implications regarding other facets of life. Therefore, no one strategy suffices for all of it.

The last decades have seen a surge of interest in the dynamics of multiple identifications. It has become a truism to point out that individuals self-identify with various people, roles, and social groups: with their parents and grandparents, their village context,

---

[43] A. Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 2 (1986): 279.

[44] Swidler, "Culture in Action," 279.

[45] Swidler, "Culture in Action," 277. She cites the example of poverty-culture, where young people do not strive for new middle-class goals, but continue to strive for poverty-culture goals because this fits with (their idea of) their capacities.

[46] A. Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 183. This notion is applied to religion by R. F. Campany, "Religious Repertoires and Contestation: A Case Study Based on Buddhist Miracle Tales," *History of Religions* 52, no. 2 (2012): 99-141.

[47] M. A. Davidsen, *The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu: A Study of Fiction-Based Religion* (Leiden: Unpublished PhD dissertation, 2014), 258-75 on the construction and maintenance of plausibility structures in the elven movement; T. M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 312 describes how newcomers in the "magical milieu" gradually adopt an identity as magicians through a gradual "interpretive drift" by which they begin to see themselves and the world through this group-identity.

profession etc. These acts of identification may be found in names, in self-designations, or in the usage of specific in-group language. Not all of these self-identifications function on the same level, nor are they attributed with the same status at all times.[48] Rachel Mairs has posited three general models for intersecting identities: nested, crosscutting, and separation. Nested identities are strongly related: "I am a Londoner, I am English, I am British, I am European (and/or perhaps Anglo-American)"; crosscutting identities have an interplay between the two: "I am French and a diplomat"; while separation identities bear no direct relation to one another: "I am a woman and I am an avid opera-goer."[49] Potential conflict arises from crosscutting identities that overlap and could have conflicting claims or behavioral dispositions. Looming conflict between disparate roles of identities is, however, defined by more than just the individual's desires and behavior. Individuals do not only self-identify; they are also categorized by others in social situations through processes such as stereotyping, discrimination or by legal or administrative classifications. These categorizations from the outside may or may not correspond to the self-identification of the individual. The complex social processes of self-identification, identification, and categorization fully remind us that individuals are not simply the carriers of cultural packages. Makarios and Pamour, two of the ancient Kellites who will be central to Chapter 4, may have been Manichaeans, but they were also fathers, sons, merchants, villagers, and Egyptians.

From the notion of different dispositions within individuals it is only a small step to various alternative identity theories. Historical studies of the last decades have used various social scientific theories about social identities and processes of group-identification.[50] Over time, however, the concept identity has come to designate radically different dynamics and ideas, and therefore has lost most (if not all) of its intellectual usefulness. The sociologists Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper concluded that the term is no longer able to bear the load of "the conceptual and theoretical *work* [that the term] 'identity' is supposed to do."[51] Their solution is to jettison the term and work with an array of more precise concepts,

---

[48] On Identity-hierarchies, see the overview of critical terminology in R. D. Ashmore, K. Deaux, and T. McLaughlin-Volpe, "An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality," *Psychological Bulletin* 130, no. 1 (2004): 80-114. On the experience of wholeness and continuity despite multiplicity and inconsistencies, see K. P. Ewing, "The Illusion of Wholeness: Culture, Self, and the Experience of Inconsistency," *Ethos* 18, no. 3 (1990): 251-78.

[49] R. Mairs, "Intersecting Identities in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt," in *Egypt: Ancient Histories, Modern Archaeologies*, ed. R. J. Dann and K. Exell (New York: Cambria Press, 2013), 163-92. Kim Bowes has characterized the study of "Christianization" in terms of a 'swap sale" instead of a theorized conceptualization of changing social identities and practices. She rightly points out that "this unalloyed confidence that one practice, thing, or social role was exchanged for another assumes a tacit teleology." Bowes, *Private Worship*, 10.

[50] There are too many studies to cite, but a preliminary overview for the ancient world is given in K. B. Stratton, "Identity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Mediterranean Religions*, ed. B. S. Spaeth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 220-51; J. Lieu, *Christian Identity in Jewish and Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); P. A. Harland, *Dynamics of Identity in the World of the Early Christians* (New York: T & T Clark, 2009).

[51] R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, "Beyond "Identity," *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 1.

including the postulated sameness of a collective, the self-identification of actors with a collective, their psychological self-understanding, or the formal categorization by outsiders such as the state.[52] Such alternatives put an emphasis on the activity and process instead of the (solid) state of perceived or claimed identity. As Comaroff puts it, "identities are not things but relations," which become "properties of individuals and collectivities, and they gradually become detached even from these, taking on a life of their own."[53] Claims on a reified identity, such as a normative religious group, tend to overlook this more processual notion of identification and the gradual social construction of this reified notion.

In antiquity, heresiologists as well as religious leaders employ strategies of categorization and reification to demarcate an imagined religious community and evoke this group in social reality.[54] What has been underrepresented is the level of discursive construction in authentic Manichaean sources. Not only Augustine embarked on a journey to frame his former coreligionists, but the authors of texts like the *Kephalaia*, Mani's *Epistles*, or the Greek *CMC* shared a common set of literary devices through which they attempted to categorize and identify what it meant to be a Manichaean elect of catechumen.[55] The potential for individual choices and creative agency was, in this period, not always unproblematic. We cannot simply transpose all elements from modern social theories to our analysis of the premodern world.[56] Jewish slaves in Rome, for example, were limited in their ability to exercise their individual agency in relation to religious rituals. Their master would have had something to say about their abstinence from work on the Sabbath, or their wish to circumcise their children (his property). Some degree of individual choice, on the other hand, cannot be excluded.[57] Exploring where and how space for individual choice was created and restricted should therefore be a central concern when studying individual religious

---

[52] Ibid., 17.

[53] J. Comaroff, "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution," in *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, ed. E. N. Wilmsen and P. McAllister (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 165. This passage is cited and discussed at M. van Beek, "Beyond Identity Fetishism: 'Communal' Conflict in Ladakh and the Limits of Autonomy," *Cultural Anthropology* 15, no. 4 (2001): 527.

[54] J. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996).

[55] The awareness is best expressed in Baker-Brian's examination of the lives of Mani, in which he warns against using these sources as if they were treasure-troves of information. Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 33-60.

[56] Some of these concerns were raised by Philippe Bruc, who strongly criticizes historians for their embrace of social scientific categories in P. Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). A potential point of friction is the textual nature of historical sources, all with their own agenda and never "objectively" representing what modern scholars would like to hear. This critique is discussed further by G. Koziol, "The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual Still an Interesting Topic of Historical Study?," *Early Medieval Europe* 11, no. 4 (2002): 367-88. With a rebuttal in P. Buc, "The Monster and the Critics: A Ritual Reply," *Early Medieval Europe* 15, no. 4 (2007): 441-52.

[57] For the examples and the groupness of Jews in ancient Rome, see the forthcoming proceedings of the conference "Shared Ritual Practices and Divided Historiography: Media, Phenomena, Topoi" (June 2017, Erfurt).

experience and practice.[58] Agency, moreover, is not only found in resistance, but also in every attempt to normalize, homogenize, exclude, marginalize, and hierarchize cultural and religious practices and ideas.[59] To pinpoint the agency of late antique individuals is, therefore, also an attempt to think beyond the outdated binary opposition that sees the premodern world as "traditional" and characterizes modernity as "individualization."[60] By finding a middle way between these two extremes, I will highlight tendencies toward individual distinction, as well as traditional choices that can be characterized as anachronistic for late antique Egypt (see Chapter 3).

2.4 Religion

The focus on religious practices in everyday-life practices leads to the question of definition. How to decide whether something is religious or not? Scholars of lived religion have exploited this ambiguity to explore otherwise overlooked meaning-making practices.[61] Mostly, they accepted as "religious practices" whatever their interlocutors perceive as such. Instead of defining the boundaries of the concept of "religion" from the outside, they ask what "makes some social events and individual actions religious in the minds of the actors."[62] As a result, the space between the interlocutors' perception of religion and academic working definitions leads to all sorts of "nagging questions" for the interpreter.

---

[58] See the contributions in Rüpke and Spickermann, *Reflections on Religious Individuality*; J. Rüpke, ed. *The Individual in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); B. Kracke, R. Roux, and J. Rüpke, eds., *Die Religion des Individuums* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2013); J. Zachhuber and A. Torrance, eds., *Individuality in Late Antiquity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014). Late Antiquity can be characterized as the period in which an increasing number of religious options emerged. J. North, "The Development of Religious Pluralism," in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians*, ed. J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak (London: Routledge, 1992), 174-93.

[59] Sewell, "The Concept(s) of Culture," 56.

[60] See for example the work of Anthony Giddens. Rüpke takes detraditionalization as defining feature of individualism. J. Rüpke, *Religion. Antiquity and Its Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 29-31. Detraditionalization and de-institutionalization are two of the multiple meanings of contemporary "individualization." At least five different notions have been discerned in contemporary debates, ranging from *heterogenization*, the increasing number of variation between individuals, to *privatization*, the decreasing influence of social collectives on individuals. This lack of conceptual clarity is further complicated by the observation of new collectives. In result, modern society shows traces of privatization and heterogenization combined with "herd behavior" and social symmetry in everyday decision-making. Unqualified individualism is a myth, which can only be discussed in relation to parallel processes as the rise of "communities lite" or Maffesoli's neotribalism. M. Maffesoli, *The Time of the Tribes: The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society* (London: Sage Publications, 1996). Dutch sociologists Duyvendak and Hurenkamp, pluralization is a temporary phase, leading to alternative clusters of practices that first seemed countercultural but now have become the new traditional norm for a majority (part-time female employment outside the house, for example). See the various contributions in J. W. Duyvendak and M. Hurenkamp, eds., *Kiezen voor de kudde: lichte gemeenschappen en de nieuwe meerderheid* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 2004).

[61] Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn," 373. See for example the contribution about various layers of meaning during a funeral, Z. Munson, "When a Funeral Isn't Just a Funeral: The Layered Meaning of Everyday Action," in *Everyday Religion*, ed. N. Ammerman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 121-36.

[62] Ammerman, "Introduction," 5.

The answers are usually far from simple, especially for historians, who cannot directly consult their interlocutors.

2.4.1 Toward a Definition of Religion, before "Religion"

Earlier I defined Manichaeism as "a religion," even though "religion" is not exactly an uncontested concept. In fact, the concept of religion has been subject to deconstruction and controversy over the last couple of decades, to the extent that some specialists in the study of religion would rather abandon the concept than continue to use it as an explanatory category.[63] The use of "religion" for the study of premodern societies and cultures is particularly suspect. Religion, these scholars argue, is conceptually tied to the modern world and tainted by ideology.[64] Modern conceptualizations of religion, so they argue, are deeply connected to imperialism, colonialism, and the European polemics between early modern Protestants and Catholics.[65] Russell McCutcheon, one of the voices calling for the abolition of the concept, has reminded us that classifications are not neutral and that "by means of such classifications, we may very well be actively presenting back to ourselves the taxonomies that help to establish our own contingent and inevitably provincial social world as if their components were self-evident, natural, universal, and necessary."[66] In the last decade, debate on the consequences of the history of the discipline and the modern and Western connotations of our conceptual toolbox was sparked by the publication of monographs such as *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept.*[67] The fundamental question, therefore, is whether the concept of religion is too tainted to be saved, redirected, or redefined.

Despite the critique, I am convinced that we do not have let go of the notion of religion. On the contrary, there is reason enough to think that late antique authors developed concepts analogous to the Western notion of religion.[68] Although it is difficult to apply a

---

[63] T. Fitzgerald, "A critique of "religion" as a cross-cultural category," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 9, no. 2 (1997): 91-110. An overview of the literature is given in R. T. McCutcheon, "The Category "Religion" in Recent Publications: A Critical Survey," *Numen* 42, no. 3 (1995): 284-309; R. T. McCutcheon, "The Category "Religion" in Recent Publications: Twenty Years Later," *Numen* 62, no. 1 (2015): 119-41. In this respect, the work of W. C. Smith in 1962 was both early and innovative. W. C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (Minneapolis.: Fortress, 1991).

[64] Ancient terminology, according to these authors, never really corresponds with our modern concept of religion. On "religio" and "threskeia," see C. A. Barton and D. Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016); B. Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 25-45.

[65] Unmasking these intrinsic stains on our conceptual toolbox, scholars have shown the Christian assumptions behind, for example, the colonial constructions of Asian religions as "Hinduism." R. King, "Orientalism and the Modern Myth of 'Hinduism'," *Numen* 46, no. 2 (1999): 146-85; R. F. Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (in the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287-319.

[66] R. T. McCutcheon, *The Discipline of Religion: Structure, Meaning, Rhetoric* (London: Routledge, 2003), 255.

[67] Nongbri, *Before Religion;* R. Orsi, "The "So-Called History" of the Study of Religion," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 20 (2008): 134-38. Nongbri's monograph was discussed during the SBL/AAR 2014 and 2016. His work proceeds along the lines of the critique brought forward by scholars as Talal Asad, Russel McCutcheon, Timothy Fitzgerald, Daniel Dubuisson, Jonathan Z. Smith and E. Judge.

[68] R. F. Campany, "'Religious' as a Category: A Comparative Case Study," *Numen* 65, no. 4 (2018): 335-6.

modern definition to antiquity, there remains room to theorize precisely this historical and contextual difference. The common-sense notion of "a religion" or a coherent religious "group," for example, belongs to the baggage of a modern concept of religion, which cannot be thrusted on the ancient world without distorting the underlying historical phenomena (see section on groupism above). Instead of thinking about coherent and stable entities (or particular brands, as David Brakke suggested), religion denotes a wide range or bundle of social practices, beliefs, experiences, and discourses that assume the existence of supernatural agents, worlds, and/or processes.[69] This demarcation is preliminary, substantive, and foremost a redescriptive, outsider, or third-order categorization, which will be used as a litmus test for features in the documentary papyri that may have characterized religion in ancient Kellis.[70] The supernatural agents, whose existence cannot be verified or falsified from the perspective of the academic study of religion, may have included gods, spirits, more abstract cosmological entities, as well as earthly institutions, flora and fauna, and (s)elected human beings. As some "natural" elements of life were interpreted religiously, they will be considered "supernatural," especially when agency is attributed to these elements. The Light Mind, a cosmological power, and the Living Soul, the incarnate element(s) of this cosmological power inside the material world, are only two examples of supernatural agents in the Manichaean understanding of the world.[71] It goes without saying, moreover, that "religion" and Manichaeanness overlap only partially. The following chapters will show the existence of religious practices outside Manichaeanness and vice versa, Manichaeanness beyond what I have defined as religion.

On occasion, I will refer to certain practices with shorthands like "Greco-Roman religion" or "traditional Egyptian religions," not to affirm the existence of spatially or culturally bounded religious and social groups, but to collectively refer to a bundle of religious practices in a particular cultural and geographical area.

The debates on the definition and nature of "religion" affect the study of Manichaeans in two ways. First, they are of importance because Manichaeism is consistently portrayed as the first "world religion." With its self-conscious attitude, books, missionary history, and widespread diffusion, Manichaeism has been perceived as a group-specific

---

[69] Building on the definition given by Davidsen, *The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu*, 31. For the position that religion exists as a social reality, see K. Schilbrack, "Religions: Are There Any," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78, no. 4 (2010): 1112-38; K. Schilbrack, "A Realist Social Ontology of Religion," *Religion* 47, no. 2 (2017): 161-78.

[70] For description vs. redescription see J. Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 36-37. The concepts are used by Nongbri and Hanegraaff. Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 21-22; W. Hanegraaff, "Reconstructing "Religion" from the Bottom Up," *Numen* 63, no. 5-6 (2016): 590.

[71] The Manichaean soul was conceived of as more than something in humans, but also as inhabiting the surrounding world. J. D. BeDuhn, "The Nature of the Manichaean Soul," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 44.

religion *par excellence*: a predecessor of our modern "world religions."[72] While this argument revolves around the position of the Manichaeans in the long history of religion, it has an impact on our hypothesis of Manichaean success at Kellis. If we embrace Manichaeism as "a religion" just like our modern world religions, we will be more inclined to see organizational features as reasons for successful diffusion, transmission, and maintenance.

Second, the study of Manichaeans as a "religion" may be affected by the earlier mentioned modern bias towards the concept. Historiographically, "religion" emerged in the context of early modern Western intellectual culture, stimulated by new colonial discoveries and Protestant polemics against Roman Catholicism. This context resulted in a strong attachment to notions of "textual truth" and coherent theology, often combined with an outspoken disdain for rituals.[73] In this tradition, "real" religions resembled Protestantism and "false" religions were those that deviated from this "pure" model.[74] A number of scholars of the last decades have argued that these normative assumptions continued to interfere with the modern conceptualization of non-Western or premodern "religions."[75] As Robert Campany states: "[T]o speak of religions is to demarcate things in ways that are not inevitable or immutable but, rather, are contingent on the shape of Western history, thought and institutions. Other cultures may, and do, lack closely equivalent demarcations."[76] Taking this critique seriously means reflecting on the choices made in the reconstruction, or presentation, of the Manichaean way of life as a religion.

Here we may return to some of the issues raised while introducing Manichaeism. The example of a recent anthology of Manichaean texts illustrates the complex entanglement of

---

[72] This is visible, for example, in Guy Stroumsa's description of The Cologne Mani Codex as offering "a glimpse at the very passage from sect to world religion." G. G. Stroumsa, *Hidden Wisdom. Esoteric Traditions and the Roots of Christian Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 64. Similar statements are made by Wilfred Cantwell Smith, who credited Mani with "deliberately establishing a religion." Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, 93. Jonathan Z. Smith has called Manichaeism "perhaps the first, self-conscious "world" religion." J. Z. Smith, "A Matter of Class: Taxonomies of Religion," *Harvard Theological Review* 89 (1996): 387-403. Reprinted in J. Z. Smith, *Relating Religion. Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 169; P. A. Mirecki, "Manichaean Literature," in *The Gnostic Bible*, ed. W. Barnstone and M. Meyer (Boston: Shambala, 2006), 569. A critical reflection on these statements is found in Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 66-73.

[73] Guy Stroumsa has described the birth of Manichaean studies with Isaac de Beausobre against the background of new philological knowledge and interest in Christian apocrypha and a polemical drive to understand Manichaeans as a precursor of the Reformation. G. G. Stroumsa, "Isaac De Beausobre Revisited: The Birth of Manichaean Studies," in *Studia Manichaica*, ed. R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 601-12.

[74] Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 85-131.

[75] Martin Stringer, for example, singles out the assumption of coherent belief, the idea of transcendence or sacred, and life-transformation M. D. Stringer, *Contemporary Western Ethnography and the Definition of Religion* (London: Continuum, 2008); Hanegraaff, "Reconstructing "Religion" from the Bottom Up," 587 for further references and an attempt to reach beyond deconstruction. 576-605. On the impact of the category on non-western religions see for example King, "Orientalism and the Modern Myth of "Hinduism," 146-85; Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 18 states, "we already intuitively know what 'religion' is before we even try to define it: religion is anything that sufficiently resembles modern Protestant Christianity."

[76] Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions," 289.

historical reconstruction and of this question. Gardner and Lieu, already cited above, discuss Manichaeism as the "first real 'religion'," whose origin and teaching was firmly based on the words of its founder (compare the Protestant critique of "extrabiblical" Catholic traditions and practices).[77] Therefore, they state: "[T]here is thus less scope in the study of Manichaeism to trace the evolution of doctrine, since all teaching was rigidly tied to the very detail of the divine word in Mani's scriptures."[78] This characterization of the unity of the Manichaean religion strongly contrasts with Richard Lim's critique on the perceived "monolithic coherence of the Manichaean movement."[79] Classifying all the local variations and fluid accommodations together as one reified "world religion," he argues, may be incorrectly constructing "an overarching ideology of unity" at the expense of diversity. By employing "Manichaeism," scholars run the risk of reproducing and legitimating the Christian normative outsider designation.[80] Gardner and Lieu are, however, aware of the problematic history of the concept of religion and they proceed with caution as they warn "not [to] impose anachronistic conceptions derived from the modern discipline of the history of religions," but to focus on what "Mani and his followers meant by the concepts of scripture and canon."[81] This appeal to the postulated origin of Manichaeism reveals a pattern in which origin equaled essence.[82] While I hesitate to accuse Gardner and Lieu of adhering to this biased heritage, I think we should reflect on the relation between the local and the general, between regional variation and the *constructed* (or *imagined*) unity of the Manichaean tradition.[83] The reconstruction of Manichaean life at Kellis may be offered as one step in this larger project.

2.4.2 The Transformation of Religion: Dis-/reembedding Religion in Novel Social Formations

In the previous chapter, I cited the self-promoting Manichaean claim of being a superior church organization. This claim resonates with modern academic perspectives on religious change in Late Antiquity that tend to emphasize exactly those features that loom large in Manichaean sources. To understand the appeal of the Manichaeans, as well as the

---

[77] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 1 state that "we might say that Manichaeism is the first real "religion" in the modern sense, because Mani established it directly and deliberately, with its scriptures and its rituals and its organization all in place."

[78] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 10. On anti-Catholic apologetics and the study of ancient religions see J. Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 1-35 and passim.

[79] Lim, "Unity and Diversity," 233.

[80] Lim, "Unity and Diversity," 249; Lim, "Nomen Manichaeorum," 163-5 strongly questions "Manichaeism" as a stand-alone universal religion.

[81] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 151.

[82] Similarly, early modern Protestants accused Catholics of adapting and modifying the pure message of the founder and thereby polluting the faith. Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 32-35.

[83] On the notion of "imagined community," see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. More generally, the social constructivism and symbolic interactionism behind most of the theoretical approaches (as discussed in Chapter 3) is built on the pivotal study of P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967). Some of the historiographical and theoretical tenets are discussed briefly in Tavory, "Interactionism: Meaning and Self as Process," 85-98.

importance of our questions about organizational structures, we need to have a firm grasp of the extent of these transformations.

Religion changed fundamentally in Late Antiquity. Modern scholars have characterized these changes as the transformation of "cult religions" into "religions of the book," "locative religion" into "utopian religion," or "primary religion" into "secondary religion." Jan Assmann, for example, stressed how "secondary religions" differentiated themselves from their predecessors on the basis of postulated supernatural revelations, books, and the distinction between truth and falsehood. These new religions transformed from a group style "ineradicably inscribed in the institutional, linguistic, and cultural conditions of a society" to an autonomous mobile system that could be transplanted in other sociocultural settings.[84] Indeed, ancient religion never was a separate domain of life. It was a "community religion" defined by ethnospecific dynamics. Roman religious practices, for example, were deeply intertwined with the social, political, and cultural lives of Romans. Their religion was "embedded" because "the whole of the political and constitutional system was conducted within an elaborate network of religious ceremonial and regulation."[85] Fundamentally, Greek and Roman religion was organized along the lines of local and preexisting social groups, like the city, neighborhood, or family. While there has always been room for some religious electives, most religious practice was directly connected to these preexisting social formations. As a result, participation in these activities was often (but not always) uncontroversial and undifferentiated, albeit depending on social factors such as status, gender, or age. Secondary religion, to stay with Assmann's terminology, gradually developed out of this type of "community religion" and became organized separately as distinct groups, communities, or traditions whose beliefs and practices were group-specific. Because of their novel attachment to a strong true-false distinction, they developed complex social imaginaries in which they located and conceptualized themselves and others according to their own institutions, objectives, or practices. Membership of the transregional

---

[84] Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism*, 1-2.

[85] M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 43; Similar explanations in S. Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 89; J. Rüpke, *Die Religion der Römer: Eine Einführung* (München: Beck, 2001), 13. For a critique on this model see B. Nongbri, "Dislodging "Embedded" Religion: A Brief Note on a Scholarly Trope," *Numen* 55, no. 4 (2008): 440-60. More recent studies on Greco-Roman religion have looked for alternative angles to shed light on religious practices of individuals. They share a critical stance toward the "polis-religion" model that has dominated the field since the 1980s. E. Eidinow, "Networks and Narratives: A Model for Ancient Greek Religion," *Kernos* 24 (2011): 9-38; J. Kindt, "Polis Religion - a Critical Appreciation," *Kernos* 22 (2009): 9-34; J. Kindt, "Personal Religion: A Productive Category for the Study of Ancient Greek Religion?," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 135 (2015): 35-50; J. Rüpke, "Individuals and Networks," in *Panthée: Religious Transformations in the Graeco-Roman Empire*, ed. L. Bricault and C. Bonnet (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 261-77; J. Rüpke, *Religious Deviance in the Roman World: Superstition or Individuality?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). Review of various initiatives and perspectives in T. Harrison, "Review Article: Beyond the Polis? New Approaches to Greek Religion," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 135 (2015): 165–80. A strong critique on these new approaches to Roman religions has been formulated in J. Scheid, *The Gods, the State, and the Individual: Reflections on Civic Religion in Rome* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

group started to count, rather than the taken-for-granted social roles within local (village) communities.

These transformations entailed more than just the rise of one religion (Christianity) and the decline of a wide array of ancient religions (sometimes still unhelpfully designated as paganism). Instead, several new religions emerged, among which the traditions of Christianity and Manichaeism. Membership of these new religions was, in theory, the result of individual choice. This choice was frequently presented in black-and-white terms. To participate (or, to convert) was often presented as a choice against the established social formations with their religious practices.[86] The new membership-based groups—or "post-ancient religions"—have been described by Bruce Lincoln in relation to some of their most fundamental building blocks:

> [A]s ancient religion gave way to post-ancient, one could observe a discourse based on canonic corpora of sacred texts displacing inspired performances of sacred verse; practices of prayer, contemplation, and self-perfection displacing material mediations through sacrifice and statues of the deity; deterritorialized elective communities constructed on the basis of religious adherence displacing multistranded groups, within which ties of geography, politics, kinship, culture, and religion were isomorphic and mutually reinforcing; and institutions that, with some exceptions, had better (also more creative and varied) funding, a wider range of activities, and more autonomy from the state, displacing their weaker, more localized predecessors.[87]

Religion, in this perspective, became increasingly defined by distinct autonomous groups with demarcated religious identities.[88] In other words, the notion of a distinct religious identity was concomitant with the rise of differentiated religious groups with marked (often doctrinal as well as behavioral) boundaries.[89]

To be sure, I hasten to say that this transformation, including its organizational aspects, was far from complete. There are many instances in which these new religions remained tied to local social formations, just as there were numerous self-authorized religious practices, or specialists, in earlier times.[90] As a general model of the religious transformation, however, it is useful to distinguish between two types of religion: community religion as the dominant model of ethnospecific religious activity in the ancient world, and secondary or utopian religion for the nascent religions organized as distinct

---

[86] A. F. de Jong, "Waar het vuur niet dooft: Joodse en Christelijke Gemeenschappen in het Sasanidenrijk," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 70, no. 3 (2016): 177.

[87] B. Lincoln, "Epilogue," in *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*, ed. S. I. Johnston (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 665.

[88] de Jong, "Waar het vuur niet dooft," 176-7.

[89] Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," 30-38; North, "The Development of Religious Pluralism," 178 described a "development from religion as embedded in the city-state to religion as a choice of differentiated groups offering different qualities of religious doctrine, different experiences, insights, or just different myths and stories."

[90] On self-authorized, or freelance, religious specialists, Wendt, *At the Temple Gates*.

autonomous groups. Within this broad typology, I will use the concept "group styles," developed by sociologists Nina Eliasoph and Paul Lichterman, to think about the variety of shared cultural elements.[91] Performing a sacrifice was, for example, one of the hallmark practices of a common group style in antiquity. It created a temporary moment of groupness with a select few, but aimed to bring the favor of the gods to a larger ethnic or social collective. The actions only marginally involved religious specialists and generally needed few doctrinal or textual specifications. Philosophical school settings provided another group style, either organized as dyads or small groups, with frequent interaction between a teacher and his or her pupil(s).[92] Reading communities or virtual network groupings are other examples of loose group styles in which physical colocation or communal gatherings are infrequent or absent.[93] Large communal gatherings with intense emotional experiences, as found in some of the "mystery cults," constituted a very different group style, just like the organizational styles modeled after the commensality and regular meals of associations.

Changes in the popularity of a particular group style were caused by novel legislation or other changing social conditions like the availability of specific resources.[94] The rise of secondary religions is intrinsically combined with the popularity of a limited type of group styles. Christians, for example, organized themselves around charismatic teachers; others participated in high-class reading practices (presumably combined with symposia-style meals with philosophical discussions), or modeled their religious groupness on the Roman patronage structures and the morning *salutationes*.[95] In many respects, Manichaeans followed suit.

Eliasoph and Lichterman discern four dimensions that can be used to differentiate between group styles. First, "map" refers to the conceptual reference points of individual actors, such as other groups, individuals, or social categories. Second, expectations and

---

[91] N. Eliasoph and P. Lichterman, "Culture in Interaction," *American Journal of Sociology* 108, no. 4 (2003): 737.

[92] Early Christianity is, by times, studied from the perspective of the group style of the philosophical school. W. Löhr, "Modelling Second-Century Christian Theology: Christian Theology as *Philosophia*," in *Christianity in the Second Century*, ed. J. Carleton Paget and J. Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 151-68.

[93] Tim Whitmarsh has argued that atheists in Ancient Greece could present themselves as if they belonged to a like-minded transhistorical community of readers, writers and thinkers, by listing their genealogy of thought over time and space. T. Whitmarsh, "Atheism as a Group Identity in Ancient Greece," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 61, where he also points out that Christian heresiologists employ similar strategies. Robert Putnam has discussed this type of groups as "tertiary groups" without shared routine or cooperative relationship, in which members do not create social capital. R. D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 291. Further discussions on the way social capital is created by civic groups are discussed by P. Lichterman, "Social Capital or Group Style? Rescuing Tocqueville's Insights on Civic Engagement," *Theory and Society* 35 (2006): 529-63.

[94] P. Lichterman, "Religion in Public Action: From Actors to Settings," *Sociological Theory* 30, no. 1 (2012): 15-36. On resource dependency and new institutionalism, see Ch. P. Scheitle and K. D. Dougherty, "The Sociology of Religious Organizations," *Sociology Compass* 2, no. 3 (2008): 981-99.

[95] C. Leonhard, "Morning *Salutationes* and the Decline of Sympotic Eucharists in the Third Century," *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 18, no. 3 (2014): 420-42; C. Leonhard, "Establishing Short-Term Communities in Eucharistic Celebrations of Antiquity," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 66-86.

behavior changes as "scenes" or "situations" change. Third, the understanding of the "group bonds" defines the way actors understand the relations within the group or within specific situations. Fourth, some of these actors share "speech norms" that define what is appropriate speech within group settings.[96] This set of concepts further assists our grasp on lived ancient religions and the dynamic of short-term and long-term social grouping.[97]

Secondary, or post-ancient, religion can be characterized by revised collective identities and novel group styles. Therefore, religious communities in Late Antiquity can be placed on a heuristic scale between social formations with loose bonds and fuzzy boundaries and those with strong speech norms, explicit conceptual maps, and detailed expectations about group bonds. Isabella Sandwell characterized religious difference in Late Antiquity as

> the difference between those who "loved" Christ and those who "loved" Zeus, Apollo and Calliope might well have been less than that between those who sought to impose ideas about clear cut religious identities on their world and those who continued to work with a practical sense of what was appropriate in regard to these matters.[98]

For Sandwell, the "practical sense" of authors like Libanius is juxtaposed with the totalization of a religious group identity in the work of John Chrysostom. Both authors made religious choices, but of a very different type. Chrysostom's discourse and group norms may well have been incomprehensible to those who lived their lives according to the routines of their *habitus*, without the explicit ideology of unsettled life. Forces from outside, such as the Roman imperial persecution, may have served as the catalyst of novel group styles, as Christians were forced to reflect on their social identifications and the behavioral norms and expectations of society.[99] In these situations, unreflective or "thin" practices could have been

---

[96] P. Lichterman et al., "Grouping Together in Lived Ancient Religion: Individual Interacting and the Formation of Groups," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 4. Building on his earlier work with Eliasoph.

[97] Several contributions in the 2017 (3.1) volume of *Religion in the Roman Empire* have used these conceptual tools, although it is noteworthy that most of them discuss short-term social grouping. On lived religion, see section 2.2.1 above. Conceptually I see strong similarities with the network approach of the framework of 'situations" within "network domains" by Mische and White. For them, a situation "involves predictable, stylized interaction that suddenly becomes fraught with uncertainty, danger and/or opportunity." The predictable nature of the previous moment depended primarily on the array of routinized stories, symbols and idioms of such network domains as family or business. A. Mische and H. C. White, "Between Conversation and Situation: Public Switching Dynamics across Network Domains," *Social Research* 65, no. 3 (1998): 698.

[98] Sandwell, *Religious Identity*, 280. Averil Cameron used "totalizing discourse" for the Christian interpretation of the world which leaves no room for alternative interpretations. A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 220-22.

[99] J. Rives, "The Persecution of Christians and Ideas of Community in the Roman Empire," in *Politiche religiose nel mondo antico e tardoantico: poteri e indirizzi, forme del controllo, idee e prassi di tolleranza*, ed. G.A. Cecconi and C. Gabrielli (Bari: Edipuglia, 2011), 199-217. In another contribution, Rives compares the religious choice of individuals in antiquity with his father's preference for Chrysler automobiles. Not all religious choices, he states, "need have any significant impact on a person's identity." J. Rives, "Religious

developed into "thick" practices that explicitly defined and characterized what it meant to be a Christian. Manichaeans have often been placed at one end of the scale, among the more rigid group styles. The validity of this "sectarian" interpretation of Manichaeism for the community in Kellis, however, will be called into question in more than one of the following chapters.[100]

If we return to the typology of a transition from primary to secondary religion, now redefined as two broad sets of group styles, we can see a twofold function of this typology. On the one hand, it serves as a reiteration of the warning against taking distinct religions for granted. In the ancient world, there were many types of religion without groups, and many group styles that differed from modern institutional religions. On the other hand, the typology illustrates how fundamental tenets of Manichaeism reverberated with this transformation. Usually, Christianity is taken as the main representative (or prototype) of this new type of religion, but Manichaeans, *par excellence*, presented their religion as mobile and universal. They thought of themselves as building on the inheritance of previous religions, all of which failed because of their close attachment to geographical regions. As we have seen, Manichaeans represented the "church" of Mani, in direct competition with previous "churches"—primarily Christianity, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism—as it superseded them in transcending all culturally specific social formations.[101] In contrast to the previous "churches," the Manichaean church suited all cultural contexts, in the East as well as the West (1 Keph. 151). This insider representation of the superiority of the Manichaean church is not immediately to be taken at face value, but it is interesting to note how Manichaeans strategically claimed novelty, which was usually considered a liability, in combination with their universalist stance. In fact, at least one scholar has argued that Mani and his early disciples were the first to produce a concept analogous to our modern category of religion. In this interpretation, the Manichaean usage of terms like "ⲥⲁⲩⲉⲥ̄" (community) and "ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ" (church) reflects

> self-identifying communities that were not interchangeable or coterminous with ethnic or cultural identity, but organized around systems of discourse and practices that were "disembedded" from a particular society and culture; within such communities, the members could understand themselves to share a set of markers

---

Choice and Religious Change in Classical and Late Antiquity: Models and Questions," *ARYS: Antigüedad, Religiones y Sociedades* 9 (2011): 273.

[100] The Manichaeans of Kellis have been described as sectarian, even by the editors of the papyri, "there are some of those communal characteristics to be found here as are known from the typology of sectarian movements, particularly in their early world-denying stages." I. Gardner, ed. *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1996), viii.

[101] Although de Jong points to Zoroastrianism and Buddhism as predecessors of Christianity as "secondary religions," replacing "community-religions." de Jong, "Waar het vuur niet dooft," 178. Building on the typology of J. Platvoet, "De Wraak van de 'Primitieven': Godsdienstgeschiedenis van Neanderthaler tot New Age," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 47, no. 3 (1993): 227-43.

> and commitments that set them apart from others of the same ethnicity, and united them despite disparate ethnic and cultural backgrounds.[102]

As a result of this "religionification," Manichaeans developed densely organized and centralized groups, which may have been among the first to think of themselves—and others—along specifically religious lines and in relation to religious institutions.[103] For our purposes, I will zoom in on the performative aspect, asking how this conceptual transformation translated into everyday practice.

2.4.3 Disembedded Religion Reembedded: The Christianization of Egypt

The so-called "Christianization" of Egypt is another topic that has bearing on our subject. The previous section has emphasized the disembedded and universal character of late antique religion. In practice, all textual and material remains of these religions are localized. The success of the utopian and universal claims of secondary religion depended on how well they adapted to the needs of local situations and historical settings, a process that may well be compared to the modern process of "glocalization," in which globalized culture finds a place in new localities all over the globe.[104] In this way, religion is first and foremost *local.* It has to make sense in the specific village or city context. These local expressions of religion,

---

[102] J. D. BeDuhn, "Mani and the Crystallization of the Concept of 'Religion' in Third Century Iran," in *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, ed. I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 248 and passim; N. J. Baker-Brian, "A New Religion? The Emergence of Manichaeism in Late Antiquity," in *A Companion to Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Lössl and N. J. Baker-Brian (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 319-343. The element of conversion, a choice to become part of the religious community, is expressed in the *Kephalaia* as "whoever will accept faith and invite it in…," [ⲙⲛ]ϧⲁⲓ ⲟⲩⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲛ̀ⲙ̀ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ϧⲉⲟⲩⲛ ⲁⲣⲁϥ… 1 Keph. 78, 191.1. On the waning of the negative evaluation of "novelty," see A. K. Petersen, "Between Old and New: The Problem of Acculturation Illustrated by the Early Christian Use of the Phoenix Motif," in *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst*, ed. F. G. Martínez and G. P. Luttikhuizen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 147-64.

[103] As emphasized above, I am less interested in the question of whether they were, in fact, the first to conjure up this novel way of conceptualizing themselves and others. There are good reasons to consider the Zoroastrian self-representation as an earlier example. Kerdir's inscription explicitly designates the groups of conquered people in religious terms. Nongbri's argument about the broader semantic meaning of the Middle Persian "den" is not convincing. Nongbri, Before Religion, 69-70. BeDuhn is more accommodating toward Kerdir's inscription, but states that "Mani did more than refer to or describe this plurality; he made it the subject of a theory". BeDuhn, "Crystallization of the Concept of 'Religion'," 266. For others, Manichaeans may actually stand last in a line of "boundary-creating 'cults'," see Rüpke, Religion. Antiquity and Its Legacy, 28 which also introduces the term "religionification" or "religionization" for this transformation of religion.

[104] P. Beyer, "Globalization and Glocalization," in *The Sage Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. J. A. Beckford and J. Demerat (London: SAGE, 2007) 98-117; T. Whitmarsh, ed. *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Roman Greek World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); G. Woolf, "Isis and the Evolution of Religions," in *Power, Politics, and the Cults of Isis: Proceedings of the Vth International Conference of Isis Studies*, ed. L. Bricault and M. J. Versluys (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 82-86.

therefore, stand in a dialectic relationship with broader frames of reference such as the traditions of institutional or rationalized religion.[105]

Recent work on the Christianization of Egypt has brought forward two very different positions on the dynamic of local traditions and nascent Christianity. On one side, Roger Bagnall perceives of late antique Egypt as a society in sharp decline, in which traditional Egyptian practices disappeared due to the withdrawal of government funding. He suggests that "the loss of the institutional base of religion must have been devastating to the sense of community."[106] Christian communities and leaders profited from this lack of organized religion and aimed to fill the leadership vacuum. The Alexandrian ecclesiastical elite survived the Decian persecutions and built a provincial structure, with bishops in most of the *nome* capitals by the time of the Diocletian persecutions.[107] Despite this institutional change, certain traditional practices continued outside the realm of the temples as an "underlying current," according to Bagnall. A radically different view is espoused by David Frankfurter, who has argued for a local model of religious change in a series of publications. On the village level, he argues, traditional practices continued for a long time, either in the hands of former temple priests turned into magicians, or as "syncretized practices" of Christian monks.[108] The local and "domesticized" religion of villages and households was a vital element of traditional Egyptian practice, which could not have easily been swept away by institutional changes.[109] Roughly speaking, one approach to the Christianization of Egypt has emphasized institutional change, while the other has focused on continuity on the level

---

[105] On this understanding of local religion in contrast to models that work with popular religion or folk religion, see D. Frankfurter, "Beyond Magic and Superstition," in *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 269.

[106] R. S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 268. I will use the term "traditional Egyptian religious practices" instead of "paganism," which implies a singular coherent phenomenon that never existed and derives from a normative evaluation by Early Christians. Of course, my alternative is not entirely satisfactory either, as it puts the emphasis on a longstanding tradition, while many "traditional" practices were just like much innovation as the nascent Christian and Manichaean communities and practices. D. Boin, "Hellenistic 'Judaism' and the Social Origins of the 'Pagan-Christian' Debate," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 22, no. 2 (2014): 167-96; H. Remus, "The End of "Paganism"?," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 33, no. 2 (2004): 191-208; C. P. Jones, *Between Pagan and Christian* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 145 notes that "in another sense, paganism was indestructible, in that it had never really existed except as an entity in the eyes of its opponents." D. Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt. Syncretism and Local Worlds in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 7-10.

[107] Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 278; Cf. E. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions* (Warsaw: University of Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements, 2015).

[108] D. Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 27-33, on priests and magicians: page 198-237. On Christian monks, see D. Frankfurter, "Syncretism and the Holy Man in Late Antique Egypt," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 3 (2003): 339-85.

[109] Noteworthy are their reviews of each other's work. Frankfurter, "Review of Roger S. Bagnall."; R. S. Bagnall, "Models and Evidence in the Study of Religion in Late Roman Egypt," in *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Hahn, S. Emmel, and U. Gotter (Leiden: Brill), 23-41.

of everyday practice. Both approaches are not uncontested.[110] A middle ground, taking into account both the continuity at the local level and the changes in the institutional sphere, may help us to navigate through the complex world of competitive textual identity formation with its various local appropriations.[111]

The academic disagreement on the centrality of Christian practices and institutions affects our study on a fundamental level. Not only is there no agreement on the level of impact Christianity had in Kellis, but there is also no established method to measure the level of religious change. Is the abandonment of the temple cult to be understood as a sign of a decline in traditional religious practices? Are the newly built fourth-century church buildings an indication of a strong Christian presence in the village? Frankfurter's call for a local or regional approach to Christian culture and practices reverberates with our focus on a local group of Manichaeans.[112] Their religious practices, like those of their Christian neighbors, stood out as innovations against the long tradition of Egyptian religion. We will see that despite the evidence for growing Christianity (see section 3.3.4 on Christian institutions in the Dakhleh Oasis), Kellites continued to appeal to traditional Egyptian deities, ordered amulets and horoscopes, and worked with a rather pragmatic approach to religious difference.

One of the most striking religious inventions of the fourth century was the early monastic movement, especially prevalent in the Theban region adjacent to the oases. The valley of the Theban mountain was traditionally used for funerary practices, but transformed "from a city of the dead into a tomb for the living" when large numbers of ascetics moved into the tombs to seek spiritual growth.[113] Archaeological and textual sources inform us about a wide variety of ascetics: cave-dwelling monks, village ascetics, Melitians, and supporters of the teachings of Origen, solitary anchorites, independent monasteries, and the

---

[110] Critique on Frankfurter's approach has focused on his reliance on hagiographical sources, his use of comparative anthropological material, and his lack of attention for the impact of institutional Christianity. M. Smith, "Aspects of Preservation and Transmission of Indigenous Religious Traditions in Akhmim and Its Environs During the Graeco-Roman Period," in *Perspectives on Panopolis: An Egyptian Town from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest*, ed. A. Egberts, B. P. Muhs, and J. van der Vliet (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 245-47; P. van Minnen, "Saving History? Egyptian Hagiography in Its Space and Time," *Church History and Religious Culture* 86, no. 1 (2006): 57-91; J. van der Vliet, "Bringing Home the Homeless: Landscape and History in Egyptian Hagiography," *Church History and Religious Culture* 86, no. 1 (2006): 39-55.

[111] J. H. F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298-642 CE)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 22-23 and passim for this middle ground position.

[112] Although Frankfurter states that "the task must then be to shift our question and analysis to the local context, to examine native religions (both centralizing cult and popular practice), Christianities, and (it is to be hoped) even Judaisms and Manichaeisms, all as regional phenomena." Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 36. Reviewed by O. E. Kaper, "Review of Frankfurter, Religion in Roman Egypt," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 58, no. 1-2 (2001): 126-32.

[113] J. van der Vliet, "Epigraphy and History in the Theban Region," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt: Nag Hammadi - Esna*, ed. G. Gabra and H. N. Takla (New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 151 about the monastery of Epiphanius.

large federations of Pachomian and Shenoutan cenobitism.[114] Some of these ascetics performed religious services that were remarkably similar to the practices of other freelance (often itinerant) religious specialists, a feature that has received some attention in the debates on Christianization. What is striking in these practices, as well as in the broader material evidence for Egyptian Christianity, is the reembeddedness of Christianity in local settings. Christianity was not merely a belief system about invisible supernatural beings, but it also transformed the interpretation of the Egyptian landscape. Christian practice rejected certain elements from traditional religious repertoire, while at the same time appropriating other practices into a new Christian framework.[115]

The material from ancient Kellis speaks to some of the central elements of this debate. It reveals that the temple cult is no longer in function, even though the traditional priest is still visible in the fourth-century papyri. It attests to the relatively early construction of three church buildings in the fourth century. Its spells, amulets, and horoscopes, on the other hand, show the broad array of religious practices beyond the doors of the churches. Frankfurter's emphasis on locality and the fuzzy boundaries of religious traditions is of critical importance. Kellites involved in Manichaean practice lived in a world filled with postulated supernatural beings that could be called on in times of trouble. Through its local and regional focus, this dissertation can be read as a case study of how another late antique religion became localized, or (re)embedded, in the lives and practices of fourth-century Kellites.

2.5 Manichaeanness in Four Related Categories of Action

Part II of this dissertation will examine the Kellis letters in depth, to examine where and when Manichaeanness was considered relevant. Some of the outcomes will highlight situations with a strong involvement in the construction and reproduction of

---

[114] A short summary of some of the material is offered in H. Lundhaug and L. Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 22-55 and 234-62. Among the more recent publications on Pachomius and his federation are, J. E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999); J. E. Goehring, *Politics, Monasticism, and Miracles in Sixth Century Upper Egypt: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Coptic Texts on Abraham of Farshut* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016); P. Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). On Shenoute we now have R. Krawiec, *Shenoute and the Women of the White Monastery. Egyptian Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); C. T. Schroeder, *Monastic Bodies. Discipline and Salvation in Shenoute of Atripe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); A. G. López, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). Most of the sources on the Shenoutan federation have only recently become available for most scholars, mainly thanks to the work of Stephen Emmel. S. Emmel, *Shenoute's Literary Corpus* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004); D. Brakke and A. T. Crislip, eds., *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great: Community, Theology, and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); B. Layton, *The Canons of Our Fathers. Monastic Rules of Shenoute* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[115] As an example of this re-embeddedness or localization, see the use of local saints in the amulet from Oxyrhynchus, discussed in A. Luijendijk, "A Gospel Amulet for Joannia (P.Oxy. VIII 1151)," in *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World*, ed. K. B. Stratton and D. S. Kalleres (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 418-43.

Manichaeanness—connecting Kellis to a transregional and transhistorical Manichaean tradition—while other letters adhere to the commonplace patterns and conventions of Egyptian village life. In Chapter 10, I will summarize the findings of Part II in four basic categories of action that derive from Jon E. Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idris's analysis of the production and reproduction of nationhood in everyday life. Despite the difference in focus, I believe that this fourfold structure will help to focus on the everyday practices of this late antique religion. Fox and Miller-Idris discern the following categories of action:

> (1) "[T]alking the nation": the discursive construction of the nation through routine talk in interaction; (2) "choosing the nation": nationhood as it is implicated in the decisions ordinary people make; (3) "performing the nation": the production of national sensibilities through the ritual enactment of symbols; (4) "consuming the nation": the constitution and expression of national difference through everyday consumption habits.[116]

Following this fourfold division, the chapters of Part II will highlight the specific ways in which Manichaeanness resonated—to the extent it did so at all—within everyday life. It will examine situations, first, in which the Manichaean group was discursively constructed in routine correspondence; second, in which it defined and framed the choices of individuals; third, where it was expressed in ritual enactments or performative actions; fourth, where it was and was not part of ordinary consumption patterns.

[116] J. Fox and C. Miller-Idris, "Everyday Nationhood," *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 537-38. Summarized in Rebillard, "Everyday Christianity in Carthage at the Time of Tertullian," 91-102.

Chapter 3. Dakhleh's Wealth: The Socioeconomic Context of Ancient Kellis

3.1 Introduction

Kellis thrived. Built on the all-year-round agriculture of the oasis, the economy flourished. Trade routes, protected by the Roman military, facilitated the transportation of wine, cotton, and other commodities to the markets of the Nile valley.[1] Local merchants, craftsmen, and artists profited from this prosperity, and members of the regional administrative elite came to live in Kellis. For this reason, one of the papyrologists of the Dakhleh Oasis Project is said to have called Kellis a retirement village for magistrates. The archaeological finds from this project did not prove him wrong. On the contrary, vivid decorations and extensive architecture have shown that Kellis was more than just a rural backwater on the fringes of the Roman Empire.

This chapter sets out to take three important preliminary steps before we encounter the individual Kellites and their families. First, I will lay out some basic features of socioeconomic life to show that the "ordinary" people in the papyrus letters belonged to a well-to-do section of society in a relatively wealthy part of Roman Egypt (section 3.2). Second, by introducing the archaeology of the Roman period houses, it will be shown that both the archaeological and the papyrological evidence relate to the same people. Section 3.3 will argue that the Manichaean texts and personal letters not only derive from the context of these houses, but actually also belonged to its inhabitants. This means that we can reconstruct their everyday life through their letters, literature, and the archaeological remains of their living space. Third, as the material culture and documents from the excavation in Kellis are prolific in their details, they offer insight into the various religious and cultural repertoires of the village. Section 3.4 will briefly sketch the archaeological and papyrological evidence for the continuation of traditional Egyptian religious practices in the fourth century, the pervasiveness of Classical (Greek and Roman) cultural traditions, and the common use of amulets and horoscopes. The available evidence for Christian institutions and a Christian repertoire in papyrus letters and funerary traditions, moreover, will be introduced with some critical notes where it relates to the history of Manichaean practice in the oasis. The chapters of Part II will build on this contextual analysis, for example in Chapter 4 where the relation between Manichaeans and the Roman administrative and military elite will be discussed, or in Chapter 8 when the existence of Manichaean burials will be examined. Together, therefore, the sections of this chapter provide a necessary sketch of the socioeconomic and religious context of the Manichaeans of Kellis.

3.2. Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis

The oases in the western desert of Egypt are fertile grounds. Not only did they produce prosperity for the desert's ancient inhabitants, but they also offer many new sources to modern scholarship. These relatively newly found sources have been made accessible by members of the Dakhleh Oasis Project. The initial survey of this project, which took place between 1977 and 1987, identified a minimum of five hundred historical sites and four

[1] R. S. Bagnall et al., eds., *An Oasis City* (New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University Press, 2015), 149-54 on wine and pages 54-56 on cotton.

hundred prehistoric sites in the oasis.[2] Several excavations commenced after this initial phase, the most important for our purpose being Colin Hope's excavation of Ismant el-Kharab. A final synthesizing publication has yet to appear, but a continuous stream of field reports has presented the main finds.[3] In addition to this excavation, contemporary archaeological work on other sites in the oasis contributes to our knowledge of the social setting of the Kellis letters.

Kellis, the Roman name for the site located 2.5 km from the modern town of Ismant, was a village (*kome*) in the Dakhleh Oasis. Even though it was one of the four large settlements in the oasis, it never reached the size of the city of Mothis (modern Mut el-Kharab, excavated by Colin Hope and Gillian Bowen), Trimithis (Amheida, excavations under the direction of Roger Bagnall), and *Imrt* (Ein Birbiyeh, the site of ancient Mesobe?). Unlike Trimithis, Kellis never achieved the official status of a *polis*, and its population size has been estimated at about 1,000 to 1,500 at a time.[4] Most of the other settlements, which surrounded these larger places, were small agricultural hamlets that depended on them for their facilities.[5] Excavations at Ain el-Gedida, one of these small hamlets, convey a sense of communalism. The interconnected buildings with shared kitchens suggest communal and seasonal occupation, instead of fully developed villages.[6] This network of agricultural

---

[2] C. S. Churcher and A. J. Mills, *Reports from the Survey of the Dakhleh Oasis: 1977–1987* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999).

[3] C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, eds., *Kellis: A Roman Period Village in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Forthcoming). The field reports initially appeared in the Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities (JSSEA) and continued in the Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology (BACE). All reports are listed in the appendix together with a short indication of the areas discussed. This chapter will refrain from referencing to all the excavation reports, but for all factual descriptions the intellectual ownership lies with the excavator(s). I will only refer to specific publications for detailed interpretations or in cases I assess the material different from Hope and Bowen (Monash University).

[4] C. A. Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery: Roman Period Burial Practices in Dakhleh Oasis," in *Le myrte et la rose. Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, ed. G. Tallet and C. Zivie-Coche (Montpellier: CENIM, 2014), 332. Cf. R. S. Bagnall and B. W. Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 55. Boozer has suggested a population of 25.000 for Trimithis, while Bagnall follows Wagner in suggesting Mothis was a little larger than Trimithis. A. L. Boozer, "Urban Change at Late Roman Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt)," in *Egypt in the First Millennium AD: Perspectives from New Fieldwork*, ed. E. O'Connell (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 29; R. S. Bagnall, *The Kellis Agricultural Account Book* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997), 73.

[5] C. A. Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses of Kellis in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis," in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, ed. A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope, and B. E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 200. On Mesobe see Bagnall, *KAB*, 74-5. Introductions with a more general overview of the oases have yet to appear. G. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte à l'époque grecque, romaine et byzantine d'après les documents grecs* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1987), was published before the results of the DOP could be included. General introductions by the team of Amheida are R. S. Bagnall, *Eine Wüstenstadt: Leben und Kultur in einer Ägyptischen Oase im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2013); Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*. For a broader audience, see H. Thurston, *Secrets of the Sands. The Revelations of Egypt's Everlasting Oasis* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2003), 233-258 on Kellis, the "desert Pompeii."

[6] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 166-8 (Aravecchia).

settlements associated with wells, villages, and towns constituted the Dakhleh Oasis (see Figure 1).

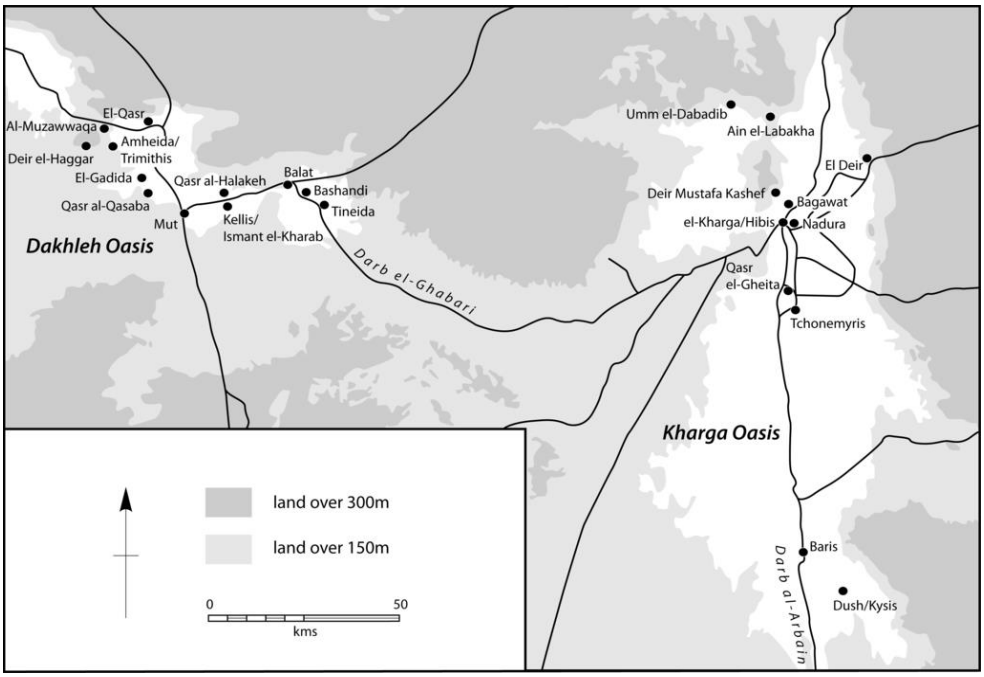

Figure 1: Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis, drawn by M. Mathews, published by A. L. Boozer (Courtesy of the Amheida Project).

In Roman times, the Dakhleh Oasis and its neighbor, the Kharga Oasis, were designated together as the Great Oasis and were known separately as the outer and the inner oasis.[7] They belonged to a series of oases located in five geographical depressions carved into the Libyan Desert plateau. The Great Oasis was connected to the Farafra Oasis, the Bahariya Oasis (together called the "Small Oasis"), and the Siwa Oasis. Following desert routes, one could travel from Dakhleh all the way north to Siwa and the Fayyum. A more direct route to the Nile valley from Kellis via Kharga, about 365 km at best via the ancient roads, would have taken the villagers about three days, depending on the mode of transportation.[8] The 190 km distance between Dakhleh's and Kharga's main towns places them closer to each other than to the Nile valley. Such distances were regularly traversed by the residents of Roman Kellis, who traveled extensively (see Figure 2). The impact of geographical location on the

[7] Division by Olympiadorus of Thebes, corresponding to the current names "Dakhleh" and "Kharga" Oasis. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 131.

[8] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 29 (Bagnall). Some of the problems and restrictions experienced during traveling are summarized by C. Adams, "'There and Back Again': Getting around in Roman Egypt," in *Travel and Geography in Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Adams and R. Laurence (London: Routledge, 2001), 154-56. Strabo, on the other hand, suggested the journey from Abydos to the oases took seven days. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 143.

social and economic lives of Kellites is visible in the papyri; traveling must have characterized many of their days.[9]

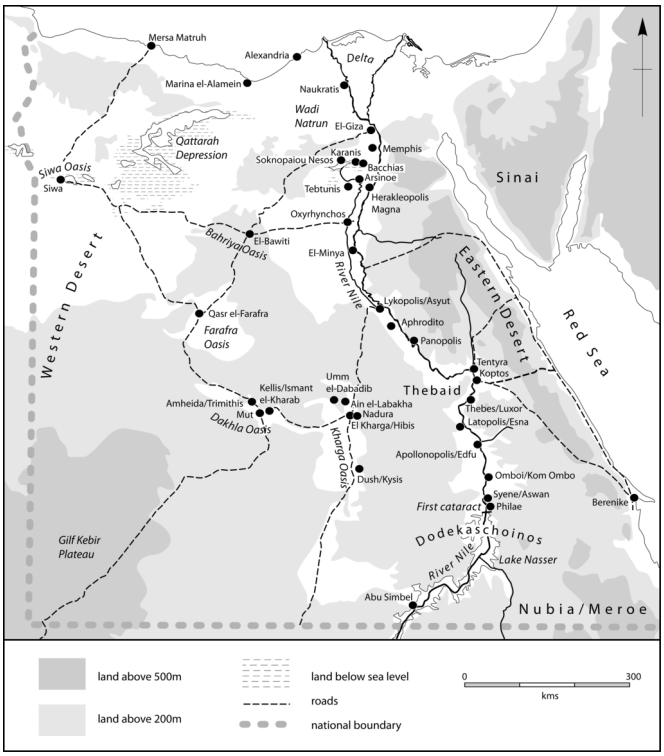

Figure 2: Dakhleh Oasis in Egypt, drawn by M. Mathews, published by A. L. Boozer (Courtesy of the Amheida Project).

Most of the villages and towns in the Dakhleh Oasis show flourishing activity and an expanding population during the Roman period, with a sudden decline and abandonment in the late fourth century, albeit some exceptions were inhabited for a longer time.[10] As a result, material from the Roman period is abundant. The last decades of the fourth century show architectural modifications, followed by the gradual decline and abandonment of entire villages. Kellis, following this pattern, was inhabited from the late Ptolemaic period onward

[9] On traveling and rest places see also R.B. Jackson, *At Empire's Edge. Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 198-200. The indication of a journey of four days and four nights between Khargah and Dakhleh in M.Chrest. 78 (late fourth century) must have been an exaggeration. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 144.

[10] Exceptional is Al-Qasr, which was inhabited continuously from the third century until the present; Deir Abu Matta with occupation into the seventh century; and Mut el-Kharab, which was occupied from the Old Kingdom until the Islamic period and today. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 173 (Bagnall). On Mut, see C. A. Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2001," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 12 (2001): 47.

and was abandoned in the last decade of the fourth century. The last dated document is a Greek horoscope from the year 392 CE. Soon after this date, wind and sand roamed freely.[11]

Why the site was abandoned at the end of the fourth century is unknown. A number of suggestions have been made to explain the sudden decline, but none of them has reached general acceptance. It could have been related to environmental changes. The current climate is extremely arid. Annual rainfall is about 0.7 mm, with temperatures ranging from 21.5°C on an average January day to 39°C in July.[12] This climate, probably not any cooler in antiquity, made agriculture difficult. It was only with the introduction of the waterwheel (*saqiya*) during the early Roman period that agriculture advanced.[13] While this technology may have contributed to the abundant wealth of the oasis, the increasing demand on the agricultural land also led to soil depletion.[14] Another environmental factor to take into account is the wind, which was continuously shifting large amounts of sand and thereby creating moving sand dunes that could end up covering fertile lands. Architectural finds all over the oasis attest to the challenge this posed to the inhabitants: wells had to be deepened and reactivated artificially, channels dug, thresholds raised, and additional windscreens built.[15] The fourth-century residents of the oasis may have fallen prey to the upcoming wind and sand, which in a couple of years destroyed their ways of living.

Apart from environmental reasons, increasing insecurity on the roads to the Nile valley has been suggested as contributing to the declining population and abandonment of Kellis. One passage in the work of sixth-century author John Moschus tells about tribesmen

---

[11] C.A. Hope (with an Appendix by G. E. Bowen), "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 205-206; G. E. Bowen, "The Spread of Christianity in Egypt: Archaeological Evidence from Dakhleh and Kharga Oases," in *Egyptian Culture and Society: Studies in Honour of Naguib Kanawati*, ed. A. Woods, A. McFarlane, and S. Binder (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 19. The last dated document derived from D/8 and its dating is discussed in K. A. Worp and T. de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 137 (2001): 206. On the date of the occupation of Kellis, see C. A. Hope, "Observations on the Dating of the Occupation at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 1*, ed. C. A. Marlow and A. J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 43 - 59. This date is confirmed by numismatic evidence and the pottery assemblages; only three Roman coins from the period between 388-394 CE have been found (of the *salvs reipvblicae-* type) and there is no ceramic material indicative of the fifth century.

[12] A. J. Mills, "Research in the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Origin and Early Development of Food-Producing Cultures in North-Eastern Africa*, ed. L. Krzyzaniek and M. Kobusiewicz (Poznań: Polish Academy of Sciences, Poznań Branch: Poznań Archaeological Museum, 1984), 205-10.

[13] The dating of the introduction of the water-wheel is matter of discussion, an earlier date in the Ptolemaic period cannot be excluded.

[14] J. E. Knudstad and R. A. Frey, "Kellis: The Architectural Survey of the Romano-Byzantine Town at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Reports from the Survey of the Dakhleh Oasis 1977–198*, ed. C. S. Churcher and A. J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 213. Colin Hope (Personal communication May 2016) reminded me, however, of the lack of strong indications of salt in the bodies from the cemeteries. If climate change indeed caused the saltification of the soil, one would expect to see traces in bioarchaeological materials.

[15] Wells and channels reactivated: Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 17-18 (Davoli). Windscreen and raised threshold of House 3: C. A. Hope, O. E. Kaper, and G. E. Bowen, "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab – 1992," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 3 (1992): 41.

ransoming elderly monks in the Kharga Oasis.[16] How this story relates to the visible presence of Roman military fortifications along those very roads is not clear, but the oases were conceived of as dangerous border zones. Was this more than a literary stereotype? Could it be that even the Roman army was unable to continue guaranteeing the safety of travelers on the roads from the oasis to the valley?[17]

Safety on the roads and the exceptional environmental conditions lay behind Dakhleh's wealth. The subterranean reservoirs of water in the oasis facilitated agriculture all year long. Water could reach the surface through natural fissures or artificial wells.[18] These wells have been a source of wealth for the entire oasis, to the extent that Trimithis's ostraka mention more than forty wells, ownership of which could be shared collectively or in individual shares.[19] The geographical distance to the Nile valley and the need for fertile areas and water wells has shaped the economy and commerce in the oases. While the advantage of the fertile Nile was absent, the groundwater allowed for multiple harvests a year, which could give a farmer a slight advantage over his competitors in the Nile valley. The cost of transportation, however, was high, and among the Kellis documents are numerous receipts for freight costs, either by camel or by donkey.[20] Many insights into the agricultural nature of the village economy derive from the so-called Kellis Agricultural Account Book (KAB), which contained the records of all income and expenditures of a section of a large estate.[21]

Based on these agricultural records, Roger Bagnall has identified the two main strategies behind the flourishing economy. First, many crops were grown for local consumption and second, value crops like olive oil, cotton, dates, figs, and jujubes were exported to the Nile valley to create a surplus.[22] The introduction of the camel was pivotal in this regard, because it could cross the desert without frequent access to food or water and

---

[16] Cited in Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 384.

[17] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 172-3 (Bagnall). P.Kell.Copt. 127 refers to an attack on the road and expresses fear for the military (?) commander.

[18] Jackson, *At Empire's Edge*, 159.

[19] R. S. Bagnall and G. Ruffini, *Ostraka from Trimithis Volume 1: Texts from the 2004-2007 Seasons* (New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World and New York University Press, 2012), 31-39.

[20] Among the category of small hamlets or settlements the Kellis documents mention Thio (P.Kell. Gr. 45), Pmoun Tametra (P.Kell.Gr. 41), Pmoun Imouthou (twenty-one instances in the Kellis Agricultural Account book, KAB), Pmoun Tkele (KAB 1408) and many others. These toponyms starting with Pmoun ('the well') probably designated wells with small settlements. Examples include P.Kell.Gr. 51 and 52 and O.Kell. 80, 81, 102, 103. On wells see R. S. Bagnall and G. Ruffini, *Amheida I. Ostraka from Trimithis, Volume 1* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 31-37.

[21] On the large estates and the relation between city and village see Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 315-16. The estate behind the KAB was led by representatives of Faustianus son of Aquila, who might have been related to the former magistrate of Mothis and *defensor civitatis* of the Mothite nome (mentioned in P.Kell.Gr. 21, 321 CE). Bagnall, however, calls the identification of this magistrate with the landlord 'most unlikely' and suggests he was the (grand)father of the landlord, who presumably lived in Hibis (KAB 1146). Bagnall, *KAB*, 70.

[22] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 149-52 (Bagnall).

could carry up to six *artabas* across a longer distance.[23] In this way, the potential number of customers increased and a vibrant transportation sector came into being. The wealth resulting from these developments was depicted in relief scenes and paintings in tombs from the Nile valley (but also at el-Muzawwaqa in the oasis). They feature the agricultural wealth of the oasis and depict wine, fruits, baskets, and other agricultural products. The rapid expansion of the oasis in the first century CE built on new agricultural technologies like pigeon lofts and aqueducts, which attracted migrant farmers to the oasis.[24]

Cotton was one of the value crops grown in the oasis. Even though it plays a minor role in the KAB, where it is recorded in small quantities only, the ostraka from Kellis, Trimithis, and Dush attest to the commonality of cotton production.[25] Since cotton is a summer crop, it was not produced in the fertile regions of the Nile valley, which would have been flooded during this period. All papyrological evidence for cotton production therefore points to western oases, where it could be grown on the land that produced other crops in winter.[26] This two-season advantage worked for millet as well, which was found in large quantities in Kellis and was presumably used as animal food.[27] Apart from cotton and millet, olive oil and wine contributed to the wealth of the oases.[28] The transportation of these commodities to the Nile valley and the local production of textiles from cotton and wool presented two flourishing economic sectors that many inhabitants of Kellis participated in. Building on this layer of agricultural wealth, additional light industry such as metalworking

---

[23] An example of a caravan of about seventy-five camels traveling between Oxyrhynchos and the oasis is discussed in C. Adams, *Land Transport in Roman Egypt: A Study of Economics and Administration in a Roman Province* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 235.

[24] Mills, "Research in the Dakhleh Oasis," 208-9. A pigeon loft has been found at Kellis (B/2/2, in the same area as the Roman Villa), which contained several thousand kilogram shreds of pigeon pots. These nesting pots were used to keep pigeons, necessary for providing fertilizers for the land and as addition to the oasis diet. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 31 (Bagnall).

[25] For example, from Kellis: O.Kell. 68 and 69, Trimithis: O.Trim.I. 38 and 44, Dush: O.Douch. 1.51, 4.381, 5.537, 5.634. For cotton production see R. S. Bagnall, "SB 6.9025, Cotton, and the Economy of the Small Oasis," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 45 (2008): 21-30. Cotton has been identified by infrared light, see C. E. Coombs, A. L. Woodhead, and J. S. Church, "Report on the Characterization of Three Fabric Samples from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 115-19. Moreover, it has been found at the site as cotton bolls and seeds, see U. Thanheiser (with contributions by J. Walter and C. A. Hope), "Roman Agriculture and Gardening in Egypt as Seen from Kellis," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 299–310. It is also listed in the KAB, 547, 556,558-59, 720 and 1484 and mentioned in ostraka from area C. G. E. Bowen, "Texts and Textiles: A Study of the Textile Industry at Ancient Kellis," *Artefact* 24 (2002): 18-28.

[26] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 154-6 (Bagnall).

[27] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 155 (Bagnall).

[28] Bagnall, *KAB*, 45, 56. cf. Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 116 and 299-300. The location of the agricultural fields is not precisely known, but modern agriculture takes place on the west-southwest side of the village. Most of the wells and irrigation channels are probably recent and do not date back to antiquity. Knudstad and Frey, "Kellis: The Architectural Survey," 189.

and carpentry offered other opportunities for non-agricultural workers, craftsmen and women, traders and artisans.[29]

With these introductory sketches of the oasis setting, we can now turn to the archaeological evidence of social and economic life in the village of Kellis. The excavation of Ismant el-Kharab was divided into four areas for archaeological reasons (see Figure 3). Area A included a number of Roman houses, in which the Manichaean documents were found, as well as the East Churches and a bath house. Area B, just north of these houses, contained several large structures, with a large number of connected rooms without easily recognizable functions. Within one of these structures stood a large colonnaded hall, a *columbarium* (or dovecote), and a Roman villa with painted decorations. Area C, on the most eastern side of the excavation, comprised a number of residential units combined with light industrial activities. Area D, on the west side, consisted of the Main Temple of Tutu with several shrines, the West Temple, the West Church, the West Tombs, and a few other structures. Just north of Area D and on the western side of Area B, an interconnected series of tombs was located (the North Tombs). On the southern side, a series of tombs was found on the alluvial terrace (the South Tombs). Further north of the excavated areas, two large cemeteries were unearthed, divided by a wadi, labeled Kellis 1 and 2 or the East and West Cemeteries (see section 3.4.5).[30]

---

[29] In area C, a pottery workshop (C/2/4) was located, with large stage bins, kilns, and unfired ceramics in the immediate surroundings. C. A. Hope (with an appendix by G. E. Bowen), "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 176. Several of the other units showed evidence for light-industrial activities, like the blacksmith at C/2/7, where layers with iron slag were found on the surface. The remains of glass-slag suggest the presence of glass industry in this section of the city. C. A. Hope, "The Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in 1998/9: A Brief Report," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 10 (1999): 65.

[30] Low quality images of the site and excavation have been published online at http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/gallery/ and have been displayed at temporary exhibitions, published in O. E. Kaper and C. van Zoest, *Treasures of the Dakhleh Oasis: An Exhibition on the Occasion of the Fifth International Conference of the Dakhleh Oasis Project* (Cairo: The Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo, 2006); C. A. Hope, *From the Sands of the Sahara: Ancient Kellis and Its Texts* (Clayton, VIC.: Monash University, 1998).

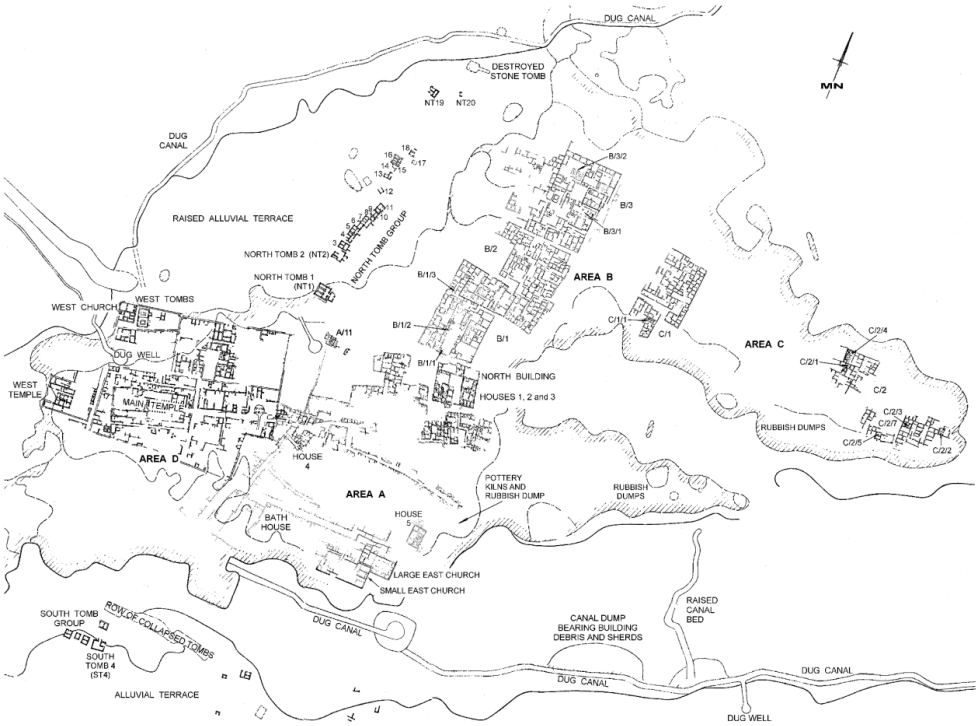

Figure 3: Map of the excavation of Kellis. Derived from Dakhleh Oasis Project 2006–2007 Season Final Report SCA. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope).

The following sections will discuss, in succession, the various residential areas; the Roman period temple and the available evidence for the cult of traditional Egyptian deities; and the fourth-century churches with the documentary indicators of emerging Christianity. Some of the administrative and military features of the oasis society will return in Chapter 4, when we zoom in on the papyrological finds.

3.3 Roman Period Housing

The excavations of the Roman houses in Area A commenced in the 1986 field season and continued until the early 1990s. During the 1991 season, large numbers of inscribed materials were unearthed in Houses 1–3. Among these materials were Manichaean liturgical documents, including wooden tablets with psalms, prayers, and fragments of Mani's canonical *Epistles* on papyrus. These Manichaean documents were found together with personal letters and business accounts of the houses' inhabitants. Upon abandoning the buildings, the owners of these papyri left enormous amounts of papyrus behind. The combination of papyri, and the architecture and archaeology of these houses provides the first context for the lives of Manichaeans in Kellis.

3.3.1 Houses 1–3 and the North Building

The central part of the village was constituted by a residential area, of which one square section was excavated. This structure on the north side of the residential area contained Houses 1–3 and the North Building. Streets on the south and north gave access to these mud-brick buildings (see Figure 4 for a plan of the houses). Occupation was mainly restricted to the fourth century, since all documents derived from the decades between 299 and 389 CE. Coins and ceramics confirm domestic activity during the same period.[31] After this date, the inhabitants of Houses 1–3 seem to have abandoned their houses, as did their neighbors. Consequently, the buildings were only occupied for a few generations.[32]

Figure 4: Plan of Houses 1–3 and the North Building (Area A). Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from the DOP website: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/houses-1-2-and-3/ last updated 7 May 2013.

House 3 was the largest of the four mud brick buildings within the structure. It had ten main rooms, which could be accessed through the entrance system (room 1A and

[31] C. A. Hope, "The Archaeological Context," in *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 1*, ed. I. Gardner, A. Alcock, and W. P. Funk (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 110-11 with the numismatic evidence analyzed by Gillian Bowen.

[32] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 215.

corridor 1B).[33] A minor indication of the environmental challenges faced by the inhabitants is the semicircular wall in front of the entrance, which protected the house against the accumulation of sand. The courtyard at the north of the corridor contained animal mangers as well as facilities for cooking and storage. Most of the rooms were arranged around the central court (room 6, probably with a flat roof) from which most of the inscribed material derived. Rooms 2–5 and 8–10 were all barrel vaulted and light entered only through the staircase (room 7) into the central court and through the windows in the north walls of rooms 2 and 3. With the internal doors closed, the house must have been a rather dark place. All of the rooms were furnished with wooden doors, of which only the bolts and sockets remain. Most of the portable wood was taken out of the house during its abandonment.[34] Only some of the palm-rib shelves in the central court (room 6) were found buried under the sand. These shelves and open niches must have been used for storage purposes. The white-plastered area surrounding these cupboards may have facilitated some extra visibility in the gloom of oil lamps.[35] Other walls were simply mud plastered without decoration and were preserved at the highest point (House 1, room 5), up to 3.13 m. Room 7 provided access to the roof, which, based on the collected pottery of the roof collapse deposits, offered storage space for domestic utensils.

The house next door, House 2, consisted of nine rooms in an L shape interlocking with House 1 and a large courtyard, which could only be accessed from the street. One room (9) was added against the south wall and served as a kitchen. The entrance (via rooms 5 and 6) leads to two central rooms (rooms 3 and 2) that could be closed off with wooden doors. This spatial configuration suggests the organic development and inbuilding between the houses, without preconceived or externally controlled planning.[36] Through the central rooms, one could roam into three rectangular rooms, all with barrel-vaulted roofs and decorated with niches and palm-rib shelves defined by white-plastered sections (Figure 5). Through the corridor (7) one could access the stairs and the upper roof, as well as a narrow cupboard under the stairs. The circulation of light and air was facilitated by openings above the doors of some of the rooms. Daylight, however, must have been minimal, because most openings to the outside had to be covered against the sand.[37] As in House 3, the central rooms were flat-roofed, presumably supported by wooden beams. These roofs would have

---

[33] For all descriptions in these paragraphs see Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 100. More recently, Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 199-229.

[34] A picture of a wooden key is included in C. A. Hope, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Report on the 1987 Excavations at Ismant El-Gharab," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 16 (1986): plate IV, d.

[35] Suggestion in G. E. Bowen, "The Environment Within: The Archaeological Context of the Texts from House 3 at Kellis in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis," in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, ed. A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope, and B. E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 232.

[36] On the organic nature of the inbuilding, see A. L. Boozer, "Towards an Archaeology of Household Relationships in Roman Egypt," in *Mediterranean Families in Antiquity: Households, Extended Families, and Domestic Space*, ed. S.R. Huebner and G. Nathan (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017), 197 and 199. But note that the specific details of her account of the architecture are not entirely correct.

[37] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 219 refers to other sites with similar systems.

been covered with several storage vessels. House 1 comprised eleven rooms, divided into two blocks. The first block of rooms (1–6) contained a kitchen with a brick oven and storage bin (1). Despite this kitchen, the main living room (4) contained traces of a circular hearth in front of room 5. Two cooking areas could suggest that multiple families may have lived here. Most of the rooms were reached through the entrance room (9) and corridor (8), which also connected them to the second block of rooms (7–11) and the courtyard. The courtyard contained storage facilities and animal mangers. These could be closed off from the house with a wooden door in the corridor, just after the entrance to the dining area (room 7). The modifications to the two mangers suggest that initially sheep or goats were kept there, but eventually larger animals, such as donkeys, used the mangers.[38] Noteworthy in this section of the house is the large horseshoe-shaped structure with raised platform in the dining area. This *stibadium* was used for formal dining in the Roman world.[39] Just like in the other houses, most rooms were barrel-vaulted and dark, with the exception of this section of the dining area and courtyard, which was only partly covered.

Figure 5: One of the mud-brick structures at Kellis showing the plastered niches. 2006 NYU Excavations at Amheida (used with permission). AWIB-ISAW: Kellis (VIII).

[38] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 218.
[39] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 217.

The North Building, located to the north of these three houses, comprised a large open court (3) with two rooms on each side. Room 4 contained an oven and may thus have had a domestic function. Other rooms contained niches, as found in the other houses. Exceptional are the traces of painted decoration in rooms 1 and 2, which are not otherwise attested in these houses.[40] Rooms 1 and 2 contained a recognizable rubbish dump with fragments of papyri, some of which ended up in the floor deposits of the other houses.[41]

Floor deposits were found underneath the layers of sand and the roof collapse in all these houses. In room 6 of House 3, these included small wooden objects, ceramics, textiles, glass, some coins, and evidence of tailoring.[42] More outstanding finds included jewelry, fine worked glass, and an intaglio ring with the motif of a centaur grappling with a stag.[43] While most valuable items seem to have been taken out of the house during the process of abandonment, the ring remained. Was it lost when the last generation of occupants left the house? Whatever happened exactly, its presence indicates a certain level of wealth, and the centaur motif suggests at least some openness to Classical or Roman culture. This confirms the general impression of the village as a place for well-to-do families and individuals.

The most staggering find, however, was the large amount of inscribed materials. Among the debris in the North Building, for example, were the fragmentary remains of a codex with a text based on the *Acts of John* and a Manichaean psalm (P.Kell.Gr. 97). Further fragments from this codex were found in Houses 1 and 3, indicating postdisposition processes such as nesting rats, wind, and human intervention. Even though most inscribed objects were found in the early 1990s, so far not all of them have been published. Appendix 2 lists all of the published documents (with some exceptions) and can be used for preliminary statistical analysis. The visual representation of the most common find locations shows the prominence of Houses 1–3 and the North Building in comparison to House 4 and the Temple area (Figure 6). This provisional impression is far from complete, as the Greek ostraka have been excluded. Tables 2 and 3 supplement this reconstruction by providing a rough overview of the type and number of documents found in two specific fourth-century houses.

---

[40] Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 100. However, Kellis House 2 had walls covered in grey mud plaster, while the vault roofs had a red colored plaster, over which were painted grey bands along the junction between the vaults and the walls. C. A. Hope, "Three Seasons of Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *Mediterranean Archeology* 1 (1988): 169.

[41] See the discussion in C. A. Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 156-61.

[42] Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 103.

[43] C. A. Hope, "The 1991 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 2 (1991): 42.

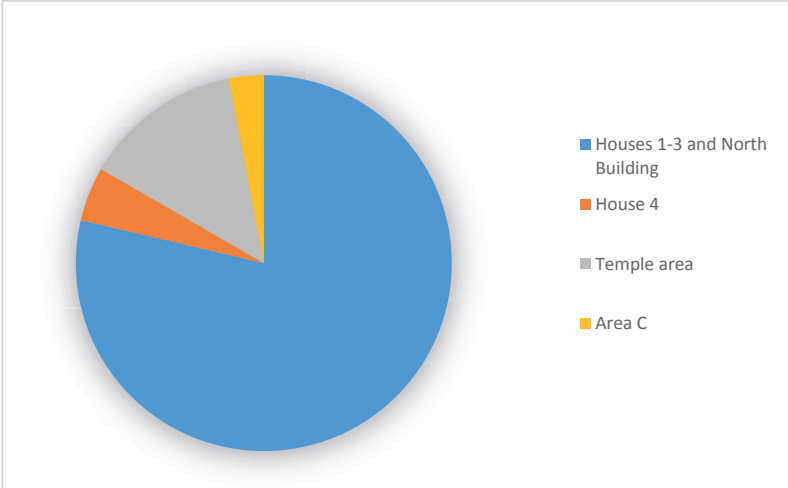

Figure 6: Greek and Coptic documents sorted by the most common find locations.

House 3 (Area A)

166 letters and administrative documents;

9 texts containing (parts of) Manichaean Psalms;

3 texts with biblical content;

9 documents with amulets, spells, or astrological content;

8 documents with Manichaean content and/or Syriac writing;

4 documents unknown/other.

Table 2: Types of documents found in House 3.

House D/8 (Temple Area)

13 letters and administrative documents;

1 document with biblical content;

6 documents with amulets, spells, or astrological content;

1 document with Manichaean content.

b

Table 3: Types of documents found in House D/8.

These brief overviews highlight the large number of documents found at House 3, many of which contained Manichaean content.[44] The other fourth-century houses preserved noticeably less Manichaean material. House 1 contained only one fragment from a codex with Manichaean psalms, which presumably derived from the dump in the North Building. This pattern is easy to explain, as there were strong connections with the neighbors in House 3, which are also attested in the papyri. House 2 and House 4 each contained one Manichaean document. In room 5 of House 2, a text with Manichaean cosmological discourse (P.Kell.Copt. 8) was found. Some of the inhabitants, therefore, must have belonged to the same social circle of Manichaeans.[45] The letters from House 4, on the other hand, show no prosopographical connections to the families of Houses 2 and 3. On the contrary, the language variation of the House 4 letters and their somewhat different Christian vocabulary seem to suggest that they belonged to an entirely different group of people (see the discussion on dialects and Christian vocabulary in Chapter 5). Despite these differences, room 1b revealed a wooden tablet with Manichaean psalms, not unlike the psalms from House 3 (T.Kell.Copt. 7). How this psalm ended up so far from the other Manichaean psalms is not easy to reconstruct. If it belonged to the occupants of the house, as proposed by the editors of the material, it would indicate a more widespread appeal of Manichaean texts.

Where did these documents come from? Who would have used the texts and why are they left among the domestic debris after the abandonment of the houses? Can we safely identify the inhabitants of the houses as the users of the Manichaean texts? At least one scholar has suggested that the large amount of papyri found in House 3 indicates that the rooms were used as rubbish dumps for the city's garbage.[46] She is hardly the only one wondering how to relate the prolific textual finds to the modest architecture of the find location. Editors of both the Greek and the Coptic documents have speculated about the house as a "storage place" during the last phase of the village's occupational history.[47] Against these cautious remarks, I will present three reasons to think that the documents and houses belong together. First, following the excavators of the village, I think that the way these papyri were stored reveals their importance to the inhabitants. Second, the clustering of the letters of one author most probably indicates that the archives were kept together. Third, the minor archaeological finds show a correlation between the content of the documents and the everyday activities in these houses. Together, this suggests that the authors and their families kept the letters on the roofs of their own houses.[48]

To start with the find location, Gillian Bowen has pointed out that many of the

---

[44] Psalm fragments have been found in rooms 4, 6, 7, 8, 9; the daily prayers in the backyard; a hymn of praise in room 9; fragments of Mani's *Epistles* were dispersed over House 3 but mainly from room 3 and 6; a devotional or theological text in room 11a.

[45] Strong prosopographical connections are found in P.Kell.Copt. 12 from House 2, with references to Kyria and Pshemnoute.

[46] L. Nevett, "Family and the Household, Ancient History and Archeology: A Case Study from Roman Egypt," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. B. Rawson (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 22-23.

[47] K. A. Worp, ed. *Greek Papyri from Kellis I* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995), 52. Gardner, *KLT1*, ix.

[48] Many of these points have been observed in Bowen, "The Environment Within," 231-41.

documents in House 3 have been found in the immediate context of ceramic shards. While some of the documents from the North Building may have been thrown away and reused as filling in the construction of animal mangers next door (i.e., the text based on the *Acts of John*),[49] the majority of the Greek and Coptic documents have been found in close association with other textual fragments and next to the remains of large ceramic jars in the debris of the roof collapse (in particular in House 3, rooms 8, 9, and 10). The best explanation is, therefore, that papyrus archives were kept in jars and stored on the roof. With the abandonment of the house, the collection of jars on the roof was forgotten and subsequently tumbled down with the collapse of the roof. Environmental factors, such as the wind or nesting rats, led to a wider distribution of the fragments over the various rooms in the house(s).

Following this observation is the fact that we can show how letters of a particular author or his family were kept together (see Appendix 2). Petros's letters, for example, were stored together. Several letters from Pamour's family were, likewise, kept in a single jar. Some of Orion's letters were kept together in one room (or presumably on its roof), while an adjacent room contained one other fragment of his letters. Most of the letters associated with Makarios derived from a single find location in House 3, with an exception found in room 3 instead of room 6, presumably because of postdisposition processes such as nesting rats and whirling winds.[50] Initially, however, these letters were kept together and not gradually disposed of during a longer period.

Eventually, the letters were left on the roof, or taken from the dumped material in the North Building and reused to raise the floor levels of House 1 (as happened with the text based on the *Acts of John*).[51] By that time, the value of the text was probably long forgotten. This is imaginable in the case of the grandmother's correspondence, which was kept on the roof, but it is more difficult to grasp in the case of the deposition of liturgical documents or sacred scriptures. Comparative practices from Oxyrhynchus, however, show that ancient individuals and communities had less scruples about discarding biblical manuscripts than we would sometimes expect.[52]

A final argument for the close relation between the physical find location and the content of the letters is found in the minor archaeological finds. We do not only encounter individual villagers in their papyrus correspondences, but we can trace their lives in the material culture of their houses. Two examples may illustrate how these rich sources overlap and offer additional information on the lives of the inhabitants: the carpenters of House 2 and the textile production in Houses 1–3.

House 2 comprised a number of wooden codices, one containing the text of the orations of Isocrates and the other an account book of a large local estate. These codices were produced locally, maybe even in this very house, as several archaeological finds point to

---

[49] Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 160-1.

[50] Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 108 and table 4 on page 20.

[51] Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 160-1.

[52] A. Luijendijk, "Sacred Scriptures as Trash: Biblical Papyri from Oxyrhynchus," *Vigiliae Christianae* 64, no. 3 (2010): 217 rebrands her discipline as "garbology" and asks "who discarded them [MB: biblical manuscripts], and why? And what does this imply for the attitude of Christians towards their scriptures?"

carpentry. Pieces of acacia wood, at various stages of its production, were found in nearby rooms. Carpenter's tools were found in a small box, together with wooden spindle whorls, a ceramic lamp, two fragments of inscribed wooden boards, and more fragments of worked acacia. The wooden codices with the account book and the Isocrates text were made from the same type of acacia wood.[53] Apart from wooden codices and woodworking tools, there is also papyrological evidence for carpenters in House 2. In documents from the 330s–350s CE, a carpenter named Gena acts as agent for Pausanias, a former magistrate of the capital of the oasis at Mothis (P.Kell.Gr. 4–7). A second group of documents belonged to the family of the carpenter Tithoes (P.Kell.Gr. 8–12 and P.Kell.Copt. 12) and dated from the second half of the fourth century. Finally, there is the request for a "well-proportioned and nicely executed ten-page notebook" in a letter from House 3.[54] It is not impossible that this request was aimed at one of the carpenters next door. As many Manichaean documents were written on wood, their connections to the neighbors must have been excellent, even though we have to admit that we cannot directly connect the carpentry tools of wooden codices to one of the carpenters known by name.

Carpentry is not the only occupation attested in both the papyri and minor archaeological finds from these houses. Material evidence for weaving is also abundant. Fragments of textile were found in almost every room and textile production is also attested in the papyrological sources, in architectural features, and in archaeological objects. Weaving was without question part and parcel of the lives of Kellites, for some as a domestic activity but for many also as a source of income. A wooden comb was found in front of the entrance of House 2, as were loom weights and cotton fibers.[55] Several holes in the walls of Houses 1–3 have been identified as gaps for warping frames, and the remains of wooden wall fittings at the door of room 4 in House 1 may have served a similar purpose.[56] Some of the inhabitants of these houses were clearly involved in weaving; others were even professionally involved in the textile industry of the oasis.

Papyrological evidence referring to the weaving process has been attested in abundance. One of the letters, for example, refers to a *sticharion* (a shirt or a tunic) and a *kolobion* (sleeveless tunic), as the author orders "tailor it for a cowl. Provide warp for it" and

---

[53] For the entire paragraph see the notes of Colin Hope in Bagnall, *KAB*, 9; J. Whitehorne, "The Kellis Writing Tablets: Their Manufacture and Use," in *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt: The Proceedings of the Seventeenth Classical Colloquium of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum, Held on 1-4 December 1993*, ed. D. M. Bailey (Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman archaeology, 1996), 240-45.

[54] Πινακίδιον εὔμετρον καὶ ἀστῖον δέκα πτυχῶν πέμψον … P.Kell.Gr. 67.17-19.

[55] More large loom weights were found in Area C, indicating that weaving was also an important feature of the activities in this region (structure C/2/1). K. Hickson, "Excavations in Area C at Ismant el-Kharab in 1996-1997," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 165.

[56] Bowen, "Texts and Textiles: A Study of the Textile Industry at Ancient Kellis." 18-28. This publication on the textile industry in Kellis is also available online http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/texts-and-textiles-a-study-of-the-textile-industry-at-ancient-kellis/ (accessed April 2016); Hope, "Three Seasons of Excavation," 168. I will follow Bowen's use of "textile industry" to designate large scale production or manufacturing of textiles for commercial purposes, even though this was primarily a domestic enterprise which shows little resembles with modern "industries."

"take it and see whether it is possible to dye it."[57] Textiles and the production of garments seem to be central issues in the correspondence of these households. One of the business accounts, found in House 3, refers to garment manufacture and reveals that the author hired two female weavers (Heni and Kame, P.Kell.Copt. 44.5–6). Another letter indicates that female slaves worked as weavers (P.Kell.Gr. 19a.8–11).[58] Presumably this letter reflects more than simply the domestic economy of a household. Professional weaving and textile industry is attested in the KAB, which refers to a weaving workshop (KAB 1266). One of the children of House 2 was sent to a monastery to learn the "linen weaving trade" as a profession (P.Kell.Gr. 12.21). Linen weaving and textile trade belonged to the professional and domestic world of Kellites.[59]

The combination of archaeological finds in the houses with the papyrological information about carpentry and weaving connects the content of the letters with the find location. Archaeology and papyrology, in this case, provide two windows into the daily lives of the inhabitants of these houses.

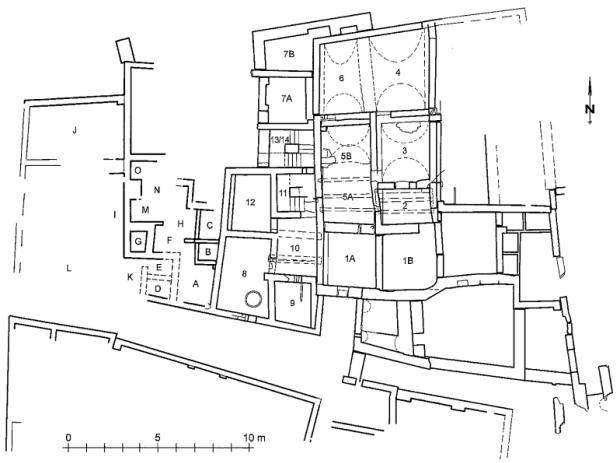

Figure 7: Plan of House 4. Courtesy of the Daklheh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from the DOP website: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/house-4/, last updated May 7, 2013.

[57] … ϩⲛⲧⲥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲉϥⲧ’ ⲧ ϣϯⲧ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲥ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲕⲁⲕⲉⲗⲟⲃⲓ .. and.. ϫⲓⲧϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲛⲟ ϫⲉ ⲟⲩⲛ ϣϭⲁⲙ ⲛ̄ϯ ϫ̣ⲏϭⲉ ⲁⲣ̣ⲁ̣[ϥ…. P.Kell.Copt. 18.6-9.

[58] On this text, see the new edition and commentary in M. Bergamasco, "P.Kell.G. 19.A, Appendix," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 121 (1998): 193-96. In one of the second-century census returns from Kellis a woman is self-identified as "spinner." R. S. Bagnall, K. A. Worp, and C. A. Hope, "Family Papers from Second-Century A.D. Kellis," *Chronique d'Égypte* 86 (2011): 234.

[59] The passage in P.Kell.Gr. 12.21 is largely reconstructed: λινου- [φικὴν which presupposes a word like τέχνην, according to the editor. Worp, *GPK1,* 38. On textiles in the oasis, see also the evidence from Trimithis House B2, see A. L. Boozer, "Woven Material," in *A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis / Amheida House B2*, ed. A. L. Boozer (New York: New York University Press / Ancient World Digital Library, 2015), 397-404.

3.3.2 Houses 4 and 5

House 4 was located east of the temple gate and provided an opportunity to examine domestic structures in another section of the village (see Table 4 on the chronology). The excavations concentrated on a number of central rooms, most of which were barrel vaulted. The building comprised twenty-two rooms and strongly resembles Houses 1–3. The large number of rooms and the wall alignment make it difficult to define the layout of the house. It appears to have contained at least three semiseparated units with their own entrances. The preservation of the building includes the first-floor level, which could be accessed from rooms 13–14 and 11. The central rooms 2, 3, and 5A and B were rectangular and barrel vaulted. Just like in Houses 1–3, the rooms were mud plastered and contained various niches, palm-rib shelves, and sections of white plaster around them.[60] Many inscribed objects and coins were found in deposits with ceramics, basketry, glass vessels, spindle whorls, textiles, and other objects. Most of these were dated in the fourth century, although some of the ceramics in subfloor deposits indicate occupation from the second and third century onwards. Some pieces of the faience date back as far as the first or early second century.[61]

Residential areas	Indication chronology
Area C/2 units	(early) second century
Area C/1 units	second half third century
Area B units	early second century–third century
Roman Villa (B/3/1)	(early) second century
Temple area unit D/8	second half fourth century
Houses 1–5 (Area A)	fourth century

Table 4: Chronology of the domestic units in Kellis. [62]

Several documents relating to Christianity and Manichaeism in the oasis have been found in House 4. In room 1b, a wooden board was found with fragments of a Manichaean psalm and a devotional postscript (T.Kell.Copt. 7). The identification of the text is not in question since this psalm resembles Manichaean psalms from Medinet Madi, mentions Mani as one of the supernatural figures, and was written in the same dialect as the other Manichaean documents (L4). Most of the other Coptic texts from House 4, however, were written in a modified southern version of Sahidic (P.Kell.Copt. 123, 124, 126, with the notable exception of 122). These Sahidic texts seem to correlate with non-Manichaean, Christian terminology (especially P.Kell.Copt. 124 and 126). Whether or not this linguistic correlation

[60] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 221-2 with one of the few published maps of the house.

[61] C. A. Hope, "A Brief Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1992-93," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 4 (1993): 25-26.

[62] These are general indications based on Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 199-229. The area B and C units appear to have been inhabited during the second and third century, but may have been abandoned end of the third century. Ceramics from the fourth century indicate reuse as stable. On the size of the enclosures B/1 and B/3 see G. E. Bowen et al., "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2007): 29.

was characteristic of the socioreligious divisions in Late Antiquity is yet to be addressed in full (see Chapter 5).[63]

House 5, located at a distance from Houses 1–3 and 4, next to the Large East Church, yielded only a few inscribed materials. The excavations could only clear rooms 1 and 5 to floor level because of the instability of the walls. As with House 4, the upper level of House 5 was preserved and reached by the staircase in room 4. The central rooms of the house were presumably accessible through rooms 6 and 5. All rooms, except for the staircase, were barrel vaulted. The few Greek ostraka found in House 5 derived from the fourth century (O. Kell. 59, 86, 142), but no documents relating to Christian or Manichaean communities were found.[64]

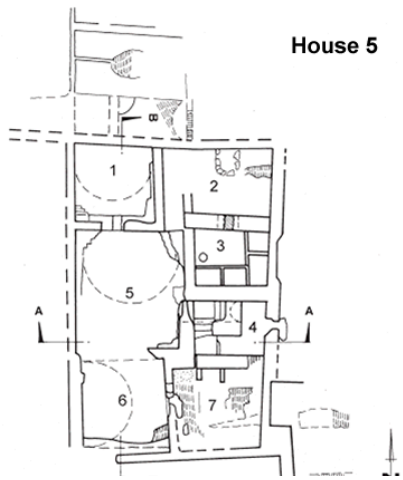

Figure 8: Plan of House 5 (Area A). Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from the DOP website: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/house-5/, last updated May 7, 2013 (modified).

3.3.3 Other Residential Units from the Roman Period

Houses 1–5 from Area A were not the only residential units excavated by the Dakhleh Oasis Project. The large structures in Areas B and C contained another type of residential units. It is not always possible to discern discrete units in the large enclosures of Area B, which are characterized by many small rooms around large communal courts. Despite this layout, some independent units within the enclosure are visible. They reveal the Roman orientation of the wealthy elite, as B/1/2 was modeled after a Roman peristyle house and B/3/1 (the so-called Roman Villa) followed the Roman *tetrastyle* atrium house style. Other identifiable units, such as B/1/4 and smaller units in C/1 and C/2, were built in a simple architectural style that is also attested at Amheida. Regarding these smaller units, there has been some

[63] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 263-4 where they also suggest the wooden board was found near the surface and may not have belonged to the inhabitants of the building.

[64] C. A. Hope (with contributions by O. E. Kaper and H. Whitehouse), "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 238.

debate on whether they had open or roofed courts, which may determine whether they reflected a more traditional Egyptian style.[65]

Area C, although only partly excavated, comprised residential and light-industrial sections of the village. The papyrus evidence dates to the second or third century.[66] Most of this area consists of structures with open courts, flanked by small rectangular rooms with flat roofs.[67] Inscribed material from these rooms derived mostly from the third or fourth century and was found among animal droppings, which suggests secondary usage, while ostraka from the early second century belonged to a layer with domestic waste.[68] Some of these ostraka attest to the poll tax at Kellis, including details of particular families in the second century (O.Kell.30–33). Some documents from a unit nearby relate to a single family, the children of Tithoes and Talaeis, presumably living in C/2/5 during the period 111/2–146/7 CE.[69] Like the houses in Area A, their house contained a number of wooden boards, although this time without inscribed text. Among the domestic objects in the roof collapse of C/2/8 were wooden spindle whorls, mud loom weights, wooden toggles, mud jar sealings, and the body of a terracotta female figurine.[70] This material resembles the domestic waste found in the deposits in the fourth-century houses in Area A.

---

[65] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 225; P. Davoli, "Classical Influences on the Domestic Architecture of the Graeco-Roman Fayyum Sites," in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, ed. A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope, and B. E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 173-84.

[66] Hope and Bowen, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," 176; Hope, "The Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in 1998/9: A Brief Report," 59-66.

[67] More specifically identified is the domestic unit in C/2/1 with a hearth and room for animals, dating to the third century. C/1/1 also had a domestic function with fifteen rooms arranged around a central room, leading to a chain of connected smaller rooms. Hickson, "Excavations in Area C," 157-61; Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 211.

[68] M. A. J. Eccleston, "Metalworking at Kellis: A Preliminary Report," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 143-49.

[69] Hope, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," 178. See the texts in Bagnall, Worp, and Hope, "Family Papers," 228-53.

[70] See images 10 a-e in Hope and Whitehouse, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 240. C. A. Hope (with Appendices by H. Whitehouse and A. Warfe), "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2005," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 16 (2005): 35-83.

Another domestic unit was found on the northwest corner of the inner *temenos* of the Main Temple. A domestic structure (D/8) of about thirteen rooms was built close to the temple enclosure. The building comprised three rooms to the west of an open court and several rooms to the east, accessible through an entrance room giving out unto the lane to the north. Two sets of rooms formed discrete blocks, to be entered via a door to the west and through room 8 respectively. While most rooms had open roofs, rooms 7 and 14 and rooms 1 and 3 were barrel vaulted. A fourth-century date has been suggested for the occupation of this unit.[71] Just like the other fourth-century houses, this unit yielded large quantities of inscribed material, including a horoscope for the year 392 CE.[72] Noteworthy among these finds is a fragment with Syriac writing and the reference to the *Apostolos* in a personal letter (P.Kell.Copt. 127). Both point to a connection to Houses 1–3, where similar documents were found (compare P.Kell.Syr. 1 and P.Kell.Syr./Gr. 1). A papyrus with Psalm 9 (LXX) from D/8 may have been used by Manichaeans and Christians alike, even though Worp assumes it is more easily explained in a non-Manichaean setting.[73]

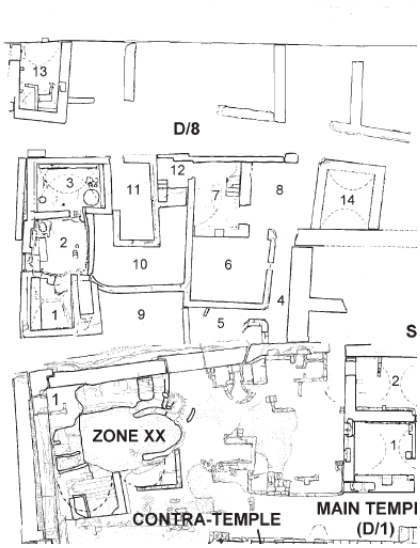

Figure 9: Plan of house D/8. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from the DOP website: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/main-temple/, last updated May 7, 2013 (modified).

The Roman Villa (B/3/1) was a large domestic unit within one of the enclosures of Area B. Excavation commenced in the 2005–2006 season, revealing an elaborate complex of twenty-two rooms, most of which contained painted decorations on the wall and ceiling plaster. These decorations will be discussed in section 3.4.2, for they bring a strong Classical or Roman decorative style to the fore. The architecture followed the Roman pattern of atrium houses,

[71] Hope, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," 199-204.

[72] Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 234.

[73] K. A. Worp, "Psalm 9.22-26 in a 4th-Century Papyrus from the Western Desert in Egypt," *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no. 3 (2016): 1-6. His argument about the Manichaean rejection of the Old Testament psalms is problematic, see Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition*, xv, xxxviii-xxxix.

although an *impluvium* did not match the local climate.[74] The heart of the unit lies in the two central rooms that gave access to other rooms on the east side and the west side. Numerous fragments of statuettes have been found in these rooms, like the fragments of a life-size statue and several pedestals with the feet of smaller statuettes, one painted in pink colors. The fragments were ornamented with elements like a snake bracelet, and another statue was holding a cornucopia. All these statuettes are Classical in style, just like the wall paintings.[75] The pottery came mostly from the second century, with some evidence for reuse in the fourth century. The size and decorations of this Roman Villa suggest it was inhabited by wealthy members of the elite during the second and third century CE. Their cultural repertoire was in no way restricted to the oasis setting but reached out to Classical Greek imagery and Roman decorative styles. It is therefore in many ways the opposite of the architecture of the fourth-century houses of Area A, which were more simple and almost without decorations.

Before we return to the cultural repertoires attested in the material culture, a statistical question should be addressed. How many people would have lived in these houses at a time? Should we imagine one family or multiple families under one roof? It has been calculated on the basis of the census returns that on average, the main resident family in a household would have entailed 4.3 persons, with village families usually a little larger than urban families.[76] Extended families or multiple families with slaves would have had an average size of about ten people. Although about 43.1 percent of the households consisted of small families (often nuclear households with unmarried children), the ideal remained a multiple-family household. The high mortality rate led to 15 percent of households consisting of only the nuclear family with coresident kin, and 21 percent of households including more than one married couple. Based on these calculations, Bagnall and Frier established that 42.8 percent of all people would have lived in households with multiple families.[77] Brothers or sisters, with their partner and children, lived together in their parental home.[78] Van Minnen has argued that second-century houses of four or five rooms would have been shared with four to five people, which would mean that the Area A houses in Kellis might have housed up to eleven or twelve people.[79] Such numbers are likely to have

---

[74] C. A. Hope and H. Whitehouse, "A Painted Residence at Ismant el-Kharab (Kellis) in the Dakhleh Oasis," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 318.

[75] C. A. Hope et al., "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2006," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2006): 26.

[76] Bagnall and Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt*, 67-8, as discussed in R. Alston, "Houses and Households in Roman Egypt " in *Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and Beyond*, ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill and R. Laurence (Portsmouth: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1997), 33-34. A summary is found in M. Malouta, "Families, Households and Children," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 296-7.

[77] Bagnall and Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt*, 62-3; S. R. Huebner, "Household Composition in the Ancient Mediterranean - What Do We Really Know?," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. B. Rawson (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 73-91.

[78] Bagnall and Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt*, 57-64 and 68.

[79] P. van Minnen, "House-to-House Enquiries: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Roman Karanis," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 100 (1994): 235-36.

varied considerably over time, as fertility and mortality rates were higher than most modern societies (see Chapter 8). Seasonal labor and migration, moreover, may have contributed to fluctuations in the household size.[80]

Another indication of what the composition of Kellite households looked like is offered in P.Kell.Gr. 13. This document, dated in 335 CE, contains a division of property between five parties: the three brothers Pekysis, Pebos, and Pachoumis, a half brother (?) Horos and their sister (?) Taoup.[81] Following the death of their father (P)alitous, the house was divided among them as part of the inheritance. The documents allotted to Pekysis a room on the second floor and one of the cellars, to Pebos a room at the level of the upper chambers and a section of the granary, the other half probably owned by Taoup. Horos received a room in the gateway. Together they held the undivided ownership of other sections of the house. The contract notes that any offense against the (voluntary but definitive) agreement could be treated with a penalty of at least a thousand talents. Unfortunately, the heavy mutilation of the papyrus hampers further identification of the allotments. Thus far, no Roman houses in Kellis have been found containing gateways and granaries.[82] Nevertheless, the image of multiple brothers and sisters living with their partners and children in one house, carefully dividing the available spaces between them, is the most probable setting for the daily life of most Kellites.[83]

3.4 Cultural-Religious Repertoires

The inhabitants of fourth-century Kellis lived in a complex sociocultural environment. Despite the somewhat remote geographical location, their economic and cultural lives were far from simple or singular. The architectural, archaeological, and art-historical evidence has shown a cultural dynamic between archaizing tendencies, independence, and innovation. Following Ellen F. Morris in her usage of the metaphor of islands to understand the oasis, we can see a tension between the remoteness of the oasis and the strong cultural ties with the Greco-Roman world *at large*.[84] Separated from the mainland of Egypt by long journeys through the desert, the inhabitants of the oasis showed an "extraordinary independence of mind," navigating between a strong attachment to their cultural past and the desire for a Classical or Roman education and lifestyle.[85] This double attachment, or their "island mentality," is visible in the art and archaeology of ancient Kellis. The preserved finds speak not only to wealth, or a broad cultural orientation, but also to the variety of religious

[80] On the household size of B2 at Amheida, see A. L. Boozer, *Amheida II: A Late Romano-Egyptian House.*

[81] Taoup employed the same hypographeus as Pachoumis, which may indicate she was his full sister. The four men are described as συγκληρονόμοι, and do not further appear in the Kellis letters from House 2. Pekysis has Stonios the priest from Kellis signing for him, while Pachoumis and Taoup employ someone from the city of Hibis as hypographeus. Could they have come from elsewhere in the oasis?

[82] Large quantities of millet have been found in storage bins at C/2/4.

[83] See the families and papyri cited in Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 204-5.

[84] E. F. Morris, "Insularity and Island Identity in the Oases Bordering Egypt's Great Sand Sea," in *Thebes and Beyond: Studies in Honour of Kent R. Weeks*, ed. Z. Hawass and S. Ikram (Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities Press, 2010), 129-44.

[85] O. E. Kaper, "The Western Oases," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 721-28.

repertoires of the inhabitants of the village. In this section, the evidence for these cultural and religious repertoires will be laid out to contextualize the position of the Manichaeans of House 3.

Before delving into the material evidence for the various cultural and religious repertoires, a parenthetical comment should be made. To classify diverse material culture into cultural containers may be misleading, as our categories do not correspond one-on-one with their self-understanding. What does it mean to consider something Egyptian? When is something legitimately called a Hellenistic practice? Archaeologists have called into question the conceptualization of material culture into geographically organized repertoires.[86] Egyptian-looking objects, for example, could have been made in Rome for the local market and connoted a high social status instead of a cultural-geographic area. The cultural connotations of ancient customers were not necessarily similar to ours. By classifying various phenomena together into cultural-religious repertoires I hope to avoid a reified notion of solid cultures, religions, or traditions, while still pointing to the patterns and similarities within the material. As noted in the previous chapter, practices described as traditional Egyptian could have been performed by people who self-identified as Christian, Manichaean, or simply as residents of Kellis. Documents and practices from a celestial-power repertoire were likewise ordered, held and performed by villagers from various backgrounds. The following classification into various cultural and religious repertoires is therefore primarily heuristic and serves the purpose of illustrating diversity and interconnections, instead of solid cultural boundaries.[87]

3.4.1 Traditional Egyptian Religion

One of the sensational discoveries of the Dakhleh Oasis Project is the Roman temple of Tutu at Kellis (in Area D). Tutu (Greek Tithoes) was venerated as the main deity of the village, together with his mother Neith and his consort Tapsais. The temple complex originated in the early Roman period and was perhaps built under Nero and extended under Hadrian. With further extensions in the second and third century, the sanctuary continued to function until the second or third decade of the fourth century.[88] The enclosure with the sanctuary

---

[86] M. J. Versluys, "Haunting Traditions. The (Material) Presence of Egypt in the Roman World," in *Reinventing 'the Invention of Tradition'? Indigenous Pasts and the Roman Present*, ed. D. Boschung, A. W. Busch, and M. J. Versluys (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015), 132-46. A similar critique on cultural containers is found in V. Stolcke, "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rethorics of Exclusion in Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 1-24.

[87] The usage of traditional mythological elements by Christian monastic scribes is discussed in depth in Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 184-231. Many of the observations in the following sections should be read in dialogue with the evidence for traditional Egyptian religion and Christianity in Amheida. M. Brand, "Religious Diversity in the Egyptian Desert: New Findings from the Dakhleh Oasis," *Entangled Religions* 4 (2017): 17-39.

[88] C. A. Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," in *Egyptian Religion: The Last Thousand Years, Part II. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur*, ed. W. Clarysse, A. Schoors, and H. Willems (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 810. By the end of the third century, most Egyptian temples were in decline, even though local practices as festivals and oracles continued for some time. The previous consensus about the correlation between the decline of the temple cults and the rise of Christianity is no longer accepted. In

contained four associated shrines, a contra-temple, a forecourt, and a west court with additional rooms. A sacred processional road passes through the monumental entrances of the *temenos*. Egyptian and Roman architectural features characterize the buildings, with painted decorations depicting Roman and Egyptian deities, as well as life-size statues surrounding the processional road.[89]

Isis, Serapis, and Amun played a significant role in the sacred landscape of the oasis. Isis and Serapis were worshiped in the Kharga Oasis (Dush), just like Amun (throughout Kharga and at Deir el-Haggar and Ein Birbiyeh).[90] The absence of representations of Tutu and Amun together may have been caused by their close link, in which Tutu became the accessible form of the high god Amun-Re in Kellis.[91] In the temple complex, Tutu was worshiped together with his consort, while he featured next to Tapsais in the Main Temple, with Neith in the birth shrine (*mammisi*). Neith and Tapsais were venerated in the west temple.[92]

But what kind of deity was Tutu and how did his cult function in the village setting? Tutu was a protective deity, known in some subsidiary cults in the Nile valley, but was only venerated as a principle deity in Kellis.[93] In temple inscriptions, Tutu was hailed as the protector against demons and the "Agathos Daimon in this town," while his consort Tapsais was praised as "the queen Tapsais, the mistress of the city."[94] Many depictions portray Tutu as a sphinx, like the limestone fragment found in the sanctuary. The surface of this limestone image was coated with an oily mud layer. Such oily layers covered other statues of deities in the temple, so it presumably derived from oil libations as part of the cult's practices.[95] This body of evidence for traditional Egyptian religious practice was supplemented by wooden

---

contrast to the situation in the Fayyum, there is ample evidence for Roman period temples in the western desert, as building activities took place under the Roman emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius in the second century, as well as third-century modification to the temples at Hibis and Kellis. O. E. Kaper, "Temple Building in the Egyptian Desert During the Roman Period," in *Living on the Fringe*, ed. O. E. Kaper (Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 1998), 151.

[89] These statues included Isis, Serapis and a stele of Tutu as a Sphinx, as well as a life-size bust of Isis-Demeter. O. E. Kaper, "The God Tutu at Kellis: On Two Stelae Found at Ismant el-Kharab in 2000," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004), 311-21.

[90] Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," 842.

[91] O. E. Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu: A Study of the Sphinx-God and Master of Demons with a Corpus of Monuments* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 112.

[92] Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 110. A second or third-century bronze, of excellent quality, representing Tapsais indicates her role next to Tutu, just like the sandstone depiction of the Roman emperor Pertinax (short reign in 193 CE) offering her a *sistrum.* O. E. Kaper and K. A. Worp, "A Bronze Representing Tapsais of Kellis," *Revue d'Egyptologie* 46 (1995), 107-18; Hope, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," 180 plate 5.

[93] Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*.

[94] Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 76, R-61 and R-48 Tapsais in R-54.

[95] Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," 817.

and ceramic fragments of portable barque shrines (modeled after a type of boat), which were used during a regional festival to celebrate Tutu at Kellis and some other Dakhleh towns.[96]

It is noteworthy that a large number of protective deities were venerated in the oasis. Primarily, the cult of Seth, the "lord of the oasis," at the temple of Mut el-Kharab (Mothis) is remarkable, since the veneration of Seth was supposedly suppressed in the Nile valley after the 25th Dynasty.[97] More local characteristics include the usage of vaulted shrines, which were generally associated with funerary cults in the Nile valley, but appear regularly in the oasis, for example the impressively decorated *mammisi* of Tutu next to the Main Temple of Kellis.[98]

The decoration of this *mammisi* shows more traits of a local tradition: it only depicts one Pharaoh, among over four hundred supernatural figures. Outside Egypt, the role of the Pharaoh was more often suppressed in decorations, but it is exceptional within Egypt. The *mammisi* decoration was furthermore divided equally between Pharaonic-style paintings and Roman-style wall paintings; the latter were also found in the residential units and are dated to the early second century by Olaf Kaper.[99] Simpler versions of this design, known as the panel style, were used throughout the temple precinct.[100] This combination of styles was unheard of in the Nile valley, but occurred more often in oases' temples and tombs, reflecting their greater cultural freedom in decorative choices. The tomb of Petosiris at Qaret el-Muzawwaqa illustrates this curious mixture of cultural elements, as it depicts Anubis, Isis, and Nephthys next to the deceased on a funerary bed. Tutu, in his guise as a sphinx, was also depicted. The deceased is depicted in Egyptian dress, but also in a Roman-style painting, dressed in a Roman toga at an offering scene. This mixture of styles also characterized the zodiac ceiling of both chambers as well as the decoration at the neighboring tomb of Petubastis.[101]

---

[96] Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 153-4. On the portable shrines see Hope, "Objects from the Temple of Tutu," 836, 840-1.

[97] Kaper, "The Western Oases," 722; Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2001," 49; Hope, "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2005," 47. New research into the cult of Seth in the oasis is commencing, funded by the Australian Research Council (2015).

[98] Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724.

[99] Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724. On the decorations, see C. A. Hope et al., "Excavations at Mut El-Kharab and Ismant el-Kharab in 2001-2," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002): 102-5. On the suppressed role of the Pharaoh, see O. E. Kaper, "Galba's Cartouches at Ain Birbiyeh," in Tradition and Transformation: Egypt under Roman Rule, ed. K. Lembke, M. Minas-Nerpel, and S. Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 181-201.

[100] Helen Whitehouse, "Mosaics and Painting in Graeco-Roman Egypt," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 1025 notes parallels at the temenos wall of the temple at Deir el-Haggar and the rock shrine at Ain el-Labakha. Cf. Hope, "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," 191 and plate 14.

[101] H. Whitehouse, "Roman in Life, Egyptian in Death: The Painted Tomb of Petosiris in the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Living on the Fringe*, ed. O .E. Kaper (Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 1998), 253-70. On this tomb see also C. Riggs, *The Beautiful Burial in Roman Egypt: Art, Identity, and Funerary Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 161-5; M. S. Venit, *Visualizing the Afterlife in the Tombs of Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 157-182.

Other features of the temple complex likewise highlight local traditions with archaizing tendencies, like the way the cartouches of emperors were written in the temples.[102] The calendar reform under Augustus was adopted in the oasis but they continued to make use of the traditional Egyptian calendar, even as late as in a horoscope from 392 CE.[103] Combined with the decorative program laid out above, this suggests that the inhabitants of the oasis had greater cultural freedom to navigate between traditional Egyptian practices—sometimes even adopting them anachronistically to stress their Egyptianness—and elements from the Classical and Roman world.

One of the most interesting figures found in the temple papyri is a certain Aurelius Stonios, a priest from the temple of Tutu, active during the turn of the late third/early fourth century. This "Aurelius Stonios son of Tepnakhthes, priest" is last mentioned in papyrus P.Kell.Gr. 13, where he acted as a witness in a legal contract from House 2 (335 CE). Presumably, he is the same man as the priest Stonios summoned by the local chief priest in one of the temple papyri.[104] He is also the author of at least two petitions to the governor of the Thebaid (dating from 288–300 and 300–335 CE).[105] These petitions derived from the temple archive, which contained at least three letters from the chief priest who resided in the nome capital. In these letters, he ordered people to come to him immediately upon receiving the letter, which suggests the presence of a fairly stable temple hierarchy. The chief priest must have had some influence, since two of the letters addressed the village heads (*comarchs*) of Kellis.[106] Another text contains a report sent to Valerius Sarapion, a provincial official, referring to circumcised adult priests and the presence of still-uncircumcised infants.[107] Together, these texts mention a large number of priestly offices in Kellis. They include *pastophoros* (lector priests),[108] *prophetes*,[109] and a priest scribe[110]. The inclusion of infants, the uncircumcised priests in training, suggests that they expected a new generation of priests in the early years of the fourth century.[111] These documents and ostraka contain at least twenty

---

[102] Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724.

[103] Discussed in Kaper, "The Western Oases," 724. See also the late third-century contract O.Kell.145 (294 CE, which gives its date 'according to the traditional Egyptian calendar'). Kaper also noted the hieroglyphic names of the Roman emperors Galba and Pertinax, which do not appear outside the oasis. The horoscopes are published in K. A. Worp and T. de Jong, "A Greek Horoscope from 373 A.D.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 106 (1995): 235-40; Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 204n5.

[104] K. A. Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons* ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: 2002), no.1.

[105] Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," no. 4 and 5.

[106] Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," 334, no. 1-3 probably dating from between 300-335CE.

[107] Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," no. 10 dating after 304 CE.

[108] Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," no. 7.5, 10.5 and unpublished D/1/75, D/1/84, D/1/84.26. K. A. Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004), no. 98; 126; 134.

[109] Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," no. 6.2 and D/1/75/35, D1/84.12, D/1/84/21 including someone called Pachoumis, just as in text 6.2.

[110] Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," D/1/75.20.

[111] Text cited at Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," 346, no. 10. Discussed in G. E. Bowen, "Some Observations on Christian Burial Practices at Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 174.

names of the priests in Kellis.[112] Clearly, the temple remained an economically viable institution during the first two decades of the fourth century.[113]

The temple's influence on and integration into village life during Late Antiquity is difficult to assess. The frequent occurrence of the name of Tutu (Tithoes) in personal names suggests the prevalence of private veneration, but no definitive evidence is found in Kellis for the domestic worship of Tutu.[114] Connections between the temple area and the domestic residences can be seen in the attestation of votive figurines in the domestic settings. A second-century painted panel of Isis, found in the temple complex, probably derived from a domestic context and was given as votive gift to the temple.[115] The widespread images of Isis in temple decoration and in domestic contexts show how her cult was present at various layers of society in the oasis.[116] The majority of the terracotta figures found in Kellis derived from the Main Temple, but about one-third came from domestic settings.[117] At House 4, a terracotta bust of a deity, presumably Serapis, was found among the remains of niches with palm-rib shelves.[118] Not all of these figurines depict supernatural beings, as most of them have the shape of horses, people, or form only the base of a statuette. The bust of Serapis at House 4 is the most explicit example of figurines used for household religion. Other tentative evidence includes a third-century (?) ceiling plaster with images of Isis, Serapis, and Serapis-Helios. Since a graffito in this house mentions "leadership" (of a priesthood or an association?), this decorative scheme could have conveyed the owner's elevated social position as well as a religious function.[119] Although no explicit religious renderings have been found in rooms with decorations, the traces of oily mud attest to ritual practices that were more common in the temple complex.[120] Intriguingly, close to the entrance of the building an entire adult female goat was buried, presumably as sacrifice, since one of the

---

[112] Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, 12.

[113] Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 150.

[114] Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 146 and 79-86 on personal names.

[115] H. Whitehouse, "A Painted Panel of Isis," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992–1993 and 1993–1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 95-100; C. A. Hope, "Isis and Serapis at Kellis: A Brief Note," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 5 (1995): 37-42.

[116] O. E. Kaper, "Isis in Roman Dakhleh: Goddess of the Village, the Province, and the Country," in *Isis on the Nile. Egyptian Gods in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, ed. L. Bricault and M. J. Versluys (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 149-80.

[117] Stevens, "Terracottas from Ismant el-Kharab," 293. However, more recent excavations found a statuette of Isis and a anthropomorphic figurine in South tomb 4. Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 284.

[118] A. Stevens, "Terracottas from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2000), 294 and no. 1. Wrongly identified as Isis-Demeter, according to Kaper, "Isis in Roman Dakhleh," 173n74.

[119] Bowen et al., "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," 21-52. C. A. Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab, Dakhleh Oasis," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 21 (2010): 42.

[120] The excavators point to the similarity with the niches in some of the rooms at Karanis Hope and Whitehouse, "A Painted Residence," 318. For the use of oil A. Ross and B. Stern, "A Preliminary Report on the Analysis of Organic Materials from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 367-69.

scenes on the *mammisi* decoration depicts a sacrifice of a goat.[121] If this interpretation holds up with future explorations of this house, it would be the most explicit evidence for traditional rituals attested in the material culture of the Roman period households. The decorative scheme has also been interpreted, in light of the other finds, as reflecting the function of the house as a meeting place for a cult association.[122] Both suggestions call for further research, especially as there are a number of ceramic figurines found in Houses 1–5 that resemble Coptic figurines that may have been part of (Christian?) domestic religion.[123]

3.4.2 Classical Traditions from the Greek and Roman World

Kellites not only used the traditional Egyptian repertoire in their daily lives but also employed elements from Classical traditions beyond Egypt. Greek and Roman cultural influences are visible in decorative schemes, literary documents, school exercises, and Greek archaizing of personal names. Sometimes, these features carried a marked otherness, but often they would not have stood out. Greco-Roman influences had been part and parcel of Egyptian society for centuries. Classical education, therefore, belonged to the curriculum in late antique Kellis. Shrines I and III at the temple complex yielded remains of a local school: pens, ostraka, boards, and several school exercises. These two shrines, situated at the rear sides of the Main Temple, also preserved miniature codices with a text building on Homer, mathematical exercises, and a list with Greek verbs. From the mistakes in the exercises we can conclude that they functioned in the context of a school rather than a full-fledged scriptorium. Documents such as the Isocrates codex, a copy of Homer, and other texts in various Roman houses reveal that the influence of Classical literature extended beyond this late antique school setting.[124]

The Classical texts found in the Roman Villa indicate that the inhabitants received a Classical training, or pursued this for their children. This is paralleled in one of the houses at Trimithis, which had a school next door. This school building yielded not only many school exercises on ostraka, but had poetic texts written in red ink on the walls.[125] The *dipinto* consisted of five columns of text, framed by instructions to the students to imitate the text.

---

[121] Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations," 44.

[122] H. Whitehouse, "A House, but Not Exactly a Home? The Painted Residence at Kellis Revisited " in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, ed. A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope, and B. E. Parr (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 243-54.

[123] Stevens, "Terracottas from Ismant el-Kharab," no. 20 and 35. Stevens notes that the lack of Nile sediments shows local production. On the continuation of these figurines in an Ancient Christian domestic religion, see D. Frankfurter, "Female Figurines in Early Christian Egypt: Reconstructing Lost Practices and Meanings," *Material Religion* 11, no. 2 (2015): 190-223.

[124] On the documents from Shrine I, see C. A. Hope and K. A. Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," *Mnemosyne* 59, no. 2 (2006): 226-258. On the documents and setting from Shrine III, see K. A. Worp and C. A. Hope, "A New Fragment of Homer," *Mnemosyne* 51 (1998): 206-10. Recently reported are papyrus fragments from the *Odyssey* and Demosthenes' *In Aphobum*. Hope et al., "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations," 27. These texts have not yet been edited and published and therefore do not appear in the list in the appendix.

[125] R. Cribiore, P. Davoli, and D .M. Ratzan, "A Teacher's Dipinto from Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis)," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 21 (2008): 179-91.

The first epigram received some extra attention because of its reference to "god" in the singular. The text in the first column is translated as:

> Here I withdraw near the sources of the sacred leaves. But may god grant my wishes that you all learn the Muses' honeyed works, with all the Graces and with Hermes son of Maia reaching the full summit of rhetorical knowledge. Be bold, my boys: the great god will grant you to have a beautiful crown of manifold virtue.[126]

Could this "god" have referred to the Christian god? Cribiore rejects the identification with Hermes Trismegistos, who often carried the epithet "great" and is identified with Thoth, the god of rhetoric as well as the city deity of Trimithis. Instead, she thinks it "seems very likely that the 'god' is the Christian God."[127] Such an identification would place the schoolmaster in the fourth-century dynamic of Christian teachers utilizing mythological gods and classicizing literature, despite resistance of some Ancient Christian authors. A similar argument has been made about a poetic adaptation of Homer, found in Kellis, which was presumably used by a local schoolmaster in his educative program.[128] Just like with the text from Trimithis, connections have been suggested between this adaptation of Homer and Christianity. Some scholars have recognized elements of the "Pater noster" in the text, in particular in the sentence: "Father Zeus, give us bread."[129] Both identifications, however, are tentative and hardly grounded in the texts themselves. What these documents show, even without the Christian connection, is that Classical literature was appreciated at Kellis and Trimithis, and was used with some creative freedom in an educational setting.[130]

A Classical and Roman cultural taste is also tangible in the decoration of the Roman Villa and the colonnaded court at Kellis. This decorative program reveals a strong interest in Classical themes and even the adaptation of the well-known Pompeian panel style. The excavated sections of the colonnaded court revealed a long central room with double columns and decorations. Fragments of plaster show how white plaster layers with pink painted sections and fragments of Corinthian capitals were used. Other rectangular, painted panels with yellow or pale-blue backgrounds were framed by black lines and fictive columns. These decorations depicted flora, fauna, and anthropomorphic figures. In one of these panels, a female bust with a plumed helmet was depicted and another large section depicts birds and foliage on a yellow or red background.[131] At the Roman Villa, similar panels portrayed Isis and Serapis-Helios, flanked by geometric patterns.[132] The geometric

---

[126] Cribiore, Davoli and Ratzan, "A Teacher's Dipinto,"186.

[127] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 187 (Cribiore).

[128] Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 233.

[129] Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 247.

[130] Other school exercises include O.Kell. 153, 157, 161. More texts from the school at Trimithis are published as R. Cribiore and P. Davoli, "New Literary Texts from Amheida, Ancient Trimithis (Dakhla Oasis, Egypt)," *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 187 (2013): 1-14.

[131] Hope, "The Roman-Period Houses," 205-6.

[132] The decorated panels with painted plaster depict scenes from Greek literature: Perseus rescuing Andromeda, Odysseus being recognized by Eurykleia, the Olympian deities witnessing the adultery of

patterns seem to have been particular to the oasis; the wide range of imagery related to vines and grapes could have connoted the wine production in the oasis. Other themes, like the acanthus leaf ornaments, did not immediately connote the local environment, but belonged to the "decorative vocabulary of Greece and Rome," which was also found in the decorative program of the house of Serenos at Trimithis.[133]

The Roman Villa at Kellis harbored another exceptional find: a Greek clay tablet. The unbaked clay tablet is the only one of its sort with a Greek text, which makes this a unique find, even though the content of the document is a fragmentary economic account not unlike many others on ostraka and papyri. Other unbaked clay tablets may have failed to survive the test of time, but the two tablets from the temple area and from Amheida suggest that the use of these materials may have been a local tradition.[134]

Finally, Classical traditions reverberate in the onomastics. Roger Bagnall has highlighted the number of Classical Greek names in the oasis. Just like the reintroduction of the clay tablets and the curious dating practices in the temple, these names reflect an archaizing tendency. Some of the names refer to Classical Greek figures like Peleus (the father of Achilleus), Kleoboulos, Pausanias, or Isocrates, while many other names had either an Egyptian theophoric or a Christian background. This revival of old Greek names at the end of the third century CE is far more marked in the Great Oasis than elsewhere. It shows a new attachment to Greek *paideia*.[135] The enthusiastic embrace of Classical Greek traditions, whether in their Hellenistic or Roman versions, was part of the educated elite's culture. It was not directly connected to religious affiliations, as there is ample evidence for Christians participating in Classical education elsewhere in Egypt.[136] Just like images of Greek or Roman deities, these choices may have connoted wealth, social status, or educational standing rather than religious affiliation.

3.4.3 Celestial Power, Amulets, and Spells

Horoscopes, amulets, and spells are strongly related to both traditional Egyptian traditions and Classical traditions from the Greek and Roman world. Many of these texts from Kellis relate to the power of the stars. In the early Roman period, tomb decorations depicted the

---

Aphrodite and Ares, Orpheus taming the animals and Zeus seducing Europa. These Classical themes are combined with a more local depiction of Polis, most probably the personification of Trimithis, as allusion to the role of the house owner in the administration. See also S. McFadden, "Art on the Edge: The Late Roman Wall Painting of Amheida, Egypt," in *Antike Malerei zwischen Lokalstil und Zeitstil*, ed. N. Zimmermann (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014), 359-70.

[133] H. Whitehouse, "Vine and Acanthus: Decorative Themes in the Wall-Paintings of Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 381. On the fourth-century house of Serenos, see Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 179-212.

[134] K. A. Worp and C. A. Hope, "A Greek Account on a Clay Tablet from the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Papyri in Honorem Johannis Bingen Octogenarii*, ed. H. Melaerts (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 474. Kaper, "The Western Oases," 726-27 with picture of the clay tablet from Amheida.

[135] Kaper, "The Western Oases," 729; Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 224-8. For Trimithis, Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 212-16 (Bagnall).

[136] Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 251-52.

zodiac, and a temple at the western end of the oasis contained an astronomical ceiling.[137] In daily life, the attachment to celestial power became visible in amulets, spells, or horoscopes. A short overview of the sources will show how this type of religious practices drew on various religious repertoires.

Two prominent examples of documents relating to celestial power are the calendars of good and bad days, found at House 3 (P.Kell.Gr. 82 and 83). Calendars of lucky and unlucky days had a long tradition in Egypt. They offered guidance as to which days should be avoided for meaningful activities and which days were auspicious. They indicated which days would be favorable to rituals, which days were considered very bad, and which days remained to be a matter of observation.

Apart from calendars of favorable and unfavorable days, eight fragments of Greek horoscopes have been found. Two horoscopes on ostraka are relatively short, but a wooden board contains an entire horoscope (P.Kell.Gr. 84), written on the back of a Coptic business account (P.Kell.Copt. 48) from House 3.[138] During more recent excavations, two more horoscopes on wooden boards were found, which were written in the same (professional) hand. Despite this professional appearance, they also share a number of mistakes.[139] These mistakes are most likely to be made by a student, which is entirely plausible since most of these documents have been found in an educational setting inside the temple complex.[140] In total, at least six of the horoscopes date from the period between 332 CE and 392 CE.[141] The fact that the horoscopes continue to use the Egyptian calendar alongside the Greek calendar shows the archaizing tendency of the oasis, as most horoscopes from the Nile valley came to use another style of dating. The practitioner was therefore aware of local variation in style, or missed out on the more recent developments in the Nile valley.[142]

The calendars and horoscopes attest to the flourishing of astrological practice in the fourth century. Previous studies of amulets and other types of invocations have observed how Christian monks followed in the footsteps of Egyptian temple priests and itinerant

---

[137] O. E. Kaper, "The Astronomical Ceiling of Deir El Haggar in the Dakhleh Oasis," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 81 (1995): 175-95.

[138] I. Gardner, A. Alcock, and W. P. Funk, eds., *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 266 argues that the Greek was written on top of the Coptic, since the business account in Coptic continued.

[139] Worp and de Jong, "A Greek Horoscope," 238 "astronomical dabbling," "skill is equally poor"; Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 206 "astronomical ignorance." They have suggested that the documents served an educational purpose, but it seems unlikely that a teacher would make these kind of mistakes in example-pieces. On education, apprenticeship and initiation in astrology see T. Barton, *Ancient Astrology* (London: Routledge, 1994), 134-41.

[140] The one exception is found in House 3, but it is written by the same hand as two of the other texts. Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 213.

[141] Excluding the two ostraka which contain only fragments. Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 213. This long continuation is interesting since astrology met with imperial opposition during Late Antiquity. Laws under Constants (C.Th. 9.16.4 of 357 and 9.16.6 of 358) explicitly forbid the consultation of astrologers. Continuation of these laws under Valentinian C.Th. 9.16.8 and Honorius C.Th. 9.16.12 of 409 CE. T. Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 9.

[142] Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 204n5.

ritual specialists by purveying amulets, custom made with liturgical or biblical features.[143] The Kellis horoscopes do not contain such specific features, but there are several reasons to think that they were ordered and used by the families and individuals known to be from Christian and Manichaean circles.

It is well known that some Early Christian theologians rejected astrology, while others embraced it within a monotheistic framework. Both Christians and Manichaeans paid elaborate attention to astrology and employed astrological metaphors in their theology and cosmology.[144] Manichaean sources include elaborate astrological systems of correspondences between the body and the cosmos (*melothesia*, see 1 Keph. 69 and 70).[145] They identified gods with stars and planets, attributed them with beneficent or maleficent influence on daily life, and struggled to articulate the balance between determinism, fate, and free will.[146] As Von Stuckrad argues, these astrological issues are best understood as a shared plural field of astrological discourses that allowed for multiple positions and interpretations.[147] Christians, Manichaeans, and others appropriated astrological traditions and altered them within their own religious frameworks and specific situations.

Allocating the Kellis horoscopes to distinct religious communities is not possible, due to the lack of personal names on the document. Who ordered a Greek horoscope for the birth

---

[143] Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 248-50; D. Frankfurter, "The Great, the Little, and the Authoritative Tradition in Magic of the Ancient World," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 16, no. 1 (2014): 11-30; Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 92-100; Th. S. de Bruyn, "P. Ryl. III.471: A Baptismal Anointing Formula Used as an Amulet," *Journal of Theological Studies* 57, no. 1 (2006): 108; A. Luijendijk, *Forbidden Oracles? The Gospel of the Lots of Mary* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

[144] Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology*. K. von Stuckrad, *Das Ringen um die Astrologie: Jüdische und christliche Beiträge zum antiken Zeitverständnis* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000). With a summary in K. von Stuckrad, "Jewish and Christian Astrology in Late Antiquity: A New Approach," *Numen* 47, no. 1 (2000): 1-40. Christians banned the use of scriptural texts for protective proposes at the Council of Laodicea, but literary as well as archaeological and epigraphical sources witness its widespread use. J. R. Strawbridge, "Early Christian Epigraphy, Evil, and the Apotropaic Function of Romans 8.31," *Vigiliae Christianae* 71 (2017): 315-29.

[145] Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction*, 62-68; H. G. Schipper, "Melothesia: A Chapter of Manichaean Astrology in the West," in *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 195-204. Earlier discussion in Stuckrad, *Das Ringen,* 743-56; Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 177-79; R. Beck, "The Anabibazontes in the Manichaean Kephalaia," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 69 (1987): 193-96; V. Stegemann, "Zu Kapitel 69 der Kephalaia des Mani," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37 (1938): 214-23; A. Panaino, "Astrologia e visione della volta celeste nel manicheismo," in *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi: "Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 249-95.

[146] Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology*, 3; Stuckrad, *Das Ringen,* 737-41. In particular noteworthy is the description of the Manichaeans by Mark the Deacon (Debate Manichaean electa Julia and the Christian bishop of Gaza, in the year 397 CE). Manichaeans "believe in horoscopes, fate, and astrology in order to be able to sin without fear since, according to them, we are not really accountable for sin, it is the result of a fateful necessity." Cited and translated in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no.32. See also 1 Keph. 46 and Hom. 30.2.

[147] K. von Stuckrad, "Interreligious Transfers in the Middle Ages: The Case of Astrology," *Journal of Religion in Europe* 1 (2008): 55.

of their child (the most common occasion for a horoscope)? Based on the find location(s), we cannot exclude the members of the Manichaean community (P.Kell.Gr. 82–84). In fact, an allusion to a celestial power in Matthaios's letter to his mother suggests familiarity with astrological discourse, as he refers to "whether they are dreams (?) or whether it is the sphere (ⲧⲥⲫⲉⲣⲁ)," they might "change and cast us once again towards you."[148] The hope for a benevolent influence of the stars and spheres visible in this letter must have been shared by others, regardless of their religious group. There is no explicit indication of Manichaeanness in this passage, even though it suggests a type of celestial power not unlike the allusions to notions of celestial determinism in the *Kephalaia* (1 Keph. 46, 117.32–118.12 and 48, 122.15), or the Syriac Manichaean fragments from Egypt.[149] Therefore, despite the absence of direct onomastic evidence, it is most likely that the Manichaeans of Kellis were involved in astrological discourse and, presumably, the use of Greek horoscopes.

The celestial power of the stars, or the divine providence of god(s), was not considered as written in stone. Rituals could be performed to influence fortune or move supernatural being(s) in one's favor. Many of these rituals have been classified as "magic," a category that is now widely recognized as problematic.[150] Amulets, spells, and magical alphabets are the material remains of religious practices that were often rejected by members of the institutional elite.[151] Despite this rhetorical rejection, the practitioners draw on

---

[148] ⲉⲓϣϫⲉ ⲛ̣̣..ⲥ̣ⲟⲩ ⲛ̣ⲉ ⲉⲓϣϫⲉ ⲧⲥⲫⲉⲣⲁ ⲧⲉ ⲛ̣̣ⲧ̣̣ⲱⲛ̣̣ ⲛ̣ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲛ ⲧ̣ⲁϫⲁ ⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲉϣⲓⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲛⲁϫⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲥⲁⲡ ϣⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄· P.Kell.Copt. 25.27-28. The editors note it is difficult to read ⲥⲓⲟⲩ (stars) and therefore suggest to read [ⲡⲉ]ⲥⲟⲩ, and translate "dreams." The editors suggest a general meaning of "a wish (combined with a certain fatalism?) that circumstances will contrive to bring them together again." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 192. Jean-Daniel Dubois translates "ou alors que ce soit des [rêves] ou la sphère de la [zoné]," in which he directly connects the (postulated) persecution with the demons in the zones or layers the soul passes in its ascent. J. D. Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios (P. Kell. Copt. 25)," in *Coptica, Gnostica, Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. L. Painchaud and P. H. Poirier (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 233. "Sphere" (ⲧⲥⲫⲉⲣⲁ) features in one of the Manichaean texts (P.Kell.Copt. 1, text A, line 6-8), but is also a common term in gnostic texts, see for example the relation between magic, astrology and "spheres" in the *Pistis Sophia*, discussed by J. van der Vliet, "Fate, Magic and Astrology in the *Pistis Sophia*, Chaps 15-21," in *The Wisdom of Egypt*, ed. A. Hilhorst and G.H. van Kooten (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 519-36. Note also that P.Kell.Syr/Copt. 2 deals with the moon-cycle, presumably in relation to the salvation of Light.

[149] The Allberry Fragments from the Cambridge University Library contain, most probably, an astronomical Manichaean text. N. A. Pedersen and J. M. Larsen, eds., *Manichaean Texts in Syriac* (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2013), 193-7.

[150] S. I. Johnston, "Review: Describing the Undefinable: New Books on Magic and Old Problems of Definition," *History of Religions* 43, no. 1 (2003): 50-54; D. Aune, "'Magic' in Early Christianity and Its Ancient Mediterranean Context: A Survey of Some Recent Scholarship," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 24 (2007): 229-94. With the exception of H.S. Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion," *Numen* 38, no. 2 (1991): 177-97.

[151] Among the papyri and ostraka are two examples of school exercises with the alphabet (O.Kell. 157 and P.Kell.Copt. 10). These exercises could have derived from a school, but can also be interpret as magical amulets. See notes at their editions Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, no.157. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 126-27. Manichaean rejections of magical practices are found in 1 Keph. 7 and CMC 137-40. P. A. Mirecki, I. Gardner, and A. Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," in *Emerging from Darkness*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 10-11 suggest that the author of P.Kell.Copt. 35 may have

elements from institutional or textual religion to bolster their authority. As result, these documents show an intriguing, shared religious *koine* focused on the anxieties of everyday life. Some of these documents employ Christian or Manichaean terminology, while others call on traditional Egyptian deities. The presupposed efficacy was sometimes influenced by the perceived origin of the spell, deity, or formulas, but the appropriation of such powerful elements happened beyond community boundaries.[152]

Text	Content	location
P.Kell.Gr. 85ab	Two magical formularies	House 3
P.Kell.Gr. 86	Fever amulet	House 3
P.Kell.Gr. 87	Fever amulet (copy of Gr. 85b?)	House 3
P.Kell.Gr. 88	Christian (?) liturgical document on a wooden board (amulet?)	House 3
P.Kell.Gr. 91	Greek Manichaean prayer of praise (amulet?)	Street near Houses 1–3
P.Kell.Gr. 92	Greek Manichaean amulet (?) or hymn	House 3
P.Kell.Gr. 93	Sethian invocation/scripture (?)	House 3
P.Kell.Gr. 94	Eulogy/amulet (?) on a wooden board	House 3
P.Gascou 84	Amulet (folded papyrus)	House 4
P.Gascou 85	Amulet (piece of a wooden board)	House 2
P.Gascou 86	Amulet	House 2
P.Gascou 87	Amulet	D/8
P.Gascou 88	Enigmatic text (magical?)	A/10/63
TM 700788	Page of Oracle Book (inv. P96.150) with mixture of names of Greek and Egyptian gods	D/8
P.Kell.Copt. 7	Sayings or amulet (?) (rolled papyrus text?)	House 3
P.Kell.Copt. 35	Personal (Manichaean) letter and magic spell	House 3
P.Kell.Copt. 56	Amulet against snake bite in a miniature papyrus codex	Temple area D/8
P.Kell.Copt. 126	Invocation (?)	House 4

Table 5: List of amulets and related texts from Kellis.

understood this polemic rejection as referring to Zoroastrian ritual, rather than as a full prohibition of "magic."

[152] The role of the practitioner in the composition of the spell is discussed by Shaul Shaked, who points to the incorporation of liturgical elements, or features from the Jewish Hekhalot texts, in some of the spells from incantation bowls. S. Shaked, ""Peace Be Upon You, Exalted Angels": On Hekhalot, Liturgy and Incantation Bowls," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 2 (1995): 197-219. For the Greaco-Egypian milieu, Richard Gordon argues against Frankfurter's "stereotype appropriation," by highlighting Egyptian priestly innovations and techniques to increase their personal authority. R. Gordon, "Shaping the Text: Theory and Practice in Graeco-Egyptian Malign Magic," in *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H.S. Versnel*, ed. H. F. J. Horstmanshoff, H. W. Singor, and F. T. van Straten (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 69-111; R. Gordon, "Reporting the Marvellous: Private Divination in the Greek Magical Papyri," in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, ed. H. G. Kippenberg and P. Schäfer (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 65-92. The literature on "Christian magic" is extensive and often highlights the problems of associating texts with institutional religious categories. Boustan and Sanzo, "Christian Magicians, Jewish Magical Idioms, " 217-40. On the dynamics between liturgy and magic, see J. van der Vliet, "Literature, Liturgy, Magic: A Dynamic Continuum," in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectural Trends*, ed. P. Buzi and A. Camplani (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2011), 555-74.

Traditional Egyptian, Christian, and Manichaean elements feature in the spells and amulets. P.Gascou 84 and 85 call on angelic figures; P.Kell.Copt. 56 adjures poison in the name of the "living God" and "Jesus, his Christ, the Nazarene"; P.Kell.Gr. 88 employs a section from a Christian liturgical book; P.Kell.Copt. 35 incorporates a spell in a Manichaean letter; and P.Kell.Gr. 87 calls on the Egyptian goddess of fertility and vegetation Thermuthis for the sake of Pamour and Mother Lo, both of whom we know as Manichaeans. The close relation between different types of religious repertoire has led at least one scholar to wonder whether (one of) these authors were "active participants in the Manichaean scribal mission," who strategically used the spell for the "success of the local mission."[153] The usage of familiar religious elements might have aided the transition of new converts to the Manichaean community. The spell in P.Kell.Copt. 35, for example, was aimed at the separation of a couple, for which "the One sitting above the Cherubim and Seraphim" was invoked.[154] A previous reconstruction of the situation, which suggested that the curse was meant to cut a woman loose from her network in order to integrate into the local Manichaean community, is merely speculation, as there is no explicit evidence for religious conversion at all.[155]

Recent work on the fuzzy boundaries between religious groups in antiquity has opened an alternative route. Rather than directly relating religious elements to a specific religious group, ritual specialists could draw on the various repertoires. A ritual specialist in the oasis saw no problem in invoking a traditional Egyptian deity for the health of two Manichaean individuals, nor was the spell in P.Kell.Copt. 35 specifically Manichaean in nature. [156] The use of specific supernatural names or citations from liturgy and scripture implies that the practitioners attributed a certain authority and efficacy to these features, which they creatively employed in the local ritual context.[157] The alterations in the amulet (?) P.Kell.Gr. 88 may reflect this process of appropriation, as it incorporates a Christian liturgical

---

[153] P. A. Mirecki, "Manichaeism, Scribal Magic and Papyrus Kellis 35," in *Gnostica et Manichaica*, ed. L. Cirillo and M. Knuppel (Wiesbaden Harrassowitz, 2012), 143-4. Contra previous interpretations in which Mirecki, Gardner and Alcock suggested that "they are not driven by particular evangelical fervour." Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 30.

[154] Τὸν καθήμενον ἐπάνω Χερουβὶν καὶ Σαρουφὶν P.Kell.Copt. 35.2-3.

[155] Contra Mirecki, "Manichaeism, Scribal magic and Papyrus Kellis 35"; Th. S. de Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian: Artefacts, Scribes, and Contexts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 229-33.

[156] K. A. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," in *Mélanges Jean Gascou*, ed. J. L. Fournet and A. Papaconstantinou (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2016), 478 points for example to the use of the names of Christian angels in "pagan" contexts. Angels are also called on in Iranian Manichaean incantation texts, including incantation bowls, see E. Morano, "Manichaean Middle Iranian Incantation Texts," in *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, ed. D. Durkin-Meisterernst, et al. (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004), 221-27; J. D. BeDuhn, "Magical Bowls and Manichaeans," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. M. Meyer and P. A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 419-34. Mirecki also notes the problem that the ritual text is "completely empty of any reference to Manichaean myth or Manichaean technical terms," but considers this as the integration of "indigenous ritual" for missional purposes. Mirecki, "Scribal Magic " 13.

[157] Frankfurter, "The Great, the Little, and the Authoritative Tradition," 12.

formula in a Manichaean context.[158] The introductory remarks made by Ouales in his letter accompanying a spell (P.Kell.Copt. 35) also hint at the decision-making process of the ritual specialist. Ouales used this freedom to send an alternative to a requested spell (which was lost): "[T]his is what I have found near me… for the other one is written on a small fragment of papyrus, and I did not find it…"[159] Ouales's choice for a separation spell (*diakopos*) is introduced with the words "perhaps this is what you need," which suggests prior correspondence about the purpose of the spell.[160] The placement of the amulet at the top of the papyrus and the empty spots for the clients' name, imply that the recipient needed a specific spell that was "traditional, tested, and efficacious" and could be applied to new situations and customers.[161]

Most exotic is the discovery of a fourteen-week-old fetus, found in an upper room of House 4. It was wrapped in linen and found among the wall debris of upper room 7b. The extensive wrapping of this fetus resembles the wrapping of amulets rather than the treatment of mummies.[162] While fetuses are not common in spells, David Frankfurter points to one papyrus in which a fetus was thrown (!) toward a victim as part of an aggressive curse-spell. Rather than deriving its authority from Egyptian or Manichaean cosmological or mythological stories, the impurity and weirdness of the object may have contributed to the postulated power of the spell.[163] A less spectacular interpretation of the fetus would be that it was placed in the wall awaiting burial, without the intention to serve as a hidden amulet.[164]

Together, the horoscopes, calendars of good and bad days, spells, and amulets show the continuing interest in celestial powers and the efficacy of specific rituals. Horoscopes were ordered until the end of the fourth century. Spells and amulets were collected and sent on request, with or without alterations to reflect group-specific terminology. Even though some members of the Christian and Manichaean institutional elite may have frowned on

---

[158] C. Römer, R. W. Daniel, and K. A. Worp, "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung bei Kranken in P.Barc. 155.19 - 156.5 und P.Kellis I 88," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 119 (1997): 129 are careful with the Manichaean association, but note that the final lines on Christ as savior in the original document are missing in Kellis. It's find location in House 3 ties it closely to the Manichaean households of Kellis.

[159] ⲡⲉ ⲡⲉⲓ ⲉϥϩⲏⲛ ⲁⲣⲁⲓ… ϫⲉ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲕⲉⲟⲩⲉ ⲥⲛϩ ⲁⲩ[ⲕⲟ]ⲩⲓ ⲛ̄ⲗⲉⲕⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ϫⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲙⲛⲧϥ… P.Kell.Copt. 35.28, 30-31. There is no reason to assume Psais had sent a spell to Ouales previously, contra E. O. D. Love, *Code-Switching with the Gods: The Bilingual (Old Coptic-Greek) Spells of PGM IV (P. Bibliothèque Nationale Supplément Grec. 574) and Their Linguistic, Religious, and Socio-Cultural Context in Late Roman Egypt* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 173.

[160] P.Kell.Copt. 35.14. On similar spells, see Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 23-27.

[161] Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 9. See also M. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001), 303-4; K. Dosoo, *Rituals of Apparition in the Theban Magical Library* (Unpublished PhD dissertatie: Macquarie University, Sydney, 2014), 164-5; Love, *Code-Switching with the Gods*, 273-79.

[162] D. Frankfurter, "Fetus Magic and Sorcery Fears in Roman Egypt," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 46 (2006): 43.

[163] Frankfurter, "Fetus Magic," 55.

[164] This was the original interpretation by Gillian Bowen. The magical interpretation by Frankfurter is called into question by R.W. Daniel, "P.Mich. Vi 423-424 without Magic," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 200 (2016): 389-97.

these practices, and Roman emperors labored to forbid them, Kellites continued to appeal to celestial powers, using elements from various repertoires to protect themselves from harm.

3.4.4 Christian Institutions and Repertoire

If you could measure Christianization by counting church buildings, the Dakhleh Oasis must have been profoundly Christianized during the fourth century. The remains of eight church buildings have been found, three of which were located in Kellis.[165] Soon after the rise of Constantine, the first basilica-type church was built. Church buildings and references to ecclesiastical offices in papyri reflect the introduction of Christian institutions in the oasis, presumably well before the arrival of Manichaeans. I will use the designation "Church" for convenience's sake, to distinguish these buildings from the domestic architecture. It has to be borne in mind that these buildings had a wide range of usages, not all explicitly religious or "Christian." As we will see, it is difficult to discern what kinds of Christian practices were performed in these spaces.

a) The East Churches (Area A)

At walking distance from Houses 1–3 and directly next to House 5 stood two churches: a large basilica church and a smaller house-church. A third church was found closer to the temple complex (the West Church).

The excavations of the Small East Church revealed a domestic unit with major architectural modifications to facilitate its usage as church. Benches were added to the walls, cupboards were built, and the entire room was gypsum coated. Between the benches on the south wall, an apse with two side chambers was constructed, framed by three arches with pilasters on either side. The apse was decorated with geometrical motives and beneath those decorations was a slightly raised platform that could be screened off by wooden doors.[166]

---

[165] I am not convinced that this is the best way of measuring Christianization, and I tend to disagree with Gillian Bowen's assessment of the rise of Christianity in the oasis. Frankfurter's approach to Christianity, on the other hand, seems to exclude any type of organized Christianity (with church buildings and regular gatherings for the liturgy) at all. Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 237-242. Apart from the church buildings at Kellis, there was one at 'Ain al-Sebil, 'Ain al-Gedida, Dayr al- Makak (although maybe from a later date), Amheida, and Dayr Abu Matta. On the church in Ain El-Gedida, see N. Aravecchia, *Christians of the Western Desert in Late Antiquity: The Fourth-Century Church Complex of Ain El-Gedida, Upper Egypt* (University of Minnesota Ph.D. dissertation: University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, 2009), 108-9. The fourth-century church from Amheida is discussed in Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 119-30 (Aravecchia). On Dayr Abu Matta, see G. E. Bowen, "The Church of Dayr Abu Matta and Its Associated Structures: An Overview of Four Seasons of Excavation," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 429-50. Another Christian building (a church?) may have been located in the temple temenos of Mut al-Kharab. G. E. Bowen, "Christianity at Mut Al-Kharab (Ancient Mothis), Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," in *The Cultural Manifestations of Religious Experience. Studies in Honour of Boyo G. Ockinga*, ed. C. Di Biase-Dyson and L. Donovan (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2017), 241-48.

[166] G. E. Bowen, "The Small East Church at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 159 with photographs. See the description of the decoration in Knudstad and Frey, "Kellis: The Architectural Survey," 205-7. On the Large East Church, P. Grossmann, "Typological Considerations on the Large East Church at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project:*

Below one of the niches on the side was a decorated rectangular panel with a *crux ansata*.[167] The other main room of the modified house was easily accessible from the main room through two doorways. It may have functioned as a separate liturgical room for catechumens who were not allowed to see the performed rituals, while they did receive oral instructions by the preacher in the other room. Alternatively, it could have been used as a communal dining area.[168]

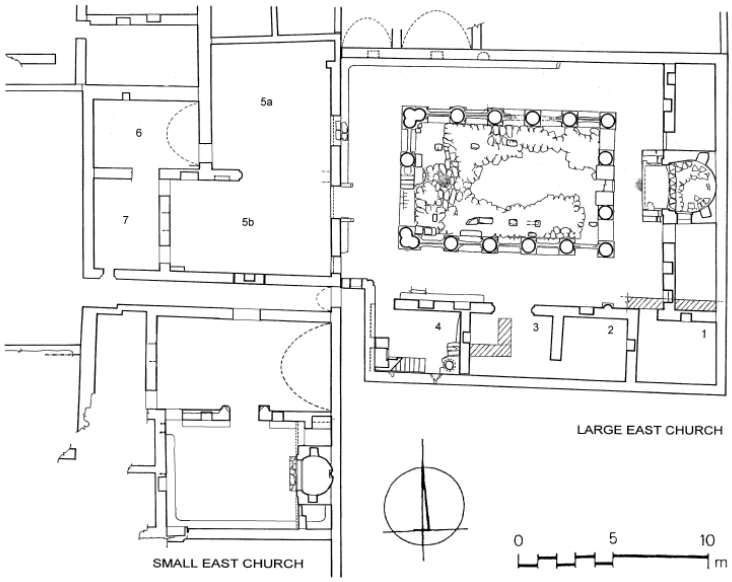

Figure 10: Plan of the East Churches (Area A). Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from the DOP website: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/the-east-church-complex, last updated 7 May 2013.

As it predates the Large East Church next door, the Small East Church is best understood as modified house-church. Its layout resembles Early Christian church structures like the *domus ecclesia* at Dura-Europos. Numismatic evidence points to a date not long after 306 CE for the modifications in the building, which continued to be used until about the first half of the fourth century.[169] The last years of its usage must have been contemporaneous

---

Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 153-56.

[167] The plaster of the large East church also revealed the remains of a *crux ansata*, while there are no decorations preserved in the West Church, probably due to higher erosion on this edge of the site. G. E. Bowen, "The Crux Ansata in Early Christian Iconography: Evidence from Dakhleh and Kharga Oases," in *Le myrte et la rose. Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, ed. G. Tallet and C. Zivie-Coche (Montpellier: CENIM, 2014), 291-303.

[168] Bowen, "The Small East Church," 162.

[169] This is based on coin finds. G. E. Bowen, "Coins as Tools for Dating the Foundation of the Large East Church at Kellis: Problems and a Possible Solution," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 426-7. For a recent discussion of other early church buildings, see E.

with the Large East Church, which was founded in the second or third decade of the fourth century.[170] The construction of a basilica within two decades after the house-church suggests a sharp increase in the number of Christians and a change in their public visibility, presumably caused by the changing legal status of Christianity.

The Large East Church was built on an east–west axis and comprised a central nave with apse and two aisles on all sides. The nave contained benches alongside two walls, opposite the raised bema platform, and could hold about two hundred people.[171] Significant is the architectural layout with an apse, which became one of the prime characteristics of Early Christian architecture. Other sites in the oasis also contained early examples of the basilica with apse structures. In Ain el-Gedida, the apse was even built on the public road, leading to a more complex (and thus highly visible) infrastructural situation. For some reason, the Christians in the oasis decided to adopt the characteristic basilica structure as a visible component of their religious position. In terms of decoration, the apse above the platform of the Large East Church was roofed with a semicircular dome with at least one *crux ansata* on the edge of the apse.[172] Among the debris of the floor, several fragments of painted glass were found, whose depictions are said to be reminiscent of biblical iconography.[173] An extended structure on the west of the central nave comprised four rooms, one of which had two ovens, suggesting that dining and food preparation took place at a short distance from the meeting place.

The church and its officials are attested in the papyri. The church (ἐκλησία) is mentioned in the KAB as receiving expenditure from the *dapane* account (KAB 880, 883) or direct disbursements of wheat "to the church for the bishop" (εἰς ἐκλησία τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ KAB 620–1). The bishop is mentioned once again when he receives jujubes (KAB 706). None of these instances indicate whether he (and his church) was based in Kellis or elsewhere.[174]

Adams, *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 89-112.

[170] Its early date suggests that it may have served as the central and primary basilica of the village, modeled on the early basilicas built at cities in the Nile valley like Antinoopolis or Hermopolis. G. E. Bowen, "The Fourth-Century Churches at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons* ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 84 on the basis of comparative material from early Constantinian basilicas.

[171] Other fragments with *crux ansata* figures were found on a pair of engaged columns. Bowen, "The Spread of Christianity in Egypt," 18.

[172] Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 71.

[173] Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 84. On glass in Kellis, see C. Marchini, "Glass from the 1993 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and A. J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 75-82. Images of these "biblical" themes have not (yet) been published, but at least one is announced as "a child swathed" or a "nativity scene." Thurston, *Secrets of the Sands*, 297.

[174] Bagnall suggests that the bishop was located in Mothis. Bagnall, *KAB*, 81. Wipszycka stresses that the centralization of the institutional church and the increasing power of the Alexandrian bishops took place during the second half of the third century. By the fourth century, therefore, a network of bishoprics was in place. E. Wipszycka, "The Institutional Church," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300-700*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 333.

Apart from this bishop, there are about six presbyters mentioned in the KAB: Pakous, Psenpnouthes, Psais, Psennouphis, Valerius, and Timotheos.[175] One deacon is listed as receiving jujubes.[176] While their names and the disbursements are recorded, no further information about these individuals is available. All seem to be involved in everyday economic transactions with the estate, not necessarily as representatives of the local churches.[177]

Could any of the church officials mentioned in the KAB have belonged to the Manichaean community? The Manichaeans designated their communal body as "the church" and they knew bishops, presbyters, and deacons in their ranks. Some voices have been raised about the possibility of a Manichaean monastery (see Chapter 7) in the oasis. Could these church officials have been associated with this monastery? In my opinion, we should be careful not to stretch the evidence this far. Although it is not entirely impossible, it remains best to assume that most presbyters and deacons belonged to non-Manichaean Christian communities, unless further strong evidence suggests otherwise.

Presbyters not only feature as tenants in the account book, but were also called on as witnesses and scribes of legal documents. In an official request to the *dux* (352 CE), the inhabitants of Kellis, headed by a presbyter and two deacons, request support against a certain Hatres (P.Kell.Gr. 24.11). Interestingly, among the individuals who signed the petition is Aurelius Pamour (III) son of Psais, one of the Manichaeans of House 3.[178] The prominent role of the priest and the deacons at the start of this list indicates their elevated social status within the community. Other references to priests specify them as "priest of the catholic church" (πρεσβυ[τ]έρου καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας P.Kell.Gr. 24.3). This specific phrase returns in a lease document from 364 CE and an agreement from 337 CE (P.Kell.Gr. 532.21 and 58.8). Another presbyter witnessed the manumission of a slave and is referred to without this additional designation (P.Kell.Gr. 48.20, from 355 CE). The additional "catholic" as early as 337 CE is outstanding. In a village context, it most probably designates the most important church of the village.[179] At this point in time, it did not refer to a particular branch of Christianity and there is no reason to understand this designator as a type of self-

[175] Pakous (KAB 142 if you follow Bagnall's reconstruction), Psenpnouthes (KAB 575-6, 1155-6 and 1179-80 only calling him "father"), Psais (KAB 1315 and possibly again without his title 1179-80), Psennouphis (KAB 96 designated only as "father"), Valerius (KAB 707, designated only as "father") and Timotheos (KAB 1307, designated only as "father").

[176] Petros *diakonos* (KAB 1576), presumably not to be identified with Petros *monachos* (see section 7.4).

[177] This is not unremarkable. The documentary sources appear to have the same selection-bias as the literary texts that inform us about the institutional church. Clergy are widely attested on and off duty in the papyri. A. Luijendijk, "On and Beyond Duty: Christian Clergy at Oxyrhynchus (C. 250 - 400)," in *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, ed. R. Gordon, G. Petridou, and J. Rüpke (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 103-26.

[178] Worp, *GPK1*, 75 unaware of the indications of this name.

[179] Worp, *GPK1*, 159. E. Wipszycka, "Καθολική et les autres épithètes." In the course of the fourth century, this title designates churches affiliated with the Alexandrian church. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 108-10.

differentiation in direct competition with the Manichaeans, who considered themselves to be the "holy church."

When exactly Christianity spread into the oasis is hard to determine. The tentative date of the modifications of the Small East Church soon after 306 CE and the subsequent construction of the Large East Church suggest a rapid growth in the early fourth century, but little is known about the time prior to this.[180] Gillian Bowen has attempted to pinpoint the earliest evidence for Christianity in the oasis through Christian names with patronyms. She tentatively suggests the presence of Christians in the village from about the 250s CE.[181] However, what exactly counts as a Christian name is open for debate. Some scholars believe names cannot be taken as indicators of religious identifications, since traditional names continued to run in the family (think of Tithoes, the carpenter of House 2). This makes it difficult to be certain about the presence of Christians in the oasis before the fourth century.[182]

Terminology and textual finds pointing to the "catholic church" instead of containing Manichaean features are found in the domestic unit close to the Temple (D/8, a papyrus leaf with Psalm 9 in Greek), the temple area (P.Kell.Copt. 128, a personal letter with Christian overtones), and House 4 (P.Kell.Copt. 126, invocation (?) with Christian overtones). This latter house also contained a letter (P.Kell.Copt. 124) of two presbyters, Besas (designated Apa Besas on the address) and Agathemeros, addressing their "blessed father" Stephanos in strong Christian vocabulary, while Hor "the subdeacon" (ϩⲱⲣ ⲡϩⲩⲡⲟⲇⲓⲁⲕⲟⲛⲟⲥ) added his postscript on the verso.[183] By the fourth century, the Alexandrian bishop was extending his control through regional bishops, of which there were at least fifty-seven by the end of the

---

[180] The earliest documentary attestation of Christianity is dated 319 CE (PUG 20, P.Med. Inv. 68.82) See Wagner, *Les oasis d'Égypte*, 327-8. French translation in D.C. Gofas, "Quelques observations sur un papyrus contenant un contrat de société (PU. G II Appendice I),," in *Studi in onore fi Arnaldo Biscardi S.J.*, ed. F. Pastori (Milano: Istituto editoriale Cisalpino, 1982), 499-505. The text is a contract between two parties for transportation and commerce in the oasis. The formula in which God is called on for help identified them as Christians.

[181] Bowen, "Some Observations," 174.

[182] Klaas Worp has recently attempted to relate the three church buildings to significant numbers of Christian names in ostraka and papyri. His discussion and lists shows some of the problematic assumptions behind the notion of 'Christian names'. K. A. Worp, "Christian Personal Names in Documents from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 195 (2015): 193-99. On the possibility of counting the number of "Christian names" and using them to discuss the Christianization of Egypt, see the following exchange. M. Depauw and W. Clarysse, "How Christian Was Fourth Century Egypt? Onomastic Perspectives on Conversion," *Vigiliae Christianae* 67, no. 4 (2013): 407-35; D. Frankfurter, "Onomastic Statistics and the Christianization of Egypt: A Response to Depauw and Clarysse," *Vigiliae Christianae* 68, no. 3 (2014): 284-89; M. Depauw and W. Clarysse, "Christian Onomastics: A Response to Frankfurter," *Vigiliae Christianae* 69, no. 3 (2015): 327-29. In his most recent contribution, Frankfurter takes Christian names to suggest the families' inclination to endow children with the blessings of Christian saints. Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 5 and 38-9.

[183] P.Kell.Copt. 124.v40. For this ecclesiastical position and the ἀρχιδιάκονος mentioned in an unpublished Greek document from House 4, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 276; E. Wipszycka, "Les ordres mineurs dans l'église d'Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 23 (1993): 181-215.

century.[184] In theory, at least, this structure would have kept the church firmly under Alexandrian control. The reality was different, as the fourth century started with chaotic leadership changes when the emperor exiled Athanasius four times from his seat, while Athanasius himself vigorously labored to gather popular and monastic support for his position.[185]

A remarkable Greek letter, found at House 4, may attest to these blurred and contested religious group boundaries, as it contains a letter from a church official (?) to several priests about the regalia that had been taken from him. The letter was written in a highly skilled hand, probably during the second half of the fourth century. It contains several scriptural allusions or quotations that connote Jewishness or Christianness, but never correspond to known religious texts. The remarkable features of the text (including a reference to the prophet Jeremias, an unknown priestly office, and a list of extravagant treasures) make it impossible to determine with certainty either a Manichaean or a "catholic" Christian background, but rather they convey a sense of highly skilled textuality based in a broad (and presumably shared) religious milieu.[186]

Biblical texts and ecclesiastical language are not the most reliable indicators of Christianity, as the copy of two New Testament texts in House 3 suggests. They were probably read by Manichaeans as well as Christians (see Chapter 9). Even with an explicit identification, the meaning of the phrases and the type of Christianity remains open to interpretation. In a Greek manumission document for a female slave, freed in the presence of a priest, the "most reverend father Psekes," the author boasts about his motives as stemming from "my exceptional Christianity, under Zeus, Earth, and Sun" (ὑπερβολὴν χ[ρι]στιανότητος ἀπελευθρωκέναι σε ὑπὸ Δία Γήν Ἥλιος P.Kell.Gr. 48.4–5).[187] This combination of Christianity with the traditional formula "under Zeus, Earth, and Sun," illustrates the mixture of traditional and Christian repertoire. The openness to combining phrases and practices from multiple repertoires shows the idiosyncrasies of everyday religion, even in the face of nascent Christian institutions.

b) West Church and West Tombs (Area D)

Close to the Main Temple are the remains of the West Church, built during the mid-fourth century and in use until the 390s. The mud-brick building consisted of two rooms, one of which had an apse to the east. Benches were lined up with the walls of both rooms and the

[184] Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 108-09.

[185] D. Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

[186] The text is published and discussed in I. Gardner and K. A. Worp, "A Most Remarkable Fourth Century Letter in Greek, Recovered from House 4 at Ismant el-Kharab," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 205 (2018): 127-42. An inscription from Trimithis has been interpreted as highlighting religious competition, see Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 131-33.

[187] The editor notes the possible presence of monks (line 11), which would be significant if this text was a "manumissio in ecclesia." Worp, *GPK1*, 142-3. The combination of the traditional formula used in manumissions (E.g. P.Oxy. IV 722.6) with Christian elements is also attested in P.Edmonstone 7-9, discussed at Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion*, 58-59.

apse was slightly raised with a bema platform. The ancillary rooms of the church contained benches and traces of a hearth, probably used during communal meal gatherings.[188] Two graves were located inside the nave of this church, in front of the platform, containing the bodies of a man and a six-month-old infant.[189] The east–west direction of these graves, combined with the lack of burial goods, has contributed to their identification as "Christian graves."[190] Similar graves along the walls of the church and inside its enclosure, all postdating its construction, followed the same arrangements. They all held single interments laid in a simple pit, some covered with low-stepped mud-brick structures. One of the graves had a small bowl at the head end, containing pieces of charcoal. According to Bowen, this may have been a Eucharist offered at the graveside.[191]

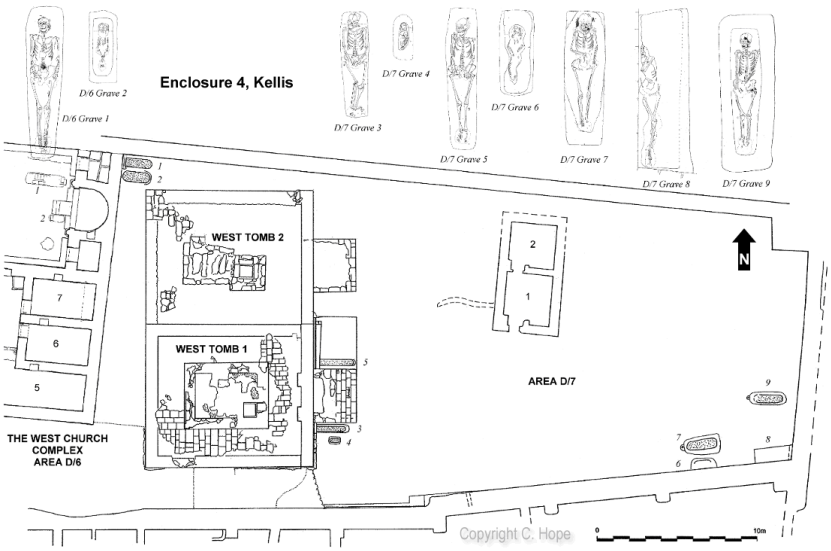

Figure 11: Plan of Enclosure 4 with the West Church and Tombs (with enlarged representations of the graves). Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from the DOP website: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-kellis/west-church-complex, last updated May 7, 2013.

The church building and these graves were built right next to two monumental tombs on a platform. These West Tombs are from an earlier date; the original interments in the monumental structures derived from the period before the construction of the West Church.[192] Presumably originating in the second century, these tombs were reused for burials

[188] Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 78. Among the objects found were ceramic vessels, coins, mud jar sealings, ostraka and a fragment of inscribed and uninscribed papyri. These papyri have not yet been edited, but G. Bowen assures me they are of an economic nature and do not further inform us about the nature of the church. Bowen, *Personal Communication,* May 2016.

[189] Bowen, "Some Observations," 176-7.

[190] Bowen, "Fourth-Century Churches," 78 therefore identified it as a church, contra earlier interpretations by Peter Grossmann.

[191] *Ibid*.

[192] Hope, "A Brief Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1992-93," 21.

in the third and fourth century. The burials inside West Tomb 1 resembled the interments of the East Cemetery in their lack of traditional funerary items. Several golden rings with gems were found on the bodies. At least eleven people were buried in this tomb and their bodies had only received limited postmortem treatment.[193]

Moving a little more to the east side of the enclosure, a small, two-room structure was erected, either as superstructure above family graves, or as gathering place for funerary rituals.[194] The seven-room structure south of the West Church presumably fulfilled a similar function, as the benches, jars, and hearth point to the preparation of food (room 1).[195] Immediately east of the two-room structure, moreover, several deposits with decorated glass were found, including a colorful jug with depictions of gladiators, dating from the second half of the fourth century.[196] Whether this jug was lost, disposed of, or intentionally left near the graves is difficult to assert. It may have conveyed an ideological message about gladiator games and Roman culture, but could just as well have been a luxury item displaying wealth and social status.

3.4.5 Funerary Traditions: The West and East Cemeteries

The two cemeteries outside of the village proper (Kellis 1 and Kellis 2) yielded bioarchaeological materials that inform us about the mummification and burial customs, as well as local diet, diseases, and life expectancy.[197] Most importantly, the cemeteries have been understood as reflecting a sharp differentiation between Christian burial practice and all

---

[193] G. E. Bowen, "Early Christian Burial Practices at Kellis, Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *Artefact* 26, no. 1 (2003): 84; C. A. Hope and J. McKenzie, "Interim Report on the West Tombs," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and A.J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 60-61.

[194] Bowen, "Some Observations," 177 calls the option of a family tomb "unlikely."

[195] Bowen, "Some Observations," 177.

[196] C. A. Hope and H. Whitehouse, "The Gladiator Jug from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 290-310.

[197] A.C. Aufderheide et al., "Mummification Practices at Kellis Site in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 31 (2004): 63-77; A.C. Aufderheide et al., "Human Mummification Practices at Ismant el-Kharab," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 85 (1999): 197-210; T.L. Dupras and Schwarcz, "Strangers in a Strange Land: Stable Isotope Evidence for Human Migration in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 28 (2001): 1199-208; T. L. Dupras and M.W. Tocheri, "Reconstructing Infant Weaning Histories at Roman Period Kellis, Egypt Using Stable Isotope Analysis of Dentition," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 134 (2007): 63-74; T. L. Dupras et al., "Birth in Ancient Egypt: Timing, Trauma, and Triumph? Evidence from the Daklah Oasis," in *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals and the Environment* ed. S. Ikram, J. Kaiser, and R. Walker (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2015): 41-53; M. W. Tocheri et al., "Roman Period Fetal Skeletons from the East Cemetery (Kellis 2) of Kellis,Egypt," *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 15 (2005): 326–41; S. Fairgrieve and J. E. Molto, "Cribra Orbitalia in Two Temporally Disjunct Population Samples from the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 111, no. 3 (2000): 319-31; J. E. Molto, "Bio–Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 239-55; J. E. Molto, "The Comparative Skeletal Biology and Paleoepidemiology of the People from Ein Tirghi and Kellis, Dakhleh, Egypt," in *Oasis Papers 1*, ed. C. A. Marlow and A. J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 81-100.

other traditional customs. Chapter 8 will examine these funerary practices for evidence of Manichaean burials.

The West Cemetery (Kellis 1) has been dated to the late Ptolemaic and early Roman period, based on ceramics.[198] This cemetery consisted of a large number of tombs cut into the clay and the higher sandstone terrace, most with low ceilings and single chambers. These chambers had narrow entrances and they followed the contours of the hill, without a particular common orientation.[199] Most of the graves were disturbed by grave robbers, even though they were closed off by wooden doors or large sandstone slabs, which could be opened or replaced when new bodies were added to the tomb chambers.[200] In this cemetery, the bodies were not placed in coffins but were wrapped in shrouds and placed on funerary beds.[201] A few had cartonnage head and foot coverings, which was not unusual in the oasis.[202] One of the bodies was covered with a gilded cartonnage representing the god Tutu, and other grave goods included small wooden sculptures depicting the *ba*, the soul of the deceased. These *ba*-birds were equipped with human heads and outspread wings, which according to Olaf Kaper "represent an archaizing feature in the tomb equipment of the oases that had virtually disappeared elsewhere."[203] Libation tables reused in some of the fourth-century buildings probably came from these tombs and were used in the context of ritual commemoration.[204]

A parallel to these archaizing features of funerary culture at Kellis is the construction of two funerary pyramids at the cemetery of Trimithis. These two mud-brick superstructures stood above mausoleum tombs and were visible from a great distance. Together with similarly styled pyramids from Mut, these tombs are among the few Roman revivals of this ancient funerary tradition.[205]

---

[198] M. Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and A. J. Mills (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 29. Although more recent insights doubt the early start at the Ptolemaic period and assign the cemetery to the first to third century CE Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 331.

[199] Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," 31.

[200] Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 326-7.

[201] There are some traces of funerary beds. Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 330.

[202] A. Schweitzer, "Les parures de cartonnage des momies d'une nécropole d'Ismant el-Kharab," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 269-76.

[203] Citation and references in Kaper, "The Western Oases," 728.

[204] Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 328.

[205] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 112-16 (Kaper).

The East Cemetery (Kellis 2) was located on the other side of the wadi. It contained about three to four thousand interments. In contrast to the West Cemetery, only single interments were found, in pit graves with an east–west orientation.[206] Few of these graves contained burial objects such as jewelry or amulets, but no traditional grave gifts have been found. Instead, most graves were only covered with pottery shreds, with large pieces covering the face of the deceased.[207] Another difference with the West Cemetery is the large number of infant burials. These fetuses were buried in shallow pits among adult graves at the East Cemetery. This practice has been interpreted in relation to the Christian concept of the soul, as the practice is uncommon in earlier cemeteries.[208] The inclusion of children's burials was paralleled in the cemetery of Bagawat, Kharga Oasis, where some of them were found with Christian names and symbols.[209] The treatment of the bodies in the East Cemetery was relatively limited. Fewer bodies showed traces of elaborate postmortem treatment, although the mummification practices in the West Cemetery also varied, from a full body treatment to cheaper treatment with resin and linen.[210] Many of these features have been understood as the difference between two coherent religious traditions: traditional Egyptian practices in the West Cemetery and Christian funerary practice in the East Cemetery. In Bowen's words: "Separate cemeteries; separate customs."[211] The neat division between a Christian cemetery and a "pagan" cemetery as early as the fourth century seems too good to be true.[212] The only

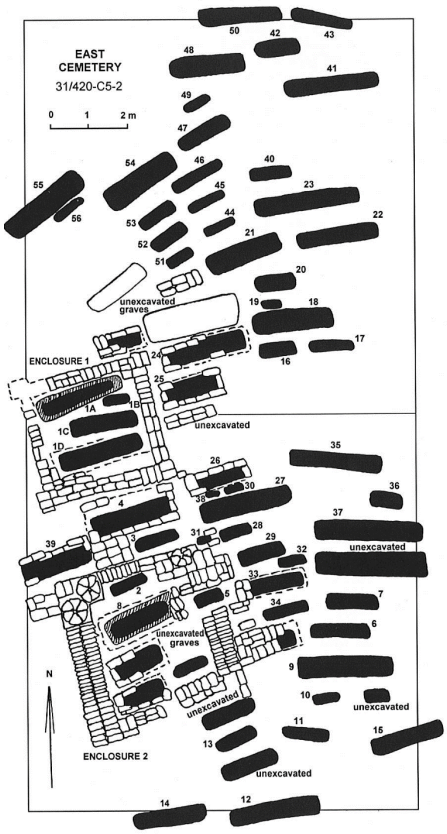

Figure 12: Plan of a section of the East Cemetery. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Derived from Birrell, "Excavations," 39.

[206] Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," 38.

[207] Size estimated in J. E. Molto, "Bio–Archaeological Research of Kellis 2," 41. Interestingly, at the Christian necropolis of el-Deir (Kharga) the East-West orientation is not the only orientation, as a second group of graves had a n/w-s/e orientation. M. Coudert, "The Christian Necropolis of El-Deir in the North of Kharga Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 451-58.

[208] Tocheri et al., "Roman Period Fetal Skeletons from the East Cemetery (Kellis 2) of Kellis, Egypt," 326–41; Bowen, "Some Observations," 178; G. E. Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials of the Late Roman Period at Ismant el-Kharab Ancient Kellis, Dakhleh Oasis," in *L'enfant et la mort dans l'antiquite II*, ed. M. D. Nenna (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2012), 351-72.

[209] The inclusion of children's burials was paralleled in the cemetery of Bagawat, Kharga Oasis, were large number of foetuses, infants and children were found combined with Christian names and *cruces ansatae* on the grave stelae. Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials," 369.

[210] Bowen, "Some Observations," 172.

[211] Bowen, "Some Observations," 169.

instance in which a Christian identification was made explicit in the Kellis interments was in North Tomb 1. The tomb contained decorations of traditional Egyptian gods and the organization of the bodies suggests that the tomb was regularly opened to include recently deceased family members.[213] The last interments are different. These bodies were aligned with an east–west orientation, they lacked grave goods, and were only wrapped in linen. In this instance, a firm identification with Christianity has been found in the gypsum sealing with a *crux ansata*, found among the plaster decorations.[214] Religion, therefore, mattered in the funerary sphere, even if it may not have correlated one-on-one with identifiable religious groups (as I will argue in Chapter 8).

3.5 Conclusions

This overview of the social and economic context of ancient Kellis highlights the multiple repertoires available as cultural and religious options. It points to a strong attachment to traditional Egyptian traditions as well as a desire for Classical education and Greco-Roman-style decorations. This double attachment to the cultural developments of the outside world in combination with the revival of archaic Egyptian practices has been described in terms of the "extraordinary independence of mind" of the inhabitants of the oasis.[215] The wealth of the agricultural economy and the flourishing trade with the Nile valley made ancient Kellis an attractive place to live for the elite of the oasis. They presented themselves as well-educated and sophisticated magistrates, chose archaizing Greek names for their children, and spent money on Classical literature and education. Even though the most extravagant houses were abandoned in the fourth century, remnants of this wealth remained visible in architecture and decorations. The inhabitants of House 3 must have had their share of this wealth, as indicated by the intaglio ring found in room 6. It is this wealth that enabled the epistolary and literary developments in our corpus of Manichaean texts.

In short, this chapter has shown how the archaeological and textual material from the Dakhleh Oasis Project can contribute to the study of religious change in Late Antiquity. First, its finds enable a microhistorical approach in which both archaeology and papyrology play a role. The large corpus of papyrus documents found in various Roman period houses allows us to follow the lives of specific individuals and families. Their voices can be heard and their religious lives approached through textual and material sources. To appreciate this fully, Chapter 4 will highlight two specific families from the second half of the fourth century. Second, the wide array of sources offers evidence for multiple religious and cultural

---

[212] Discussed in F. Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation: Egyptian Funerary Practices in Late Antiquity," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300-700*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 163-84. The same is argued under the header of syncretic practices for the Early Islamic and Coptic period in A. Pleşa, "Religious Belief in Burial: Funerary Dress and Practice at the Late Antique and Early Islamic Cemeteries at Matmar and Mostagedda, Egypt (Late Fourth – Early Ninth Century CE)," *Ars Orientalis* 47 (2017): 18-42.

[213] O. E. Kaper, "The Decoration of North Tomb 1," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 323-30.

[214] Bowen, "Early Christian Burial Practices," 81.

[215] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 116 (Kaper).

repertoires. This religious plurality, I have argued, can only be understood as the result of the specific geographical and social circumstances of the oasis: remoteness and wealth, openness and archaism. This facilitates the everyday groupness approach set out in the previous chapter, in which individuals and families are followed while they draw on these repertoires and act on a set of practices that stem from embodied dispositions. This chapter has shown the textual and material remains of repertoires associated with Christianity, traditional Egyptian religion, as well as some impressive visual features of Greco-Roman culture and religion. Kellis may have been an oasis village, but its inhabitants lived fully in a multicultural Roman-Egyptian society that was connected to the Roman Empire at large.

From the socioeconomic wealth of the oasis and the diversity of cultural and religious repertoires attested in the Kellis evidence, we will zoom in on the lives of two families in the fourth century. Their papyrus correspondence not only gives us a glimpse into daily life at Kellis, but also sheds light on the instances of marked Manichaeanness in their lives and letters.

Part II.
Individuals, Practices, and the Formation of a Local Community

Chapter 4. Makarios's Family and Pamour's Letters: Manichaean Affiliations and Village Relations in Kellis

> Are (not) you yourself a catechumen? (Makarios to Maria, or her sister Kyria).[1]

4.1 Introduction

Sometime in the middle of the fourth century CE, a man named Makarios rebuked his wife (or his sister in law) for what he considered improper behavior. She "reached this place to make apparent some ungodliness and inhumanity," while Makarios himself had behaved correctly. Rhetorically, he asked, "are (not) you yourself a catechumen?"[2] Maria's (or Kyria's) answer to her husband's accusations has not been preserved, but it stands to reason that she would have understood the connection between her behavior and the norms of the Manichaean catechumate. She may not have agreed with her husband on the specific matter, but apparently, Manichaeanness mattered enough to be incorporated in the complaint.

The situation behind Makarios's remarks may have been defined by some type of religious maltreatment or violence. It seems that Makarios and Maria, if she was indeed addressed in this section of the letter, copied a book under difficult circumstances. Makarios states: "[W]e are not retaliating against anyone in this place for what they are doing to us" and suggests that something should be done so that the book (?) "would be saved from the hands of them pursuing it."[3] It is tempting to understand these lines as reflecting persecution. Manichaean books were forbidden and powerful individuals like Diocletian and Augustine ordered them to be burned.[4] Is this passage a local witness to the late antique policies of religious violence?

This chapter will pursue a microhistorical approach to the lives of two families. After having highlighted the social, economic, and cultural setting of Kellis in the previous chapter, we shift our focus to the inhabitants of Houses 1–3. Specifically, I will focus on some religious episodes, or passages that tend to be interpreted in relation to Manichaeism. These passages, however, will be treated with caution, as they hardly contain all the information we would like to hear. In the passage cited above, Makarios never identified "this place" or

---

[1] ⲉⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟ ⲟⲩⲕⲁⲑⲏⲕⲟⲩ̣ⲓ̣[ⲉ]ⲛⲏ ϩⲱⲉ̣ P.Kell.Copt. 22.61. At line 45, the letter is addressed to Kyria, and it is unclear whether the author continues his conversation with Maria, or with Kyria, after line 60.

[2] See previous note, followed by ϩⲁⲡⲱϩ ϣⲁ ⲡⲓ [ⲙ]ⲁ̣ ⲁⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲱⲛϩ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲛ̣̀[ⲁ]ⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲧⲣⲱⲙⲉ P.Kell.Cop. 22.62-63.

[3] ⲉ̣[ⲡⲓ]ⲇ̣ⲏ ⲉⲛϯ̣ϣ̣ⲓ̣ⲱ̣ ⲛ̄ⲗ̄ⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲏⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ ⲛⲉⲛ P.Kell.Cop. 22.61-2 and in line 65: ϫⲉϥ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩϩⲙⲉ ⲁⲛⲟⲓϫ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲡⲏⲧ ⲛ̄ⲥϣ̣ϥ. The editors suggest Kyria may have been addressed in this section of the letter. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 180.

[4] On the burning of Manichaean books, see D. Rohmann, *Christianity, Book-Burning and Censorship in Late Antiquity* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 26, 28, 71, 76 and 101. More generally speaking, there are good reasons to question the prevalance of violent episodes in the religious narratives of late antique Egypt. J. H. F. Dijkstra, "Religious Violence in Late Antique Egypt Reconsidered: The Cases of Alexandria, Panopolis and Philae," *Journal of Early Christian History* 5, no. 2 (2015): 24-48.

the people against whom they should not retaliate. The connection between the book and the pursued object is, moreover, not crystal clear. Our careful minimalist approach prevents us from making sweeping statements on the basis of such tentative interpretations. This short vignette has already illustrated how difficult it is to understand religious episodes in the everyday correspondence of fourth-century Kellites. Our documents are fragmentary and lack, at times, the necessary background information. Written against the backdrop of situations known to author and recipient, the papyrus letters were never meant to describe all the specifics of situations, nor do they inform us about the religious backgrounds and/or motivation of those involved.

Despite these caveats, small and incidental references to Manichaeanness connect the lives of Makarios and his family to the history of Manichaeism. By triangulating material from various letters and accounts with the conventions of the genre and the sociohistorical situation, we can approach the range of possible interpretations. Fortunately, the papyrus letters from Kellis come in clusters, associated with specific authors and their family members. They inform us about the context of family and village relations, in which Manichaeanness came to play a role. This village context must be considered, and the multiplicity of social roles or identifications kept in mind, to prevent a treatment of the texts as treasure troves for Manichaeism only. In contrast, the letters contain traces of the everyday hopes and fears of individuals and families in highly specific circumstances. Their geographical setting in the western desert, for example, caused them headaches. Traveling in antiquity was, at times, a dangerous endeavor. This underlying anxiety about family health and safety sets the stage for many of the personal letters in our corpus. Following two families through different spheres of life intimates concerns that were important enough to be put into writing. Against this background, we can highlight the instances in which they worked on the basis of a Manichaean group-identification.

Based on the papyrus letters from Makarios, Pamour, and their families, it will be shown that Manichaeans had connections to members of the upper regimens of local and regional society. Together with the papyrological and archaeological evidence for the Roman military in the oasis, this leads us to believe that Manichaeans could live openly and peacefully in the Dakhleh Oasis.

4.2 Makarios and Maria

The Makarios archive has sparked considerable interest because of its Manichaean tone and content. It consists of eleven Coptic letters, with strong prosopographical connections to many other Kellites, either relatives, neighbors, or other acquaintances.[5] Some of the letters refer to books known from the Manichaean tradition and others employ uncommon phrases that connote intimate knowledge of Manichaean cosmology. More fundamentally, the social relations in the letters show that a family unit stood at the center of this network, connected to relatives, neighbors, and coworkers in the oasis and the Nile valley.

[5] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 4-5, passim. Archive is used in the sense of a collection of papers brought together in antiquity. The terminology and distinction with “dossiers” is contested. K. Vandorpe, "Archives and Dossiers," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 216-55.

Most of the eleven letters in this archive were written by Makarios and his sons Matthaios and Piene (see Table 6. They provide the bare backbone of the family structure. Their letters all address one woman: Maria. She stayed in Kellis and kept in contact with those who left the oasis for longer or shorter periods. Maria was the wife of Makarios, and Matthaios and Piene were their sons. Other family relations are more difficult to determine with certainty. Even this reconstruction "may not be as simple as it might at first appear," the editors of the papyri warned.[6]

Document	Author and recipient
P.Kell.Copt. 19	Makarios to Matthaios (and Maria)
P.Kell.Copt. 20	Makarios to Pshempnoute, Maria, and Koure
P.Kell.Copt. 21	Makarios to Pshempnoute, Kyria, and Maria
P.Kell.Copt. 22	Makarios to Pshempnoute, Kyria, and Maria
P.Kell.Copt. 23	Fragmentary appendix to 22 (?)
P.Kell.Copt. 24	Makarios to Maria
P.Kell.Copt. 25	Matthaios to Maria
P.Kell.Copt. 26	Matthaios to Maria
P.Kell.Copt. 27	Matthaios (fragment)
P.Kell.Copt. 28	Drousiane (?) (fragment)
P.Kell.Copt. 29	Piene to Maria

Table 6: Documents in the Makarios Archive.

The reconstruction of this family unit is built on the assumption of a certain level of consistency in the way people addressed each other.[7] Makarios's letters addresses his "son" Matthaios (P.Kell.Copt. 19) and Matthaios writes to his "mother" Maria (P.Kell.Copt. 25, 26). Piene also addresses his "mother" Maria (P.Kell.Copt. 29) and is mentioned several times by the others as either "son" or "brother." Makarios writes to "my sister Maria" (P.Kell.Copt. 20,

[6] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 154.

[7] On kinship terminology see E. Dickey, "Literal and Extended Use of Kinship Terms in Documentary Papyri," *Mnemosyne* 57, no. 2 (2004): 131-76; E. Dickey, "Forms of Address and Markers of Status," in *A Companion to the Ancient Greek Language*, ed. E.J. Bakker (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 327-37; I. Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms in the Coptic Documentary Papyri from Ismant el-Kharab," in *Oasis Papers 2* ed. M. F. Wiseman (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2008), 129-36.

21, 22, 24), a common way of addressing a spouse in Late Antiquity. Together, these references build a consistent picture from different angles, as Iain Gardner summarized: "Father writes to son (a) and greets wife; father writes to wife and mentions sons (a+b); son (a) writes to mother and mentions father and brother (=son b); son (b) writes to mother."[8] An alternative interpretation would be to consider Maria as Makarios's sister, with Makarios as the responsible uncle who was very much involved in the lives of his two nephews. In both cases, although the latter is less probable, actual kinship relations are the most likely interpretation of the kinship language.[9]

Kinship terminology was not exclusively used for family members. In Matthaios's letter to his "mother" Maria, he greets six women as "my mother."[10] Not all of these women could have been core family. To base attempts to comprehend the complex distinction between kinship and fictive kinship structures on the way people are addressed in documentary letters is a dangerous endeavor, albeit a crucial one. As one of the general rules about kinship terminology, Gardner noticed that "brother" and "sister" are used for people on the same generational level, while "mother" and "father" generally referred to respected older individuals. In P.Kell.Copt. 19, Makarios writes to "sister" Maria, "sister" Charis, and "son" Matthaios. At the end of the same letter, Gena, who is traveling with him, adds his own greetings to "mother" Maria, "mother" Charis, and "brother" Matthaios. Even if nothing else is known about Gena's relations to them, his choice of words reveals he is on the same generational level as Matthaios.[11] Matthaios's six mothers, then, must have been aunts and respected women from the generation of his parents. By cross-examining other letters with similar tentative indications, the family tree in Figure 13 can be gleaned together, representing the most securely reconstructed relations with a solid line and the more speculative ones with dotted lines.

The majority of the documents stem from the second half of the fourth century. A Greek contract with a specific date placed Makarios and Maria in the late 350s.[12] The younger generation, among whom Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais, occasionally greeted "mother Maria" in letters from the 360s (P.Kell.Gr. 71) and was greeted as "son(s)" by Makarios (P.Kell.Copt. 24).[13] Contemporaries like Tehat and Hatre (P.Kell.Copt. 43, 50), Lysimachos (P.Kell.Copt. 30, P.Kell.Gr. 67), and Orion (P.Kell.Copt. 15–18) appear in several letters of this period. Some of

---

[8] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 132. The variant spellings, Matheos, Mathaios, and Matthaios, referred to one individual. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 154n204.

[9] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 132 adds the exceptional tone of the letters of Matthaios to Maria as another indication of close kinship, but likewise warns for our "own cultural readings of the text." See also J. D. Dubois, "Vivre dans la communauté manichéenne de Kellis: une lettre de Makarios, le papyrus Kell. Copt. 22," in *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient: Hommage a Michel Tardieu* ed. M. A. A. Moezzi, et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 203-10.

[10] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 134.

[11] Gardner has posed four propositions regarding the usage of family language *(immediate family, extended family, respected position, religious authority*) and concludes that little can be taken for certain. Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 134.

[12] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 11 and 56.

[13] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 11.

them remain active during the next decades. Pshempnoute and Kyria were addressed in Makarios's letters, but also appear in the correspondence of Tithoes to his son Shamoun in the early 360s.[14] The names of Pamour and Pegosh continue to come up until the late 380s (P.Kell.Gr. 44).

How exactly Makarios and Maria related to Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais is unknown, but Pamour's wife Maria frequently greets "my mother Maria" and mentions "my daughter Tsemnouthes" (P.Kell.Gr. 71 and P.Kell.Copt. 65, see the appendix). It has been suggested that Maria's daughter Tsemnouthes (or Jemnoute) may have stayed with her grandmother Maria in Kellis. If so, it is remarkable that "daughter" Maria is never mentioned in Makarios's letters.[15] If Pamour was Makarios's son-in-law, moreover, we would expect stronger expressions of connectedness. Despite the tentative nature of the connection to Tsemnouthes, I have visualized the relation between Makarios and Pamour in Figure 13. If anything, we know they must have known each other quite well, as they lived and worked in the same social circles and shared a Manichaean background—as became apparent in a number of their letters.

The twist in most of these interactions and relations is that the letters inform us about those outside the oasis. They were written by family members and their associates who were traveling and wrote to the home front about their well-being. Distress about the absence of family news or material support is frequently expressed at length and without restraint, as exemplified by Makarios's irritations at the outset of this chapter. Most voices in the letters, therefore, speak of the anxieties of itinerant life. These fears and hopes are strongly connected to the well-being of those in Kellis, which gives us glimpses into the situation in the oasis itself.

[14] P.Kell.Gr. 8-12 and P.Kell.Copt. 12, one of which is firmly dated in the year 362 CE. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 55.

[15] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 52. If so, it is remarkable to see no connection to Makarios, who did greet his daughter Tsempnouthes at least once.

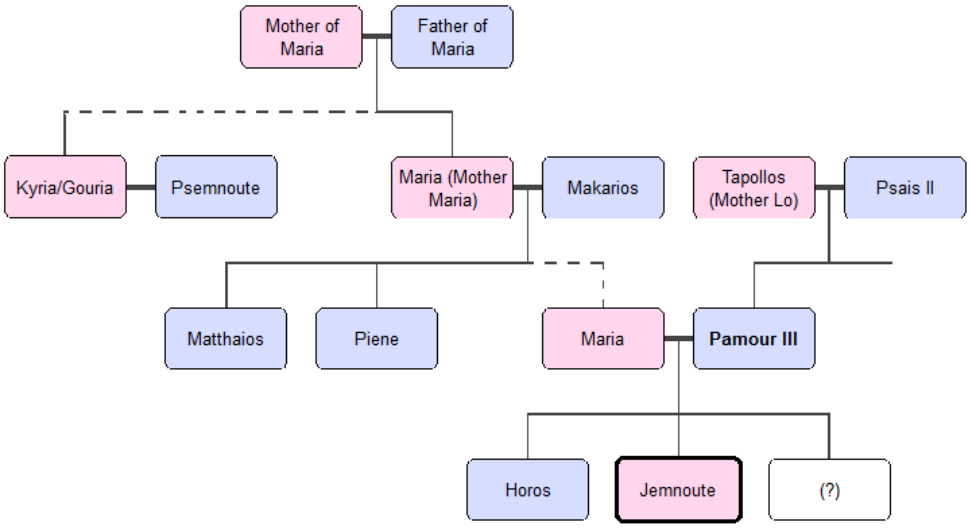

Figure 13: Reconstruction of the family relations of Makarios.

The papyrus correspondence also offers insights into the financial situation of the family. Interestingly, Maria played a central role in managing the finances. When Makarios was traveling in the Nile valley, Maria had to raise money for the journey of her son Matthaios. She even has to sell her loom to be able to afford the cost.[16] It appears, moreover, that Makarios had suffered losses in one of the previous years and asked Maria (or Gena?) to "count the fare to me," assuring her that he will pay the entire amount later after having received some other money.[17] In another letter, Makarios expressed his discontent about Ammon approaching Maria for his wages (P.Kell.Copt. 22.25–40); surely Makarios had tended to the matter himself in the Nile valley! Even though Makarios often complains about Maria's failure to answer his letters and he hardly seems to receive the goods she sent, their financial position never seems at risk. On the contrary, the list of commodities sent from the oasis and back indicates they had a comfortable, wealthy position within the oasis's society.[18]

The two main subjects that keep returning in Makarios's letters, apart from family matters, are books and textiles. The books will be discussed in section 4.5.3, since many of

[16] ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲓϣ̀ϫ̣ⲉ̣ ⲧⲉⲣⲭⲣⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲏⲁϥ ⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲧⲉⲉ[ϥ] ⲁ̣ⲣ̣ϩⲏⲏⲁ ⲛ̄ⲏⲁⲑⲉⲟⲥ…P.Kell.Copt. 19.31, I consider "if you have no more need of it" to refer to the remainder of the money instead of to the loom itself.

[17] [ⲉⲓϣⲱⲡⲉ] ⲁⲛ ⲉϩⲁⲥⲙ̄ⲧⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲏⲉⲓ ⲉⲡ̄ ⲧ̣ϩⲏⲏⲁ ⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲧⲉϥ̣… ⲉⲩϣⲁⲛϯ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ϯⲏⲁϩ ⲧϩⲏⲏⲁ ⲧⲏⲣ̄ⲥ̄ ⲡⲕⲉϥ̣ⲉⲉⲡ̣ⲉ̣ …P.Kell.Copt. 19.36-37 and 39. See observations in J. S. Moss, "Women in Late Antique Egypt," in *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, ed. S. L. James and S. Dillon (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 510-11.

[18] A position that is different from the individuals of House B2 at Trimithis described by Giovanni Ruffini. Their documents suggest they came from the lower social strata of Trimithis, mainly active as middle-men in transportation, manual labor and the production of clothing. G. Ruffini, "Transport and Trade in Trimithis. The Texts from Area 1," in *A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis / Amheida House B2*, ed. A. L. Boozer (New York: New York University Press / Ancient World Digital Library, 2015).

them have a Manichaean connotation. The textiles are never explicitly connected to Manichaeism. Apart from occasional references to clothing for himself and his boys, Makarios mentions threads, dye, and cushions frequently. On one occasion, he expressed his distress about moths affecting the threads and cushion (P.Kell.Copt. 24.6), which he presumably intended to sell in the valley. Makarios's son Matthaios reported how he had received the cloth bag (ϫⲏⲗϭⲉ) from Hatre and how Pamour sold the *sticharion*, a garment Matthaios himself had not inspected for its quality (P.Kell.Copt. 26.14–16). From these indications, we learn that Makarios and his sons worked in the textile business, just as many other Kellites who profited from the agricultural wealth of the oasis. The trade in garments and semifinished products at the markets of the Nile valley was the profitable business background to many of the Kellis letters. This means that these letters offer a perspective on the everyday life of relatively well-off individuals and families.[19]

4.3 Pamour and Maria

A second set of Greek and Coptic letters allows us to trace a family of three to four generations. Most of these letters were written by, or addressed to, three brothers: the earlier mentioned Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais. The reconstruction of the social relations behind this archive is hampered by frequently returning names. Pamour and Psais were relatively common names in the oasis, and only some of these individuals were related. Following Klaas Worp and his reconstruction of the family's generations, I will discern the various individuals with Roman numbers. A large number of papyri relate to the lives of the descendants of Pamour I (early fourth century), among whom at least two other men were named after their father or grandfather.[20] Two volumes of Coptic documentary texts have added new information, complementing Worp's reconstruction. Built on the analysis of the editors of the Greek and Coptic letters, I have reconstructed some of the family relations of Pamour III, shown in Figure 14. The cluster of associated documents is listed in Table 7.

Document	Author and recipient[21]
P.Kell.Copt. 64	Pamour III to Psais III

[19] Onno van Nijf notes that "the craftsmen and traders who formed the core of the demos were, in an economic sense, spread across a broad band of society. Although many of them were poor in the eyes of the senatorial elite… they were often, in local terms, relatively well off." O. M. van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 21. Compare this with the position of Leonides in Oxyrhynchus, who was not only a member of a professional association, but its president, taking on compulsory services. A. Luijendijk, "A New Testament Papyrus and Its Owner: P.Oxy. II 209/P10, an Early Christian School Exercise from the Archive of Leonides," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 3 (2010): 584.

[20] See the reconstructed family tree at Worp, *GPK1*, 51.

[21] This is a simplified list in which the individuals are identified with the name used in the visualization. In the letters, most names are spelled with variations. There is moreover, as will be explained below, considerable ambiguity in the identification of individuals with the same name. The list is, moreover, limited to letters written by, or addressing, members of Pamour's family. These individuals are mentioned in many other letters. I have included some legal documents in which they appeared.

P.Kell.Copt. 65	Pamour III to Pegosh, Psais III, Theognostos, Andreas
P.Kell.Copt. 66	Pamour III to Pegosh
P.Kell.Copt. 67	Pamour III to Pegosh
P.Kell.Copt. 68	(?) to P…. (Pamour III to Pegosh?)
P.Kell.Copt. 69	Pamour III to Pegosh
P.Kell.Copt. 70	Pamour III ? (or Pegosh) to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 71	Pamour III to Partheni, Andreas
P.Kell.Copt. 72	Pamour III to Psais III and Theognostos
P.Kell.Copt. 73	Pegosh to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 74	Pegosh to (?)
P.Kell.Copt. 75	Pegosh to Partheni
P.Kell.Copt. 76	Pegosh to Partheni (or Hor)
P.Kell.Copt. 77	Pegosh to Kapiton
P.Kell.Copt. 78	Pegosh to father Horos
P.Kell.Copt. 79	Pegosh to father Horos (copy?)
P.Kell.Copt. 80	Philammon to Theognostos
P.Kell.Copt. 81	Philammon to Theognostos
P.Kell.Copt. 82	Philammon to Theognostos
P.Kell.Copt. 83	Theognostos to Partheni (?) and Pegosh to (?)[22]
P.Kell.Copt. 84	Theognostos to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 85	Ploutogenes to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 86	Ploutogenes to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 87	Ploutogenes to father Soure/Syros
P.Kell.Copt. 88	Ploutogenes to Andreas
P.Kell.Copt. 89	Ploutogenes to Tabes
P.Kell.Copt. 90	Psekes to Ploutogenes
P.Kell.Copt. 91	(?) to Iena (Ploutogenes?) and Hor
P.Kell.Copt. 95	(?) to Partheni
P.Kell.Copt. 102	Psais III to Partheni
P.Kell.Copt. 103	(?) to Pegosh
P.Kell.Copt. 105	Psais III to Andreas
P.Kell.Copt. 108	Psais III to Pegosh
P.Kell.Copt. 109	Kapiton to Tegoshe (?)
P.Kell.Copt. 110	Psais II[23] to Pamour III (and Pegosh)
P.Kell.Copt. 114	(?) to Philammon
P.Kell.Copt. 115	Tegoshe to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 116	Tegoshe (?) to Psais III
P.Kell.Copt. 120	Pekos (Pegosh?) to Pamour III (?)

[22] See notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 136-7.

[23] Tentative identification Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 221.

P.Kell.Gr. 19b	Ruling made by provincial governor to Pamour I and Philammon (298/9 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 20	Petition to the provincial governor by Pamour I (300–320 CE)[24]
P.Kell.Gr. 21	Petition to former magistrate by Pamour I (321 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 30	Exchange ownership rights Pamour III and son (363 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 31	Lease of a house by Pamour I (?) (306 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 32	Lease of a room in Psais II's (?) house (364 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 33	Lease of Pamour III's (?) house (369 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 37	Sale of part of a house by Takysis (320 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 38ab	Gift of a plot of land to Psais II (333 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 41	Loan to the daughter of Kapiton by Pamour I (?) (310 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 42	Loan by Pamour II (364 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 44	Loan by Pegosh (382 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 45	Loan by Kapiton son of Kapiton (386 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 50	Receipt of goods addressed to Psais II
P.Kell.Gr. 65	Philammon to Takysis
P.Kell.Gr. 67	Apa Lysimachos to Theognostos
P.Kell.Gr. 68	Psais III to Elias
P.Kell.Gr. 71	Pamour III (and Maria) to Psais III
P.Kell.Gr. 72	Pegosh to Pamour III
P.Kell.Gr. 73	Psais son of Tryphanes, to Pamour III (?)
P.Kell.Gr. 76	Pegosh to Sarapis
P.Kell.Gr. 79	Aniketos to Psais III (?)
P.Kell.Gr. 80	Psenamounis to Kapiton

Table 7: List of documents directly related to the relatives of Pamour III.

Our focus is on Pamour III, the husband of Maria, not to be confused with the spouse of Makarios. Pamour III was the brother of Pegosh/Pekysis and Psais III, all sons of Psais II and Tapollos. They had a sister, Tagoshe/Tekysis, who was married to Kapiton the son of Kapiton (P.Kell.Gr. 45 and 76). Due to the abundance of personal names in their letters, which sometimes seem to consist of greetings and minor family news only, a reconstruction of their personal networks can be established with some certainty. Not all names can be placed. The aim is not to present an exhaustive or definitive prosopography, but to discuss some of the individuals in more detail to introduce them as the historical actors within this network of entangled relations and interactions that formed the backbone of the local Manichaean community. A more complete prosopography is presented in Appendix 4.

[24] A petition to provincial governor by Pamour I (308 CE) is mentioned by Worp but not (yet) published. Worp, *GPK1*, 81.

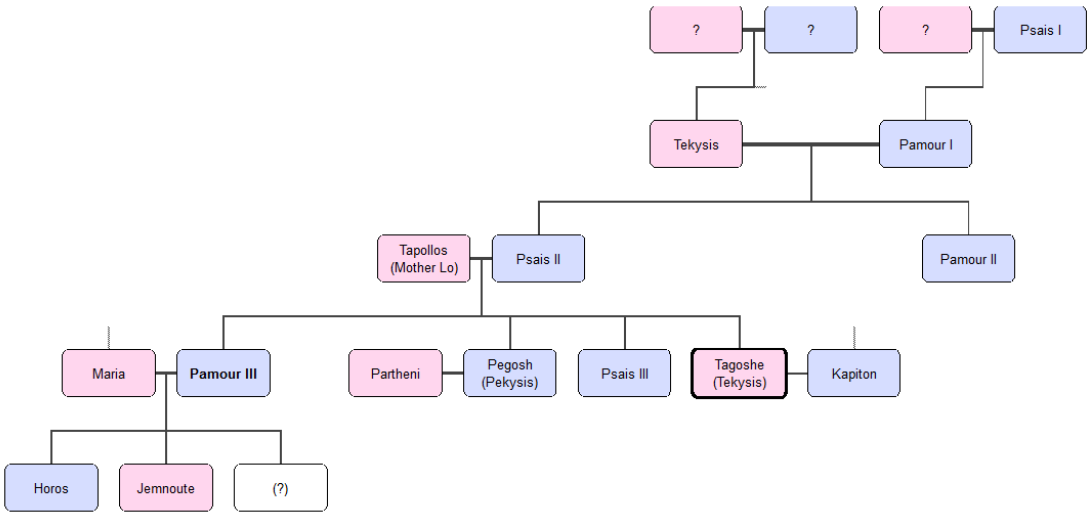

Figure 14: Section of the reconstructed family relations of Pamour III.

Financially, the brothers Pamour, Pegosh, and Psais belonged to the same affluent merchant network. Just like Makarios, they were involved in textile production and trade. Even though it is not always easy to distinguish between production for internal household purposes and for sale on the markets of the Nile valley, the latter seems to have taken place in abundance. A Greek letter by Psais son of Tryphanes, concerning his son Tryphanes, discussed some of the business agreements:

> [L]ook now, I have sent you my son Tryphanes with (?) my goods in order that you make an effort and together with him bring together… and if you spend ten or twenty days together with him, while you are selling my goods, I am prepared to give you your salary in the meantime.[25]

To gain profit from the agricultural wealth of the oasis, these people traveled extensively to sell their commodities elsewhere in Egypt. Presumably, Pamour traveled with Tryphanes to sell the goods of his father Psais. These goods must have included garments, dye, and wool, as these are mentioned at the verso of the letter (P.Kell.Gr. 72). The other letters by Pamour and his brothers frequently concern these business arrangements. In a Greek letter, Pegosh asks his brother Pamour for "nicely colored wool" and questioned him about his failure to send the purple dye (P.Kell.Gr. 72). Kapiton, who was still traveling with Pegosh at the time, wrote to his wife, asking her to cut the wool that he has sent and make a *sticharion*, which

[25] ἰδοὺ οὖν, ἀπέστειλά σοι τὸν υἱόν μου Τρυφάνην μετὰ τὰ εἴδη μου, ἵνα ποιήσῃς τὴν σπουδὴν κ̣α̣ὶ̣ συνάγεις μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ -- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- --[-ca.?-]μ̣ου καὶ πρ̣ι̣[. . . .]-κα μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐν καλ̣[. .] . μ̣η καί, ἐὰν ποιήσῃς δέκα ἡμέρας ἢ εἴκοσι μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἕως πιπράσκεις τὰ εἴδη μου, ἑτοίμως ἔχω παρασχεῖν σοι τὸν μισθόν σου τέως. P.Kell.Gr. 73.8-20.

had to be sent together with the belongings of Pegosh (P.Kell.Copt. 75, wool was also sent to Kellis for the production of garments in P.Kell.Copt. 78 and 79).[26] Presumably, it was sent to the oasis, spun, dyed, and made into beautiful garments to be sold on the markets in the Nile valley.[27] The fabrics found in the village were mostly made locally, but a few seem to have been imported.[28] Without a doubt, there was reason for distress when their products were not accepted, for example when low-quality wool was used in the production of blankets (P.Kell.Copt. 76. Cf. the situation of Matthaios in P.Kell.Copt. 26.14–16).

Not all the business associates mentioned in Pamour's letters were relatives, but Kapiton was. The web of interpersonal relations strongly suggests Kapiton was married to Tagoshe, the sister of Pamour, Psais, and Pegosh. His role in their business is visible, at various stages in time, in his postscripts to letters of Pegosh.[29] After a while, however, they went separate ways, as Pegosh declared in a Greek document that he did not know whether Kapiton was still alive and he had "nothing in common with him in any respect."[30] When exactly he broke away from his wife and his brothers-in-law is not known, but we have a loan of money on his name, or the name of his son, from 386 CE (P.Kell.Gr. 45).[31]

Several letters indicate how Pamour III, Psais III, and Pegosh collaborated with relatives and other associates under direct supervision of their father, even when the latter was of old age. Pamour III's relation to his father is characterized by a strong sense of obligation, which resulted in some tense situations. Many boys in late antique Egypt grew up fatherless, due to high mortality rates, and only a few children grew up with their parents and grandparents.[32] To see Psais II in action in the 360s, while he was probably well into his sixties, is therefore exceptional. As elderly figure in the household, he was frequently greeted

---

[26] Wool is not mentioned in the KAB and is absent from the bio–archaeological remains. C. S. Churcher, "Faunal Remains from Kellis," in *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, ed. C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 105-13. It may not appear in the KAB because it was primarily a list of agricultural transactions rather than products of animals.

[27] Bowen, "Texts and Textiles," 18-28 suggests that wool was produced in the oasis. Could P.Kell.Copt. 58.20 have contained a request for "local" wool? See the notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 24.

[28] R. J. Livingstone, "Late Antique Household Textiles from the Village of Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis," in *Clothing the House: Furnishing Textiles of the 1st Millennium from Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, ed. A. de Moor and C. Fluck (Tielt: Lannoo Publishers, 2009), 84 mentions resist-dyed cottons and the taquete textiles.

[29] See his postscript in Pegosh's letter P.Kell.Copt. 75.37 to Tagoshe and his letter to her in P.Kell.Copt. 109.

[30] μηδὲν κοινὸν ἔχοντα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν οὐδένι. P.Kell.Gr. 76.29-30. Translation as given in the notes of Worp, *GPK1*, 199.

[31] I tend to follow the editors of the Coptic material in their interpretation of this loan as to the son of Kapiton, returned to the Dakhleh Oasis and residing in the hamlet Thio. See Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 100. Contra the family tree of Worp, *GPK1*, 52. The date in the 380s, on the other hand, would not require a new generation, since Pegosh's latest dated occurrence is in a document from 382 CE. For the hamlet Thio see P.Kell.Copt. 19.77, 50.38 and KAB 108, 584.

[32] Huebner, *Family in Roman Egypt*, 73 refers to 15.3 percent of the census returns belonging to three generation households. See also W. Scheidel, "The Demographic Background," in *Growing up Fatherless in Antiquity*, ed. S. R. Huebner and D. M. Ratzan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 31-40 citing percentages of Roman urban areas with 28-37 percent of the individuals having lost their father at 15 and 49-61 by the age of 25.

by his younger relatives.[33] More importantly, from the letters of Pamour and Pegosh, we get the impression that they continue to seek his counsel and struggle with his role as paterfamilias. In a fascinating letter about the fate of two orphaned girls, Pegosh seeks counsel from his brother Psais and asks not only for his opinion but also for his intervention in the decision-making process of their father: "'Will you persuade my father if you are content for me to do the thing?' And I myself am wondering whether you are persuaded?"[34] Likewise, in P.Kell.Copt. 77, Pegosh indicates to Kapiton that "father Shai" had given specific instructions about the issue at hand (P.Kell.Copt. 77.22, likewise in P.Kell.Copt. 82.20 written by Philammon). Although in both instances the content of the request or issue is largely lost, it indicates the central position of Psais II in their lives and businesses.[35]

Their father's continuing presence led to tension between the brothers. A good example, though hard to reconstruct in detail, is Pamour's letter to his brother Psais, requesting particular items. The letter makes clear that Pamour had corresponded with their father about the issue at hand, but he ends up writing to his brother. It appears that some items, including a copper vessel (?), were sold and that Pamour was deliberately excluded, "so that I would receive nothing from him [i.e. Psais II]" (P.Kell.Copt. 64.7–9). Had Pamour lost the favor of his father? If so, he told his brother "do not let any complication occur among us," stressed he was "only seeking what is ours" (P.Kell.Copt. 64.3–4, 8–9), and renounced all claims on the items from which he was allegedly excluded.[36] A related issue featured in a letter between Pamour and Pegosh, concerning a disagreement about property. The items were probably either given by Psais to Pegosh or taken out of his inheritance, but "every item we have, between us mutually on account of our father, whether of bronze or all that is ours, you are its owner."[37] As in the previous example, Pamour did not seek conflict over the property, even though he might actually be in the possession of the goods, but confirms Pegosh's ownership rights.

Since traveling belonged to the occupational practice of Pamour III and his relatives, it is unsurprising to see him taking up residence in Aphrodite in the Nile valley (Antaiopolite nome). Together with Maria, he continued to correspond with their relatives in the oasis. As a Greek document related to the inheritance of their son Horos was dated May

---

[33] References to "father Pshai," by Pamour and Maria are found in P.Kell.Copt. 64, 65, 66, 67 (?), 70, 71 and 72.

[34] ⲁϊⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲛⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲕⲛⲁⲡⲱⲉ ⲙⲡⲁ̈ⲱⲧ ⲓ̈ⲱϫⲉ ⲓ̣ⲛ̣ⲕ ⲛϩⲏⲧ ⲧⲁⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲓϩⲉ ϩⲱ̣ⲧ̣ ϫ[ⲉ] ⲕⲡⲱⲉ.. P.Kell.Copt. 73.14-16.

[35] N. J. Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite in Late Antique Religion: The Case of Manichaeism," in *Mass and Elite in the Greek and Roman Worlds: From Sparta to Late Antiquity*, ed. R. Evans (London: Routledge, 2017), 181 also attempts to interpret this passage in relation to the *Kephalaia* passage on child-donation. Unfortunately the "ambiguities of expression" hampers a full identification of the situation.

[36] ..ⲙ̄ⲡⲱⲣⲧ̣ⲉ ϩⲗⲁⲙ[ⲗ]ⲉⲙ ⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ ⲛ̄ⲉⲣⲏⲩ ..ⲱⲁⲛⲉⲧ ϫⲉ ⲛⲓϫⲓ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ· ϩⲓⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲏⲧ̣ⲉ̣ [ⲁ]ⲣⲁⲩ· ⲉⲛⲱ̣ⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲡⲱ̣ⲛ̣· P.Kell.Copt. 64.3-4, 7-9.

[37] ..ϫⲉ ϩ̣ⲛ̣ⲟ ⲛⲓⲛ ⲉ̣ϥⲱⲟⲡ̣' ⲛⲉⲛ· ⲉϥⲟⲩⲧⲱⲛ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ ⲛ[ⲉ]ⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ϩⲁ ⲡⲛ̄ⲓ̈ⲱⲧ· ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲟ ⲛ̄ϩⲁⲛⲧ'. ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄. ⲕⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡϥ̄ϫⲁ̈ⲥ. P.Kell.Copt. 69.5-8. Discussed at Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 64. Dubois understands this as the inheritance, but from my understanding of the text, Psais II is still alive. J. D. Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis: A Contribution to the History of a Manichaean Community," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013): 21-28.

363 CE, all of these letters must have been sent before that time (P.Kell.Gr. 30).[38] During this period, but also afterward, a number of Kellites were registered in Greek contracts from Aphrodite (P.Kell.Gr. 30, 32, 42, 43, 44, all from the period 360–380). Pegosh, like his brother, wrote from Aphrodite (P.Kell.Copt. 77).[39] One of his contracts was signed in Aphrodite by a man who had also signed a contract of his uncle, Pamour II (P.Kell.Gr. 44, 382 CE, and P.Kell.Gr. 42, 364 CE).[40] Both times, it was recorded that this man also came from Kellis himself, but lived in Aphrodite. The strongest connection to Aphrodite is the document with ownership rights of a house at Aphrodite, found in Kellis. It was signed by grandfather Psais II on behalf of Pamour III and his son Horos (P.Kell.Gr. 30, May 363 CE). From this letter, we learn that Horos's mother, presumably Maria, owned about half of a farm house (ἐπαύλεως) in Aphrodite.[41] Since she passed away, the ownership rights were transferred to Horos.

This latter document is interesting for another reason. It records the nickname of Pamour and Horos, the "Egyptians."[42] Even though they came from Kellis, they acquired a nickname as outsiders, people from the Nile valley. Presumably, this nickname derived from their residency in Aphrodite. Just as his father, uncle, and grandfather, Pamour III divided his time between Kellis and Aphrodite. This evidence for the internal migration of three subsequent generations from the oasis to Aphrodite and back has led Worp to identify them as a camel-driver family with a pied-a-terre, which is not entirely implausible, despite few traces of camel driving in the papyri.[43]

Besides strong relations with relatives and coworkers, there are marked traces of interactions with Christians. The following example is set in Aphrodite. In a contract from 364 CE, Marsis leased one room in the house of Psais II in Aphrodite for the price of two *artabas* of wheat. The scribe and witness was Iakob son of Besis the priest, reader of the catholic church (P.Kell.Gr. 32.20–21). Such singular indications of religious officials, even if

---

[38] I am grateful to H. Teigen for bringing this to my attention.

[39] From where Pamour and Maria add their postscript to his letter (just as Maria did with Pamour's letters (P.Kell.Copt. 64 65, 66, 71 and P.Kell.Gr. 71). Discussed also in T. Gagos, "A Multicultural Community on the Fringes of the Desert: A Review of the Greek Papyri from Kellis," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12, no. 2 (1999): 758, who suggests that the communication increased when more family members moved to Aphrodite.

[40] If this Aurelius Pebos, son of Tithoes, is the same person as the Pebo in P.Kell.Copt. 66, he might also have shared the Manichaean affiliation. See Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 55.

[41] Which is inherited by Horos for 1/3th, suggesting his mother had three children who all received 1/6th of the farmhouse. Worp, *GPK1*, 87-91 in particular 90n11. Other testimonials to private property in the Pamour family stem from 320, 333 and 369 CE. The first deals with a sale by Takysis of 1/4th of a house in Kellis, it is no longer visible whether it dealt with House 3 or another house (P.Kell.Gr. 37). Worp, *GPK1*, 106. The second is a document in which Pausanias grants a plot of land to Pamour. The latter attests to Pamour III's ownership of a house, since he is able to lease one room to Psais the son of Psyros, a carpenter from Kellis, for 200 talents per year (P.Kell.Gr. 33). Much may have been changed in the period between Takysis and Pamour III, but their family's wealth and property was still relatively strong.

[42] Αἰγύπτιων λεγομενων Discussed at Worp, *GPK1*, 90.

[43] P.Kell.Copt. 50 mentions the ϩⲁⲛⲟⲩⲗ and in 71 pack-animals (ⲡⲃⲁⲣⲱϩⲉ, camel (?)) are discussed by Pamour. Cf. P.Kell.Copt. 20.54 (Makarios about the owners of the pack-animals). Worp suggests that some of these Kellites belonged to a family of cameldrivers. Worp, *GPK1*, 90.

they only hold minor offices, are the only religious self-designations of non-Manichaean Christians in the Kellis documents (see previous chapter, however, on the office of the bishop). Both Psais II and Marsis, however, have been associated with the Manichaean community.[44] Why Marsis and Psais II did not use the services of a fellow Manichaean scribe is unknown. It could have been caused by their remote location in Aphrodite, far from the oasis, or by the fact that they reckoned they needed someone of official status in the Aphrodite village context with experience in Greek legal documents, regardless of his religious affiliation.

4.4 Performing personal letters

Building a social and religious history on the basis of personal letters requires a profound understanding of the social function of these documents. Ancient letters were not used primarily to convey new information, but to establish and nurture social ties. They bring the absent author in the presence of the recipients and convey his or her best intentions. Since the level of literacy was not high, most letters would have been read out loud by someone else than the primary addressees.[45] Reading and writing personal letters was therefore not a private affair. Apart from a scribe or a literate acquaintance to help with composing the letter, other members of the household would probably have been present when news from the Nile valley finally reached the oasis. Epistolary conventions also point toward this social setting, as many of the letters take remarkable effort to greet all family members and neighbors. Of course, we cannot be certain that all these people would have been present when the letter was read, but they would have received the news soon enough. Shorter letters could also be more abrupt, skipping the formulaic greetings, while sometimes only containing brief informal requests.[46] In such instances, additional information and greetings were transmitted in the associated letters or through the letter carrier. As some time may have passed between the author writing the letter and the recipients reading it, the letter carrier was to provide further information to fill the gap.[47] This made reading a dynamic

---

[44] This affiliation with the Manichaean circle known through the letters of Makarios and his son, where she is called Marshe (in Coptic). Another Greek contract could strengthen this hypothesis. P.Kell.Gr. 30 mentions Aurelius Psais son of Pamour who acted on behalf of this son and grandson in an exchange of ownership rights in Aphrodite (363 CE). This Psais is likely to be the same as in the contract with Marsis (same name, same time, same location and same find location in Kellis). This adds strength to the hypothesis that she is a Manichaean, because Psais was also closely related to the Makarios archive. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 41 identifies the Psais in P.Kell.Copt. 25 and perhaps 26 with Psais II. Worp, *GPK1*, 51. But see the number of individuals called Psais in Worp's onomasticum.

[45] But also see Wipszycka's argument for a relatively high degree of literacy. E. Wipszycka, "Le degré d'alphabétisation en Égypte byzantine," *Revue des etudes augustiniennes* 30 (1984): 279-96.

[46] Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 15-19.

[47] There is a dearth of literature on the situatedness of ancient (personal) letters. The few studies that reflect on these reading-experiences include L. H. Blumell, "The Message and the Medium: Some Observations on Epistolary Communication in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 10 (2014): 46-53, 57-65. A. Verhoogt, "Dictating Letters in Greek and Roman Egypt from a Comparative Perspective (Unpublished Working Paper)," (2009). Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 25-32 turn to medieval letters to remedy the absence of late antique information. On the gifts that sometimes accompanied these letters,

performance with additional information, questions from the audience, and communal conversation. Formulating an answer thus started with these initial oral responses. As Lincoln Blumell remarks, this should remind us that "the whole epistolary process in Late Antiquity was often a group project."[48] It is, thus, important to realize the difference between these communal reading experiences and modern, private letters or emails. In fact, the postcard with greetings from family members on holiday may be a more suitable comparison. The postcard is generally not meant to convey information, it reinforces family bonds, contains formulaic phrases and greetings, and it may suggest an informal status or hierarchies (like between those who can afford the expensive holiday and those who stay at home). As with the postcard, we need to be aware of the audience and its expectations. They would know the conventions, the sequence, cues, and codes. The accumulation of these expectations and the performative context has been conceptualized as a "performance arena" with various players involved.[49] The performance arena is a culturally determined contact between these people, in which certain cultural and social expectations were met with more or less success.[50] As part of an implicit information game, authors employ extensive formulas and phrases belonging to politeness strategies, to establish or frame a smooth working relationship against which the interaction may take place.[51] Many of these epistolary politeness formulas are known through practice-letter formularies.[52] Ancient letter writers could draw on multiple repertoires and schemes. Greek letters became more formal and elaborate in the fourth century, with allusions to biblical narratives and strongly marked Christian formulas, while Coptic letters could maintain both a level of spontaneous simplicity as well as a more lavish or formal style.[53] Some of the latter-type letters have been found in Kellis, but the majority combined an informal conventional tone with sections of marked religious language.

This brings us to the role of religion, or Manichaeanness, in the letters of Makarios, Pamour III, and their relatives. To bring together some of the details from various letters, we

---

see J. Williams, "Letter Writing, Materiality, and Gifts in Late Antiquity: Some Perspectives on Material Culture," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 7, no. 2 (2014): 351-59. A number of studies are focused on letter-writing in relation to the New Testament. S. K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986). H.-J. Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006).

[48] Blumell, "The Message and the Medium," 65.

[49] J.M. Foley, *How to Read an Oral Poem* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 116.

[50] E.D Zakrzewska, "The Bohairic Acts of the Martyrs as a Genre of Religious Discourse," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Northern Egypt*, ed. G. Gabra and H.N. Takla (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2017), 228. E.D Zakrzewska, "Masterplots and Martyrs: Narrative Techniques in Bohairic Hagiography," in *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient near East: Literary and Linguistic Approaches*, ed. F. Hagen, et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 516.

[51] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 10 and passim.

[52] Collected in M. Hasitzka, *Neue Texte Und Dokumentation Zum Koptisch Unterricht* (Vienna: Hollinek, 1990), no.109-83. Studied in T.S. Richter, "Coptic Letters," *Asiatische Studien* 62, no. 3 (2008): 739-70. E.M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 121-23.

[53] Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 17-18.

should take a step back and reflect on three ways in which these papyri shed light on Manichaeism.

4.5 Indications of Manichaeanness

The first and foremost reason to examine these letters for traces of Manichaean groupness is their find location, together with liturgical and theological texts from the Manichaean tradition. Many of the following chapters will explore the connections between the documentary letters and the liturgical texts, putting them in the context of earlier discoveries like the Manichaean Psalmbook from Medinet Madi. A second incentive—maybe more exciting—are the passages in the personal letters where Manichaean thought and practice are discussed or alluded to. Some of the letters refer to Manichaean deities, while others include titles of officials or books. Because of the nature of the letters, these references are often short or ambiguous, lacking most of the contextual evidence that would inform us in more depth about the role Manichaeism played in daily life. Finally, there are passages in which the authors do not directly discuss the Manichaean church, but employ phrases that nevertheless give their religious affiliation away. More reflection on the existence and use of this Manichaean repertoire has to be postponed to Chapter 5, but section 4.5.2 will already highlight some of the remarkable formulas from the Kellis letters.

The following sections will exhibit some of this evidence for Manichaeanness. Taken together, they show the undisputable Manichaean affiliation of Makarios, Pamour, and their families, while at the same time making it apparent that they only occasionally foregrounded this aspect of their lives.

4.5.1 Traveling with the Teacher

Makarios's letters are characterized by complaints. Frequently, he grumbles about the state of the goods sent, but particularly about the lack of news from the oasis.[54] Maria knew the camel drivers were coming, why did she not send a letter (P.Kell.Copt. 20.53–4)? Why has she not replied to his letters or even confirmed that she received them (P.Kell.Copt. 20.14)? Makarios's frustrations loom large, even more so in modern ears. These complaints are, however, commonplace in papyrus correspondence. With long journeys separating families and no official post service, ancient authors had to rely on other travelers to carry their correspondence back to the oasis. Makarios, nevertheless, wondered if she did not return his letters because his children "have been taken from me" (ⲁⲩϥⲓ ⲛ̀ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ… P.Kell.Copt. 20.22). Could she have been angry about this situation?

With hindsight, Maria should have been proud. Their children were taken from Makarios by a higher authority, as he wrote: "I have no power in this matter beyond … requests (?)."[55] Piene, one of their sons, was traveling with the Teacher:

---

[54] This is a common feature in papyrus letters, see Clarysse, "Emotions in Greek Private Papyrus Letters," 65-9.

[55] .. ⲛ̀ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲧⲉ̈ⲓ ϭⲁⲙ ⲁⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲙⲉⲧⲁ… ⲛⲁϫⲓⲱϣ̀ϣⲓⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 20.22-23.

> the Great Teacher let him travel with him, so that he might learn Latin. He teaches him well. Their body is set up, and they are good and worthwhile [MB: i.e., they are healthy and doing well].[56]

In other letters, she was informed that Piene was in training to read in the church (P.Kell.Copt. 25) and intended to go to Alexandria with the Teacher (after their stay with Apa Lysimachos, P.Kell.Copt. 29.15). This "Great Teacher" (ⲡⲛⲁϩ ⲛⲥⲁϩ) was more than an

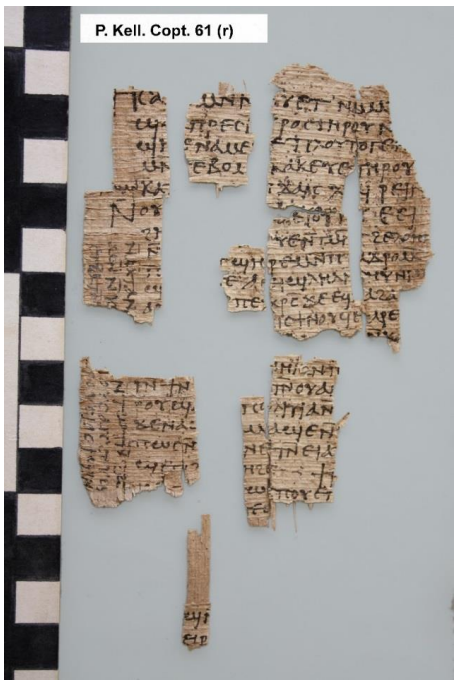

Figure 15: Letter P.Kell.Copt. 61. Photograph by Jay Johnston. Published in the edition (used with permission).

[56] ⲡⲓⲉⲛⲉ ⲇⲉ ⲁ ⲡⲛⲁϩ ⲛⲥⲁϩ ⲕⲁⲩ ⲉⲩⲙ[ⲁϩ]ⲉ ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲧⲣⲉⲩϫⲓⲥⲱⲙ ⲁⲛⲓⲧⲣⲱⲙⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲥⲧⲥⲉⲃⲟ ⲓ̈ⲛⲁⲩ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ ⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱⲙ̣ⲁ̣ ⲥⲛⲁⲛⲧ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲣⲫⲉⲩ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ P.Kell. Copt 20.24-26.

ordinary teacher, as the Manichaean church hierarchy was said to be led by twelve Teachers, themselves only directed by the successor of Mani (the *Archegos*). An official designated as the Teacher could have been a major authority to the Manichaeans in the oasis.

Piene was not the only one traveling with the Teacher. Amongst the heaps of papyri extracted from the domestic debris is one fragment of a letter from the Teacher to Ploutogenios, Pebo, and others (P.Kell.Copt. 61, see Figure 15). The introduction of this letter confirms that the Teacher was a high church official. The author followed an established pattern in Manichaean letters by referring to himself only by title.[57] Matthaios wrote to his mother: "[N]ow if he [MB: Piene or the Teacher?] depends (?) on him, and the child is content following him, it will be his glory."[58] Presumably, this glory derived from his training for several ecclesiastical duties. Learning how to read, as well as learning Latin, could indicate training as a *lector* or, as the editors suggest, as one of the new elect.[59]

This latter interpretation is tantalizing since there is little evidence for the selection and training of Manichaean elect. One section of the Coptic *Kephalaia* has been interpreted as indicating a system of child donation. In this passage, catechumens are urged to follow a threefold discipline to become perfect. Apart from the regular obligations of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, they are asked to give a child to the church:

> A person will give a child to the church for the (sake of) righteousness, or his relative or a member of the household, or he can rescue someone beset by trouble, or buy a slave and give him for righteousness. Accordingly, every good he might do, namely this one whom he gave as a gift for righteousness; that catechumen… will share in with them (ⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ).[60]

---

[57] For everything on this letter, see I. Gardner, "A Letter from the Teacher: Some Comments on Letter-Writing and the Manichaean Community of IVth Century Egypt," in *Coptica - Gnostica - Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. L. Painchaud and P. H. Poirier (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 317-23.

[58] ⲉⲓ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉ̣ϥ̣ⲓ̈ϣ̣ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲏⲁϥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲗⲓⲗⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲏ̣ϩ̣ ⲛ̄ϣⲱϥ ⲛ̣̄ϥ̣ⲉⲁⲩ ⲡⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 25..46-48.

[59] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 76 and on 170 they state: "one wonders if Piene was being groomed for missionary work in the west." Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 235 "Ces renseignements sur les responsabilités réciproques de membres de la hiérarchie manichéenne orientent l'interprétation générale de la lettre, et surtout de la figure de Matthaios. Matthaios participe au réseau des élus manichéens charges d'instruire et de prêcher (voir peut-être aussi la référence a "entendre ma parole," ligne 74) dans les communautés le long de la vallée du Nil." I see no reason to divert from the primary edition which reads "everyone who wishes our word" (ⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲱϣ ⲡ̄ϣ̣ⲉϫⲉ) as a Manichaean self-designator in line 74. This does not necessarily suggest that Matthaios was involved in teaching (nor that a first person singular is indicated here).

[60] .. ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲛⲁϯ [ⲟ]ⲩϣ̣ⲏ̣ⲣⲉ ⲛⲧ[ⲉⲕ]ⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ⲏ̣ ⲡⲉϥϣ̣ⲣⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ [ⲏ ⲡⲣⲏ]ⲛⲏ̈ⲓ̈ ⲏ ⲉϥⲁⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲉ ⲉϥⲁϩ̣ⲉ ⲁⲣⲉⲧ̄ϥ̣ ϩ̣ⲙ̄ ⲟⲩⲑⲗⲓϯ[ⲓⲥ ⲏ ⲉϥ]ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲁⲩ ⲟⲩϭⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ϥⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲁⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲁ[ⲥ ⲁⲅⲁ]ⲑⲟⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲁⲉ̈ⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ϫⲓ ⲡⲉ̈ⲓ̈ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲛ̄ⲇⲱⲣⲟⲛ [ⲁⲧⲇⲓ]ⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲓⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣[…..] ⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ 1 Keph. 80, 193.5-11, the Coptic text is from the edition of Böhlig, the translation from Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 74. In Gardner's earlier translation the final sentence was "That catechumen who [does this] will be in partnership with them." Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 202. Note, moreover, Gardner's reconstruction "for the sake of." Alternatively, we could consider "righteousness" in the first line as referring to the lives of the elect. BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 31.

The donation of houses (which immediately follows this passage as a third "work"), children, or slaves to the church was meant to establish partnership (ⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓⲁ) with the elect.[61] Such donations were more commonly practiced in Christian Egypt, as becomes apparent from eighth-century contracts from the village of Jeme, in which children were donated to the adjacent monastery of Phoibammon.[62] These contracts, despite their narrative structure, not necessarily indicate that the children were to become monks. They describe the arrangements under which children served as servants or were trained for useful occupations when parents could not afford their upbringing and education.[63] Though some of them remained ascetics, their initial role would have combined domestic duties with a monastic education.[64] Parallels have been drawn between these eighth-century Christian practices and earlier traditions, including the hagiographical story about Mani's youth in a Baptist sect.[65] The Manichaean *Homilies* mention children in an apocalyptic setting during (and after) the Great War (Hom. 30 and 31) and one of the Psalms alludes to religious education or training since childhood (2 PsB. 75). The *Kephalaia* contains one additional passage that confirms that children or slaves were trained to become elect, as a "boy from his slaves" was ordained by Mani (1 Keph. 166, 410.23–414.30 ⲟⲩⲗⲓⲗⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲛ[ⲉ]ϥϧⲁⲟⲩⲟⲛⲉ on 411.1). Unfortunately, these passages are fragmentary and hardly reflect actual social practices. The passages on the education of Kellis's children are therefore a much-needed contribution to our knowledge of the training of elect, or the role of children in Manichaean communities.

In this background of poverty, education, and servanthood, at least one other boy from Kellis was "given" to an ascetic teacher. In P.Kell.Copt. 12, Titoue (Tithoes) wrote his son Shamoun to inform him that his son Titoue is very well and "he has gone to the monastery to be with father Pebok."[66] In an earlier (?) letter in Greek, Shamoun instructed his father: "[A]s I indicated to you concerning my son ---, put him into the monastery, where it

---

[61] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 59.

[62] T.G. Wilfong, *Women of Jeme* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 95-116 on religious duties and the donation of children.

[63] C. T. Schroeder, "Children and Egyptian Monasticism," in *Children in Late Ancient Christianity*, ed. C. B. Horn and R. R. Phenix (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 334-5; For the documents from Jeme, E. Wipszycka, "Donation of Children," *The Coptic Encyclopedia* III (1991): 918-19; L. S. B. MacCoull, "Child Donations and Child Saints in Coptic Egypt," *East European Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1979): 409-15; A. Papaconstantinou, "Notes sur les actes de donation d'enfant au monastère thébain de Saint-Phoibammon," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 32 (2002): 83-105; T. S. Richter, "What's in a Story? Cultural Narratology and Coptic Child Donation Documents," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 35 (2005): 237-64; S. Schaten, "Koptische Kinderschenkungsurkunden," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 35 (1996): 129-42; G. Schenke, "The Healing Shrines of St. Phoibammon: Evidence of Cult Activity in Coptic Legal Documents," *Journal of Ancient Christianity* 20, no. 3 (2016): 496-523.

[64] Hagiographical evidence suggests that some children remained ascetics, even though they were probably able to leave on becoming adults. Schroeder, "Children and Egyptian Monasticism," 325. See also a possible parallel with P.Oxy. XII 1493, discussed in L. H. Blumell and T. A. Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus: Texts, Documents, and Sources* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2015), 490-3.

[65] Suggested without sufficient evidence in Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 151. There is no indication in CMC 121-123 about the age of the girl, nor of her role in the community.

[66] ⲁϥⲃⲱⲕ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲧϩⲉⲛⲉⲧⲉ ϩⲁⲧⲏ̄ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲃⲱⲕ P.Kell.Copt. 12.6-7.

(one) teaches him the linen-weaving trade."[67] These letters do not contain any explicit Manichaean language. Still, the possibility of a Manichaean monastery in the oasis has provoked discussion (see Chapter 7).[68] What happened at the monastery is, in this case, more important. The boy Titoue was sent there to learn the linen-weaving trade from a Christian monk. The object is educational. Nothing suggests he was trained as a Manichaean ascetic or monk. Late antique families could send their children into an apprenticeship even when a skilled father (and, rather exceptionally in this case, grandfather) was still alive.[69] Another document from Kellis mentions how a house slave was given to a master to learn the weaver's trade for a period of two years.[70] Piene's apprenticeship with the Teacher, on the other hand, was different. In contrast to Titoue, Piene could read and learned Latin, and may therefore have been trained for a position within the church.[71]

Traveling with Manichaean church officials, who were all by definition ascetic elect, was a more widespread group style.[72] Makarios and his other son were also involved with the Teacher. Matthaios's letters reveal an intimate knowledge of the journey of his brother. Initially, his letters suggest, Matthaios traveled with the Teacher, but he was left in Antinoou when his brother and the Teacher went to Alexandria.[73] Both Makarios and Matthaios traveled in the Nile valley, where the son stayed at least some time at Hermopolis (mentioned in the address of P.Kell.Copt. 26). Makarios is reported to have stayed at the house of Apa Lysimachos, one of the Manichaean elect whose name occurs regularly in the corpus. There, he was visited by the Teacher, who was by then very sick (P.Kell.Copt. 24. 19–20 and 41). On this occasion, Makarios also met some of the "brothers" from Alexandria, presumably elect accompanying the Teacher, who informed him about Piene's journeys (P.Kell.Copt. 24.25).

This social structure, of lay individuals traveling with the elect, is visible in at least two other letters from Kellis and in a Greek Manichaean letter from Oxyrhynchus. Philammon III wrote: "I asked Apa Lysimachos, (and) he said that we might not stay here."[74]

---

[67] [. . . . .] ̣σης τῶ̣ν̣ υ̣ἱῶν. Κα[θὼς ἐδήλωσ]ά σοι περὶ τον υἱον [. . . . .]βαλε εἰς τὸ μονοστή[ριον] [ὅπου δι]δάσκι αὐτὸν λινο̣ῦ̣[φικήν. P.Kell.Gr. 12.16-20.

[68] I. Gardner, ""He Has Gone to the Monastery...," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 247-57.

[69] R. P. Saller, "The Roman Family as Productive Unit," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. B. Rawson (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 125.

[70] P.Kell.Gr. 19a with interpretation Bergamasco, "P.Kell.G. 19.A, Appendix," 193-96.

[71] The editors wondered whether Piene was groomed for missionary work. Learning Latin in fourth-century Egypt is indeed remarkable since most official correspondence was in Greek. It has been suggested that the Teacher was from North-Africa, which opens up the larger framework of the diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 170.

[72] On church officials chosen from the elect, see Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 17.

[73] P.Kell.Copt. 25.41-42. Makarios, in his effort to inform his wife, describes his lack of power, "until Matthaios is placed near to me" (P.Kell.Copt.19.24). Presumably the authority who let Piene travel with The Teacher also "placed" Matthaios somewhere. See the notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 170.

[74] …ϫⲉ ϩⲓϫⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲡⲁ ⲗⲩⲥⲓⲙⲁϫⲟⲥ ⲙ̣ⲁϫⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲉⲛⲁϩⲙⲁⲥ ⲧⲉ̈ⲓ P.Kell.Copt. 82.37-40. I follow the translation in the edition and not the preliminary notes in the first volume, in which the translation "do not save this!" was suggested.

This suggests that Philammon III may not have had the authority to divert from the arranged plan. In a postscript to a letter from Pamour III, Psais III (?) and a number of others are greeted by "those of Apa L(ysimachos?) and Hor."[75] If this reading is correct, it supports the notion of a small group of followers or retinue of these established religious leaders.

A final strong indication for a group style based on communal journeys is found in P. Oxy. 31. 2603, a Greek letter of reference for people traveling in the "company of Ision and Nikolaos," two Manichaean elect.[76] Reading these passages in tandem, I suggest that the Manichaean elect in this period lived itinerant lives, while being supported by either local households of catechumens or by fellow travelers.

These passages are the principal sources for collating an impression of the social structure of the Manichaean community. The documentary evidence never reports about elect in the oasis, but consistently portrays them as traveling in the Nile valley. Contact with the Manichaeans in Kellis was established in letters, or through the personal stories of individuals like Piene and Matthaios. Presumably, the elect also visited the oasis, but this remains invisible in our sources. The succinct result of these journeys was a geographically dispersed network of traveling Manichaeans supported by local houses to sustain them. This type of grouping depended on the ratio between weak and strong ties. Infrequent contact with the religious specialists may have led to the diminishing value of Manichaeanness in individuals' lives, while frequent and intense moments of shared experience with the Manichaean elect could have made Manichaeanness more relevant and central to an individual's self-understanding.

4.5.2 Manichaean Prayer Formulas

Makarios's letters left few doubts about his knowledge of the church of Mani. The issues discussed, the book titles mentioned, the phrases used, and the deities called on: they all connote Manichaeism. This is not to say that there is no ambiguity in his words. On the contrary, most religiously marked phrases can be interpreted as stemming from a non-Manichaean, Christian background. This dual usage of religious phrases and formulas has led to the situation in which academic specialists in Manichaeism argue for a distinct Manichaean epistolary style in some of the Kellis letters, while historians of Christianity point to parallels in Egyptian Christian letters and liturgical traditions.[77] In this section, some

---

[75] Ϫⲛ ⲛⲁⲁⲡⲓ̀ ⲗ. ⲙ̄ⲙ ϩⲱⲣ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲓⲁⲥⲁⲛ ⲡϣⲁⲓ̈ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 72.35, on the verso.

[76] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 82 where he also points to anti-Manichaean polemics about young acolytes. I. Gardner, "Once More on Mani's Epistles and Manichaean Letter-Writing," *Journal of Ancient Christianity* 17, no. 2 (2013): 291-314. I am not convinced by their reference to Biruni (which is found on page 190 in the 1879 edition of Sachau). The young and hairless servant mentioned by Biruni is part of the discursive slander about the sexual ethics of Manichaean ascetics, which is already called into question by Biruni himself. Translation and notes about this passage in J. C. Reeves, *Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism* (Sheffield: Equinox Publishing ltd., 2011), 213-15.

[77] See discussion below, primarily the challenged posed by Martinez. Similar discussions about the use of specific phrases or symbols to identify religious affiliations in papyrus letters (or inscriptions) have addressed Jewish and Christian identities. On Jewishness see, R. S. Kraemer, "Jewish Tuna and Christian Fish: Identifying Religious Affiliation in Epigraphic Sources," *Harvard Theological Review* 84, no. 2 (1991): 141-62. S. J. D. Cohen, "'Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not': How Do You Know a Jew in Antiquity

of these epistolary formulas and their dual usage will be discussed, as they shed light on the role of Manichaeism in the lives of Makarios, Pamour, and their families. Instead of conceptualizing Manichaeanness and Christianness as two opposing tendencies, I consider them together as part of a wider, late antique Egyptian milieu in which several strands of thought and practice were shared beyond the boundaries of religious categories and groups.

There is only one letter in the Kellis corpus that cites Mani explicitly. In P.Kell.Copt. 19, Makarios wrote:

> Before everything: I greet you. I remember your gentleness and your calm, and the example (τυπος) of your … propriety; for all this time I have been without you, I have been asking after you and hearing of your good reputation. Also, when I came to you, I found you correct as you have always been. This too is the (right) way. Now, be in worthy matters (ⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲁⲩⲉ); just as the Paraclete (ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ) has said: "The disciple of righteousness is found with the fear of his teacher upon him (even) while he is far from him; like a guardian." Do likewise, my loved one; so that I may be grateful for you and God too may be grateful for you, and you will be glorified by a multitude of people. Do not acquire fault or mockery for your good conduct (ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ).[78]

The title "Paraclete" derives from a gospel passage in which Jesus promised his disciples a supernatural advocate (παράκλητος, John 14.16), whom Manichaeans identified with Mani, or Mani's supernatural double (*syzygos*).[79] Although the source of the citation cannot be identified, it is highly probable that Makarios cited one of Mani's *Epistles*. The Kellis version of one of the *Epistles* mentions a letter called "the conducts of righteousness" (ⲧ̣ⲁⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧ'ⲇ̣ⲓ̣ⲕ̣ⲁⲓ[ⲟ]ⲥ̣ⲩ[ⲛⲏ] P.Kell.Copt. 53, 71.15–16).[80]

Several lines further down in the letter, Makarios returned to the topic of ardent study, stressing that his son should be zealous "whether I am far from you or near to you."[81] At first glance, there is nothing peculiar about these passages. Many ancient letters play with the tension between being present and absent at the same time. Iain Gardner, however, has argued that Makarios in this instance not only cites Mani, but also adapts a Manichaean

---

When You See One?," in *Diasporas in Antiquity*, ed. S. J. D. Cohen and E. S. Frerichs (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 1-45.

[78] ϩⲁⲑⲏ ⲛ̄ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲏ ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϯⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ̅ⲣ̅ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲛⲏ̣ⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲟⲛⲧ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲡⲉⲕⲥ̣ⲃ̣ⲣⲁϩ̣ⲧ̄ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲡⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲛ̄ⲧϣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄.[.]̣ⲧ̣ⲉ ϫⲉ ⲡⲓⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲧⲏⲣ̄ϥ̄ ⲉⲧⲁⲓⲉϥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲓϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲕ ⲉⲓⲥⲱⲧ[ⲙ̄] ⲁ̣ⲡ̣[ⲉⲕ]ⲥⲧⲏⲟⲩϥⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲓⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϩⲁⲓⲃⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲕ̄ ⲉⲕⲥⲏⲓⲛ̄ⲧ̄ ⲛⲧⲉⲕϩⲉ ⲧⲉⲕϩ[ⲉ] ⲡⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲣⲏⲧⲉ ϯⲛⲟⲩ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲩϫ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲕⲁⲧ[ⲁ] ⲧϩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ϩⲁ ⲡ̄ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ ϫⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲡ̄ⲙⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ϣ[ⲁⲩ] ⲟⲛⲧ̄ϥ̄ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲧ̄ϩⲉⲣⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁϩ ϩⲓϫⲱϥ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲛⲩ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁϥ ⲛ̄ⲧϩⲉ ⲛⲉⲣ̄ϥ̄ⲣⲁⲣⲁϩ ⲉⲣⲓ ⲡⲓⲣⲏⲧⲉ ϩⲱⲕ ⲡⲁⲛⲉⲣⲓⲧ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥⲉ ⲉⲓⲛⲁϣⲱⲡ ⲡⲉⲕϩⲛⲁⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲛ ϣⲱⲡ̄ ⲡⲉⲕϩ̄ⲛⲁⲧ ⲛ̄ⲕϫⲓ ⲉⲁⲩ ϩⲓⲧⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲧⲟ ⲛ̄ϣⲱⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ̅ⲣ̅ϫⲡⲉ ⲁⲓⲃⲉ ⲏ ⲕⲱⲛϣ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ P.Kell.Copt. 19.4-13.

[79] This identification is made in the *Living Gospel* in CMC, 69, but also 17, 36, 63, 70. C. M. Stang, *Our Divine Double* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 145-84. For an examination of the CMC passages, see van Oort, "The Paraclete Mani," 139-57. The foremost *Kephalaia* passage on the Paraclete presents the biblical proof text (John 16.7) in Manichaean interpretations (1 Keph. 14.3-10), discussed in T. Pettipiece, "Separating Light from Darkness: Manichean Use of Biblical Traditions in the Kephalaia," in *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. DiTommaso and L. Turcescu (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 422.

[80] Gardner, *KLT1*, 82-3.

[81] ..ⲉⲓⲟⲩⲛⲩ [ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛⲏⲱⲧ]ⲛ̄ ⲉⲓϩⲏⲛ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ P.Kell.Copt. 19.69-70.

epistolary style based on Mani's *Epistles*.[82] In particular, the theme of being far while physically near is used in several more letters. Chief among these is the letter of the Teacher, which employs it in an introductory formula:

> Now, every time I am afar it is as if I am near. I remember the gentleness of your (pl.) sonship and the strength of your faith. I pray always to Jesus Christ: That he will guard you for me with this fragrance (?), as you are honoured by everyone corresponding to your conduct (πολιτια).[83]

Since both Makarios and the Teacher used this theme, it is likely that such a saying of Mani indeed featured in one of the Manichaean books. The notion of being far while near (ⲟⲩⲛⲩ - ϩⲛⲛ) was employed by several other letter writers. A member of the elect used it to remind their supporters in Kellis of their obligation to remember the traveling fathers in their gifts, even if they were far away[84], and Ploutogenes addressed his brothers as those "whose memory is sealed in my soul at all times, who are far from me in the body yet are near in the state of never-changing love."[85] The repetition of the theme shows the conscious appropriation of scriptural models in everyday correspondences.

According to Gardner, there are more instances that follow Mani's epistolary style. The Teacher may have followed Mani's *Epistles* in several other regards, like stressing specific Manichaean values.[86] This is even more telling in the similarity with a Manichaean letter from a totally different region. Makarios wrote: "[W]hen I came to you, I found you correct as you have always been."[87] A similar statement was made in a Parthian Manichaean letter: "Furthermore you should know this: When I came, I found brother Rashten to be just as I would wish. And as for his devotion and zeal, he was just as Mar Mani would desire."[88]

---

[82] Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 321-2. For these observations about far-near. I take "like a guardian" to refer to the respect for the teacher, which kept the pupil safe, following the interpretation in H. M. Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner: Kellis Literary Texts; Iain Gardner/Anthony Alcock/Wolf-Peter Funk (Ed.): Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis," *Enchoria* 27 (2001): 229. The argument is developed in I. Gardner, I. Nobbs, and M. Choat, "P. Harr. 107: Is This Another Greek Manichaean Letter?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 131 (2000): 118-24. Gardner, "Once More," 291-314. The latter explicitly engages with the critique of David Martinez.

[83] ⲛ̄ⲟⲩ[ⲁϊϣ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲏ] ⲁⲉⲓⲟⲩⲛ̣ⲩ ⲉⲉⲓ ϩⲏ[ⲛ ⲁⲉⲓⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉ]ⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲛ̄ⲧ̣ϩⲉⲗϭⲛⲧ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄]ⲧ̣ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲧ̣ⲁ̣ϫⲣⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡ[ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ]ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲁⲉⲓϣⲗⲏ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲛⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ ϣ[ⲁ ⲓⲛⲥⲟⲩ]ⲥ̣ ⲡⲉϫⲣ̄ⲥ ϫⲉ ⲉϥ[ⲛ]ⲁϩⲁ[ⲣⲏϩ] ⲁⲣ[ⲱⲧⲛ̄] ⲛⲏⲓ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥϯⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ ⲁ̣ⲣⲉ[ⲧⲛ̄] [ⲧⲁϊⲁⲓⲧ ⲛ̄]ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̣ⲛ̣ [ⲛⲓ]ⲛ̣ [ⲛ̄ⲧⲱⲧ]ⲛ̄ ⲕⲁ̣[ⲧⲁ] [ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄]ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲧⲓⲁ ⲛ̄[….P.Kell.Copt. 61.6-13. The translation from Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 32 is used and not an earlier version found in Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 317-23. The translation of ⲡⲥϯⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ as "fragrance" is dubious; the editors note the alternative "good reputation" (P.Kell.Copt. 19.2,7 31.20-21, P.Kell.Gr. 63.6-7 and 1 Keph. 259.11, 380.13).

[84] [ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲉ]ⲛ̀ⲟ̣ⲩⲛⲩ· ⲉⲓⲧⲉ [ⲉⲛϩⲏⲛ ⲁ]ⲛ̣ϭⲛ̄ ⲡⲣⲓⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲣⲱ ⲛ̄ϩⲏ[ⲧ̀ⲧⲏⲙⲉ] P.Kell.Copt. 31.24: "Whether we are far or we are near: indeed we have found remembrance among you."

[85] ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲟⲩ̄ⲣ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲧⲁⲃⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲁϯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲓⲏ· ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲛⲩ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁϊ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥⲱⲛⲁ ⲉⲩϩⲏⲛ ⲁ̣ⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧ̣ⲁⲓⲁⲑⲉⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲗⲁⲡⲏ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧⲱⲓⲃⲉ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ…P.Kell.Copt. 85.2-4, translation modified, see also P.Kell.Copt. 15.12, 17.5, 19.5, 26.11, 31.24, 61.6-7, 63 (?), 72.10,

[86] Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 317-23. Gardner, "Once More," 291-314.

[87] ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲓⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲕ ϩⲁⲓϭⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲕ̄ ⲉⲕⲥⲙⲓⲛ̄ⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕϩⲉ ⲧⲉⲕϩ[ⲉ] ⲡⲉⲓ ⲁⲛ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲣⲏⲧⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 19.7-8.

[88] M5815 II translation from Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road*, 260. Cited in Gardner, "Once More," 300-1.

The commonality between the two letters may well be explained as resulting from a deep awareness of the Manichaean scriptures and the existence of a Manichaean epistolary style used as a "model" (τυπος P.Kell.Copt. 19.4–5).[89] Gardner's argument about the exemplary role of Mani's *Epistles* is convincing, but can only be examined in full after the publication of what is left of the Medinet Madi fragments of this canonical work. Tracing phrases back to a hypothetical Manichaean origin, moreover, may obscure the interaction between epistolary customs in the local Egyptian context. One additional approach, therefore, is to compare the prayer formulas in the Kellis letters with each other and with Ancient Christian letters and literature, to discern patterns and establish how the Kellites used religious notions in the introduction of their letters.

Prayer formulas are a standard feature of Greek and Coptic letters. Scholars have studied them extensively, aiming to determine the religious affiliation of the author(s).[90] As more and more documentary letters were published in the last decades, it became clear that despite the Christian tone of some formulas, many phrases were used by authors from various religious backgrounds. Characteristic phrases like "God is my witness," with "God" in the singular, are not exclusively Christian. Apparently, monotheistic formulas were also used outside a Christian (or even monotheistic) framework.[91] Specific prayer formulas (*proskynema*) often occur in relation to the Christian "God," but are also attested for Serapis.[92] This coalescence of expressions hampers the identification of distinct religious groups. As a general rule, papyri do not inform us in depth about specific religious concerns that would allow us to categorize them along the lines of the theological controversies. This does not mean, however, that all these letters are the same, as epistolary formulas can be examined for their variation and the way they play with conventions.

Makarios's sons started their letters with praise for their mother's kindness, and continued in a remarkably similar style, with a prayer formula addressing the "Father, the God of Truth."

> (Matthaios to Maria) Before everything I greet you warmly, my lady mother; with my brothers, my masters whose names are very precious to me at all times, every day and every hour. This is my prayer to the Father, the God of Truth, and his beloved son the Christ and his holy spirit, and his Light angels: That he will watch over you together, you being healthy in your body, joyful in heart, and rejoicing in soul and spirit, all the time we will pass in the body, free from any evil and any temptations by Satan and any sickness of the body. And furthermore (I pray) that this great day of joy should happen to us, the (day) for which we pray indeed every hour…[93]

---

[89] Gardner, "Once More," 301 refers to P.Kell.Copt. 53, 71.22-72.2 and 53, 83.20-21.

[90] Three recent contributions include Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 89-90; M. Choat, *Belief and Cult in Fourth-Century Papyri* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); L. H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

[91] Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 106.

[92] Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 111.

[93] ϩⲁⲑⲏ ⲛ̄ϩⲣⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲏ ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ· ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲧⲁϫⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲙ̄ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲛⲁϫⲓⲥⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲉⲛ ⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ’ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ· ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲛⲓⲏ· ⲙ̄ ϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲏ· ⲙⲛⲏ̄· ⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲡⲉ̈ⲓ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ϣⲁ ⲡⲱⲧ’ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲛⲉ’ ⲙ̄ ⲡⲉϥϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲧ’ ⲡϫ̄ⲥ· ⲙ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲡⲛ̄ⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ· ⲙ̄ ⲛⲉϥⲁⲅ’ⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛ̣ ϫⲉϥⲛⲁⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲓ ⲟⲩϩ̣ⲁⲓ̈· ⲉⲣⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁϫ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ϣⲱⲙⲁ· ⲁⲣⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣⲁⲩⲧ’ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ϩⲏⲛⲧ· ⲉⲧⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲗⲏⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ϥⲩⲭⲏ· ⲙ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ· ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ϣ ⲧⲏⲣϥ· ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲉ̈ⲓ̈ⲧϥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲙⲁ· ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲁ ⲛ̄ⲃⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲑⲁⲩ ⲛⲓⲏ· ϩⲓ ⲡⲣⲁⲥⲛⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲏ

> (Piene to Maria) This is my prayer every hour to the Father, the God of Truth, that he may preserve you healthy in your body, joyful in your soul, and firm in your spirit; for all the time that you will spend in this place. Also, after this place, you may find life in the kingdom for eternity.[94]

It is not just these letters that resemble each other in their usage of this specific prayer formula; their combination of the prayer to "the Father, the God of Truth" and a tripartite division of body, soul, and spirit, was employed, with some variation, in more Kellis letters (see P.Kell.Copt. 65.7–14, 71.4–9, 72.3–12). This resemblance has led Gardner, Choat, and Nobbs to conclude that it was "a valid and important indicator of religious belief."[95] In other words, if Greek or Coptic letters combine these features, they were most probably written in a Manichaean context. Interestingly, Gardner, Choat, and Nobbs noticed the same formulaic elements in P.Harr. 107, 4–12, which they consequently reconsidered and classified as a Manichaean letter.[96]

How strongly did these formulas evoke religious groupness? David Martinez has challenged the Manichaean interpretation of P.Harr. 107, and suggested that some of the phrases "could have their ultimate source in the language of liturgy and protective magic."[97] The God of Truth, he points out, occurs ten times in the liturgical traditions of the fourth-century *Prayers of Serapion*. Instead of connoting Manichaeanness, the formulas could have been associated with these non-Manichaean liturgical traditions. Despite Gardner's rebuttal of Martinez's argument, the dual usage of expressions remains a problematic issue. To illustrate this problematic status—I will not claim to have solved the question of the exact origin of the phrases—I will reexamine two of these formulaic phrases: the use of "Father, the God of Truth" and the tripartite prayer.

Martinez correctly identified the Christian use of the phrase "the God of Truth," which is not only common in the *Prayers of Serapion* but also in works by Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, and other Early Christian authors. At the same time, its frequent

---

ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲥⲁⲧⲁⲛⲁⲥ· ⲙ̄ⲡ ϣⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ· ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲓⲛⲁϩ ⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲣⲉϣⲉ ⲧⲉϩⲁⲛ· ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲣⲱ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲓⲙ P.Kell.Copt. 25.9-23.

[94] ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲓ̈ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ϣⲁ ⲡⲱⲧ’ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲛⲉ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣[ⲣ]ⲉϥⲣⲁ̈ⲥ ⲁⲣⲟ ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩ [ⲁ]ϫ’ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉ̣[ⲥ]ϣ̣ⲛ̣ⲁ ⲉⲣⲉ̣ⲣⲉϣⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉ̣[ⲣ]ⲉⲧⲁϫ̣[ⲡⲁ̈ⲓⲧ’ ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲡⲛ̄̀ⲁ̣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓϣ ⲧⲏ[ⲣ]ⲟ̄ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲉⲣ[ⲁ]ⲉ̣ⲩ̣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲛ[ⲁ] ⲙⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ⲡ̣ⲓⲛⲁ ⲁⲛ [ⲧ]ⲉ̣ϭⲓⲛⲉ ⲛ̣̄ⲡⲱⲛϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ [ⲧ]ⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲣ̄ⲣⲟ ϣⲁⲁ[ⲛ]ⲏ̣ϩⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 29.7-13.

[95] Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat, "P. Harr. 107," 123.

[96] P.Harr. 107.4-12. Other variations are found in P.Kell.Copt. 25.12-26, 29.7-13, 31.12-16, 32.19-24, 62.1-15 (?), 63.1-10 (?), 71.4-9, 72.4-5.

[97] D. G. Martinez, "The Papyri and Early Christianity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 602. The expression ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀληθειας (Psalm 30.6 LXX) occurs more often in patristic authors (such as Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, but also the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*). A TLG search (accessed May 2017) lists at least 30 exact matches. The date and authorship of the *Prayers of Serapion* are contested, but the most recent literature tends to see a fourth-century date for the majority of the prayers B. D. Spinks, "The Integrity of the Anaphora of Sarapion of Thmuis and Liturgical Methodology," *Journal of Theological Studies* 49, no. 1 (1998): 136-44; M. E. Johnson, *Prayers of Sarapion of Thmuis: A Literary , Liturgical and Theological Analysis* (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995).

usage in Manichaean sources, as "the Father, the God of Truth," stands out.[98] Clearly, Christians and Manichaeans participated in the same linguistic repertoire, which makes it difficult to establish whether the authors appropriated the phrases from a Christian or Manichaean source. In personal letters, the God of Truth is only attested in P.Harr. 107 and the Coptic letters from Kellis, which slightly bends the argument in favor of the Manichaean connotations.[99] Here, Gardner's argument about Mani's *Epistles* counts in full, as the Kellis copy of one of these letters contains the exact phrase "The Father, God of Truth" (ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲛⲉ).[100] Presumably then, the Manichaeans of Kellis appropriated this phrase from liturgical Manichaean texts.

What about the other formula? Prayer formulas including a tripartite division between body, soul, and spirit are not uncommon. Searching for the origin of this notion is therefore not useful. As with the previous phrase, it belonged to the shared repertoire of fourth-century Egypt. Here, Gardner's comparison with Mani's own *Epistles* fails to convince. His examples (even though not all copies of Mani's *Epistles* have been published) do not contain tripartite divisions, but only dipartite divisions. The copy found at Kellis, for example, contains a dipartite division with body and spirit, omitting the soul, "… and may it [MB: the peace of God] guard you and … you in your body, and your spirit. He is with you namely the Father, the God of Truth."[101] The other fragments of Mani's *Epistles* contain similar formulas, but never full tripartite divisions. Other Ancient Christian texts and letters, on the other hand, contained the same tripartite formulas.

A passage in the New Testament incorporates spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23b), while the *Prayers of Serapion* changed the order to soul, body, and spirit. Three Greek personal letters (from the fourth to the sixth century) employ the formula in various orders (see Table 8, with P.Neph. 17.15, P.Oxy. VIII 1161 and SB XII 11144.5). It may be significant that none of these texts adhere to the Pauline order, while only one letter used the reversed order known from the *Prayers of Serapion*.[102] The order soul, body, spirit, is shared with P.Harr. 107. Could this specific sequence point to the origin of this formula?

Manichaean personal letters	Subsequent order of elements from the tripartite formula, with prayer wish in brackets		
P.Kell.Copt. 25	Body (health) Body (2x, free from evil, and healthy)	Heart (joy)	Soul and spirit (joy)
P.Kell.Copt. 29	Body (health)	Soul (joy)	Spirit (firm)

[98] Among others, the God of Truth is mentioned in 1 Keph. 20.30, 23.32, 25.13, 38.33, 39.32, 41.1 and 10, 81.29, 100.10, 151.20, 181.4, 217.16 etc. For more references see Crum, CD, 117.

[99] A papyri.info search for ἀληθειας lists primarily Greek census documents (accessed June 2017).

[100] P.Kell.Copt. 53, 12.11, discussed in Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat, "P. Harr. 107," 121.

[101] ⲛⲥ'ⲣⲁϊⲥ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛ̀ϣ̀[..]..ⲙ̄ⲙⲁϥ̀ [ϩⲛ̄] ⲡⲉⲕⲥⲱⲙ̀ⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲕⲡⲛ̄̀ⲁ: ϥⲛ̄[ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲕ] ⲛ̄ϫⲓ ⲡⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧ̀ⲙⲛ[ⲉ..]. P.Kell.Copt. 53, 12.9-11. Dipartite divisions are very commonly used in Greek letters, see the list of references in Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 499n9-10.

[102] Blumell, *Lettered Christians*, 224-25. Referring to Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 74. They do not refer to the fifth-sixth -century amulet that employs the same phrase: P.Coll.Youtie. 2.91.

P.Kell.Copt. 32	Body (health)	Spirit (joy)	Soul (joy)
P.Kell.Copt. 65[103]	Body (health)	Spirit (joy)	Soul (health)
P.Kell.Copt. 71	Body (health)	Soul (flourishing)	Spirit (joy)
P.Harr. 107	Soul Body (health)	Body Spirit (joy)	Spirit Soul (eternal life)
Non-Manichaean personal letters			
P.Neph. 17 (fourth century)	Soul	Spirit	Body
P.Oxy. VIII 1161 (fourth century)[104]	Body	Soul	Spirit
SB XII 11144 (fifth–sixth century)	Soul	Body	Spirit
Scriptural or liturgical examples of the same (?) formula			
Sundermann's edition of fragments of Mani's letters (Middle Persian)[105]	Spirit (health)	Body (content and happy)	—
Mani's letter from Kellis (P.Kell.Copt. 53)	Body	Spirit	—
Mani's Epistula Fundamenti (Latin)[106]	—	Heart (piety)	Soul
Mani's letter to Menoch (Latin)[107]	—	—	—
Unpublished Seventh Ktesiphon Letter (Berlin Codex)[108]	—	—	—
Mani's letter to Marcellus (Latin)[109]	—	—	—
Mani's Seal Letter (Sogdian)[110]	—	—	—
1 Thes. 5.23b (NT)	Spirit	Soul	Body (all kept sound and blameless)

[103] But note that body, spirit and soul are reconstructed in the lacunas.

[104] In a list, just as the first time they are mentioned in P.Harr. 107, without additional designations.

[105] W. Sundermann, "A Manichaean Collection of Letters and a List of Mani's Letters in Middle Persian," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 259-77. Note that "spirit" is reconstructed. The order of some of the fragments is discussed in I. Gardner, "Some Comments on the Remnants of the Codex of Mani's Epistles in Middle Persian as Edited by W. Sundermann," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 173-80.

[106] Translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 53. It is dubious whether we are dealing with the same formula here, but it is included in this list because protection from evil is referred to in a similar way as some of the other letters.

[107] The attribution to Mani is contested, see G. Harrison and J. D. BeDuhn, "The Authenticity and Doctrine of (Ps.?) Mani's Letter to Menoch," in *The Light and the Darkness*, ed. P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 128-72. Translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 54.

[108] As cited and discussed by Gardner, "Once More," 296-7.

[109] I. Gardner, "Mani's Letter to Marcellus: Fact and Fiction in the Acta Archelai Revisited," in *Frontiers of Faith: Encounters between Christianity and Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 33-58.

[110] C. Reck, "A Sogdian Version of Mani's Letter of the Seal," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 225-39.

Prayers of Serapion (fourth century)	Soul	Body	Spirit

Table 8: Overview of formula with tripartite division in various sources.

The Kellis letters have one remarkable, consistent distinction that sets them apart from the Greek letters and the Egyptian liturgical texts (Table 8 gives an overview of the way in which this formula is used). While they employ a tripartite formula with body, soul, and spirit, they do not simply list them, as the other texts do. They add a wish for health and joy to the three elements, reworking them into longer eloquent phrases (as the example cited above). This extension of the formula seems to be shared with one of the fragments of Mani's *Epistles* and not with their Christian parallels. Further publications will have to show whether this elaborated formula was more frequently employed in Mani's *Epistles*.

Two concluding points follow from these observations. First, the prayer formulas hardly contain explicit and exclusive Manichaean language. The Manichaean "Light Mind" (ⲙ̅ⲡⲛ̀ⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̅ⲟⲩϩ̀ⲓⲛⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 15.3–4) is mentioned once, but most phrases are open to multiple interpretations. They could be associated with either Christian liturgy, or Manichaean scripture, or the phrases used in amulets. The similarity in style and vocabulary could derive from the Christian tone of Mani's third-century *Epistles*, which were evidently transmitted into Coptic (P.Kell.Copt. 53). Apart from the origin, the continuation of this style suggests it was meaningful to a fourth-century Egyptian audience. Makarios, Pamour, and other authors could have used more significantly different terminology, but they used the standard patterns of language available to them.[111] The second observation complements this dual-language usage by noting the similarity in style and vocabulary of letters from the village network. Sociolinguists have discussed how authors tend to adopt the language of their correspondents, leading to the convergence of linguistic variation.[112] Variation derives from these social factors, social networks being one of them. Through shared training as scribes, socialization, or frequent interactions, numerous authors could come to use the same linguistic repertoire. In this respect, it is noteworthy that most of the explicit Manichaean terminology came from either the elect or from those who traveled with them.[113]

4.5.3 Book Writing

Makarios frequently mentioned Manichaean book titles in his letter to Matthaios: the *Psalms, The Judgment of Peter,* the *Apostolos, The Great Prayers,* the Greek *Psalms,* and the great *Book of Epistles* (all in P.Kell.Copt. 19). While an in-depth discussion of the Manichaean nature of these books is the topic of Chapter 9, they should be discussed briefly here in relation to

[111] This approach is also pivotal to Boustan and Sanzo's evaluation of "Jewish idioms" in late antique amulets. They argue that most perceived Jewish features were indigenized and understood as belonging to a Christian repertoire. Boustan and Sanzo, "Christian Magicians," 217-40.

[112] L. Milroy and J. Milroy, "Linguistic Change, Social Network and Speaker Innovation," *Journal of Linguistics* 21 (1985): 339-84.

[113] It is difficult to establish this with certainty, as "Manichaean terminology" has to be defined in relation to a more general "Christian" repertoire. See some of my earlier observations in M. Brand, "Speech Patterns as Indicators of Religious Identities: The Manichaean Community in Late Antique Egypt," in *Sinews of Empire: Networks in the Roman near East and Beyond*, ed. H. F. Teigen and E. Heldaas Seland (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2017), 105-19.

Makarios's involvement in the textile business, as there might have been a connection between a cushion and a book.

Cushions are only mentioned in passing as items sent from the oasis to the Nile valley. Maria sent a "cushion" (?) (ϣⲁⲧ) together with the hard mat and the mattress (P.Kell.Copt. 20.35) and Kapiton is asked to bring the large cushion to Egypt (P.Kell.Copt. 82).[114] It is only natural to consider these cushions as part of the textile industry, a flourishing trade for Kellites, due to the abundance of cotton in the oasis. One of these cushions might have had additional connotations, since it was mentioned in combination with a book. If the sequence of the letters is understood correctly and if they are about a single situation, the cushion Makarios is asking for may have been a decorated cushion for a Manichaean book.

Beginning at the end of the reconstructed situation, Makarios complains about the received goods. Instead of a high-quality product, Makarios received blemished goods, "indeed, you sent them, but when I received them I was distressed. For on the one hand, the threads were smitten by moth, even the cushion too!"[115] Earlier, Makarios had urged Maria to send a cushion, "also the cushion, and the book about which I sent to you, saying: 'send it to me.'"[116] The initial request (or a repetition) is found in another letter asking for "the dyed cushion for the book" as well as threads (ϣⲁⲧ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲛ̄ϫⲏϭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 21.24). Threads and dye have an important place in the textile production, and as such it would not be strange to consider the editors' alternative translation for the dyed cushion: "the bag of dye for the book." Unfortunately, the exact nature of ϣⲁⲧ and the situation remain largely beyond our comprehension. Why would they have needed dye in the context of books? Was it used for the decoration of the book itself? Was the cushion decorated? The editors suggest that it referred to a decorated cushion, on which a sacred book could rest, or a special bag or cover to protect it.[117] Manichaeans are known for their books, not only because they prided themselves in Mani's authorship, but also because of the picture book in which Mani depicted some of the key doctrines. A decorated cushion or special bag for Manichaean sacred books is therefore a tantalizing option.[118] Concrete evidence for the treatment, decoration, and transportation of Manichaean books in Late Antiquity is, however, never handed down. Nor is "cushion" (ϣⲁⲧ) used by other late antique authors in the context of book production.[119]

---

[114] Other references include P.Kell.Copt. 79, 92,103 and116. A. Paetz gen. Schieck, "Late Roman Cushions and the Principles of Their Decoration," in *Clothing the House. Furnishing Textiles of the 1st Millennium AD from Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, ed. A. De Moor and C. Fluck (Tielt: Lannoo, 2009), 115-31 never mentions cushions in relation to books. For the remains of a cushion, found in a burial context in Kellis, see Livingstone, "Late Antique Household Textiles," 78.

[115] ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ϣⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲣⲟ̣ⲥ ⲁⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩⲥⲉ ⲙ̣ⲉⲛ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ̣[ⲣ]ⲓϫⲓⲧⲟⲩ ⲁⲓ̈ⲣ̄ⲗⲩⲡⲓⲏ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲱⲥ ⲙⲛ ⲁⲩϭⲁϫϫ ⲛ̄ⲑ̣ⲁⲗⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 24.3-7.

[116] ⲡⲕⲉϣⲁⲧ ⲙ̣[ⲛ] ⲡ̣ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲉⲧⲃⲏⲧϥ ϫⲉ ⲧⲛ̣[ⲁ]ⲩϥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ P.Kell.Copt. 20.35.

[117] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 174. If the cover was decorated, however, one would expect ⲕⲟⲉⲓϩ instead of ϣⲁⲧ.

[118] On the ϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ, see 1 Keph. 7, 92, 151, 191 and Hom 18.24-27. Gulácsi, *Mani's Pictures*, 26-39.

[119] A. Boud'hors, "Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VIIe-VIIIe siècles)." In *"Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...": Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistique, romaine et byzantine*, ed. A. Delattre and P. Heilporn (Bruxelles: Association Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 2008), 149-61.

These difficult passages regarding the cushion for a sacred (?) book have been related to the equally difficult question of persecution. Makarios seems to suggest that the book must be protected against those who "pursue it" (ⲁⲛⲱⲓϫ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲡⲏⲧ ⲛ̄ⲥϣϥ P.Kell.Copt. 22.65). Could this refer to the religious persecution of Manichaeans in Egypt? Books were regularly targeted. Outsider sources and legislation suggest that Manichaeans were increasingly persecuted under the Christian emperors, but how much of this is visible in the documentary papyri? The following section will examine the archaeological and papyrological material from Kellis for traces of religious persecution or the maltreatment of Manichaeans. By pursuing this question, we will not only learn more about the social position of the families of Makarios and Pamour, but also critically engage with the scholarly representation of Manichaeism as a sectarian and persecuted religion in the Roman Empire.

4.6 Manichaeans and the Roman Administration

The Kellis letters have frequently been considered against the background of religious persecution. Samuel Lieu suggested that House 3 functioned as a "safe house" or "an ideal haven" for Manichaeans fleeing persecution in the Nile valley, a notion that has been adopted uncritically by a number of recent studies.[120] Jean Daniel Dubois speculates that the Manichaeans could have been deported to the oasis during the persecution of Diocletian.[121] In line with these ideas, the editors of the Coptic papyri described the personal letters as "written against a backdrop of persecution (ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ 22.73) in their authors' lives."[122] Several elements, such as the reference to ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ in P.Kell.Copt. 22, seem to support this idea to some extent, while other characteristics of Kellis's village life cast doubts on the extent of the persecution or maltreatment. The presence of the Roman army in the oasis, for example, makes it unlikely that Manichaeans would have been invisible to the Roman administration in the oasis.

---

[120] Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 89. Lieu, "Manichaeism," 224. Cf. a similar statement: "while there is nothing to suggest from their private letters that theirs was a community hiding from the long arm of the law, the remoteness of the oasis would certainly have helped a Manichaean community to last longer than in other parts of Roman Egypt." S. N. C. Lieu, "The Diffusion, Persecution and Transformation of Manichaeism in Late Antiquity and Pre-Modern China," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond: Papers from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, University of Oxford, 2009-2010*, ed. D. Schwartz, N. McLynn, and A. Papaconstantinou (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 113; Similarly in S. N. C. Lieu, "The Self-Identity of the Manichaeans in the Roman East," *Mediterranean Archeology* 11 (1998): 207, he states: "the rescript of Diocletian might have the effect of driving Manichaeans in Upper Egypt to seek shelter in remote oases like that of Dakhleh." N. A. Pedersen, "Die Manichäer in ihrer Umwelt: Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion über die Soziologie der Gnostiker," in *Zugänge zur Gnosis: Akten zur Tagung der patristischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft vom 02.-05.01.2011 in Berlin-Spandau*, ed. J. van Oort and Christoph Markschies (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 270.

[121] J. D. Dubois, "L'implantation des manichéens en Égypte," in *Les communautés religieuses dans le monde gréco-romain*, ed. N. Belayche (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 295; Dubois, "Vivre dans la communauté manichéenne," 209; Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 110 "…members of the sect migrated to the Dakhleh Oasis to avoid persecution."

[122] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 81; The same statement is taken over in C. Römer, "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Papyri," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* ed. R. S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 642.

4.6.1 Direct Connections to the Military and Administrative Elite

With the incorporation of Egypt into the Roman Empire, the western desert became part of the overarching military structure of the Romans. Even though the desert cities were located on the fringes of Egypt, the region was considered important enough to have a permanent military presence after Diocletian's reign.[123] The *Notitia Dignitatum*, a list of military units, mentions a cohort of foot soldiers at Mut and a cavalry unit at Trimithis, which are also mentioned in the KAB (KAB 793, 1263, 1407).[124] Detachments from other units included the Tentyrites and the Legio II Traiana (both mentioned in ostraka from Trimithis) and the horse-mounted archers at Mothis (ostraka found at Ain el-Gedida).[125] The archaeology, moreover, reveals a number of Roman fortresses—one of which was even used during the First World War by British soldiers defending the oasis.[126] The presence of Manichaeans in the Great Oasis can therefore hardly have resulted from them fleeing persecution in the Nile valley and living secluded lives on the periphery of the Roman Empire.[127] In fact, a fourth-century document found in House 4 (P.Gascou 67, an irrigation contract from 368 CE) addressed Flavius Potammon, an honorably discharged veteran. This former member of the military lived in one of the houses that contained at least one Manichaean psalm.[128] Although we do not know when this Manichaean psalm was left there, it seems highly unlikely that Flavius Potammon was unaware of the presence of Manichaeans in his village. The only indication of tension between Kellites and the military is a side reference in a Coptic letter about someone who has been attacked on the road and he is now looked after "lest the

---

[123] Bagnall points out that the construction of military sites during the late 280s CE are found all over Egypt Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 172.

[124] Called the Ala I Quadorum, from the Danubian region. Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 170 (Bagnall). cf Wagner, *Les oasis d'Egypte*, 375-77.

[125] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 171 (Bagnall); R. Ast and R. S. Bagnall, "New Evidence for the Roman Garrison of Trimithis," *Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 30 (2015): 1-4.

[126] At El-Deir, reported in Jackson, *At Empire's Edge*, 185. At Dakhleh a fortress was located at Qasr al Halakeh, at Qasr al-Qasaba and al-Qasr. The military perspective on the oasis is discussed by A. L. Boozer, "Frontiers and Borderlands in Imperial Perspectives: Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier," *American Journal of Archaeology* 117 (2013): 283. The work on the Al-Qasr fortress is discussed in P. Kucera, "Al-Qasr: The Roman Castrum of Dakhleh Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 6: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of the Dakhleh Oasis Project*, ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 305-16; I. Gardner, "Coptic Ostraka from Qasr Al-Dakhleh," in *Oasis Papers 6,* ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012), 471-4. On the Kharga forts, R. S. Bagnall, "The Camp at Hibis," in *Essays and Texts in Honor of J. David Thomas*, ed. T. Gagos and R. S. Bagnall (Oakville: American Society of Papyrologists, 2001), 3-10; C. Rossi, "Controlling the Borders of the Empire: The Distribution of Late-Roman 'Forts' in the Kharga Oasis," in *Oasis Papers 6*, ed. R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 331-36.

[127] As suggested in Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 89 (a contribution by Dominic A.S. Montserrat), but see also his remark on page 97-8 that Kellis was less overseen by imperial administration and less Christianized. This phrase is repeated frequently in academic literature, see for example Morris, "Insularity and Island Identity," 134; Kaper and Zoest, *Treasures of the Dakhleh Oasis*, 17.

[128] This document derives from House 4, room 4, but a second reference to a honourably discharged veteran is found in an unpublished document in room 2, where also the documents of Tithoes and Pausanias were found. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 438.

commander do anything evil to him."[129] Far from being evidence of religious persecution, such passages attest to the prevailing tension that ancient villagers experienced in all facets of life. The harvest could be spoiled or neighbors could act violently or cast a spell on you, while the price for daily necessities could go up.

A second reason to doubt the religious persecution of Manichaeans in the oasis is found in the legal petitions. Known Manichaeans were included in the lists of complaining villagers, seemingly unafraid! Pamouris son of Psais from the village of Kellis (Pamour I?) complained to the *praeses Thebaidos* about Psa-s, a powerful man from the same village who took away his donkey when he was still young (P.Kell.Gr.20, dated in the first two decades of the fourth century). In another petition to a local magistrate, he complains that Sois son of Akoutis, *komarch*, and an anonymous son of Psenamounis assaulted his wife (P.Kell.Gr. 21 from 321 CE). These letters show how Manichaeans (if Pamouris son of Psais indeed has to be identified with Pamour I) could call for official protection and without hesitation participated in the legal structure of Roman Egypt. Pamour's grandson, Pamour III, is included in a list of thirty-three inhabitants of Kellis complaining about violence, addressed to the provincial dux of the Thebaid (P.Kell.Gr. 24 from 352 CE). Interestingly, this list is headed by a priest and two deacons, indicating their leading role in village society.[130]

Another indication of excellent social connections is the suggested legal appeal against (or *via*?) Kleoboulos (P.Kell.Copt. 20.40–42). The contextual information is sparse but it appears that brother Sarmate (otherwise unknown in the corpus)[131] has petitioned an imperial military officer (could he have been the *comes*? The editors initially translated "petitioned Pkonaes (?)" and noted the alternative ϩⲱⲛⲏⲥ) for the return of Kleoboulos in order to "cause to be given (back), the things of Matthaios that had been taken."[132] Why the *comes* was called on as mediator, conveying the petition to Kleoboulos, who is known as the *logistes* of the Great Oasis (P.Kell.Gr. 25), is not made explicit.[133] The sequence of interactions, Sarmate requesting the help of a high military official to approach the *logistes*, who in turn has to order (?) Kleoboulos to return, is presumably embedded in the patronage ties of the local community. Who else than a military official could put pressure on the *logistes*? Without situational information, it is hard to establish what exactly befell Matthaios. Are his "things" stolen? Is this why he does not even have sandals (P.Kell.Copt. 20.58)? Is Kleoboulos a Roman official or the suspected thief? Whatever might have happened to the Makarios family, the fragment adds to the impression of a strong social position with at least some connections in the Roman administration. If Matthaios or his father Makarios indeed

---

[129] .. ϩⲓⲛⲁⲥ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉ ⲡⲉⲓ̈ⲣ̈ⲉⲡⲟⲥⲓ ⲉⲣ ⲗⲁⲩ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲑⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲁϥ P.Kell.Copt. 127.37-38. See the *praepositus pagi* in P.Kell.Gr. 27.3.

[130] See, T. Gagos and P. van Minnen, *Settling a Dispute. Towards a Legal Anthropology of Late Antique Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 12-14.

[131] Except for in P.Kell.Gr. 30 as a patronym.

[132] ⲡⲥⲁⲛ ⲥⲁⲣⲙⲁⲧⲉ ⲥ̣ⲛ̣ⲏⲉ ⲛⲓⲡⲕⲱⲛⲁⲏⲥ ⲁϥⲣⲕⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲉⲩⲉ ⲁⲧⲣⲉ ⲕⲗⲉⲟⲃⲟⲩⲗⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲛϥⲧⲣⲟⲩϯ ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ̣[ⲁⲑ]ⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲩϥⲓⲧⲟⲩ (P.Kell.Copt. 20.40-42). The editors initially translated "petitioned Pkonaes (?)" and noted the alternative ϩⲱⲛⲏⲥ, in which the superlinear ⲏ replaced the ⲁ and the ⲛ was used for ⲙ. The ⲱ instead of the ⲟ is also attested in P.Ryl.Copt. 404 (seventh or eighth century).

[133] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 171. See references to other people with this name in Worp, *GPK1*, 77.

petitioned a Roman imperial official after a theft or assault, it is most unlikely that they would have been afraid of maltreatment by the Roman authorities for their religious affiliation. They acted as if they had nothing to conceal.

One of the underlying reasons for the friendly relations with the regional administration was the social position of these families in village society. Evidence for Manichaeans in the higher layers of village society includes a Greek letter from Pegosh to his brother Pamour III about "our son Horos" who served as a liturgist in Kellis. Pegosh reproached Pamour for his lack of involvement. Instead of coming to the oasis or sending items like fleece, purple dye, or linen cloth, he is away and "appeared heavy-headed."[134] Presumably, Horos was appointed to a compulsory service, like tax collection, a system that gradually became coercive instead of honorific and voluntary.[135] The participation and support of an uncle may have been of critical value, as the scribes of the village archive would have selected people who were financially responsible for carrying the load of their liturgical service. Again, we see that this family must have been of substantial means; otherwise the scribes (or the *komarchs*) would have been held responsible for the financial burden of the liturgical office.[136]

4.6.2 The Patronage of a Former **Strategos***?*

Wealth and social standing were not enough. The relatively secure position of the Manichaeans in the oasis may have been due to the patronage of a former magistrate. In a Greek legal contract from 333 CE, a certain Pausanias son of Valerius granted a plot of land in the eastern part of the village of Kellis to Aurelius Psais, son of Pamour (see the documents listed in Table 9). The plot of land was located adjacent to other land belonging to Pausanias, and its description suggests that it might be identified with the land north of House 3 (P.Kell.Gr. 38a and b).[137] In this contract, Pausanias is designated as a former magistrate of the city of the Mothites, but it is probable that he also functioned as *strategos* and *riparius* in the Great Oasis between 326 and 333 CE (P.Gascou 69).[138] On the basis of this function he was called on to mediate between a brother and sister in a conflict about the inheritance of their father, who also belonged to the class of former magistrates. In 337 CE, the same Pausanias son of Valerius paid for the transportation of the president of the local

---

[134] καὶ καταλαμβάνω ὑμᾶς ταχέως ἐπὶ το[ῦτο, ὡς] γὰ̣ρ̣ βαρυκ̣έ̣φ̣αλος ἐφάνης. P.Kell.Gr. 72.43.

[135] The power and appointment of the komarchs. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 133-8 and 57-60. About compulsory service, A. Monson, *From the Ptolemies to the Romans. Political and Economic Change in Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 236-46; N. Lewis, *The Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt* (Firenze: Gonnelli, 1982), 88-89.

[136] Monson, *From the Ptolemies to the Romans*, 244 on wealth assessment and collective liability. A similar issues is discussed by Barys and father Diogenes in P.Oxy. LVI 3858. E. J. Bridge, "A Difficult (?) Request to 'Beloved Father' Diogenes," *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 10 (2012): 168.

[137] See the examination in Worp, *GPK1*, 109. Is P.Kell.Gr. 2 a contract of *parachoresis* related to the same house? Worp suggests to restore the name of the addressee as Aurelius Psais son of Pamour. Worp, *GPK1*, 20.

[138] Worp suggests that Optatus in P.Gascou 70 was the precursor of Pausanias who might have been in office between 326-33 CE. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 447.

town council (P.Gascou 71) and some of his business transactions are traceable in his correspondence with Gena (P.Kell.Gr. 5, 6 found in House 2).

Document	Description and find location
P.Kell.Gr. 4	Contract of cession. Parcel given to Aurelius P--- (House 2, 331 CE)
P.Kell.Gr. 5–6	Correspondence with Gena (House 2)
P.Kell.Gr. 38ab	Grant of a plot of land to Psais (House 3)
P.Kell.Gr. 63	Manichaean letter addressed to Pausanias and Pisistratos (House 3)
P.Gascou 69 and 71	Petition to Pausanias the *strategos* and a tax receipt from 337 CE (D/8)

Table 9: List of documents by Pausanias.

Was this influential individual only a neighbor? An undated Greek personal letter found in House 3 suggests that he may have shared a Manichaean affiliation. Addressed in a laudatory style, Pausanias and Pisistratos are acknowledged and praised by an anonymous author who employs several Manichaean phrases to make his gratefulness known. He has "benefitted also from the fruits of the soul of the pious…" and "we shall set going every praise towards your most luminous soul inasmuch as this is possible for us. For only our lord the Paraclete is competent to praise you as you deserve and to compensate you at the appropriate moment."[139] It is conceivable that a wealthy Roman official supported members of the Manichaean community or came to belong to their inner circle.[140] If Pausanias was the

[139] ..κ[α]ὶ ν̣ῦν ἀπο̣λαύομεν πνευμ̣α̣τικῶν ὀλ̣ί̣γων καρπῶν, ἀπο̣λ̣αύ[ο]μεν̣ δ[ὲ] π̣άλιν καὶ̣ τῶν ψυχικῶν τῆς ε̣ὐ̣σ̣εβο̣ῦ̣ς̣ . . φ̣ο̣ρ̣α̣ς̣ δηλονότι· καὶ ἀμφοτέρ[ω]ν πεπλησμ[έ]νο̣ι πᾶσαν ε̣ὐ̣λογίαν̣ σ̣π̣[ε]υσόμεθα πρὸς τὴν φω̣τινο̣τά̣τη[ν] ὑμῶν ψυχὴν καθ̣᾽ ὅσον ἡμῖν ἐ[στι] δ̣υ̣ν̣α̣[τὸν . .]. Μόνος γὰρ ὁ δ[ε]σπότης ἡμ̣ῶ̣ν [ὁ] π[α]ρ̣[άκ]λητος \ἱκανὸς/ ἐπαξ̣ί̣ως ὑμᾶς ε̣ὐ̣λο̣γῆσα[ι] κ[α]ὶ̣ τ̣[ῷ] δέοντι καιρῷ ἀνταμείψα[σ]θ̣αι. P.Kell.Gr. 63.20-30.

[140] Further prosopographical connections could include his father Valerius, a name which returns in a manumission of a female slave in 355 CE. This Valerius set her free because of his "exceptional Christianity, under Zeus, Earth and Sun" with a presbyter as witness. ὁμολογῶ δι᾽ ὑπερβο̣λὴν χ[ρι]στιανότη̣τ̣ο̣ς̣ ἀ̣π̣ελευθερωκέν̣αι σε ὑ̣π̣ὸ Δία Γῆν Ἥλιον. P.Kell.Gr. 48.4-5. On this a-typical situation and vocabulary see Worp, *GPK1*, 140-3. The main argument against identifying Pausanias in these letters is their find location. While P.Kell.Gr. 4-6 derive from House 2, P.Kell.Gr. 38ab and 63 were found in House 3 and P.Gascou 69 and 71 in D/8 in the temple area. Despite this distribution, I am convinced we are dealing with the same person. In P.Gascou 71 (temple area) Pausanias is designated as the son of Valerius, just as in P.Kell.Gr. 38ab (House 3), which in my interpretation deals with the same house and addressee as P.Kell.Gr. 4 (from House 2). The identification of the two individuals called Pausanias at the same find location in House 3 (P.Kell.Gr. 38ab the official and P.Kell.Gr. 63 the Manichaean) is further strengthened by the relation between the former and Psais son of Pamour. His name occurs also in O.Kell. 57.5, 85.1, 137.4, 256.2. Of these only the first could be the same individual, as it is dated in the year 296/297 CE. In 85 Pausanias is mentioned with "our (?) son Pisistratus." The editor notes that if they are father and son, they could have been the same people as those addressed in P.Kell.Gr. 63. Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, 84. More complex is the relation with Pausanias son of Gelasios (O.Kell.256), who is mentioned frequently as the *strategos* or

strategos of the oasis, the Manichaeans would have had access to one of the most powerful figures of the regional government.[141]

Close relations between Manichaeans and Roman provincial or imperial officials are not without precedent. Roman legislation during the fourth and fifth century suggests that some officials covered for them or even protected Manichaeans among their imperial colleagues.[142] The only other instance of such patronage ties outside legal sources is the request of the rhetor Libanius, in 364 CE, to his friend Priscianus, the proconsul of Palestina, appealing for his protection of the Manichaeans so they could be "free from anxiety and that those who wish to harm them will not be allowed to do so."[143] It is unknown whether Priscianus acted in accordance with this request, but the letter shows that it could be dangerous to be Manichaean, even in a period without anti-Manichaean legislation. Local bishops had no need for official legislation to start persecuting Manichaeans. This evidence for Manichaeans suffering from the goading of local Christians is further complemented by reports of public debates and philosophical and theological works written against them.[144] The question of the social reality behind such literary production cannot be pursued here, but we should look into the documentary papyri to see whether there are any indications of such religious maltreatment or persecution of Manichaeans.[145]

4.6.3 Religious Persecution or Maltreatment

Three passages in the documentary papyri from Kellis stand out. The first passage is found in a letter from Makarios to his wife Maria (P.Kell.Copt. 22), in which he accuses her (or is he

---

logistes in the first decade of the fourth century (P.Gascou 72.5 and 82.1, P.Kell.Gr. 7.22). An individual with the same name held an office at Amheida in the second half of the fourth century. Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 438.

[141] On the role of the *strategos* in Late Antiquity see A. Jördens, "Government, Taxation, and Law," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 58-59; J. Rowlandson, "Administration and Law: Graeco-Roman," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. A. B. Lloyd (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 237-54.

[142] Prohibition to serve in the imperial service in 445 CE (Novel of Valentinian) and under Justinian specific penalties for officers who failed to denounce their Manichaean colleagues (527 CE, CJ I.5.16). I am grateful to Rea Matsangou for bringing these laws to my attention. The rhetorical nature of the complains about 'Manichaeans' and the portrayal of persecution of Manichaeans in the *Liber Pontificalis* is discussed by S. Cohen, "Schism and the Polemic of Heresy: Manichaeism and the Representation of Papal Authority in the *Liber Pontificalis*," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 8, no. 1 (2015): 195-230.

[143] Libanius, *Epistle 1253,* translation and citation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 125.

[144] For example, the debate between Aetius and Aphthonius in Alexandria, or the work of George of Laodicea and the refutations of Agapius work described by Photius. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 137-41. The comparative evidence from the late third/early fourth-century persecution of Christians in Egypt also suggests that persecutions were local. The intensity varied and periods of violence or repression did not start at the same time in all regions. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 83.

[145] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 81; Dubois, "Vivre dans la communauté manichéenne," 9. On the relation between legislation and a Manichaean discourse of suffering, see my M. Brand, "In the Footsteps of the Apostles of Light: Persecution and the Manichaean Discourse of Suffering," in *Heirs of Roman Persecution: Studies on a Christian and Para-Christian Discourse in Late Antiquity* ed. E. Fournier and W. Mayer (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

still addressing Kyria?) of having no pity for her brother's son "because he is under persecution" (ⲉϥϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 22.73). Earlier, he announced that he prayed to God to "grant us freedom and we may greet you again in the body."[146] Both passages are suggestive. They allude to difficulties that keep them apart, but are these best understood as religious persecution? This entire episode, including the fear pertaining to the sacred book as discussed above could have been about a failed business transaction (including books?), for which Makarios blames Maria (or Kyria). The brother's son may have suffered the financial or legal consequences for this misbehavior, as the Coptic term for persecution (ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ) was also used in military or legal settings.[147] Without further context, it remains unclear whether religious persecution was meant.

The second passage is found in the concluding warning of P.Kell.Copt. 31: "[D]o not let it stay with you, it may fall into somebody's hands."[148] Presumably, this refers to the letter itself, which has to be passed on to the author's son. While the editors stress the implied need for secrecy, this passage could have stressed the act of passing on. The final warning could have been a reminder to send the letter to his son "with certainty" (ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲱⲣϫ) instead of forgetting about it and leaving the letter behind. That the translation and interpretation of such passages is extremely difficult is seen in the proposed connection to a letter in which Apa Lysimachos urges recipients: "do not save this." A new and more probable reading, however, is that Apa Lysimachos says "we might not stay here" (ⲛ̄ⲉⲛϩⲛⲁⲥ ⲧⲉⲓ P.Kell.Copt. 82.39–40). Instead of reflecting on the way that these letters were to be treated, the passage refers to the travel plans of a number of people.[149]

The third passage referring to persecution is found in P.Kell.Copt. 37, where Ammon expresses that "great grief overcame me … when I heard about what happened: namely that they shook (?) those of this word."[150] The verb translated as to "shake" (ⲕⲓⲛ+ ⲉ) also has a

---

[146] ϯⲱⲗⲏⲗ ⲁ̣ⲡ̣ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ϫⲉϥϧϯ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲡⲁⲣϩⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲱⲧ’ⲧⲏⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲥⲁⲡ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ.. P.Kell.Copt. 22.10-11. The phrase "parresia" returns several times in Makarios' letters (P.Kell.Copt. 20.7, 22.10 and 25.25). In Manichaean literature, the phrase is used to express Mani cannot freely speak in the world (1 Keph. 184.7 and 185.2). The editors of the Kellis papyri wonder "if it is more than just the tyranny of distance that keeps the family away from the oasis." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 82 with further references. Is there any reason to read these passages as indicators of persecution? As Makarios frequently employs Manichaean repertoire, and these phrases do not return in other letters, I take these as rhetorical statements which do not directly reflect the maltreatment of Manichaeans in fourth-century Egypt.

[147] Although ⲇⲓⲱⲅⲙⲟⲥ is used frequently by Christian authors to designate the persecution under Decius, the word could be used in military context for hunting or the pursuit by soldiers (of Bedouin criminals?). See O.Claud. 2.357 and 4.327. The verb is used in a legal sense, P.Alex.Giss. 39 (second century CE), BGU 8.1822 (first century BCE) and in the legal designators for the prosecuted party, for example in P. Mich. 13.659 and P.Lond. 5.1708 (both sixth century CE).

[148] ⲙ̄ⲡⲧⲣⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲥ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲏⲛⲉ· ϩⲉⲉ̈ⲓⲉ ⲁⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲁⲣⲱⲙⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 31.54.

[149] The original interpretation is found in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 81n110. The new translation and interpretation is discussed in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 134n39-40, they suggest the verb is ϩⲙⲉⲥⲧ, "to sit down." Is a similar authority standing behind Ammon's remark that he is not allowed to come to the oasis (P.Kell.Copt. 37.24-25)?

[150] ⲟⲩⲛⲁϩ ϩⲁ̣ⲣ ⲧ̣ⲉ ⲧ[ⲗⲩ]ⲡⲏ ⲉⲧⲁϩ ⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲏ̈ ⲙ̄[[ⲧ̣ⲙ̣]] ⲡⲡⲱⲱ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧ ⲉⲧⲁϩⲧⲉ ϩⲁ̈ ⲛⲧⲁⲣⲓⲥⲱⲧϥ̄ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲁϩⲱⲱⲡⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲕⲓⲛ ⲁⲛⲁ ⲡⲥⲉϫⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 37.13-20.

softer meaning, namely to move, touch, or beckon. Combined with the grief expressed by Ammon, it may have carried stronger negative connotations. It is also used in the *Homilies* (28.1–2) for something that should not happen, namely: "[T]he church shall not be shaken."[151] Ammon's letter refers to the Manichaean church with "those of this word," an ambiguous designator that carried additional religious connotations since it was followed by what seems to have been an allusion to scripture, "for it is possible for God to thwart their designs."[152] It is the only passage in which the difficulties are connected, more or less directly, to the religious community. If so, it intimates social problems encountered by the Manichaeans of the oasis, in the Nile valley. The editors of the papyri emphasize that it is difficult "to know what weight should be given to a reference" with comments as "this place is difficult" (ⲡⲏⲁ ⲛⲁϫϩ P.Kell.Copt. 31.47, 83.7, 110.25) or with prayers wishing to be kept "safe from all the temptations of Satan and the adversities of the evil place (?)."[153] None of these phrases is straightforward and most can be read in terms of economic difficulties (compare P.Kell.Cop. 89.30) as well as pious, religious formulas against all sorts of evil. Although these phrases have a religious background, they are hardly solid evidence for religious persecution.[154]

Ultimately, then, was the Manichaean community in Kellis under persecution?[155] Probably not. The Kellis documents show few traces of religious violence. A number of

---

[151] ⲧⲉⲕ[ⲕⲗⲏ]ⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲕⲓⲛ ⲉⲛ ⲉⲥⲛⲏⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ Hom. 28.1-2, translated by Pedersen as "The church will not cease remaining," even during the time of the Antichrist. The same phrase returns in Hom. 33.29, 44.10, 82.17 (which is significant: "his heart was firm, he did not waver before him at all"), 85.25 (about the church, "it will not waver until the day…"). The virtue of not wavering, even though life is difficult, is central to the Manichaean ascetic practice and features in other ascetic discourses as well. See section 5.2.3 on the Manichaean expression "rest" and Crum, *CD*., 108b on the verb "to shake."

[152] ⲟⲩⲛ ϩⲁⲛ ⲅⲁⲣ ⲛ̀ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲧⲣⲉϥⲟⲩⲱϣϥ ⲛ̀ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲉⲩⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 37.20-22. The editors suggest 'quite probably this is a quotation or at least allusion to some scripture; but we can not identify it'. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 233.

[153] ⲁⲣ̀ⲉⲧⲛ̀ⲟⲩⲁϫ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̀ⲡⲣⲉϩⲥⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̀ⲡⲥⲁⲣⲧⲁⲛⲁϩ ⲙ̀ⲛ̀ ⲛ̀ϭⲗⲏⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲡⲏ̀ⲁⲛⲃⲱⲛⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 71.8-9. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 74-5. See also P.Kell.Copt. 83, 89 and 97 for similar troubles, disturbances and difficulties.

[154] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 82. In the letters collected by Bagnall and Cribiore, the evil eye is mentioned frequently in similar formulas: P.Brem. 64, P.Mich. VIII 473, BGU III 714, P.Würzb. 21, P.Oxy. VI 930 and XIV 1758, from the second century. From the fourth and fifth (?) century, P.Wisc. II 74, P.Köln II 111. A similar sentiment is expressed in liturgical formulas from the fourth century, which were incorporated in an amulet (P.Ryl. III 471). Bruyn, "P. Ryl. III.471," 105-7.

[155] Römer, "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Papyri," 642 also thinks that it does "not necessarily refer to the difficult circumstances of the person as a Manichaean but rather to the position of a Manichaean believer in a difficult family situation." It should be noted that persecution was also a literary trope for Manichaeans, who remembered the suffering of Mani and the earliest Manichaean community in the Sasanian empire. See the letters of Mani (P.Kell.Copt. 53, 51.04) and the Syriac fragments from Oxyrhynchus. MS. Syr.D.14 P (recto) fragment 2, in Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 107. A major argument against persecution by the Roman government is the spatial division of the Kellis houses. The relative lack of private space made it impossible to conceal one's religious practice, as suggested for the Christians under Decius' persecutions, "in an eighth of a rented room or a twentieth of a house in an Egyptian township, it was simply not possible or necessary to conceal one's prayers or worship of God

passages refer to feelings of unease, fear, or otherwise unexplained difficulties. Of the three more informative passages, only one makes the connection to the religious community. While it is possible that some Manichaeans experienced maltreatment on the basis of their religious affiliation, there is no evidence for full religious persecution. Instead, just like modern minorities in Egypt, they may have suffered from petty acts of discrimination or a subordinated position in relation to other people. Such maltreatment may have converged with the negative stereotype of the oasis as a foreign and dangerous place.[156] Merchants from the oasis may have suffered because of these stereotypes while traveling in the Nile valley. The connections to the Roman administrative and military elite from the region, however, make it highly improbable that Manichaeans had to conceal their religious affiliation in their daily affairs in the oasis.

4.7 Conclusions

Dakhleh's wealth spread beyond the elite owners of agricultural estates. Makarios, Pamour, and their families belonged to the affluent, well-off segment of oasis society, whose occupation strongly linked them to one of the sources of Dakhleh's wealth: cotton and the textile industry. By taking a holistic and microhistorical approach to the Manichaeans of Kellis, this chapter has used the correspondence of two families to identify them foremost as Kellites. Their letters attest to a network of local village relations, which included family members, coworkers, and neighbors. Religious identifications were only sometimes considered relevant enough to be mentioned in this context. Manichaeans did not spend their entire time being Manichaean, but they were happy to wear many hats.[157]

At the heart of the Manichaean network stood family units. A relatively small number of people interacted on the basis of kinship, business, and religious relations. This resembles Le Roy Ladurie's classical description of the Cathar households in southern France. Just like in this medieval setting, the institutional organization of the religious community appears to have been secondary to the household network structure. In social network terminology, these people had strong ties among each other, while they were connected to the elect by rather weak ties. Weak ties, by definition, connect parts of a network that would otherwise have few direct relations. Itinerant religious specialists such as the Teacher and Apa Lysimachos had such positions in the network that they could stimulate the diffusion of innovative practices.

A second set of connections, which stand out among the many names in the Kellis documents, consists of the connections to members of the local and regional Roman elite (again, these could be understood as weak ties). Makarios and Pamour III, as well as their relatives, were embedded in patronage structures that transcended the local level. Some of them even petitioned the provincial governor without hesitation. Nothing suggests that

---

from everyone's eyes." R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Peguin Books, 1986), 316 about Early Christians in Rome. Manichaeans in Kellis never concealed themselves, but fully participated in village life.

[156] On the negative stereotypes of the oasis as a "physical, conceptual, and human buffer zone between the 'civilized' Nile valley and the 'chaotic' desert," see Boozer, "Frontiers and Borderlands," 275.

[157] Here I paraphrase one of Peter Brown's characterizations of late antique Christians. P. Brown, "Rome: Sex & Freedom," *The New York Review of Books.* Dec. 19, 2013.

these people were seeking shelter in a region "less overseen by imperial administrators and also less Christianised," as was previously suggested.[158] The propounded ease in the relations with non-Manichaeans and Roman officials may be explained by their shared identification as villagers from Kellis. As elucidated, the inhabitants of the oases sometimes explicitly identified themselves in opposition to those of the Nile valley. Such feelings of otherness caused them to stick together outside the oasis. The intersection of a village identification with religious identification(s) may thus have been less problematic than sometimes assumed. Instead of crosscutting identities, to use Mairs's conceptual division, these identifications appear to have existed in separation, without bearing a direct relation to one another. Of course, the absence of conflict or concealment may be explained by the periodization of Roman legislation, since most of the documents derived from the period before the anti-Manichaean laws of Valens and Valentinian. Some of the expressions of anxiety and unease in the Kellis letters might have been related to incidents in the Nile valley involving Manichaeans, as Ammon reported to his relatives: "[T]hey shook (?) those of this word" (ⲁⲩⲕⲓⲙ ⲁⲛⲁ ⲡⲓⲥⲉϫⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 37.22). Religious persecution or incidents of maltreatment, however, did not characterize daily interactions on the village level, nor the attitude of the Roman administration or the relations with Christians in the oasis. Rather than marked and tense relationships, the association of Manichaeans and Christian officials seems unmarked; only to be detected by historians through detailed prosopographical analysis. A heavy and religious reading of the other expressions of anxiety and unease is, therefore, not the most probable interpretation.

The construction of an imagined religious community seems not to have been a priority of these individuals and families, presumably because of the limitations of the type of sources. Letters do not usually convey this information. Their references to a religious group are occasional and often without further situational information, which would have been known to the addressees anyway. When we decide to filter out all other issues and identifications to focus solely on the Manichaean identification, we can capture a basic impression of the group-specific speech norms. By looking at the Manichaean phrases and vocabulary in the personal letters, we get a glimpse of the way in which Makarios, Pamour, and their families activated Manichaeanness. These situations can be understood as belonging to a performance arena in which a number of social expectations concurred, including epistolary conventions and group norms. Since letters were read out loud, effort was put into the composition of the letter, especially through the use of cues, politeness formulas, and in-group language. More elaborate and explicit Manichaean phrases were included for strategic reasons, but they also contributed to the performance, and therefore to the maintenance, of Manichaeanness. The children who heard Makarios's letters read out loud would have had ample opportunity to get familiar with the Manichaean repertoire. The (relative) absence of such language and formulas in most of the letters of Pamour III and his brothers, in turn, resulted in a decrease of situational performances of Manichaeanness. The children in his generation would have been less exposed to these events. They would have had less opportunities to witness talking and performing Manichaeanness.

[158] Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 97.

The question of the diffusion of a Manichaean linguistic repertoire has a bearing on the representativeness of these two families. While Makarios and his sons where closely associated with the Manichaean elect, there is no reason to assume that all individuals in House 3, or even all Manichaeans in the village, had similar experiences. For some of them, Manichaeanness could have been restricted to the textual and performative world of Manichaean scriptures and psalms in communal gatherings (see Chapter 7). Pamour and his relatives, although also associated with Apa Lysimachos, referred less frequently to the Manichaean church and its ascetic officials. What we call "Manichaeism" was subject to a variety of experiences and levels of involvement. When we compare the letters of Makarios and Pamour III, despite all shortcomings of such a comparison, it seems that the younger generation used less elements from a Manichaean repertoire, indicating that they might have been less deeply involved in the community.

The variation in levels of involvement and the social dynamic of letter writing provide the background for the use of explicit Manichaean self-identifications. The next chapter will examine these phrases and ask what these expressions *did* and meant for the construction of Manichaean groupness.

Chapter 5. Orion's Language: Manichaean Self-Designation in the Kellis Papyri

> Greet warmly from me those who give you rest, the elect and the catechumens, each one by name (Orion to Hor).[1]

5.1 Introduction

Language matters. It gives structure to reality and offers building blocks for fundamental acts of self-identification. Sometimes, this is made explicit in names, labels, and self-designators, but often it is implied in the author's choice of words. Take for example Orion, one of the contemporaries of Makarios from House 3. He wrote to his "beloved brother" Hor, and he praised him as "the good limb of the Light Mind." These phrases were combined with other marked language, as he greeted "those who give you rest" and the "elect and catechumens."[2] The previous chapter has introduced such phrases as a Manichaean linguistic repertoire. In using this repertoire, Orion gave away his Manichaean affiliation: a reference to the Light Mind is not easily overlooked.

Orion may have used these words to reveal his Manichaean self-identification, but other authors were less forthcoming. Sifting through the various self-designations in the Kellis letters shows how authors wove together religious and nonreligious modes of classification and self-identification. In fact, relatively few explicit Manichaean names and labels were used, presumably because the situation did not ask for such information, which was already known to all those involved. Therefore, focusing on linguistic markers such as "those who give you rest" or "limb of the Light mind" allows us to approach both the social self-understanding of the letter writers and the situations in which there was a need for these labels.

An important reason for looking into the self-designators is the claim that Orion's language reflects the inherent "sectarianism" of the local Manichaean community.[3] Self-designators are one way into the social map of a group of people. They offer a perspective (although with limitations) on the way those people perceived themselves in relation to others; how their face-to-face acquaintances related to the intangible social and religious world around them.[4] The usage of explicit Manichaean self-designators and strong fictive kinship language has led Peter Brown to suggest a "sense of intimate friendship" between

---

[1] Ⲱⲓ[ⲛ]ⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧ̣ⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲙ̄ⲛ̣̀ⲕⲗⲉⲕ[ⲧ]ⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁ̣ⲑⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣̀ⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ P.Kell.Copt. 15.27-30. I will follow the spelling Orion, as this is considered the best choice in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 20. In *CDT1* his name was spelled as Horion.

[2] Cited above, P.Kell.Copt. 15.27-30 and in line 3-4 ⲡⲛⲉⲗ[ⲟ]ⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛ̣̀ⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣̀ⲓⲛⲉ. Orion and Hor were associated with the Makarios' letters through several onomastic connections. Most prominently Taliphanti in P.Kell.Copt. 58 (Orion) and P.Kell.Copt. 19 and 25 and 28 (Makarios archive), Hatre in P.Kell.Copt. 17 and 18 (Orion) and P.Kell.Copt. 24 and 26 (Makarios archive), although all identifications can be contested. The editors date the letters in the late 350s CE. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 140.

[3] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 74.

[4] Eliasoph and Lichterman, "Culture in Interaction," 778.

catechumens in Kellis, something that may have attracted people like Augustine to Manichaeism. In his opinion, the documentary letters from Kellis show how

> members of the local Manichaean community thought of themselves as bound together by strong ties of spiritual friendship. Their members spoke of each other as sons and daughters of the "Light Mind." They were inextricably joined one to the other through the common possession of the "Light Mind."

He concludes that catechumens and elect experienced a "spiritual solidarity of unusual force."[5] But is he correct? Did Orion's language indeed reflect strong groupness and a sectarian stance?

This chapter has two primary aims. First, it will analyze from a sociolinguistic perspective the forms of address, the self-designation, and ascribed identifications from the Kellis documentary papyri. How did these people describe themselves? How did they address others and what role was reserved for the religious identifications? By looking at these self-designators, this chapter will discern how and when Kellites embedded their lives and letters into a Manichaean framework—as well as situations in which they did not.[6] The results provide a critical contribution to the postulated sectarian nature of the local Manichaean community. Second, the use of Coptic as a community marker will be examined. We have seen that some phrases (including forms of self-designation) connoted Manichaeanness, even to the extent of adhering to the ⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ (P.Kell.Copt. 19.4–5) of a Manichaean epistolary style, ultimately deriving from Mani's own *Epistles*. The second half of this chapter will continue this examination with regard to the role of Coptic. It will be argued that the choice for Coptic over Greek was a marked option that correlated partially with Manichaean groupness.

5.2 Self-Designation in Documentary Papyri

Most letters in the Kellis corpus refer to the recipients as family members or as closely related members of the household, neighborhood, or village. The identification with the village is also apparent in the Greek legal documents, which frequently designate people with their place of residence. An illuminating example is found in a contract pertaining to the exchange of ownership rights, dating from 363 CE, between Aurelius Psenpnoutes son of

---

[5] Both passages are from Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 159.

[6] With regard to religious self-identification, Cohen concluded that "a Jew is anyone who declares himself/herself to be one." Cohen, "'Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not'," 41. Sociologists and psychologists stressed how "people actively produce identity through their talk." J. S. Howard, "Social Psychology of Identities," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 372. Some previous studies looking into the self-identification of Manichaeans include, Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 205-27; N. A. Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations in the Western Tradition," in *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 177-96; A. Khosroyev, "Manichäismus: Eine Art persisches Christentum? Der Definitionsversuch eines Phänomens," in *Inkulturation des Christentums im Sasanidenreich*, ed. J. Tubach and M. Arafa (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2007), 43-53; Earlier discussions are found in A. Böhlig, "Zum Selbstverständnis des Manichäismus," in *A Green Leaf. Papers in Honour of Professor Jes P. Asmussen*, ed. W. Sundermann, J. Duchesne-Guillemin, and F. Vahman (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 317-38.

Pachoumon and Aurelius Horos son of Pamour (P.Kell.Gr. 30). The latter is represented by his paternal grandfather, who is introduced as:

> Aurelius Psais son of Pamour and mother Tekysis, about *n* years old, with a scar on the flank of the shin of the left leg, from the village of Kellis belonging to the city of the Mothites in the Great Oasis, acting on behalf of his grandson Horos and his son Pamour named "Egyptians" (?), residing in the same village of Aphrodite in the same *nome*. Greetings.[7]

Names, nicknames, physical description, family relations, and the village- and nome-context provided enough legal designation to make clear which parties were involved in this transaction.[8] Similar designations in other documents listed information like occupation (Tithoes, the carpenter, P.Kell.Gr. 11, Aurelius Stonius, priest, P.Kell.Gr.13) or social position (Aurelius Pausanias, son of Valerius, former magistrate of the city of the Mothites, P.Kell.Gr.38). These self-designators are fairly common in Greek documents. In contrast to the Coptic letters, few Greek documents convey a sense of Manichaeanness (with one notable exception: P.Kell.Gr. 63, see Chapter 6). Religiously marked self-designators are only found in the Coptic personal letters (see section 5.5 on the use of Coptic).

Religious self-designators, when formalized in writing, inform us about what we will call the social imaginary of a set of individuals. Charles Taylor's "social imaginaries" designate the ways in which "ordinary people imagine their social surroundings."[9] These imaginative maps are "carried in images, stories, and legends," more than in explicit theoretical reflections.[10] Naming oneself and others is an essentially imaginary practice within this social imaginary, identifying the primary actors within the narratives and tying social others to the conceptual images and stories found in theological or cosmological texts. In this way, self-designators serve as abbreviations of a more complex set of cosmological or theological ideas.[11] You could say that theological and heresiological literature may have

---

[7] Αὐρηλίου Ψάιτος Π[α]μοῦρ μητρὸς Τεκύσιος ὡ[ς ἐτῶν -ca.?- οὐλὴν ἔχοντος ἐπὶ] πλαγίας ἀντικνήμης ἀρι̣στεροῦ ποδὸς ἀπὸ κώμης Κέλλεως τῆς Μωθιτῶν πόλεως Ὀάσεως Μ[εγάλης χρηματίζοντος ὑπὲρ τοῦ] υἱωνοῦ Ὥρου καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ Παμοῦρ Αἰ̣γ̣υ̣π̣τ̣ί̣ω̣ν̣ λ̣εγομένω[ν ἐπ]ιδημήσ̣αντος τῇ αὐτῇ κώμῃ Ἀφροδίτης τοῦ [αὐτοῦ νομοῦ ἀλλήλοι]ς χαίρειν. P.Kell.Gr. 30.5-7. The nickname "Egyptians" is heavily restored and its meaning is not entirely clear. Worp read this as a nickname, Lewis has interpreted it as "city folk" from the Nile valley instead of the oasis. N. Lewis, "Notationes Legentis," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 34 (1997): 29-30.

[8] Worp, *GPK1*, 89-90; A. Delattre, " Éléments de l'identification en Égypte (IVe-VIIe siècles)," in *Identifiers and Identification Methods in the Ancient World*, ed. M. Depauw and S. Coussement (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 153-62.

[9] C. Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 171. See also his earlier work, C. Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham.: Duke University Press, 2004), 23-30.

[10] Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, 23.

[11] P. Trebilco, *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 11-12. See also the overview of sociolinguistic studies and the ancient world in J. A. Snyder, *Language and Identity in Ancient Narratives* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 6. On Christian ethnography and the role of heresiology, see T. S. Berzon, *Classifying Christians: Ethnography, Heresiology, and the Limits of*

defined the conceptual borders of ancient religious groups insofar as it became applied and embedded in the social imaginaries of individuals in their daily life.

The social imaginary of Manichaeans has frequently been understood as sectarian in nature. In sociological studies, sectarianism means that a group exists in a state of tension with society.[12] This can be measured by (1) a high level of social difference with deviant norms, beliefs, and primarily behavior;[13] (2) a high level of antagonism, with particularistic beliefs and an exclusive stance; (3) the practice of separation: favoring social relations among insiders and restricting social interactions with outsiders. Some of these characteristics have been detected in the letters of the Manichaeans of Kellis. According to Lieu, they

> saw themselves as a chosen elite in the Christian sense. They promoted themselves as the Church of the Paraclete and as such were *the* Christians in the Dakhleh Oasis. The lack of a strong presence of other forms of Christianity in the region probably enabled this elite self-identity to develop.[14]

In contrast to this statement from almost twenty years ago, this chapter will problematize the antagonistic characterization of Manichaeans as a "chosen elite" and their self-understanding as "*the* Christians." The self-designators used by Kellites show that religious difference was not their primary conceptualization of the world. Instead, I will suggest that the strong dualism of the Manichaean cosmology did not crystallize into sharp group boundaries.

The following sections will give an overview of seven types of self-designators, ranging from allusions to the Manichaean church hierarchy to more general and ambiguous designators based on the household or neighborhood.

Knowledge in Late Antiquity (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016). In particular on page 24ff where he redefines ethnography as a disposition and discerns the microscopic ethnography of customs and the macroscopic ethnography of typologies and genealogies.

[12] On the sectarian interpretation of the Manichaeans, see note 3 in this chapter. A usefull summary of church-sect typologies is found in L. L. Grabbe, "When Is a Sect a Sect - or Not? Groups and Movements in the Second Temple Period," in *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*, ed. D. J. Chalcraft (London: Acumen Publishing, 2007), 125; B. R. Wilson, *Religious Sects. A Sociological Study* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970), 14-18; R. Stark and W. S. Bainbridge, *A Theory of Religion* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 121-28; R. Stark and W. S. Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 41-67; R. Stark and R. Finke, *Acts of Faith* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2000), 144-45 continue to propose that the average religious commitment of members is higher when the tension is high. However, use of "tension with the world" is problematic, because, a difference with aspect of the world is fundamental for every construction of movement, moreover, it presupposes consensus in the world which might not be there. D. J. Chalcraft, ed. *Sectarianism in Early Judaism* (London: Acumen Publishing, 2007), 14; C. Wassen and J. Jokiranta, "Groups in Tension: Sectarianism in the Damascus Document and the Community Rule," in *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*, ed. D. J. Chalcraft (London: Acumen Publishing, 2007), 205-45. For an examination of these three criteria in the Damascus Codex and a comparison with the use of tension in B. R. Wilson, *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 46-68.

[13] Wassen and Jokiranta, "Groups in Tension," 209.

[14] Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 227 (his capitals) and page 224 (his capitals and emphasis).

5.2.1 Kinship Language and Ethnic Reasoning

Kinship language was commonly used to refer to colleagues, neighbors, and friends throughout the ancient world.[15] The extensive usage of kinship language in the Kellis letters, therefore, complicates prosopographical research, as it masks the distinction between real kin and fictive family. Its prominence, however, also points to the value of the family metaphor. Belonging to the in-group could be demarcated as brotherhood and daughterhood, thereby stressing commonality, expectations, and behavioral norms.

The Manichaean connotation of kinship language in personal letters was strongly related to the behavioral norms associated with the two classes of Manichaeans. This is most strongly visible in P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32, two Coptic personal letters written by members of the elect. In both letters, the author is an anonymous "father" (ⲡⲉⲓ̈ⲱⲧ) who writes to his "daughter(s)" (ϣⲉⲣⲉ) for financial or material support.[16] The recipients of P.Kell.Copt. 31 are never named but only addressed in kinship terminology. The recipient of P.Kell.Copt. 32 was addressed as Eirene, a personal name meaning "peace." The address formulas of both letters, printed together in Table 10 show how the extensive and explicit designations were incorporated into the framework of a father-daughter relationship. In both letters, the "daughter(s)" are characterized using elaborate Manichaean designators that indicate their status as catechumens, a position which is only made explicit in P.Kell.Copt. 32.

Many of the explicit self-designators listed in the appendix and discussed in this chapter derive from these two letters. In my interpretation, these phrases and labels were used strategically. By listing all the good virtues of the daughters, the elect author framed his request for material support. He reminded the recipients of the behavioral expectations pertaining to their role as catechumens. This does not mean that he was insincere or greedy (which cannot be tracked down), but it reminds us that his recipients would not necessarily have thought about themselves in these terms.

Letter	P.Kell.Copt. 31.1–9[17]	P.Kell.Copt. 32.1–17[18]
Addressee	"My loved daughters, who are greatly revered by me: the members of the holy Church, the daughters of the Light Mind, they who also are numbered with the children of God; the favoured, blessed, God-loving	"To our loved daughter: the daughter of the holy church, the catechumen of the faith; the good tree whose fruit never

[15] P. Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers' and 'Sisters' in Documentary Papyri and in Early Christianity," *Revista Biblica* 50 (2002): 185-204.

[16] Fourth-century Christian parallels for this use of the paternal title mainly derive from the monastic environment. At the monastery of Bawit, to use an example from a later date, both "mother" and "father" were used for senior members of the community. See also the frequent use of "apa." S. J. Clackson, *Coptic and Greek Texts Relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 2000), 8, 29.

[17] ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ ⲉⲧ’ⲧⲉⲓ̈ⲁⲧ’ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲙ̣̀ϣ̣̀ⲗⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕ’ⲕ̣̀ⲛⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ [ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲙ̣̀ⲡ̣̀ⲙⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲛϣ̣̀[ⲧⲏⲡ ⲁⲛ ⲙ]ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ· ⲙ̣̀ϒ[ⲩ]ⲭ̣̀ⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲙⲁⲛⲁⲧ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ· ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲓ̈ⲱⲧ’ ⲉⲧϩ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲛⲁ· ⲡⲉⲧⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ̈ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ϩ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲭ̣̀ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲥ ⲭⲁⲓⲣⲉⲓⲛ·

[18] ⲧⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲧϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲧⲕⲁⲑⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲏ ⲛ̄ⲡⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲁⲡ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ϩⲱϭⲏ̄ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ ⲉ[ⲧ]ⲉ ⲛ̣̀ⲧ̣̀ⲁⲥ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲉⲁⲗⲁⲡⲏ ⲉⲧϩⲟⲩ[ⲣⲉ]ⲱⲣϣ̄ ⲛ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲥ[ϫ]ⲡ̣̀ⲟ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲥϫⲣⲏⲛⲁ [ⲁⲥ]ϭⲁⲗⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ̣̀ⲛⲉϩⲱⲣ ⲉⲧ̣̀ϩ̣̀ [ⲡ]ϫ̣̀[ⲓ]ϫ̣̀ⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲗⲉ ϭⲏ̄ ⲙ̣̀ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲧ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲙⲁⲣⲉ ⲗ̣̀ⲏⲥⲧⲏⲥ [ϫ]ⲁϫⲧ’ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁ]ⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ ⲡⲟϩ· ⲧⲉⲧⲉ [ⲛ]ⲉⲥϩⲃⲛⲩⲉ ⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲥⲣⲉⲛ [ⲧ]ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉ̣̀[ⲓ̈]ⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲛⲉ ϩⲏ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩ[ⲧⲉ] ϫ̣̀ⲁⲓⲣⲉⲓⲛ

	souls; my *shona* children.	withers, which is your love that emits radiance every day. She who has acquired for herself her riches and stored them in the treasuries that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon. She whose deeds resemble her name, our daughter, Eirene.
Author	It is I, your father who is in Egypt, who writes to you: in the Lord, greetings!"	It is I, your father who writes to you: in God, greetings!"

Table 10: Start of two letters written by elect.

The biblical allusion in P.Kell.Copt. 32 takes this rhetorical strategy to a next level. The letter alludes to a New Testament parable about investing treasures in heaven, where moths and thieves cannot reach it (Matt 6.19–20, the parallels with Mt. 24:42–44 and 1 Thess 5.2 will return in Chapter 6).[19] This passage featured frequently in Manichaean scripture, where it connected the almsgiving of pious catechumens to the released Light particles of the Living Soul stored on the sun and the moon (for example at 2 PsB. 151.4–152.9).[20] The parable is included here as directive for Eirene to commit herself to her almsgiving. The explicit reference to the sun and the moon as storehouses of spiritual riches ingeniously crafts a connection between the kinship language, the Manichaean ideology of giving, and the peace (Eirene in Greek) brought about by these gifts.

Since we are otherwise (almost) uninformed about Eirene and the anonymous recipients of P.Kell.Copt. 31, we do not know to what extent they would have recognized themselves in these pious descriptions. Eirene, to whom we have one other reference in the Kellis letters, was probably an active business woman like Tehat, but her identity in this letter is framed strictly by the role of daughter and catechumen, a supporter of the elect, even though the elaborate phrasing suggests that the social standing was actually the other way around.[21] In most ancient letters, politeness strategies and extensive phrases were used by clients or petitioners toward their patron. In this case, the elect skillfully combined the

[19] Mt. 6:19-20, discussed in M. Franzmann, "An 'Heretical' Use of the New Testament: A Manichaean Adaptation of Matt 6:19-20 in P. Kell. Copt 32," in *The New Testament Interpreted*, ed. B.C. Lategan and C. Breytenbach (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 153-62.

[20] M. Franzmann, "The Treasure of the Manichaean Spiritual Life," in *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, ed. J. A. van den Berg, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 235-43. To which we can now add the parallel citation of Jesus in 1 Keph. 149, 362.27. The same theme is used in Iranian texts from the Zoroastrian tradition. A. Hintze, "Treasure in Heaven. A Theme in Comparative Religion," in *Irano-Judaica VI. Studies Relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture Throughout the Ages*, ed. S. Shaked and A. Netzer (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2008), 9-36.

[21] P.Kell.Copt. 105 mentions Eirene and therefore settles her name as a proper name. It does not, however, reveal more about her identity beyond the fact that she was greeted by Psais (presumably one of the Manichaeans, could this have been Psais III?).

language of daughterhood with the social inequality of patronage structures, as the letters continued with requests for oil and wheat. Manichaean theology and biblical allusions paved the way for this instance of gift exchange.

The metaphor of the religious community as a family was not used exclusively by anonymous fathers or elect. Other authors, including Makarios, could address their recipients as a "child of righteousness" (ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ P.Kell.Copt. 14.6) or "children of the living race/family" (ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̄ P.Kell.Copt. 22.5). Just as in the letters of the elect, kinship language had a performative function and conveyed group norms and expectations about behavior. Scholars working on the Early Christian usage of family metaphors have suggested that they tapped into the longstanding norms of Greco-Roman family ethics: kin took care of the material needs of relatives.[22] Expanding this expectation to fictive kinship relations, Christian authors like Tertullian (third-century North Africa) could describe Christianness in terms of correct kinship, defined by sharing.[23] Manichaean sources followed this trend by connecting the virtue of brotherhood to similar behavioral norms.[24] The Manichaean epistle from Kellis (resembling Mani's *Epistles*) explains how "the brothers (love) the brothers, also the sisters (love) the sisters and you will all become children of a single undivided body" and adds "now this is the way that you should behave, my loved ones, so that you will all possess this one love…," and "man cannot remain without the seal of the love of his brotherhood and that of his redeemer."[25] Like in the biblical gospels and Pauline letters, brotherhood, love, and proper behavior were deeply connected.[26]

Kinship language in personal letters not only evoked certain behavioral norms for catechumens and their responsibility as (fictive) family members, but also connected the postulated cosmological world with social relations on earth. In P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32, Eirene is a daughter of the holy church, and the other addressees are called "daughters of the

---

[22] The connection between behavioral expectations and virtues attached to sibling-language is discussed in J. H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001); D. G. Horrell, "From ἀδελφοί to to οἶκος θεου: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120, no. 2 (2001): 302.

[23] Tertullian, *Apol*. 39.8-11. Citated and discussed at Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family*, 181-2.

[24] One of the personal letters stressed that there is no treachery in "your brotherhood." ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ ⲉ[ⲧ]ⲉ̣ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲕⲣⲁϥ ⲛ̣ϩⲏⲧⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 72.5. ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲧ̄ⲙⲛⲧⲥⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲓⲧ… P.Kell.Copt. 86.4. ϯϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲧⲕⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 115.9-10. See also P.Kell.Gr.75 for *philadelphian*. On the threat of treachery of siblings Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family*, 39. Treachery by "brothers" was considered as one of the most horrible threats to society, as mutual aid belonged to the strong bonds of siblings. In the letters of Paul, the "so-called-brothers" designated those who did not behave in ways fitting to this kinship role (1 Cor 5.11). On behavior and virtues attached to sibling-language, see Horrell, "From ἀδελφοί to to οἶκος θεου," 302.

[25] ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛ· ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛ· ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲛⲉ ⲁ[ⲛ ⲛ̄]ⲛ̄ⲥⲱ[ⲛⲉ·] [ⲛ̄]ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲧⲛ̄· ⲛ̄ϩⲓⲛ[ϣⲏ]ⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲟⲩⲥ]ϣ̣ⲏⲁ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧⲡⲱⲣϫ· ϯ[ⲛⲟ]ⲩ ⲧϩⲉ [ⲧⲉⲧⲉ]ⲓ̈ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲉⲥ ⲛⲁⲛ̄ⲣⲣⲉⲧⲉ· ϫⲉⲣⲉⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲁ̄ⲫ[ⲟⲣⲉ ⲧ]ⲏⲣⲧⲛ̄· ⲛ̄ϯⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ· …. ⲡ[ⲣ]ϣ̣ⲏⲉ ϭⲉ [ⲛⲁϥ ⲛⲟⲩⲛ ⲁⲃ]ⲁ̣ⲗ̣ ϫⲱⲣⲓⲥ ⲧⲥⲫⲣⲁⲅⲓⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲉ] ⲧ̣ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ̣ [ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ· ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲁⲡⲉϥⲣⲉϥⲥ̣[ⲱⲧ]ⲉ· P.Kell.Copt. 54 lines 52-54 and 54-55, 59-61.

[26] In the New Testament this is seen in the Gospel of John (John 13.34-35, the commandment to love one another) and the letters of Paul (Rom 12:10, brotherly love and correct behavior). Among the most used self-designators in Kellis documentary texts are constructions based on "loved one(s)," like the "loved one of my soul" (P.Kell.Copt. 15.1). Such a designation may have been related to the more general usage of the adjective "beloved" before a family designator but as stand-alone shorthand it is attested frequently in Mani's *Epistles*.

Light Mind" and "Children of God" (P.Kell.Copt. 31.4–5). This last phrase can be compared with "child of righteousness" in P.Kell.Copt. 14.5, 15.2 and 19.1, which appropriated it from the *Kephalaia*, where the "new man," who is free from the enslavement of the body, is called a "child of righteousness."[27] Even though the "child of righteousness" is only born after the liberation of the body, the documentary texts show how it was used for catechumens like Matthaios and the anonymous daughters. These labels established a narrative link between the supernatural world and the believers, strengthened by allusions to biblical text and Manichaean theology. For some of the elect, these self-designators probably served as abbreviations of a more complex social imaginary. They identified the recipients as "children of the holy church," to show they understood their relation as part of a cosmological drama in which they represented the "living race" and embodied virtues such as righteousness and truth. Whether all catechumens would have understood this cosmological level remains a question, especially as most kinship terminology was used without further religious elaborations. In result, these phrases carried a certain ambivalence: they could be read with strong group connotations, but also within the unmarked framework of polite expressions in household and village interactions.

A related set of self-designators made use of the repertoire of ethnic reasoning. Ethnic reasoning was a rhetorical strategy by which Early Christians shaped their religious tradition, both by positioning themselves as a demarcated group, not unlike other ethnic groups, and by reframing themselves as universal and beyond ethnic boundaries.[28] According to Denise Kimber Buell, ethnic reasoning expressed the inclusive and distinct nature of Christianness, as it gave Christians conceptual space to legitimize their group identity as natural and universal, while it kept a certain fluidity in the membership structures.[29] Christian authors, for example, described Christians as belonging to the "righteous race," or the "god-loving and god-fearing race."[30] Conceptualizing conversion as rebirth allowed new members to enter into this new race.[31] When Makarios, therefore, addressed Maria, Kyria, and Pshemnoute as "children of the living race" (ⲛ̅ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧ̀ⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛ̅ϩ̅ P.Kell.Copt. 22.5), he made use of the same type of ethnic reasoning to differentiate between insiders and outsiders. He may have learned the notion from one of the elect, as Apa Lysimachos wrote about "our children who are among our race" (ⲛ̅ⲛ̀ⲉⲛϣⲏⲣⲉ̀ ⲉⲧ̀ϩ[ⲛ̅ ⲧⲛ̅]ⲣⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 30.5). Manichaean liturgical and theological texts also employed this image of an undivided body of daughters and fathers, united in their common identity as

[27] Ϣⲁϥⲥⲛⲏ̅ ⲙ̅ⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲛⲧ̀ⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̅ϥⲕⲁⲧⲟ̀[ⲩ] ⲛ̅ϥⲥⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̅ϥⲥⲛⲏ̅ⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̅ⲟⲩⲣⲏ̅ⲛ̅ⲃ̅ⲣ̅ⲣⲉ ⲟⲩϣⲏⲣⲉ [ⲛ̅]ⲧⲉ ⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ 1 Keph. 38, 96.25-7. "He shall set right the members of the soul, form and purify them, and construct a new man of them, a child of righteousness." Translation in Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*, 101.

[28] D. K. Buell, *Why This New Race* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). Gruen emphasizes the malleable character of this terminology, in which he does not see a direct relation to matters of race, but instead carry wider meanings. E. S. Gruen, "Christians as a 'Third Race'. Is Ethnicity at Issue?," in *Christianity in the Second Century*, ed. J. Carleton Paget and J. Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 235-49.

[29] Buell, *Why This New Race*, 3.

[30] Ignatius, *Mart. Pol.* 14.1, 17.1, 3.2, cited in Buell, *Why This New Race*, 52.

[31] Buell, *Why This New Race*, 114.

"children of the living race."[32] It is also present in one of Mani's *Epistles* at Kellis, which contributes to the impression that some authors imitated Mani's epistolary style and thereby appropriated and adopted the social map and self-representation of these texts.[33]

By adapting ethnic reasoning in their self-designations, Kellites embraced a cosmological world far greater than their local village society. It does not mean, however, that they worked with a sociological and soteriological determinism, as is sometimes claimed by ancient heresiologists. The accusation of soteriologial determinism, analyzed by Buell and Williams, belonged to the broader use of ethnic reasoning. In fact, Buell and Williams show the opposite was sometimes true. Ethnic reasoning could be used without implying deterministic beliefs about salvation. Instead, metaphors of ethnicity and race were perceived as permeable: they could be used to emphasize the openness of the group identity, which allowed people to choose their own affiliation.[34] In other words, ethnic reasoning was not necessarily a marker of sectarianism.[35] While it could make use of strong groupness by stressing the ethnic distinction between insiders and outsiders, it was frequently used with a more open meaning. This is also true for Manichaeans. In the epistle of Mani found at Kellis, the author identifies the community as the "children of this living kindred," but he continues to stress their background in the race and kin of the world: "[T]hey who have been chosen from every race and kin. We have been chosen because of nothing except that we could know our soul and understand everything; and strip ourselves of the world"[36] Their identity as a new race, here, does not imply an inherent, predetermined Manichaean identity or nature, but was the result of "being chosen" (ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲥⲁⲧⲡⲟⲩ) and having received Mani's teaching, example, and wisdom.[37]

Before continuing our examination of various other types of self-designation, two curious designators have to be mentioned. Some of the Kellis letters refer to specific individuals with the honorific title "Apa" or "Ama" and the unknown phrase "*shona*"—daughters—is used several times. How strongly were these phrases connected to Manichaeanness?

---

[32] See appendix, [ⲛ̅ϣ]ⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ, 1 PsB. 154.15 and in the reconstruction in T.Kell.Copt. 4 B41.

[33] ⲛ̅ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ, "the sons of this living race," P.Kell.Copt. 53, 82.7. Gardner, *KLT1*, 39. Pedersen notes that "the crucial point rather seems to be that this is a very rare attestation of an expression which seems to have been dear to Mani himself." Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 206.

[34] On this flexible notion of soteriological determinism in Valentinian sources, see Buell, *Why This New Race*, 116-37; M. A. Williams, *The Immovable Race* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 158-85; D. Brakke, "Self-Differentiation among Christan Groups: The Gnostics and Their Opponents," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, ed. M. M. Mitchell and F. M. Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 251. On the question of determinism, see N. Denzey Lewis, *Cosmology and Fate in Gnosticism and Graeco-Roman Antiquity. Under Pitiless Skies* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[35] See the examples discussed in Buell, *Why This New Race*, 117.

[36] …ⲛ̅ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ': ⲛⲉⲧⲉϩⲁⲩⲥⲁⲧⲡⲟⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧⲁⲩⲥⲁⲧ'ⲡⲓⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲛ ⲉⲓⲛⲏⲧⲓ ⲁⲧⲣⲛ̅ⲥⲟⲩⲱⲛ ⲛ̅ⲧⲣⲛ̅ⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̅ⲧⲣⲛ̅ⲙ̅ⲙⲉ ⲁϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲛ̅ⲧⲣⲛ̅ⲕⲁⲛⲉ ⲕⲁϩⲏⲩ ⲙ̅ⲡ̅ⲕ̅ⲟ[ⲥⲙ]ⲟ̅ⲥ… P.Kell.Copt. 53, 82.7-12.

[37] Mani's teaching (P.Kell.Copt. 53, 82.04), model and wisdom (idem, 82.20-21).

The honorific *Apa* and female *Ama* derived from paternal and maternal designations, which developed into Christian (but not exclusively Christian) honorific titles.[38] In the Kellis documents, Apa Lysimachos is the most prominent figure with this title. He features most prominently in Makarios's letters, where he is described as living and working in the Nile valley. In two letters by Makarios, for example, Apa Lysimachos is in the Nile valley. In one instance, he is reported to have stayed (or lived?) in Antinoopolis.[39] He seems to have intimate knowledge of the Manichaean hierarchy, since he mentions bishops in his letter to Hor (P.Kell.Copt. 30) and a Syriac lector in his letter to Theognostos (P.Kell.Gr.67). As seen in the previous chapter, Apa Lysimachos must have been one of the elect. He was authorized to make decisions about the travel schedule and he may have had a retinue of catechumens following him. The designator "Apa," therefore, was used as an honorific title, not unlike Christian ecclesiastical officeholders (Apa Besas in P.Kell.Copt. 124).

The female equivalent of *Apa*, the honorific *Ama*, is less well known and only attested in one of the Kellis letters: "Zosime greets you; and Ama Theodora and Dorothea and Ama Tatou; and Ama Tapshai and her daughter and sons."[40] While "apa" is used in the doxologies of the Manichaean Psalmbook (2 PsB. 47.22–23, 149.30, 155.42, 166.22, 176.10), "ama" is never used in Coptic Manichaean texts. The most striking fact about this Kellis passage is that Ama Tapshai had children, which may suggest that these amas were catechumens instead of elect.[41] If that is the case, ama is used here in a more traditional sense to designate women as honorable mothers, in contrast to the honorific (and religiously marked) use of the title apa. In general, however, these titles are used similarly in other fourth-century Christian letters.

---

[38] Malcom Choat notes that the use of apa is not exclusively Christian, but is often found in a Christian context. It was more commonly used than monastic titles, and was not an indicator of an ecclesiastical office. Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 68-70; T. Derda and E. Wipszycka, "L'emploi des titres Abba, Apa et Papas dans l'Egypte byzantine," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 24 (1994): 23-56. On the use of "apa" in letters, see M. A. Eissa, "The Use of the Title Apa for the Sender in an Opening Epistolary Formula," *Journal of Coptic studies* 16 (2014): 115-24.

[39] P.Kell.Copt. 21 and 24. Just like with the Teacher, we happen to have letters by Lysimachos, one to Hor and one to Theognostos. The situation alluded to (the death of Joubei) makes sure that we are dealing with the same person.

[40] ϫⲱⲥⲓⲙⲉ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙ̄ ⲁⲙⲁ ⲑⲉⲟⲇⲱⲣⲁ ⲙ̄ ⲇ̣ⲱⲣⲟⲑⲉⲁ ⲙ̄ ⲁⲙⲁ ⲧⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ ⲁⲙⲁ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲡ̣ϣⲁ̣ⲓ̈ ⲙ̄ ⲧⲉⲥϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲏⲣⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 80.33-36. Amma 'assumes the meaning "ascetic" or "clerical personality," according to Susanna Elm. S. Elm, *'Virgins of God'. The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 246. Blumell lists a large number of Greek inscriptions and papyri and notes (on the basis of SB VIII 9882) that "ama" could have developed from its early use as "a maternal title before it eventually came to be used as an honorific title for certain Christian women." L. H. Blumell, "A New Jewish Epitaph Commemorating Care for Orphans," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 47, no. 3 (2016): 321.

[41] Although she could have had children before she became a member of the elect. Unfortunately, little is known about the way one became elect. Note that in all other letters Tapshai is designated as "mother." Doctrinal texts also urged catechumens to become perfect by refraining from procreation (1 Keph. 91, 228.24, 229.12). On the evidence for female Manichaean elect, see J. Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen. Die Rolle der Frau im frühen Manichäismus* (Heidelberg: Verlag Antike, 2013).

An equally difficult question revolves around the meaning and translation of "my *shona*—daughters" (ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲛⲁ) in P.Kell.Copt. 31.7. The phrase ϩⲟⲛⲁ occurs four times in the documentary papyri and resembles the Sahidic Coptic ϩⲓⲙⲉ (female, woman). In P.Kell.Copt. 31, this would result in a "pleonastic construction" ("my female daughters").[42] Other letters use ϩⲟⲛⲉ and ϩⲓⲙⲉ as if two distinct terms (P.Kell.Copt. 44.14, 32) or employ the variant ϩⲟⲛⲉ (P.Kell.Copt. 20.50). Although two of these passages seem to suggest a collective (P.Kell.Copt. 20.50 and 58.19), this interpretation is merely speculation. The exact interpretation of the phrase remains ambiguous and without parallels outside the Kellis papyri.[43]

5.2.2 Catechumens and Elect

Many of the previously discussed kinship metaphors relate to the binary division of the Manichaean community into catechumen and elect. The author of P.Kell.Copt. 31 described the catechumens as "my loved daughters, who are greatly revered by me: the members of the holy Church, the daughters of the Light Mind, they who also are numbered with the children of God" and Eirene was approached as a "daughter of the holy church" and "catechumen of the faith."[44] The self-designators "catechumen" and "elect" were only infrequently used in the other personal letters, with Orion's letters as main exception. He finished most of his letters by sending greetings to all those in the oasis, including the catechumens and elect:

> Greet warmly for me they who give you rest, the elect and the catechumens, each one by name.[45]
>
> Greet for me all… the elect and the catechumens, all they who give rest to you, and every one.[46]
>
> Greet warmly for me my sister Aristakenia, all (?) the catechumens and they who give rest to you.[47]

---

[42] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 171, 212 referring to Crum, *CD*, 343a, 385a; See also Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 24.

[43] Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 91 opts for an alternative form of the Coptic word for "schwester" (ϩⲱⲛⲉ). Alternatively, it may be from the Egyptian *st-ḥnwt* "mistress." Jean Daniel Dubois, in personal communication, has suggested it came from the ancient Egyptian for "young girl" (Personal communication, 06-08-2015).

[44] See the Coptic text cited above, P.Kell.Copt. 31.1-5 and P.Kell.Copt. 32.1-4.

[45] Ⲙ[ⲛ]ⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧ̣ⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗⲉⲕ[ⲧ]ⲟⲥ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲙ̄ⲕⲁ̣ⲑⲛⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲡⲟⲩⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ P.Kell.Copt. 15.27-30.

[46] Ⲙ[ⲛ]ⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁ …….. ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣ̣ⲟⲩ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗ̣ⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣ [……] …. ⲛⲉⲧϯⲙⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 16.40-41.

[47] Ⲙ[ⲛ]ⲉ̣ ⲛ̣ⲏⲓ ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲛ̣ⲟⲩ ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲥ̣ⲱⲛⲉ̣ ⲁⲣⲓⲥ̣ⲧⲁⲕⲉ̣ⲛⲓⲁ ⲁ̣ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲑⲛⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣ ….. ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉ̣ⲧ̣ϯⲙ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ P.Kell.Copt. 17.52-53.

These greetings indicate that the Manichaeans in Kellis indeed knew the same binary division in their community and used the same terminology as used in the theological texts found at Medinet Madi.

It is, however, striking that only three out of (circa) two hundred personal letters mention the ⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ. Not all two hundred letters came from a Manichaean background, but those that show indications of Manichaeanness do not usually refer to the elect. Catechumens, on the other hand, are mentioned a little more often, but the general way of alluding to this status within the community was through kinship metaphors, or by the use of ecclesiastical titles.[48] Such ecclesiastical titles (see section 5.2.6), if they belonged to Manichaean church officials, must have referred to members of the elect, as catechumens were excluded from fulfilling these roles.[49] The identification of specific individuals as members of the elect is, however, hampered by the shared vocabulary of Manichaeans and Christians. It is not always visible whether we deal with officials in the Christian or Manichaean "church."

Catechumens were designated with more than just this label, as various phrases were used to praise them for their supportive role. They are the "fruit of the flourishing tree," the "blossom of love," "good caretakers" (P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32). It is thus from this position as "father" that elect could praise their daughters because they were "helpers," "worthy patrons," and "firm unbending pillars" (ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟ̈ⲓ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲛⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ· ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁ̈ⲓⲧ P.Kell.Copt. 31.16–18). These designators point to the supportive role of catechumens, but they also play with terminology of Greco-Roman patronage structures. The Latin loanword *patronus*, often used in Greek, is employed by the elect author, used for wealthy or influential catechumens who acted as benefactors (the Coptic term is once used in the *Kephalaia* to describe the protection of a king as "the patronage of the church").[50] When a Manichaean elect, therefore, addressed catechumens as "helpers," "worthy patrons," and "firm unbending pillars," he puts these designators to work within the expectations of the Manichaean alms exchange (see Chapter 6).

---

[48] ⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ is used in the two examples cited above (P.Kell.Copt.15.28, 16.40), and in P.Kell.Copt. 28.25 in a fragmentary context. The Coptic ⲥⲟⲧⲡ is not attested as self-designator in the documentary letters. ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲑⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ are mentioned in three examples cited above (P.Kell.Copt. 15.28, 16.40 (reconstructed) and 17.52), 22.61, 32.2, see appendix.

[49] As the religious leadership was chosen from their ranks. On the role of women in the senior roles see J. K. Coyle, "Prolegomena to a Study of Women in Manichaeism," in *The Light and the Darkness. Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, ed. P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill), 141-54; Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 72, 190, passim. On the church hierarchy and the origin of the number of leaders (12 Teachers, 72 bishops, 360 presbyters) see C. Leurini, "The Manichaean Church between Earth and Paradise," in *New Light on Manichaeism*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 169-79; Leurini, *The Manichaean Church*, 87-220.

[50] [ⲧ]ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲱⲛⲓⲁ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 233.24. The phrase is used twice for a king in a Coptic historical text. Pedersen, "A Manichaean Historical Text," 196 and 198. For more references to the Greek use of the term, see S. Daris, *Il lessico latino nel greco d'Egitto* (Barcelona: Institut de Teologia Fonamental, Seminari de Papirologia, 1991), 88.

5.2.3 Those Who Give You Rest

If we return to the three greeting sections of Orion's letters, cited in the previous section, we see that the "elect and catechumens" are mentioned in close association with "those who give you rest" (ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ). Who are these rest givers?

"Rest" (ⲙ̄ⲧⲟⲛ in Coptic, ἀνάπαυσις in Greek) is part of a complex semantic web of meaning, in which religious connotations about heavenly peace, salvation, and a state of unshakenness play a large role. A minimalist reading of the Kellis passages is to consider alternative translations like "everyone who pleases you," which is also put forward by the editors.[51] Indeed, "rest" may have had a metaphorical meaning besides the specific religious connotation. In one of the letters (P.Kell.Copt. 80.26–27), ⲙⲧⲁⲛ is translated with (financial) "benefit,"[52] while in another instance, the translation "peace" is used: "[P]eace of mind in word and deed" (ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛϩⲏⲧ ⲛⲉⲕ ϩⲛ ⲡⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡϩⲱⲃ P.Kell.Copt. 35.47 cf. 36.17). This broad range of meanings has to be put in perspective, as almost no other personal letters outside this corpus use ϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ. It occurs in one or two Christian letters, which may imply that it was not exclusively Manichaean, but its usage in the context of other Manichaean self-designators in P.Kell.Copt. 15, 16 and 17 leads me to believe that Orion alluded to a specifically Manichaean notion.[53]

The way this phrase is used suggests that "those who give you rest" either are identical with "elect and catechumens" or represent only a section of the Manichaean community.[54] In P.Kell.Copt. 15 and 16, the phrase can be read as a reiteration of "the elect and catechumens" earlier in the sentence, while it seems that the elect are replaced by "they who give rest to you" (ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ϯⲙ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ) in P.Kell.Copt. 17. In the Manichaean psalms, the elect are called "men of rest." This rest is defined as their ascetic practice, which is, in turn, a gift from God, who is called the "giver of rest."[55] In the *Kephalaia*, however, the catechumens are those who give rest because "the holy church has no place of rest in this entire world except for through the catechumens who listen to it as [...] only with the catechumens who give it rest (ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ)."[56] Another chapter specifically connects "rest" to the daily almsgiving and healing, when Mani forgives all the sins done to the Living Soul, "for all that you do to this alms on that day you do to cause it to be healed. You are bringing this alms offering that you have

---

[51] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 241; Cf. Gardner et. all, *CDT1*, 53.

[52] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 123; See also Crum, *CD*, 193b-196a.

[53] The edition refers to the possible parallels in Christian formulas in the letters published in W.E. Crum, ed. *Coptic Manuscripts Brought from the Fayyum by W.M. Flinders Petrie* (London: Nutt, 1893), 23, 37 and 53.

[54] The phrase is used in P. Kell. Copt. 15.28, 16.41, 17.53, 35.47, 36.14 and 115.40.

[55] God is the giver of rest in 2 PsB. 155.16-42. Elect are the men of rest in 2 PsB. 170.16 and in 1 Keph. 79, 191.9-192.3, where their ascetic practice is defined as dwelling in the rest. In one of the Kellis texts which may have been part of the collection of Mani's *Epistles*, rest is promised at the end (P.Kell.Copt. 54.64). On the virtue of being "unmoved" and the desire for "rest," see Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 5; Williams, *The Immovable Race*, 1-7 and 221. In the Coptic version of the ten advantages of the Manichaean church, the steadfast stance and unshakenness of the church is listed as the number three reason why the Manichaean church is superior over all others (1 Keph. 151, 372.1-10).

[56] ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ϩⲱⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲉⲥ ⲙⲁⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲉⲓⲛⲏⲧⲓ ϩⲓⲧⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲁⲣⲁⲥ ⲉⲣⲉ ….. ⲙ̣ⲛ̣ⲉⲧⲉ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ ⲛⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲥ 1 Keph. 87, 217.20-24.

made to life and rest (ϩ̄ⲧⲁⲛ)."[57] This connection to almsgiving, the central defining feature of the Manichaean catechumenate, strongly points to the identity of "those who give you rest," although Orion seems to include both elect and catechumens in this designator.

5.2.4 Metaphors of Belonging

Belonging was sometimes expressed by the authors of the Kellis letters with some elegance, especially when religious groupness was implied. They employed designators like "kingdom of the saints," "those of this word," "the members of the holy church," "worthy members," "beloved of my limbs" and the "good limb of the Light Mind." The latter designator is most clearly exclusively Manichaean, while the other phrases are less specific.[58] The image of "limbs" for community members and supernatural beings is rather common in Manichaean theological texts.[59] The authors drew on the image of the Manichaean church as a communal body in which the members constitute the limbs. They followed Mani's example, who had frequently addressed his disciples as "my brothers and my limbs."[60] Otherwise, this expression was used extensively in Coptic apocryphal literature, but I know of no other instances in which "limb" is used as a self-designator in Greek or Coptic personal letters.[61] The association of "limbs" with the Light Mind (ⲙ̣ⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓⲛⲉ, in P.Kell. Copt. 31.3-4), moreover, sets it apart as a Manichaean designator.[62]

Most of the other metaphors of belonging would not have disturbed Christian letter writers. Although there are no direct parallels from this period in which Christians use "kingdom of the saints," "those of this word" or "the members of the holy church," these phrases have no specific Manichaean connotation. This so-called "warm Christian piety" has parallels in Coptic Manichaean texts discussing "kingdom," "word," and in particular the "holy church," but the first two are never used in self-designators outside the Kellis letters.[63] It is noteworthy, moreover, that "the kingdom of the saints" was employed in a letter that shared characteristics with the letters of the elect (P.Kell.Copt. 34). The designator "holy church" (ⲧⲉⲕⲕ̣ⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ), on the other hand, was frequently used for the Manichaean church. We also find "church of the faithful" (ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲙ̣ⲥ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣) in the Kellis version of Mani's *Epistles*. With the designator "those of this word," new ground is broken. Although "word(s)"(ⲥⲉϫⲉ) appear frequently, and spoken and written word are central to Manichaeism, it is never turned into a designator for the community, as far as we know. Despite tantalizing connections to Manichaean literature, it should be pointed out that most

---

[57] ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲁⲏ ⲡⲉⲧⲕⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙⲛⲁϥ ⲧⲏ[ⲣϥ ⲁ]ϯⲛⲓⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ⲉⲕⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙⲛⲁϥ ⲁ̣[ⲧⲣⲥ]ⲧⲗ̀ⲟ ⲉⲕⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ϯⲙ̄ⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲕⲉ̈ⲧⲥ ⲁⲡⲱⲛϩ ⲛⲛ ⲡⲛⲧⲁⲛ 1 Keph 93, 236.24-27.

[58] Some examples are discussed in Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 57-73.

[59] Middle Persian and Parthian sources use "limbs" to designate the two groups of elect and auditors. Similar phrases are used for the process of salvation, in which the Primordial Man and the Manichaeans have to collect their limbs. BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 27 and 223.

[60] ⲛⲁⲛⲉⲗⲟⲥ 1 Keph. 41.25-30, 144.2, 213.3, 285.21.

[61] For example, in the Coptic *Investiture of the Archangel Michael*, 3.11, 7.19, 11.30 etc. (I have consulted the online translation by A. Alcock).

[62] Samuel Lieu has recently noted that the figure of the Light Mind is central in many Manichaean texts, but is never mentioned outsider observations like Augustine. Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," 289.

[63] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 80 calls it "a warm Christian piety."

of these phrases belonged to the shared repertoire of Manichaeans and Christians, and were only occasionally explicit enough to discern one from the other.

5.2.5 Ascribed Virtues

We have seen how many self-designators functioned in the context of praise. These authors addressed members of the community in a positive way, designating their identity and behavior through terminology that connotes Manichaeanness. Bearing fruit or bringing rest were referred to as central and identity-defining virtues of Manichaean behavior. At least two personal letters alluded to the goods or benefits given by catechumens as "fruits" (ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ), a term not uncommon in Manichaean theological texts. Manichaean agricultural metaphors, sometimes closely related to New Testament parables about fruitfulness and trees, included images like trees with blossoms, or trees that sprout and are full of fruits (1 PsB. 119 , 2 PsB. 91 and 175. Cf. P.Kell.Copt. 53, 42.22–25).[64] These agricultural metaphors were used for catechumens to frame them as good and worthwhile members of the community. Of course, in their situational context, these phrases could be aimed at gift exchange and mutual support. In the letter to Eirene (cited above), her character is praised as the "good tree whose fruit never withers" and Makarios addressed his wife (and her family ?) as the "good caretakers, the fruit of the flourishing tree, and the blossoms of love."[65] These passages come across as a form of flattery, which is not uncommon in personal letters from this period. This metaphor of the blossoming and fruitful tree could be used to express the author's expectations about the fruitful gifts these people should bring them. I take this to be almost self-evident for the letter to Eirene, where this designator is followed by an ingenious allusion to a biblical parable about wealth. In Makarios's letter, the flattery-and-fundraising purpose is less clear. Instead, other social situations discussed in this particular letter may have triggered the need for this explicit repertoire, as it deals with a conflict about a book, the preparations for Easter, and, possibly, situations of religious maltreatment (P.Kell.Copt. 22, but see Chapter 4 on persecution).

Other expressions with ascribed virtues, like "the favoured, blessed, god-loving souls" (ⲙ̣ϒ[ⲩ]ϫⲁ̣ⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲛⲁⲛⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 31.5–6), could be part of the politeness strategies of some of the letters. Noteworthy is the central role of the virtue of love (*agape*). It is alluded to several times, and is used most frequently in its adjectival form when "beloved brothers" are addressed. More specific are the designations addressing "my loved ones" (ⲛⲁⲛⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ). The authors, for example, greeted "my loved one of my soul, gladness of my spirit,"[66] "loved one of my soul and my spirit,"[67] and the "loved ones who are honoured

---

[64] This inconsistency is visible in the positive use of the metaphor of the farmer in the Psalmbook, while agriculture was forbidden for the elect and featured in the life of Mani as the one of the primary examples of hurting the Living Soul (CMC 96-98). The good tree and bad tree and their fruit are, moreover, the topic of the second *Kephalaia* chapter (1 Keph. 17.2-9). Coyle, "Good Tree, Bad Tree," 65-88.

[65] ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲁ ⲡ̄ϥⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ϩⲱⲙ̄ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ, "good tree whose fruit never withers" P.Kell.Copt. 32.4-5. ⲛ̄ϥⲁ̈ⲣ[ⲁ]ⲩⲱ ⲉ̣ⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ … ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲣⲁⲩⲧ ⲛ̄ϯ ⲟⲩⲱ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϩⲁⲡⲏ, "the good care-takers, the fruit of the flourishing tree and the blossoms of love" P.Kell.Copt. 22.4-5.

[66] ⲡϣⲟ]ⲩⲛⲉ̈ⲓⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁϒⲩⲭⲏ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲁⲧ] ⲙ̣̄ⲡⲁⲡⲛⲉⲩ[ⲛⲁ….] P.Kell.Copt. 14.4-6.

[67] ⲡⲛⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϒⲩⲭⲏ̣ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲡⲁⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣̄ⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 15.1.

of my soul."[68] Such forms of address are highly formulaic; they are common in Early Christian letters, where the adjective "beloved" is considered as one of the markers for Christian authorship.[69] Even if a letter would contain complaints, tough remarks, or critique, the introductory praise of someone's virtues with friendly and kind designators would uphold the image of loving family relations, either as a matter of good style, or in imitation of Mani's *Epistles*.

What stands out in comparison to the frequent references to love is the relative absence of designators like "the faithful," "the believers," or "the righteous" in this corpus. Only one Greek Manichaean letter mentions "the pious." The relative absence of these expressions in the personal letters, while they were common designators for the Manichaean community in other Coptic Manichaean sources, is presumably to be explained by the conventions of the genre. In particular, we should see the strategic politeness behind these phrases. Structural parallels from Arabic documentary letters (and Greek and Coptic letters as well) show how authors used politeness strategies to reduce friction and how they employed conventional politeness to signify and affirm their belonging to the community.[70]

5.2.6 Religious and Institutional Titles

Religious identifications are often inferred on the basis of occasional references to institutional titles in legal documents or personal letters. These titles are chance appearances, used to identify witnesses or scribes. They are not meant to reveal more detailed information about religious or social positions in relation to the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the oasis, Alexandria, or the Roman Empire at large.[71] Where they are attested, on the other hand, they inform us about the social ties and intermingling of individuals despite their religious differences.

In a Greek document concerning the division of a house, a priest signed for a number of illiterate people. His name was "Aurelius Stonios, son of Tepnachtes, priest from the same village of Kellis."[72] This priest is known from other documents found in the temple of Tutu, but Christian priests appear in legal documents as well. Another Greek letter (P.Kell.Gr. 32) is a lease contract of a room, written by "Aurelius Iakob, son of Besis the priest, reader of the catholic church."[73] Two other documents mention Christian priests as witnesses, namely Aurelius Harpocrates (P.Kell.Gr.58) and Aurelius Psekes (P.Kell.Gr.48).

---

[68] ⲛⲁⲛⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ [ⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲧ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣[ⲟⲧ]ⲥ̣ ⲙ̈ⲧⲁϥⲩⲭⲏ P.Kell.Copt. 20.1.

[69] On the formulaic nature of the address "loved" brothers, see Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 94.

[70] Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters*, 121-23.

[71] On the chance appearances of religious officials, see Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 57-73.

[72] Αὐρήλιος Στ]ώνιος Τεπνάχθου ἱερεὺς ἀπὸ τ[ῆς αὐτῆς κώμης Κέλλεως]. P.Kell.Gr. 13.14.

[73] Αὐρήλιος Ἰακῶβ Βήσιος πρ(εσβυτέρου) ἀναγνώστης καθολικῆς ἐκε̣λησίας ἔγραψα ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς γράμματα μὴ εἰδυίης . P.Kell.Gr. 32.20-23. Derda and Wipszycka, "L'emploi des titres Abba, Apa et Papas," 23-56. P.Kell.Gr. 24.3, 48.20 and 58.8 also mention "catholic church." Worp, *GPK1*, 74. Unconvincing is, in my opinion, the examination of Le Tiec, who erroneously assumes all inhabitants of House 3 must have been Manichaeans. P. A. le Tiec, "Le temple de Toutou et l´histoire des manichéens à Kellis," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013): 75-85.

Papyrologists have considered these religious titles as identity markers, offering opportunities to approach the Ancient Christian church during a period during which sources are few.[74] Their titles are, in my opinion, not meant as markers of a religious identity, but as specific designators of occupation or social status within a specific (often legal) context. The scribe of the contract P.Kell.Gr. 32 did not necessarily indicate his religious affiliation, but rather his position within Aphrodite society. Institutional titles served to support specific situations in which social status was of importance, as for example in the official declaration to the *dux* (P.Kell.Gr. 24) from 352 CE, in which the list of inhabitants of Kellis is headed by a presbyter and two deacons.[75] None of these documents, therefore, inform us of any trace of controversy or tension between Christians and Manichaeans.

Some of the religious titles may have referred to Manichaean elect in their role as members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In the previous chapter, we have encountered the anonymous "Teacher" (ⲡⲥⲁϩ), who was probably a prominent religious leader. In his letter (P.Kell.Copt. 61), all the (Manichaean) presbyters are addressed, while Apa Lysimachos mentioned a Manichaean lector in need of a (note)book (P.Kell.Gr. 67), and bishops (P.Kell.Copt. 31.4). The references to deacons and presbyters in the Coptic letters are often without explicit designation of a Manichaean or Christian institutional context.[76] One of Orion's letters, for example, refers to "Sa..ren the presbyter" (P.Kell.Copt. 18), who is probably to be identified with "brother Saren" in P.Kell.Copt. 58. The presbyter(s) and the subdeacon Hor, addressed in a letter from a House 4 context, were most probably officials of the Christian church.[77] Establishing such a connection without explicit identifications is, however, mainly based on linguistic variation and the presence or absence of onomastic connections to other letters.

5.2.7 Collectives: Those of the Household, Neighborhood, or "People"

In contrast with the widespread use of collectives associated with the place of residence in Greek papyri, Coptic documentary letters almost never identify people in relation to their village or place of residence. There are, however, some exceptions. Philammon and Pamour of Tjkoou (P.Kell.Copt. 20.29) were designated specifically with their village of residence, presumably because of the large number of villagers with identical names. Several Coptic letters employed designators with collectives of place, like belonging to someone's

---

[74] See A. Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord. Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for Harvard Theological Studies, 2008), 81-154 on the third-century clergyman Sotas. One of the first explicit identifications of somebody "a Christian" appears in a first half of the third-century list (SB 16.12497), which has been interpreted as contextual information, used to identify and locate the individual and differentiate him from others with the same name. See M. Choat et al., "The World of the Nile," in *Early Christianity in Contexts. An Exploration Accross Cultures and Continents*, ed. W. Tabbernee (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2016), 192. Contra the interpretation by van Minnen, who suggests the designation was used pejorative. P. van Minnen, "The Roots of Egyptian Christianity," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 40, no. 1 (1994): 74-77.

[75] See notes at Worp, *GPK* 1, 75.

[76] Deacons: P.Kell.Copt. 19.48, 72.36, 124.40. Presbyter: P.Kell.Copt. 18.22, 61.2, 92.34, 124.1. Bishop: P.Kell.Copt. 30.4

[77] P.Kell.Copt. 124. Gardner et all, *CDT* 2, 276-280.

"household" (ⲡⲛⲏ) or "neighborhood" (ⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ). In more ambiguous terms, those belonging to these social units are called "people" (ⲣⲱⲙⲉ). The frequency of these collective designators reveals how fundamental the household and village were to the social imaginary of most of the Kellites.

The most remarkable instance of this collective household language is found in Matthaios's letter to Maria (P.Kell.Copt. 25). This letter ends with greetings to what "he appears to conceive of as a network of households," according to Gardner, "the majority of which cluster around a matriarch."[78] The final section of the letter greets a number of people and their households:

> Greet for me Marshe and her brother, each by name, and their children and their whole house. Greet for me my mother Tashai and her children. Greet for me my mother Talaphanti and her children and her whole house. Greet for me my mother Louiepshai and her whole house and her children. Greet for me my brother Andreas, with his whole house and his people.[79]

Some of these people with their households did not live in the direct neighborhood, but were located further away. Marshe may be identified with Marsis, who lived in Aphrodite. Mother Tashai (Tapshai?) is associated with the village of Tkou (P.Kell.Copt. 19 and 43).[80] Other individuals may have been based in Kellis itself.

The household was a focal point of meeting and greeting. Coptic letters often express the wish to "be able to greet you in my house," and one letter expresses the writer's joy about the "health of the household."[81] To what extent the households of Marshe, Talaphanti, Louiepshai, and Andreas (P.Kell.Copt. 25, cited above) connoted Manichaeanness is not clear, as none of the other letters explicitly connect households to the religious community. Greek personal letters contained polite phrases greeting similar collectives, like "all those in the house" or "all your people," often presumably meant to indicate family members. This practice is seen in papyri from elsewhere, like in P.Giss. 97 (second century CE), where the addressees' people are on the same line as the author's children: "[B]efore everything I pray that you are well with all your people and I am also (well) with my children…" and "salute

---

[78] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136.

[79] Ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲛⲁⲣϣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲉⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲟⲩϣⲛⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲩⲏⲓ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲧⲁⲛⲟ ⲧⲁϣⲁⲓ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲛⲣⲉ· ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲧⲁⲛⲁ ⲧⲁⲗⲁⲫⲁⲛⲧⲓ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲛⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲥ̄ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲧⲁⲛⲁ ⲗⲟⲩⲓⲉⲡϣⲁⲓ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲥ̄ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲥϣⲛⲣⲉ ϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲡⲁⲥⲁⲛ ⲁⲛⲇⲣⲉⲁⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡϩⲛⲏⲓ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲙⲛ ⲛⲉϥϣⲛⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 25.69-74.

[80] According to Iain Gardner, this place name (spelled Tjkoou in P.Kell.Copt. 20.29) was the Coptic name for Aphrodite in the Antaiopolite nome. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 170. Further support for this interpretation is found in P.Kell.Copt. 19, where Matthaios is ordered to send something to "Siaout (Assiut, Lycopolis), to the house of Aristakena… Antinoe….." ⲁⲥⲓⲁⲟⲩⲧ̄ ⲁ̣ⲡⲏⲓ ⲛ̄ⲁⲣⲓⲥⲧⲁϭⲉⲛⲁ ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ ..[…..] ⲁⲛⲧⲓⲛⲟⲟⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 19.43-44. It seems likely to situate the Makarios family in Antinoe and Aristakena in Siaout. Moreover, she is probably not to be identified with the Aristakenia greeted by Orion as "my sister" (P.Kell.Copt. 17.52). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 22. In another letter Pamour is asked to bring books from (the place of) father Pabo to Pekos in Kellis and certain things have to be sent to "the house of father Pebo" (ⲁⲡⲏⲓ ⲛ̄ⲡⲁⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲃⲟ P.Kell.Copt. 120.14-15).

[81] ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲧϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲏⲓ ⲧ̣ⲣⲟⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 15.33 and rejoice in P.Kell.Copt. 77.10 about ⲡⲟⲩϫⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲙⲡⲏⲓ.

all the people of our family by name."[82] In other situations, the friends could be included as well: "[G]reet all in the house and all our friends."[83]

Another observation from P.Kell.Copt. 25 is that a distinction was made between "house" and "people," since both the whole house and the people of Andreas are mentioned. Other examples of greetings to "people" are attested.[84] P.Kell.Copt. 103.35 for example, refers to "my people" (ⲁⲛⲁϱ[ⲱⲙⲉ]) as those who have solved a problem and bought the dye (?), which could mean that he is referring to his employees. Iain Gardner suggests that "our people" are the extended family, while "the whole house" is the actual family unit living together under one roof.[85] In one instance, this collective of "my people" was designated as "everyone who loves you."[86] Such collectives were clearly not exclusively religious in nature; they belonged to the ordinary world in which villagers upheld relations by means of their correspondence, through including extensive greetings to all those who were close to them.

Further questions involve the identification of those greeted as "everyone in the neighborhood." In a number of Coptic letters, the greetings are accompanied by greetings to "each one of the neighborhood."[87] In one letter, the author combined two collectives and sent his greetings to "you and all of the household and the neighborhood."[88] This suggests that a broader village or neighborhood sense was present. None of these examples add further details. One of the Greek contracts defines the relation to the neighbors in spatial terms (P.Kell.Gr.30) but carries no indication of religious identity, or of further village life. The neighborhood in documentary papyri is solely used as a collective designator to be included in polite formulaic greetings.[89]

5.2.8 Summary

The self-designators used in the Kellis letters reveal multiple intersecting roles or identities. On the one hand, the authors described themselves and their addressees in terms of kinship, or with phrases indicating their place of residence or village identity, while on the other hand, religious groupness is expressed and constructed in self-designators. The multiplicity of the terminology and the—sometimes ambiguous—way of phrasing reminds us that even

---

[82] P.Giss. III 97 citation from Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 181. Other examples from this collection of women's letters from Egypt, referring to these collectives are P. Wash.Univ. II 106, O.Florida 14, P.Mert. II 81, SB VI 9122, P.Lond. VI 1926, P.Wurzb. 21, SB V 7572, P. Hamb. I 86.

[83] P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (third century) quotation and translation in Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 371. Other examples of the use of this collective are collected in R. Alston, "Searching for the Romano-Egyptian Family," in *The Roman Family in the Empire: Rome, Italy, and Beyond*, ed. M. George (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 152.

[84] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136, mentioning P.Kell.Copt. 41 "with all our people"; P.Kell.Copt. 26 greets "Isi and her people" and in another section, greeting "you and all your people."

[85] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136.

[86] [ⲟⲩ]ⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉϥⲙⲉⲓⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙ̣ⲱ[ⲧ]ⲛ̄ P.Kell.Copt. 29.19.

[87] Ϣⲓⲙⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧⲣ̣ⲁⲟⲩⲏ P.Kell.Copt. 36.40, 39.5, ⲣ̄ⲣ̣ⲉⲟⲩⲏⲧⲟⲩ 71.31 ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲏ 77.4, ϣⲓⲙⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲧⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ̣ 85.8 and 96.28

[88] [ϯϣⲓⲙⲉ ⲁⲣⲟ] ⲧⲟⲛ̣ⲟⲩ ⲛ̣ⲧⲟ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣̄ ⲛⲁⲡ[ⲏⲓ ⲧⲏ]ⲣ̣ⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲧⲣ̣ⲁⲟⲩⲏ P.Kell.Copt. 39.5

[89] The authors could have considered these collectives to have had a religious identity, but our papyri never combine explicit religious language with these collectives.

the most religiously involved individuals were also fathers, neighbors, and coworkers. The self-designators associated with the household and the village show that these people worked with a broader social imaginary that was not always equally affected by the totalizing fiction of the claim associated with religious groupness.[90] I take this as an indication against Peter Brown's insistence on a strong sectarian groupness of "spiritual solidarity of unusual force."[91] Although self-designators such as "children of the living race" and "good limb of the Light Mind" certainly revealed religious groupness, they do not imply a social imaginary in black and white only, nor do they show a high antagonistic tension toward the world. Rather, the frequent use of other designators reveals that individuals worked with a broad spectrum of social identifications.

Regarding the level of Manichaeanness that these self-designators reveal, a distinction is visible between labels with a direct parallel in Manichaean doctrinal and liturgical texts and those that seem to have derived from a shared Christian and Manichaean repertoire, but were developed beyond what was common in these texts. The latter category, without direct correspondence in liturgical texts, included the fascinating "those who give rest," an expression whose connotation with the Manichaean ideal of rest could not be proven without a doubt, while "limb of the Light Mind" or "children of the living race" were strongly connected to the in-group repertoire of Manichaeans. This creativity was most intense, and most explicit, in the letters of the elect, whose flattery-and-fundraising purpose lay behind some of the more elaborate terminology.

5.3 Excurse: Did Manichaeans Call Themselves Christians?

In many of the previous pages, I compared Manichaean letters and Ancient Christian letters. The observed similarities can easily be explained away, as many scholars have come to understand Manichaeism as a trajectory of Ancient Christianity.[92] Similarity is, therefore, often taken as the result of sameness or a common origin, as Samuel Lieu stated about the Manichaeans of Kellis: "[They] were *the* Christians in the Dakhleh Oasis."[93] But can this be true? Did Manichaeans call themselves Christians and, if so, are we to adopt this self-designation?

Nils Arne Pedersen has recently reevaluated Manichaean self-designators and concluded, partly on the basis of Kellis documents, that some Manichaeans in the Latin West considered themselves to be Christians, but the name "Christian" was almost never used as an autonym (insider name) by Egyptian Manichaeans. Only two fragmentary Coptic passages seem to have used ⲛⲭⲣⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ or ⲛⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ as designator (Hom. 72.9 and 1 Keph. 105, 258.29).[94] Both passages, however, are elusive and at least one may in fact designate non-

---

[90] On the totalizing fiction of narratives and labels, see M. R. Somers, "The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach," *Theory and Society* 23 (1994): 610, 624, and passim.

[91] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 159.

[92] Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof*, 6-12; Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," 279-95; Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 15-18.

[93] Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 224 his emphasis. A similar statement is made by Gardner, who takes the Kellis finds to evidence "Manichaeans there regarded themselves as the true and holy church."

[94] Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 189-90.

Manichaean Christians. The other passage used ⲛⲭⲣⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ with an ⲏ instead of an ⲓ, just like in Mani's title as apostle of Jesus Christ (spelled as ⲡⲉⲭⲣⲏⲥⲧⲟⲥ) and Alexander of Lycopolis's description of the vowel change by Manichaeans (Hom. 72.9).[95] Pedersen halfheartedly suggests that this alternative spelling may have designated Manichaeans specifically, but concludes that there is "no clear evidence for any use of the name 'Christian' as an autonym" among them.[96]

Moreover, in contrast to Manichaeans in the Latin West, Manichaeans in Egypt never used "Manichaean" as a label. The one exception is a *Kephalaia* chapter that seems to suggest that Mani called his disciples "with my name" (ⲙⲡⲁⲣⲉⲛ 1 Keph. 105, 259.11–13), but this practice is unattested in Coptic Manichaean texts.[97] Instead, they used names like the ones we have encountered in the Kellis letters: "the elect and catechumen," "the holy church," "the righteous," and the "children of the living race" (see appendix). This may affect the academic classification of the Manichaeans, but for now it stands against the otherwise stimulating argument by Richard Lim that "the people whom we have grown accustomed to calling Manichaeans mainly represented themselves as Christians."[98] I rather think that within the Manichaean tradition, various positions were taken in relation to Christianity, either intensifying Christian elements, or downplaying these features in favor of a distinct identification as a new religious movement. This latter process has been detected in the redaction process and stages between Mani's *Epistles* and the *Kephalaia*, but this remains to be studied in more detail.[99]

The self-designators used in the Kellis letters, as discussed above, attest to a vision of community life in which the Manichaeans belonged together, grouped together as "limbs" or "members." Just like in the Medinet Madi documents, this collective is commonly referred to as the "church." In two Kellis letters, Manichaeans designated their communal body as "the holy church" (ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 31.2–3 and 32.1–2), while the phrase "catholic church" was reserved either for other (Nicaean?) Christians or the most important church building of the village. The differentiation with the "catholic church" might have indicated a differentiation between Christians and Manichaeans, parallel to the crystallization of religious difference in the redaction of the *Kephalaia,* placing the Manichaeans in a separate-but-related category. On the other hand, the label "catholic church" is only used as designator in Greek contracts (P.Kell.Gr. 24.3, 32.21, 58.8). Nowhere are "the holy church"

---

[95] Alexander of Lycopolis conclude they did not know Christ, but only added new meaning by calling him "chrestos" (good). See *Contra manichaei opiniones disputation* 24, translated in Van der Horst and Mansfeld, *An Alexandrian Platonist against Dualism*, 91-92.

[96] Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 192.

[97] See the evaluation of Böhlig's argument and reconstruction in Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 191. In another passage, there is another questionable restoration suggesting the use of the name "Manichaeans" (1 Keph. 271.15 in the reading of Böhlig, but this is not followed by Pedersen and Gardner). Böhlig, "Zum Selbstverständnis des Manichäismus," 325.

[98] Lim, "Nomen Manichaeorum," 147. See chapter 8 on the place called "topos Mani" in the KAB.

[99] Gardner, "Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," 147-58; Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 191-3. Their main example is the use of "apostle of Light" as Mani's title in the *Kephalaia*, instead of "Apostle of Jesus Christ."

and the "catholic church" used in opposition, nor is there any trace of local polemic against the "non-holy" or polluted church. As Ewa Wipszycka has argued, the label "catholic" (καθολική) could also designate the most important church building of the village.[100] In the specific case of Kellis, I suggest that it refers to the Large East Church, which could be distinguished from the Small East Church and the West Church through this phrase.

In sum, the Manichaeans of Kellis might have considered themselves as Christians, but they never explicitly called themselves ⲛⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ. The differentiation between the "holy church" and the "catholic church," moreover, might have reflected some sort of distinction between Christians and Manichaeans, but was never really used to highlight religious difference within the village. The main point is not this tentative differentiation, but the relatively ambiguous nature of most of the self-designators discussed above: the Kellites used many different words to designate their Manichaeanness, but they never felt the need to spell it out in the terminology that we are familiar with. Self-designators used by Kellites cannot indisputably support the hypothesis of a Manichaean self-identification as Christians.

5.4 Coptic as a Community-Specific Language

As may be clear by now, Manichaeism is not something the authors of the Kellis letters talked about frequently. The few instances in Chapter 4 where authors explicitly discussed Manichaean practices have to be supplemented by the instances in which Manichaeanness was activated as a disposition that intermittently informs the subject of the letter. This way of talking *with* Manichaeism homes in on the question of when Manichaeanness resonated in linguistic choices.[101] Expressions like "whose name is sweet in my mouth" (ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ ϩⲁⲗϩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲣⲱϊ, P.Kell.Copt. 37.3–4) are not directly related to Manichaeism, but are only attested in a Manichaean context. This may have been the result of linguistic choices affected by the involvement in so-called communities of practice. In sociolinguistics, "communities of practice" constitute norm-supporting and norm-constructing networks centered on a shared practice, like going to the same church or working in the same factory.[102] Linguistic variation becomes something that can be picked up at the workplace, rather than a feature correlating with someone's gender, social background, or education. In this approach, language use is

---

[100] E. Wipszycka, "Καθολική et les autres épithètes." On the increasingly powerful role of the Alexandrian church, see Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*.

[101] The notion of "talking *with* the nation" has been developed in Fox and Miller-Idris, "Everyday Nationhood," 540. See also the situational nature of speech utterances, discussed in P. Brown and C. Fraser, "Speech as a Marker of Situation," in *Social Markers in Speech*, ed. K. R. Scherer and H. Giles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 33-62.

[102] L. Milroy and M. Gordon, *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 119; P. Eckert, *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice: The Linguistic Construction of Identity in Belten High* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000). The correlation with church attendance is discussed in W. Baker and D. Bowie, "Religious Affiliation as a Correlate of Linguistic Behavior," *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 15, no. 2 (2010): 2 with references. Within a network-perspective, new information and innovation occur through weak ties, M. S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360-80; J. Marshall, *Language Change and Sociolinguistics. Rethinking Social Networks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 18-40. I have explored some of these themes and the application of a Social Network Analysis in Brand, "Speech Patterns," 105-19.

not primarily a representation of social categories. Instead, "it sees speakers as constructing, as well as responding to, the social meaning of variation."[103] When a network is close-knit, with frequent interactions between its members, it is highly likely that members' individual linguistic repertoire converges toward a shared in-group language. In these instances, individuals can imply groupness, without talking about the practices that constitute their shared group activity.

The use of Coptic was one of these linguistic in-group practices that stood in marked contrast with the prevalent use of Greek. Coptic was not, as previously assumed, a written version of the vernacular language. It was rather a mixture of Egyptian and Greek that employed a large number of Greek loanwords (roughly 20 percent). The earliest transmitted Coptic texts contain monastic, gnostic, and Manichaean contents, indicating the specific religious connotation of the language in the fourth century.[104] Could it have been a strategic choice to formulate theological texts, liturgical documents, and letters in Coptic? Was the language use in Kellis a social-religious clue?

5.4.1 Coptic Language Variation

"Coptic" designates the system of written Egyptian in Greek characters, with six to eight additional letters derived from Demotic and filled with Greek loanwords.[105] Known in several variations (primarily Sahidic, but also Bohairic, Fayumic, Mesokemic, Akhmimic, and Lycopolitan), the origins of Coptic have been a matter of controversy. The invention and use of Coptic by Christians have been explained, traditionally, as a means for the distribution of the Christian gospel among native Egyptians without command of Greek.[106] More recent research, however, has moved away from this assumption, as the number of Greek loanwords makes it highly unlikely that individuals without Greek would have understood the message. Instead, many scholars consider Coptic a deliberately invented language. Roger Bagnall describes Coptic as "certainly invented, in the third century, with deliberateness" in bilingual literary milieus, and not simply as a representation of their spoken language.[107] This invention started out with earlier language experiments among the traditional temple elite,

---

[103] Eckert, *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice*, 3.

[104] E. D Zakrzewska, ""A Bilingual Language Variety" or "the Language of the Pharaohs"? Coptic from the Perspective of Contact Linguistics," in *Greek Influence on Egyptian-Coptic: Contact-Inducted Change in an Ancient African Language*, ed. P. Dils, et al. (Hamburg: Widmaier Verlag, 2017), 115-53.

[105] Reintges considers Coptic a "new language form" with two parent languages, Greek and Egyptian. C. H. Reintges, "Code-Mixing Strategies in Coptic Egyptian," *Lingua Aegyptia* 9 (2001): 193-237; C. H. Reintges, "Coptic Egyptian as a Bilingual Language Variety," in *Lenguas en contacto: el testimonio escrito,* ed. P. Bádenas De La Peña and S. Torallas Tovar (Madrid: Consejo Superiores De Investigaciones Científicas, 2004), 69-86. This is called into question in Zakrzewska, ""A Bilingual Language Variety,"" 115-53.

[106] Discussed and rejected in E. D Zakrzewska, "L* as a Secret Language: Social Functions of Early Coptic," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Middle Egypt: Al-Minya and Asyut*, ed. G. Gabra and H. N. Takla (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 185-98. Another less popular theory is the Jewish origin of Coptic. L. Depuydt, "Coptic and Coptic Literature," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. A. B. Lloyd (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 733-34.

[107] Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 238. A convincing argument against the assumption that Coptic resembled spoken Egyptian is made in Zakrzewska, "L* as a Secret Language," 189-91.

but the use of Coptic for a wide array of religious texts seems to have been decisive.[108] The institutional strength of Christianity presumably contributed to the prevalence of this new writing system. Even though Coptic and its earlier variants were never exclusively used for Christian texts, the lion's share of the earliest Coptic texts stems from a monastic, gnostic, or Manichaean background.[109] This suggests a marked connection between religious groupness and linguistic variation.

The new Coptic texts from Kellis will shed new light on the debates on the origin—and use—of the Coptic language. No common ground has been reached yet. The sheer size of the corpus and its Manichaean connotation have supported interpretations that allocate the deliberate invention of Coptic to religious circles. For Ewa Zakrzewska, the Manichaeans of Kellis are "well-educated counterculturists" who used literary Coptic to discuss new ideas.[110] She considers this language not only as deliberately invented, but also as a constructed "alternative literary language and prestige variety" for ascetic groups, which set

---

[108] For David Frankfurter, Coptic is the product of the temple priests, many of whom continued in the monastic movement, as "Coptic writing in the era of these texts was for the most part a monastic system," originated in the temples for ritual purposes and systematized for fourth-century Christian literature. Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 259ff. Malcolm Choat, cautiously, pointed to similar connections based on the Demotic and Coptic epistolary formulas. M. Choat, "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters," in *Actes du huitième congrès international d'études coptes*, ed. N. Bosson and A. Boud'hors (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 676. Roger Bagnall and Tonio Sebastian Richter have refuted the first part of this argument, as they argue that Coptic was invented by Christian groups in the widest sense (including Gnostics and Manichaeans), presumably not centralized but by different groups "in every part of Egypt." Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 238-9, building on the work of J. Quaegebeur. Richter, "Coptic Letters," 741; T. S. Richter, "Greek, Coptic, and the 'Language of the *Hijra*'. Rise and Decline of the Coptic Language in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt," in *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman near East*, ed. H. M. Cotton, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 401-46. Previous experiments with Egyptian written in Greek words, including the texts labeled Old Coptic were less systematized and they may point to the existence of "multiple independent developments of full writing systems based on Greek and Demotic signs used complementarily" instead of a single line of transmission between Old Coptic and Coptic. R. S. Bagnall, "Linguistic Change and Religious Change: Thinking About the Temples in the Fayoum in the Roman Period," in *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis*, ed. G. Gabra (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 18. This argument is made in relation to the ostracon from Kellis. I. Gardner, "An Old Coptic Ostracon from Ismant el-Kharab?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 125 (1999): 195-200.

[109] Jacques van der Vliet considers Coptic a parallel language. J. van der Vliet, *Het Koptisch: de taal van de Farao's?* (Nijmegen: Radboud University Inaugural Lecture, 2009). Malcolm Choat argues that a direct connection to monasticism and the Coptic translation of the bible is "too neat." Monasticism "did not create Coptic, and monks were not the first to use it: their contribution to the educational heritage was to consolidate the language rather than to form it." M. Choat, "Language and Culture in Late Antique Egypt," in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Rousseau (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 352, as the vital groundwork was laid by Greco-Egyptian educated elite, concentrated in the Egyptian priesthood.

[110] Her overarching approach is set out in depth in Zakrzewska, ""A Bilingual Language Variety," 115-53. Earlier building blocks include E. D Zakrzewska, "Why Did Egyptians Write Coptic? The Rise of Coptic as a Literary Language," in *Copts in the Egyptian Society before and after the Muslim Conquest: Archaeological, Historical and Applied Studies*, ed. L. Mahmoud and A. Mansour (Alexandria: Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2016), 211-19; Zakrzewska, "L* as a Secret Language," 185-98, the citation is from page 92.

them apart from other readers and writers.[111] When Makarios and Pamour wrote their letters in Coptic, therefore, this might have carried connotations about their religious practice and group affiliation. We will see, however, that the evidence is less straightforward than Zakrzewska suggests.

The majority of the Kellis documents belong to the cluster of Coptic language variations known as L (previously known as A2; geographical associations of these "dialects" are no longer accepted). Specifically, most of the Kellis texts belong to the variety known as L*, while L4, the language of the Medinet Madi documents, is also attested.[112] At Kellis, Mani's *Epistles* (P.Kell.Copt. 53 and maybe also P.Kell.Copt. 54) were written in L*, while three other documents (T.Kell.Copt. 7 and T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 1 and 2) used L4. In between those sides of the spectrum, several personal letters employ variations of L4 or L*.[113] As nearly all authors used this language variant, even though they wrote from different places in the Nile valley, it is most probable that their language use correlated with their social networks back home in the oasis.

The real exceptions to this pattern are the letters written in versions of Sahidic (P.Kell.Copt. 123, 124, 126–128). The content of these letters leads us to believe that they were written by (non-Manichaean) Christians, primarily because they mentioned a "subdeacon," two presbyters, the "good shepherd" (P.Kell.Copt. 124), and the bishop (P.Kell.Copt. 128).[114] Most of these Sahidic texts were found in House 4 and the temple area D/8, while the majority of the L-variation texts derived from House 3. For these reasons, the editors noted: "[T]here is reason to think that the Christian community promoted Sahidic while all Manichaean texts found in Egypt can be grouped in (the admittedly somewhat artificial) dialect family L."[115] This correlation between religious groups and language variations seems to support the notion of community-specific language use: Manichaeans using L-variations in Houses 1–3 and Christians writing in Sahidic variations in House 4. Unfortunately, the

---

[111] Zakrzewska, "L* as a Secret Language," 197. Stephen Emmel has also explained the use of Coptic instead of Greek for the NHC as a conscious attempt to create a "new esoteric-mystical Egyptian wisdom literature," emphasizing the esoteric nature of their literature. S. Emmel, "The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses to the Production and Transmission of Gnostic (and Other) Traditions," in *Das Thomasevangelium. Entstehung - Rezeption - Theologie*, ed. J. Frey, E. E. Popkes, and J. Schröter (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 48, even though he thinks their Coptic is barely comprehensible without Greek. For another discussion on the language of the NHC, see Lundhaug and Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, 94-101.

[112] Differences between the clusters of language variations (or dialects) are discussed in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 90-95; Gardner, *KLT2*, 11-13; See also Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner," 225-7.

[113] These documents include T.Kell.Copt. 2, P.Kell.Copt. 50 with Sahidic type vowels, P.Kell.Copt. 44-48, P.Kell.Copt. 56 with Sahidic features, P.Kell.Copt. 122 which belongs to the broad L-family. This is discussed at Gardner, *KLT1*, xv and 9; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 92-93; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 263-6. There has been some debate on whether or not P.Kell.Copt. 129 contains the variation known as "Old Coptic." Bagnall, "Linguistic Change and Religious Change," 11-19.

[114] The editors note that the latter letter was marked by a large number of Greek loan words and they suggested that "the author was a Christian of substantial education." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 295.

[115] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 264. Discussed earlier at Gardner, *KLT1*, vii; Gardner, *KLT2*, 5.

clear-cut pattern is disrupted by two texts from House 4 in L-variations: a wooden tablet with a Manichaean psalm (T.Kell.Copt. 7) and a personal letter (P.Kell.Copt. 122).[116]

While the language differentiation seems to support Zakrzewska's theoretical argument about the way linguistic variation was shaped by social networks, it cannot bear the entire weight of her reconstruction. In particular, it does not unequivocally support the direct relation between the use of Coptic and the Manichaean group. Not all Coptic letters relate to Manichaeanness, nor can we identify all the Coptic letter writers as belonging to a local Manichaean network. Not all of Pamour's letters were in Coptic, nor is there a clear differentiation in his use of Greek or Coptic for specific recipients (see the following section). The differences between the L- and Sahidic language variations, moreover, are not large enough to classify the one or the other as a "secret language." While it stood out from the common use of Greek, Coptic was used for a wide variety of mundane messages, not exclusively addressed to fellow Manichaeans. Modern linguistic habits in the oasis—in particular from before the introduction of television and radio in the 1980s—exhibit similar variation within a relatively small geographical and societal setting. Manfred Woidich has discerned at least three distinct dialect groups, most of which are now heavily influenced by Egyptian as spoken in Cairo.[117] Rather than conceptualizing Coptic as an in-group language of Manichaeans, I would consider the use of Coptic as a positive act of identification with the complex network in which village identification, kinship, and religious ties came together.

5.4.2 Code-switching Greek and Coptic

Code-switching between Greek and Coptic is visible within sections of personal letters as well as between various letters of an individual author. Pamour and his brothers, for example, wrote in Coptic and Greek to each other (compare P.Kell.Gr. 71 Pamour to Psais with P.Kell.Copt. 64 Pamour to Psais). A Coptic personal letter addressing Psenpsais (?), presumably written by his mother Tehat, contains a Greek postscript by somebody else (P.Kell.Copt. 43), which clearly indicates that the recipients lived and worked in a bilingual context.

In general, letters regarding legal arrangements or administrative duties were written in Greek, while family and household issues were expressed in Coptic.[118] This language distribution is, however, not ubiquitous, as some Greek letters are not fundamentally different from their Coptic equivalents. The family of Titoue (House 2) showcases and challenges the language distribution. Their archive comprised one personal letter in Coptic,

---

[116] This latter letter, moreover, contains prosopographical connections with individuals known from letters in House 3, including Pakous (husband of Chares?), Lammon, Papnoute, and Philammon.

[117] Briefly discussed in Thurston, *Secrets of the Sands,* 334-7; M. Woidich, "Neue Daten aus Dakhla: Ismint in Zentral-Dakhla," In *Between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans: Studies on Contemporary Arabic Dialects,* ed. S. Procházka and V. Ritt-Benmimoun (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2008), 471-481.

[118] Comparative questions about the relation between language variation and social identifications have been explored by Brubaker et al., *Everyday Ethnicity*, 239-64, which points to the asymmetry of bilingual practices at Cluj.

one in Greek, and several administrative documents in Greek.[119] The personal letters in Coptic and Greek (P.Kell.Copt. 12 and P.Kell.Gr. 12) relate to the same situation of Shamoun's son Titoue in the monastery. The Coptic letter is written by grandfather Titoue to his son Shamoun, while the Greek letter is Shamoun's answer to his father. The specific choice of Greek or Coptic may have been caused by social factors other than religious group norms, like the availability of a Coptic scribe.

Another type of language variation is code-switching between Greek introductory formulas and Coptic main bodies of the letters.[120] Frequently, the address on the verso was in Greek, just like the first couple of lines of some of the introductory formulas (in which the addressee and author are mentioned again).[121] In the Makarios archive, the introductory formula is always in Coptic, with one exception—in which the letter switches the formula from Greek to Coptic halfway (P.Kell.Copt. 22, compare 118). The address is in Greek. In contrast to this pattern, the two letters by members of the elect (P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32) contained no address and were written entirely in Coptic. One reason for a Greek address could be the reading abilities of the letter carrier, in which case we could speculate about the delivery process of the letters of the elect. Many of the other letters contained not only opening formulas in Greek, but also Greek closing formulas (P.Kell.Copt.11, 12, 21, 22, 24, 26, 33, 34, 36, 38, 43, 44 (?), 52, 65, 75, 84, 92, 94, 95, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108, 112, 113, 116). The location of these Greek formulas on the page suggests that they may have been prefabricated, as their position at the bottom of the page does not correspond to the end of the letter. They could have been written by the scribe in the most suitable place on the papyrus, before the author (or the scribe) continued to write the main body of the letter in Coptic.[122] A default Greek model is thus filled with Coptic content, making code-switching to Coptic a marked option.

Zakrzewska considers Coptic not only an in-group language developed within social networks, but also a countercultural prestige language.[123] Large collections of Coptic texts, such as the Nag Hammadi Library or the impressive Medinet Madi Psalmbook, seem to support this position. Most Manichaean liturgical texts found at Kellis, moreover, were written in Coptic. A new literary language such as Coptic could well have reinforced feelings of exclusivity and exoticness about the content of these texts. The personal letters from Kellis,

---

[119] Discussed in S. J. Clackson, "Coptic or Greek? Bilingualism in the Papyri," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 91.

[120] R. S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 80. Considers this "striking," but it is relatively common in other languages. P. Muysken, "Mixed Codes," in *Handbook of Multilingualism and Multilingual Communication*, ed. P. Auer and L. Wei (Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 2007), 321 calls this "alternational code mixing."

[121] See the observations of the editors, Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 24-25, 93-94; M. Choat, "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis, Volume 2, by Iain Gardner, Anthony Alcock, Wolf-Peter Funk," *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2016.07.24 (2016); Choat, "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters," 671. M. Choat, "Early Coptic Epistolography," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 153-78.

[122] Choat, *Belief and Cult*, 26-27; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 233.

[123] Zakrzewska, "Why Did Egyptians Write Coptic?," 216.

on the other hand, contain no trace of these traits. Instead, they show the early application of Coptic for domestic purposes.[124] While other early Coptic letters came from a monastic context (for example those in the cartonnage of the NHC), the Kellis letters derive from households, dealing mostly with everyday issues and concerns. They are not directly used for the communication of countercultural ideas. The use of Coptic in personal letters is, therefore, hardly flamboyant, even though it is markedly different from the majority of the personal letters on papyrus in this period.[125] It is precisely the relative absence of explicit religious markers or prestigious countercultural notions that makes it difficult to discern the Manichaean background of some of these letters. Most letters in the corpus are related to people who shared overlapping social ties. The business content of P.Kell.Copt. 94, for example, shows no indication of religious commonality, nor can we use the choice for a particular variation of Coptic to identify the author (or scribe) with the Manichaean community. It is perfectly possible that this letter was written to Kellites without Manichaean affiliation. The use of Coptic, then, did not solely correlate with a clearly demarcated religious group, but with a local social network of family, village, and religious connections.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter started with the idiosyncratic language use of one individual: Orion. By examining some of the self-designators in the Kellis letters, I have aimed to identify the social imaginary or social map of these individuals, in particular because of the postulated "sectarianism" of the local Manichaean community. The overall picture that emerges from the self-designators in the documentary papyri suggests that the authors saw themselves as part of a somewhat coherent network of affiliated brothers and sisters. The relations in this network were modeled after, and frequently addressed as, family and kin, ranging from "brothers" and "mothers" to "those of the neighborhood" or "those of the household." Many of these designators carried an unmarked tone, indicating nothing more than the actual kinship of those living under the same roof. At the same time, some of the self-designators were expanded in meaning to include fellow Manichaeans, with more or less explicit phrases.

One function of religiously motivated kinship terminology was performative, to frame the relation between author and recipient in the normative Manichaean ideology of gift exchange. Expectations about the support of catechumens were alluded to in the letters of the elect. Some of the authors discussed the Manichaean church in terms of one single family or race, in which "daughters" were expected to support their "fathers." These kinship designators served fundraising purposes. Apart from these specific situations, in which

[124] See the lists of Coptic letters in Choat, "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters," 667-78. Note Bagnall's characterization, "it is prudent to suppose that the nonliterary use of Coptic was largely monastic in the fourth century and only gradually acquired a larger public." Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 257 (which was published before the publication of the Kellis documents).

[125] Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 238; Choat, "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis, Volume 2" points out that few Coptic texts have been found at Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis) and the Kharga Oasis. Although this may change in the future, it shows that the use of Coptic was not widespread in the oases.

family expectations and obligations were transferred into the fictive religious kinship relationship, the repetition of the image of the "living family" in letters of the elect contributed to the social imaginary of Manichaeans. It conveyed a basic meaning of structured social relations and corresponding obligations. Additional modifications, such as "daughters of the faith," "daughters of the Light Mind," or "children of righteousness," made these designators stand out from other politeness strategies.

The more explicit self-designations reveal how the authors of the Manichaean letters considered themselves and their addressees as part of a distinct category of people, designated with various honorary designators. These includes phrases like "children of righteousness," "worthy member," "children of the living race," and "the holy church." Most of these self-designators carry the sense of privilege or separateness, but none carries a strong antagonistic meaning. In the modern edition of the letters, these phrases are considered as "sectarian" or indicating "sectarianism," but on a more fundamental level these designators belonged to the social practice of (group-)identification in general, articulating a distinctive group identity.[126] While I cannot exclude the possibility that these designators resulted in intense feelings of commonality, as Peter Brown suggests, it is more telling that most authors did not use these expressions. In fact, the most marked phrases come from the letters of the elect, rather than from those of the catechumens. The widespread use of kinship terminology in all letters was not primarily the result of strong groupness, but also belonged to the common speech norms of polite village relations.

Within this context, self-designators were attempts to encourage or evoke groupness in situations that can be called—with Ann Swidler's terms—settled life. In settled life, most self-understanding was implicit, with no reason for explicit demarcations. Authors pressing for more explicitly articulated group bonds and conceptual maps used more distinct designators, but to draw these distinctions is not necessarily sectarian. We have seen that their articulation of difference was not necessarily antagonistic or elitist, in contrast to what has been argued by Samuel Lieu. In fact, his antagonistic characterization of Manichaeans as a "chosen elite" and their self-understanding as "*the* Christians" cannot be confirmed in the actual Kellis letters, where they never employed self-designators like "Christian" or "Christianity," nor used labels like "the holy church" in direct competition with other (unholy?) churches. The postulated antagonistic stance of Manichaeans appears to be based on theological texts and less on the social practices of everyday life.

The second question that has shaped this chapter concerned the use of Coptic. As the Kellis letters are among the earliest letters written in Coptic, it stands to reason that this must have carried specific connotations. Religiously marked language is mostly found in the Coptic letters, while it is almost absent from their Greek counterparts. This seems to suggest that the use of the Coptic language related closely to religious groupness. It is, however, not possible to establish with certainty what ancient readers would have thought when they noticed the language choice. Despite some tantalizing correlations between language variations, find location, and postulated religious groups, it is most probable that the use of Coptic connoted a wider network of overlapping relations, including family, village, as well

[126] Trebilco, *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament*, 5.

as religious affiliations. There is no reason to assume that all Coptic letters were exclusively written by, or addressed to, Manichaeans.

In light of the aforementioned fundraising purpose of some of the letters, the next chapter will turn to the evidence for gift exchange and the local economy of Kellis, to see where and how Manichaeanness made a difference.

Chapter 6. Tehat's Gifts and Everyday Community Boundaries

> You do not give bread to the hungry, from fear of imprisoning in flesh the limb of your God (Augustine, *Faust*. 15.7).

6.1 Introduction

A continuous stream of donations, gifts, and semicommercial interactions provide the backdrop to most of the personal letters and business accounts from Kellis. Requests for material support, grumpy complaints about lost commodities, and detailed instructions for financial transactions permeate the letters. They provide a rich source of information on the social relations and transactions of an Egyptian village economy. In the Kellis papyri, we find some short snippets on the textile industry, but more often the letters inform us about the inner workings of household economies. Geographically dispersed between the oasis and the Nile valley, families like those of Makarios and Pamour had to depend on long-distance messages to request particular goods to be sent, sold, or given away.

These transactions and gifts are said to have included specific Manichaean alms gifts to the ascetic elect, with the aim of supporting their lifestyle and liberating the Living Soul from its prison in the material world. In fact, it would be difficult to imagine Manichaeism without almsgiving and the associated ritual meal, both of which played an important role in the cosmological narrative and provided the fundamental logic behind the community's regulations. This chapter, however, will challenge this perspective by examining all types of gifts and transactions in the Kellis letters. To successfully juxtapose lived religious practice with institutional or rationalized religious prescripts, section 6.2 will discuss voluntary poverty and almsgiving in Christian as well as Manichaean sources. After analyzing five types of giving in section 6.3, the impact of the geographical distance on the relationship between elect and catechumens in Kellis and the evidence for a daily ritual meal will be examined in sections 6.4 and 6.5. In the conclusion of this chapter, I will return to the role of giving in the construction of a Manichaean group identity. We will see that despite the strongly religious themes in some of the fundraising letters, the majority of the gifts and transactions were relatively mundane, never fully corresponding to the normative expectations or ideology of rationalized religion. Instead, the role of Manichaeanness in everyday life was fundamentally affected by the specific social and geographical circumstances of the Dakhleh Oasis. This down-to-earth sketch of gift relations will, in the end, also support my claim that this community was far less "sectarian" than previously suggested.[1]

---

[1] Elements from this chapter have been published in a different context as M. Brand, "'You Being for Us Helpers, and Worthy Patrons...' (P.Kell.Copt 32). Manichaean Gift-Exchange in the Village of Kellis," in *Women in Occidental and Oriental Manichaeism: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at Paris Sorbonne, Paris, June 27-28, 2014*, ed. M. Franzmann and M. Scopello (Leiden: Brill, Forthcoming). A similar observation about the blending of networks of care is made by Eduard Iricinschi, in his conference paper

6.2 Almsgiving and Voluntary Poverty within the Manichaean Ideology of Giving

The Manichaean ideology of giving cannot be understood without the context of Roman patronage and the novel Christian emphasis on voluntary poverty. In both of these systems, gifts generated the obligation for the recipient (whether supernatural of human) to give in return.[2] Christian bishops benefited from patronage ties to establish themselves as leader figures of importance. Christian thought, at the same time, was responsible for the changing expectations of these imperial and urban elites. They "came to see themselves as obliged to establish relations, through gifts of money and the provision of services, no longer to a clearly defined and overwhelmingly urban nucleus of their fellow citizens, but to the less exclusive category of the poor, in town and country alike."[3] Peter Brown's work on the role of the bishop and the new Christian discourse on poverty and wealth has shown the "rich imaginative humus" beneath the transformation of late antique gift relations.[4] Three themes stand out: (1) the emphasis on redemptive almsgiving; (2) the mediating role of the church; and (3) the social and discursive tensions surrounding the balance between manual labor and voluntary poverty. Manichaeans worked with all three of these themes, even though their social and theological logic was often firmly reconceptualized and rearticulated within a Manichaean framework.

First, redemptive almsgiving was a central theme in late antique Christian sermons, which urged the rich to give away their wealth and thereby invest in heavenly treasures. Alms were understood as religious gifts to God, who would repay the gracious giver.[5] In the New Testament gospels, where the ideal of anonymous and selfless giving is explored in various sayings and parables, the message was often combined with one of heavenly reward

---

"'God bears witness that I have been sick for three months' (P.Kellis Copt. 82): affliction and therapy in the Kellis Manichaean community," September 12, 2017, International Association of Manichaean Studies Conference in Turin.

[2] M. Mauss, *The Gift* (London: Routledge Classics, 2002). Various types of gifts in antiquity are discussed in the contributions to M. L. Satlow, ed. *The Gift in Antiquity* (Chichester: John Wiley & Son, 2013).

[3] P. Brown, "The Study of Elites in Late Antiquity," *Arethusa* 33, no. 3 (2000): 338.

[4] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, xxv. His earlier work on this theme includes, P. Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (London: University Press of New England, 2002). More recent contributions are Brown, *Treasure in Heaven*. P. Brown, "Wealth, Work and the Holy Poor: Early Christian Monasticism between Syria and Egypt," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (2016): 233-45. Brown's perspective on gift giving is discussed in I. F. Silber, "Neither Mauss, nor Veyne: Peter Brown's Interpretive Path to the Gift," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. M. L. Satlow (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 202-220. At the same time, it should be pointed out that Christian modes of giving (in particular when connected to discourse about charity) did not replace previous civic modes of giving (like patronage or euergetism). These two modes blended into a type of "civic Christianity" in action, see M. R. Salzman, "From a Classical to a Christian City. Civic Euergetism and Charity in Late Antique Rome," *Studies in Late Antiquity* 1, no. 1 (2017): 65-85.

[5] This is for example set out in Leo the Great, sermon 10.4, cited in B. Neil, "Models of Gift Giving in the Preaching of Leo the Great," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 18, no. 2 (2010): 225-59. In a similar way, John Chrysostom's advocacy of almsgiving has been reconsidered as belonging to the discourse of identity-formation. S. Sitzler, "Identity: The Indigent and the Wealthy in the Homilies of John Chrysostom," *Vigiliae Christianae* 63, no. 5 (2009): 468-79.

for earthly charity.[6] The Gospel of Matthew, for example, urged its readers to "go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven" (Mt. 19.21 NIV, cf. Mk.10.21, Lk. 18.22). Ecclesiastical authorities repeated the biblical promise of "treasures in heaven" and reconceptualized charitable giving within a cosmological debt relation. Humanity, indebted to God for his gracious gift(s), could repay him (in part) through alms given to the church.[7] The prayers of either the poor or the voluntary poor with an ecclesiastical or ascetic position could, in turn, open a channel of divine forgiveness for the donor. Manichaeans, as we will see, made use of this notion of redemptive almsgiving in their theological texts, and one of the letters from Kellis alluded to this specific passage of the Gospel of Matthew.

Second, as God's blessing materialized through the hands of man, the church received a mediating role. As the traditional civic euergetism gave way to a Christian ideology of charitable giving to the poor (not defined through their civic status but by their need), wealthy donors were asked to give to the church, so that the church could support the poor in the community.[8] The third-century Syrian *Didascalia Apostolorum*, for example, admonished laity to bring their alms to the altar and leave the redistribution to the bishop.[9] Apart from centralizing power in the hands of the bishops, this mechanism imposed a widening of the conceptual polarity between the rich and the poor.[10] Where the traditional civic patronage structure led to unilateral dependency and asymmetrical power relations, the Christian rhetoric pauperized the poor, which led to the incorrect impression of starkly

[6] Some tension existed between the two poles of selfless giving and the expectation of (heavenly) rewards, which has led major philosophers to argue against the very existence of "interest-free" gifts. J. Derrida, *Given Time 1. Counterfeit Money* (Chicago: Chicago University Press), 6-31. This tension or inconsistency in Early Christian literature is for example visible in the parable of the banquet (Lk. 14), the commandment to give anonymous and expect no reward from man (Mt. 6) and the message of heavenly reward for earthly charity (as Mt. 25 the division of the sheep and the goats).

[7] L. Canetti, "Christian Gift and Gift Exchange from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages," in *Gift-Giving and the 'Embedded' Economy in the Ancient World*, ed. F. Carlá and M. Giori (Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, 2014), 337-51; D. Downs, "Redemptive Almsgiving and Economic Stratification in 2 Clement," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 19, no. 4 (2011): 493–517; C. Osiek, *Rich and Poor in the Shepherd of Hermas: An Exegetical-Social Investigation* (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1983); S. R. Holman, *The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[8] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 528 and passim.

[9] Cited and discussed in Brown, *Treasure in Heaven*, 24-25. Late antique Christian authors have emphasized the philanthropic activity of the bishops, see Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 349-53.

[10] As Brown noted, it caused "a potentially acute conflict between support of the 'poor' and the support of the 'ministering poor', already felt in nuce at a very early stage." Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 23; Neil, "Models of Gift Giving," 225-59. It is noteworthy that this development in rhetoric presented a stark difference between almsgiving and euergetism, while in practice most affluent Christians would have embraced both. P. Brown, "From Civic Euergetism to Christian Giving," in *Religiöser Alltag in der Spätantike*, ed. P. Eich and E. Faber (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013), 26 cites the example of Firmus, who was addressed in one of Augustine's letters but also had his name carved out in a seat of the amphitheater of Carthage.

increasing poverty in the later Roman Empire.[11] The significance of Christianity for the development of gift-giving is therefore twofold: it changed the discourse about poverty and prompted the establishment of institutions of organized charity.[12]

A third observation relates to the two diverging attitudes toward giving and manual labor within Ancient Christian traditions. On the one hand, there were itinerant ritual specialists and ascetics who rejected manual labor and claimed to depend on God for their daily survival,[13] while on the other hand, a strong ideology of manual labor was developed in the cenobitic monastic tradition from Egypt. Itinerant religious specialists were criticized by representatives of the latter tradition for their blatant requests for support. Hostile accounts with negative stereotypes of money-grubbers and tricksters convey the tension between Egyptian monastic authors and the ascetics who did not adhere to their ideology of manual labor.[14] Monastic literature rejected wandering, begging, and monks, and contrasted them with a positive valuation of the manual labor done in cenobitic monasteries.[15] The terminology associated with this "third type of monk," either called *remnuoth*[16] or *sarabaitae*, cannot be equated with specific forms of asceticism, since it was primarily a rhetorical category.[17] It included those who "refuse to subordinate themselves to anyone," wander, and

---

[11] Z. A. Crook, "Fictive Giftship and Fictive Friendship in Greco-Roman Society," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. M. L. Satlow (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons), 61-77.

[12] Inquiries into the beginnings of organized charity are discussed by G. E. Gardner, *The Origins of Organized Charity in Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 5-12; David Seccombe has observed that some scholars seek to demonstrate that "the Christians did it first." D. P. Seccombe, "Was There Organized Charity in Jerusalem before the Christians?," *Journal of Theological Studies* 29, no. 1 (1978): 140.

[13] This tradition was prominent in Syrian monasticism, for example in the *Book of Steps*, where the ascetics had transcended manual labor and claimed to live as angels. Brown, *Treasure in Heaven*, 56-70.

[14] On the position of Paul as a freelance religious expert in the Roman Empire, see Wendt, *At the Temple Gates,* 146-189.

[15] An extreme version of this ideology is espoused by John Cassian, discussed in Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 414-19; D. Brakke, "Care for the Poor, Fear of Poverty, and Love of Money: Evagrius Ponticus on the Monk's Economic Vulnerability," in *Wealth and Poverty in the Early Church and Society*, ed. S. R. Holman (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic), 76-87; D. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks. Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 49 "by the fifth century," Egyptian monks "could be caricatured as having an almost banausic devotion to manual labor." On the reality of manual labor in cenobitic monasteries, see J .E. Goehring, "The World Engaged: The Social and Economic World of Early Egyptian Monasticism," in *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 39-52.

[16] Jerome, *Ep*. 22.34. More literature is found in M. J. Blanchard, "Sarabaitae and Remnuoth. Coptic Considerations," in *The World of Early Egyptian Christianity*, ed. J. E. Goehring and J. A. Timbie (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 49-60; M. Choat, "Philological and Historical Approaches to the Search for the 'Third Type' of Egyptian Monk," in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium*, ed. M. Immerzeel and J. van der Vliet (Leuven: Peeters), 857; M. Choat, "The Development and Usage of Terms for 'Monk' in Late Antique Egypt," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 45 (2002): 17; A. Boud'hors, "SBKopt. III 1314 reconsidéré: une autre attestation des 'solitaires'?," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 14 (2012): 27-32.

[17] Cassian, *Conlat*. 18.4. The translation and interpretation of terminology like *remnuoth* and *sarabaitae* has caused some problems, but Choat suggests that it came from ⲣⲙ̅ⲛ̅ⲟⲩⲱⲧ, "single man" and ⲥⲁⲣⲁⲕⲱⲧⲉ, "wandering" or ⲥⲁⲣⲁⲃⲏⲧ, "one dispersed from a monastery." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 1; J. E.

beg for money.[18] The work of Daniel Canner has shown that this "third type" of asceticism had roots in older, pre-Pachomian ascetic traditions, which lay closer to some of the Syrian ascetic practices.[19] Giving to wandering, begging monks must have been common for some time, but it was considered to be beyond the boundaries of proper ascetic arrangements by the fourth-century monastic establishment.[20]

Let us now look closely at the Manichaean understanding of poverty and the practice of almsgiving in relation to each of these three points. In relation to manual labor, first, the behavior of Manichaean ascetics in Egypt seems to correspond to the rejected third category of monk. The ascetic lifestyle of Manichaean elect was sustained by the gifts of lay people, while they themselves had to abstain from a large number of everyday practices. The alms gifts by catechumens to the elect comprised the central interaction between the two regimes of the Manichaean community, which Peter Brown described as "an exceptionally high-pitched version of the spiritual exchange between its leaders and the rank and file."[21] The symbiotic relation between the two regimens was explored in and regulated by many Manichaean texts from various regions. In the western Manichaean tradition, the *Kephalaia* described giving as one of the first tasks of the catechumenate, alongside prayer and fasting (1 Keph. 80). Gifts to the elect have to be given "in righteousness" (ϩⲛ̄ ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ[ⲩⲛⲏ]) so that "catechumen who does this will be in partnership with them."[22] The elect, often portrayed as strangers and wanderers, were to embrace poverty, as one of their psalms urges them to

> let us love poverty and be poor in the body but rich in the spirit. And let us be like the poor, making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing power over the universe. What shall we do with gold and silver? Let us love God: his light is the power, his sage wisdom.[23]

Unsurprisingly, the expectation for Manichaean elect to live in voluntary poverty is well attested in the theological tractates and liturgical texts from Kellis. In one of Mani's *Epistles*

Goehring, "The Origins of Monasticism," in *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 22; The phrase is mentioned twice in Manichaean texts (1 Keph. 98.20 and Hom. 92.2), discussed in W. P. Funk, "Noch Einmal Zu *Remnuoth*," in *Liber Amicorum Jürgen Horn zum Dank*, ed. A. Giewekemeyer, G. Moers, and K. Widmaier (Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie der Universität, 2009), 35-45.

[18] Jerome, *Ep.* 22.34. Translation in Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks*, 7-8.

[19] Wandering, begging ascetics loomed large in the imagination of the Sayings of the Desert Fathers, as outdated ideal which should not be followed any longer by fourth-century monks Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks*, 19-49, where he places the text in the process of conciliating the ideology of solitary withdrawal with the increasing popularity of asceticism and the need for communal stability and accommodation.

[20] *Bohairic life of Pachomius*, 35, cited at Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks*, 45.

[21] Brown, *Treasure in Heaven*, 38. He puts the Manichaeans among the Christian "radical consensus" of third-century Syria.

[22] ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲓⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ⲉ̀ⲣ̣[…..] ⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓⲛ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ 1 Keph. 80, 193.3 and 10-11.

[23] ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉ ⲧⲛⲛ̄ⲧϩⲛⲕⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄[ϩ]ⲙ̣ⲕⲉ ϩⲛ̄ⲡⲥⲱⲛⲁ ⲣ̄ⲛⲁⲟ ϩⲱϥ ϩⲛ̄ⲡⲡⲛ̅ⲁ̅ ⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲧϩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲓϩⲛⲕⲉ ⲉⲛⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲛⲏϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲛⲁⲟ ϩⲱ̣ⲥ̣ ⲉⲛⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲛⲉⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲁϫⲛ̄ⲡⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ [ⲉ]ⲛⲁⲣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲃ ϩⲓϩⲉⲧ· ⲛⲁⲣ̄ⲛⲉⲣⲓ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ· ⲡⲉϥⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲧⲉ ⲧ̣ϣ̣ⲁⲙ ⲧⲉϥⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲛ̄ϩⲓ[ⲧ]
2 PsB. 157.5-10 (modified translation, Allberry translates "possessing power over everything").

(P.Kell.Copt. 53), the community is redefined in terms of voluntary poverty to distinguish them from all the other religious communities of the world. The author (Mani?) wrote: "[Y]ou have become people made better by blessed poverty"[24] and

> you are obliged the more now to perfect the blessing of poverty, by which you will gain the victory over the sects and the world. It is profitable for you to perfect it and be vigilant in it, because (poverty) is your glory, the crown of your victory.[25]

The emphasis on poverty as indicator or sign of community membership is translated into the pressing commandment for the elect to strip themselves of the world (P.Kell.Copt. 53, 82.12) and they are reminded in their psalms that the world will be dissolved (T.Kell.Copt. 2, 98.29).[26] The opposition between earthly wealth and the love of God is further explored in another psalm, of which a version is attested in Kellis. It appropriates a biblical parable (Mt. 6.19): the Psalmist exhorts the catechumens not to "acquire treasure for yourselves upon the earth, the place of moths and thieves," a theme that recurs in one of the fundraising letters of the elect (P.Kell.Copt. 32).[27] Just like other Ancient Christian ascetics, the elect were supposed to abstain from all material wealth and embrace the love of God instead.[28] In one of the letters of the elect, however, instead of praising voluntary poverty, the author praised Eirene, because she had acquired "for herself her riches and stored them in the treasuries that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon."[29] In contrast to the elect, for whom acquiring riches would be a major transgression, Eirene was praised for her wealth. The rhetoric usually associated with voluntary poverty was appropriated by the author of this letter and applied in the framework of giving material riches to the elect.

These liturgical and theological Manichaean texts, then, portray the ideal of voluntary poverty for the elect and the expectation of support through almsgiving by the catechumens, supported with biblical allusions. This relates to the second observation about gift-giving as a redemptive, soteriological practice. In Manichaeism, more than in Christianity, the obligation to give was motivated by a complex belief system about the cosmos, gnosis, and the role of the purified human body. The *Kephalaia* explicitly states that almsgiving leads to the rescue of the Living Soul that "is entangled and bound in the entire universe. For it shall

---

[24] ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲩⲁⲛⲓⲧ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲛⲛ̄ⲧ’ ϩⲛⲕⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 53, 51.6-8.

[25] ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲏ’ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲁϫⲱⲕ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϯⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲡⲛⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲛ̄ⲧ’ ϩⲛⲕⲉ ⲧⲉ̈ⲓ ⲉ̣ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲧϭⲣⲟ’ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲧⲥ’ ⲁⲛⲇⲟⲅⲛⲁ ⲛⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ: ⲥⲣ’ⲛⲁϥⲣⲉ ⲛⲛⲧⲛ̄ ⲁϫⲁⲕⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣⲁ̈ⲥ ⲉⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲧⲥ’: ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲥ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲁⲩ ⲡⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧϭⲣⲟ P.Kell.Copt. 53, 51.11-17.

[26] The Manichaean Psalmbook from Medinet Madi contains many songs praising poverty and including it as one of the honors of the Paraclete (2 PsB. 33.22). In the Psalms of Herakleides, poverty is one of the virtues summed up by the soul, as embraced and received in the process of rejecting sin (2 PsB. 97.31).

[27] ..ⲙⲡ]ⲱⲣϫⲡⲟ ⲉ̣ⲣⲟ ⲛⲛⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲓϫⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲁϩ ⲡⲛ̀ⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧϩⲁ[ⲗⲉ ⲛⲛ̄ ⲛ̄]ⲣⲉϥϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ 1 PsB. 68 98.22-23 = T.Kell.Copt. 2 A2.44ff.

[28] The comparison between the ascetic styles from third-century Syria and fourth-century Egypt is made explicit in Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks*, 75-8 and 120-1.

[29] ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲥ [ϫ]ⲡ̣ⲟ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲥϫⲣⲛⲛⲁ [ⲁⲥ]ϭⲁⲗⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ̣ⲛⲉϩⲱⲣ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲓ [ⲡ]ϫ̣[ⲓ]ⲥ̣ⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲗⲉ ϭⲛ̄ ⲙ̣ⲁ̈ⲓⲧ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥⲧⲏⲥ [ϫ]ⲁϫⲧ’ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ; ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲧⲁ]ⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲏ ⲛⲛ̄ ⲡⲟϩ· P.Kell.Copt. 32.7-13.

be freed and cleansed and purified and redeemed on account of him."[30] The fasting of the elect leads to the purification of the soul. The soul "comes into him [MB: the elect] daily in the metabolism of his food, becomes pristine, and is purified, separated, and cleansed from the mixture with the Darkness that is mixed with it."[31] The liberation of the Living Soul is the key to salvation. Almsgiving was, therefore, central to the Manichaean practice and ritual community.[32] BeDuhn summarized this as follows:

> The Elect compressed their contact with the world, which is problematic for both its profanity and its sacrality, to the single point of ingestion. Their resolution of the problematized world, therefore, was metabolic. The second class [MB: the catechumens] received absolution from the guilt it had incurred in the world by sponsoring these physicians of the cosmos, providing them with the means for their operations, and entering into a partnership with them whose ultimate goal was not only their own liberation, but also the salvation for all life.[33]

In other words, having a separate class of ascetic holy men and women equipped the Manichaean community to liberate the supernatural sparks of Light from their entanglement in the material world. The bodies of the elect were purified because of their ascetic practice, and could therefore separate the Living Soul from the food.[34] This liberation was achieved through a daily ritual meal, which was facilitated by the alms gifts brought by the catechumens. The daily repetition of almsgiving before the meal, therefore, constituted the most important ritual obligation for catechumens. It is repeatedly stressed as a *daily* obligation: "[H]is alms that he gives on every day of the year."[35] Free from its material prison, the supernatural sparks of Light were sent it up to ascent into the world of Light on a daily basis.[36]

---

[30] ⲛ̄ⲧϯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ ⲧⲉⲧϫⲁⲗϫ ⲉⲧⲛⲏⲣ ϩ[ⲙ ⲡⲕⲟ]ⲥⲙⲟ̣ⲥ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ϣⲁⲥⲃⲱⲗ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲥⲕⲁⲑ[ⲁⲣⲓⲍⲉ] ⲛⲥⲧ̣ⲩⲃ[ⲟ] ⲛ̄ⲥⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ϥⲗⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲥⲉ 1 Keph. 115, 277.8-10 (modified translation).

[31] ϯⲩⲩⲭⲏ ⲉⲧⲛⲏⲩ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ [ⲁⲣ]ⲁϥ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲓⲕ[ⲟⲛⲟ]ⲙⲓⲁ ⲛⲧϥⲧⲣⲟⲫⲏ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏⲛⲉ ϣⲁⲥⲧⲟⲩⲃⲟ ⲛⲥ[ⲕⲁ]ⲑⲁⲣⲓⲍⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲥⲱⲧϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲥ[ⲉⲓⲱ]ⲉ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ϯⲥⲩⲧⲕⲣⲁⲥⲓⲥ [ⲙ]ⲡⲕⲉⲕⲉ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϫϯ̄ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲛⲉⲛⲉ̣ⲥ̣ 1 Keph. 79, 191.16-19. See the interpretation of BeDuhn BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 169-79.

[32] J. J. Buckley, "Tools and Tasks: Elchasaite and Manichaean Purification Rituals," *The Journal of Religion* 66, no. 4 (1986): 399-411.

[33] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 208.

[34] In fact, the elect were not only purified by their ascetic practice, but by their observation of the Manichaean rules, which was aimed at the stimulation of the New Man, through the power of the Light Mind, and the rejection of negative vices that seek to dominate the body. Lieu, "Manichaeism," 230.

[35] ⲧⲉϥⲙⲛⲧⲛ̣[ⲁⲉ ⲉⲧϥ]ϯ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲥ ϩ[ⲛ̄] ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲁⲛⲡⲉ 1 Keph. 91, 233.15-16. Cf. 1 Keph. 79, 191.29, 32 and 81 194.8.

[36] The daily ascent of Light is related to the waxing moon, which was believed to contain all the liberated light. See 1 Keph. 65, 69, and 122. Kosa, "The Manichaean Attitude to Natural Phenomena," 258-9. It is important to note the parallels not only with the Christian tradition(s) but with Zoroastrianism, in which the yasna is still the most important ritual meal. BeDuhn, "Eucharist or Yasna?," 14-36; A. Hultgård, "Ritual Community Meals in Ancient Iranian Religion," in *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, ed. M. Stausberg (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 367-88.

The salvation of the cosmos by liberating the Living Soul was not the only result of Manichaean gift-giving. Individuals could also profit more directly from their gifts. In return for their alms gifts and for their exceptional services, catechumens would be released from the cycle of transmigration (1 Keph. 91 and 127).[37] In fact, the *Kephalaia* assures them that their alms gift "becomes an intercessor (ⲟⲩⲣⲉϥⲥⲁⲡⲥⲡ) for you and causes you to be forgiven a multitude of faults"[38] and the Psalmbook speaks of alms like chariots or horses, bringing salvation in full speed (2 PsB. 111.25). The daily prayers also reflect this reciprocity in the final stanza, where "the righteous" are praised for having overcome all evil (most probably to be interpreted as the Manichaean elect, πάντας δικαίους P.Kell.Gr. 98. 97).[39] In return for worship and glorification, the prayer expresses the expectation of supernatural blessing and release from the chains and torment of reincarnation (P.Kell.Gr. 98. 106-123).[40]

To return to a third point observed above, the mediating role of the elect also leads to the question of whether catechumens experienced the exchange relationship as fair and balanced. A number of passages reflect critically on the transfer of guilt and sin embedded in the exchange relation. Some outsider sources report polemically about the hypocritical attitude of the Manichaean elect. An anonymous papyrus containing a polemical account of an Egyptian Church leader (P. Ryl. Gr. 469) insinuated that the elect transposed their sin unto the catechumens by secretly uttering a prayer over the donated bread: "Neither have I cast it (sc. the bread) into the oven: another has brought me this and I have eaten it without guilt."[41] In this way, the elect would transfer the responsibility for the (agricultural) transgression against the Living Soul to those who donated the food. This apology of the bread (also known from the polemical works of Hegemonius and Cyril of Jerusalem) is not the only text accusing the elect of hypocrisy.[42] Augustine shared the same understanding of the ritual exchange and points out his unease about how "the injuries your auditors inflict upon plants are expiated through the fruits which they bring to the church."[43]

Not only outsiders thought about this apparent inconsistency; the *Kephalaia* addressed it as well. In one of the chapters, a catechumen asks whether he caused a wound by his practice of alms offering to the holy ones (1 Keph. 93). The short answer is yes, but the longer answer exonerates him from any sins, because through the practice of almsgiving rest and life is brought. The catechumen is described as a physician who may cure a wound with

---

[37] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 198-9.

[38] Ⲱ[ⲁ]ⲥ̅ⲣ̅ⲟⲩⲣⲉϥⲥⲁⲡⲥⲡ ϩⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ ⲛⲥⲧⲣⲟⲩⲕⲱ ⲛⲏ[ⲧⲛ ⲁ]ⲃⲁⲗ ⲛⲟⲩⲏⲏϣⲉ ⲛ̀ϫⲣⲁⲡ 1 Keph. 93, 238.27-28 (translation modified).

[39] On the use of this terminology, see F. Bermejo-Rubio, ""I Worship and Glorify": Manichaean Liturgy and Piety in Kellis' Prayer of the Emanations," in *Practicing Gnosis*, ed. A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J. D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 253-4.

[40] I. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis: A New Understanding of the Meaning and Function of the So-Called *Prayer of the Emanations*," in *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, ed. J. A. van den Berg, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 253n16 referring to Keph. 115.

[41] P. Ryl.Gr. 469.24-26, cited from Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 23.

[42] AA, 10. Cyril of Jerusalem's sixth catechetical lecture, cited and discussed in BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 131-2.

[43] Augustine, *Mor. Manich*. 61, cited in BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 130.

the knife that has caused the wound in the first place.[44] The transgression is forgiven "because of his fasting and his prayer and his alms."[45] The apparent inconsistency, so visible for outsiders and modern scholars, was presumably solved by the differentiation in regulations between elect and catechumens, allowing the latter to conduct agricultural activities without breaking the rules.[46]

Following this line of reasoning, Manichaean catechumens were encouraged not only to give food alms but also to invest all they have in the church. The *Kephalaia* discerns three works of the catechumenate: the first is fasting on the lord's day, praying to the sun and the moon, and almsgiving to the "holy one(s)" (ⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ). The second work is to give a child, slave, or relative to the church. The third work is the construction of a house (ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲏⲁⲛ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ) or place (ⲟⲩⲧⲟ̣[ⲡⲟⲥ]) for the church "so they can become for him a portion of alms in the holy church."[47] Apart from food alms, catechumens were thus instructed to give their time, prayer, children or slaves, as well as their houses to the elect. In Parthian and Middle Persian texts, these gifts are called "soul work" (*rw'ng'n*) and include all obligatory services, including (annual) gifts of clothing, which may have been the source of the psalm singers' claim to have "clothed the orphans."[48] Catechumens who wished to be perfect, in order to reach salvation without transmigration, were urged to devote all their time and property to the holy church (1 Keph. 91, 229.4–10). In these instances, the logic is less focused on the salvation of the Living Soul, and more on providing aid to those who were capable of setting the process of salvation in motion: even inedible alms gave rest and contributed to the eternal life of the donor (1 Keph. 158, 397.12–22).

Whether or not all this was practiced in the fourth century in Egypt is far from certain. Even though we have only scratched the surface of the complexity within Manichaean sources, these liturgical and theological texts bring to the fore how gifts fundamentally shaped the social organization of the Manichaean community and its daily practice. Gift-giving was the implementation of their cosmological narrative in daily life and provided the framework for the differentiation between the two regimens of elect and catechumens. Giving the right objects at the correct time to a very particular group of people under specific circumstances defines the group identity and plays a fundamental role in the salvation of the entire cosmos. The ritual gestures and utterances, as explored by BeDuhn,

---

[44] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 175.

[45] ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲉϥⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲅ̄ ⲡ[ⲉϥϣⲗⲏ ⲙⲛ ⲧⲉϥⲛⲏ]ⲧⲛⲁⲉ 1 Keph. 91, 232.31-233.1, cited and discussed (with a slightly different translation) in BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 199. A similar exposé is found in the, unpublished, Dublin *Kephalaia*.

[46] I note here that this may have worked for some catechumens, but still contains a large inconsistency with the fundamental narrative of the Manichaean religion. Even if catechumens are not explicitly forbidden to be involved in agricultural activity, they would still read or hear about Mani's early adventures in which the earth cried out, while trees and vegetables bled and spoke up to prevent further injuries.

[47] …ⲧⲁⲣⲟⲩⲉ̣̣ϥ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲁⲩⲧⲁ̈ⲓⲉ ⲛ̄ⲏⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ [ϩ]ⲛ̄ ⲧ[ⲉ]ⲕⲕ[ⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ] ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃ[ⲉ] 1 Keph. 80, 193.12-14.

[48] ⲁ̈ϯ ϩⲓⲱⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲟⲣⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ 2 PsB. 175.22. W. Sundermann, "A Manichaean Liturgical Instruction on the Act of Almsgiving," in *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, ed. P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 206 with references. See also BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 135n59 and a similar reference to yearly clothing gifts in the Chinese hymnbook (strophe 260d).

defined each of the intragroup roles publicly in the presence of the entire (local) community. By giving these very particular food alms in a ritualized setting, the donor embraced his or her role in the community. Social psychological research has suggested that gifts impose identities on the giver and recipient. It is a "way of free associating about the recipient in his presence," as it reveals "the idea which the recipient evokes in the imagination of the giver."[49] To give alms was to perform Manichaeanness in semipublic situations, to allow others to recognize you as one of their own.

Gifts are potentially a "way of dramatizing group boundaries."[50] It is therefore no surprise to see Manichaean literature criticizing all other forms of almsgiving. Fish or meat were considered improper, just like undesirable behavior such as drunkenness. The gifts of catechumens had to be without such pollution, as they stood in contrast with the alms given to the "teachers of sin" in the world (ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 144, 348.1).[51] But how might this system have been applied in a village setting in the desert of Egypt? The following section will discuss the documentary papyri from Kellis, which confront us with a quotidian situation in which almsgiving was not entirely absent, but certainly less clear-cut than these prescriptive texts suggest.

6.3 Five Types of Giving in the Kellis Letters

Gifts, commercial exchange, and the transportation of commodities from the Nile valley to the oasis appear frequently in the papyri. Some of these transactions have been interpreted as Manichaean alms gifts.[52] In the following section, the personal letters and business accounts will be scrutinized for various types of gift exchange. Following a modified version of the classification by the anthropologist Hénaff, five types of gifts will be discussed: gifts to the elect, economic interaction, household support structures, charity, and patronage.[53] This

---

[49] B. Schwartz, "The Social Psychology of the Gift," *American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 1 (1967): 2. His examples include gifts related to typical gender roles.

[50] Schwartz, "The Social Psychology of the Gift," 10.

[51] 1 Keph. 144, 346.28-29 on fish and drunkenness, 347.21-24 lists further unclean ingredients as eggs, cheese and poultry. Judgment is ready, moreover, for "the one who takes as much punya-food as a grain of mustard and is not able to redeem it." M6020, cited in BeDuhn, "Digesting the Sacrifices," 314 with other instances of critique on the purity of alms and false preachers. 1 Keph. 87 discussed alms gifts also in contrast with the gifts given in other religious communities, 1 Keph. 166 deals with a presbyter who kept alms for himself.

[52] Among other studies, I note here the interpretation of various letters as "breakdown in communications," revealing the complex and haphazard nature of almsgiving (for example in P.Kell.Copt. 20), in Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 177-81.

[53] Hénaff distinguishes ceremonial gifts, gracious giving and solidarity based gifts, all of which are fundamentally different from economic interactions. I have split the solidarity based gifts into two sub categories, either based on household solidarity or a type of charity (often religiously defined). Both patronage and gifts to the elect, which Silber calls "sacerdotal giving," are ceremonial gifts by the fact that they are public and reciprocal. M. Hénaff, "Ceremonial Gift-Giving: The Lessons of Anthropology from Mauss and Beyond," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. M. L. Satlow (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013), 16; I. F. Silber, "Beyond Purity and Danger: Gift-Giving in the Monotheistic Religions," in *Gifts and Interests*, ed.

modular approach of presenting the material classified into these five types aims to move away from a monolithic notion of Manichaean gift-giving toward a more differentiated picture of the variety of religious and nonreligious gifts and transactions and the interaction between these types of gifts.

6.3.1 Gifts to the Elect

The Manichaean alms gifts and the ritualized meal of the elect have been considered as the background for several passages in the Kellis letters. References to the *agape* have been interpreted as the Manichaean ritual meal,[54] and one of the women, Tehat, has been described as an energetic business woman whose "heart and energy is also with the elect and her religious duties."[55] Other fragmentary passages have also been surmised as related to Manichaean alms gifts. This section will scrutinize some of these passages, to examine how Manichaean almsgiving could take place in a world defined by long desert journeys and despite periods of absence.

The authors of P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32 used explicit and elaborate Manichaean phrases to introduce and frame the requests for material support from anonymous daughters. They stressed their dependence: "[Y]ou being for us helpers, and worthy patrons and firm unbending pillars, while we ourselves rely upon you" and "therefore I beg you, my blessed daughters, that you will send me two *choes* of oil. For you know yourself that we are in need here since we are afflicted."[56] They approached their addressees as "helpers and patrons" (ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ) who supported the author(s) as "beloved daughters" (ϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ), also considered "members of the holy church, daughters of the Light Mind" (ⲛ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕ̣ⲕ̣ⲗ̣ⲥⲓⲁ̣ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ [ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲙ̣ⲡ̣ⲙⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲛⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 31.1, 2–4). These designators indicate that wealthy female catechumens in the oasis were the primary audience of the letter. Although two *choes* of oil was not much (about 6.5 liters), similar requests were probably made more often.[57] If P.Kell.Copt. 31 was used as a circular letter, it could have amassed a larger amount of wheat and oil. We could imagine other women, like Tehat, receiving similar requests.

Eirene, the recipient of P.Kell.Copt. 31, is ordered by a "father" to "do the work and mix the warp until I come."[58] This leads us to believe that she worked in the textile business, just like Tehat and others, producing garments of various sorts. The letter urged her to

---

A. Vandevelde (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 115-32; I. F. Silber, "Echoes of Sacrifice? Repertoires of Giving in the Great Religions," in *Sacrifice in Religious Experience*, ed. A. I. Baumgarten (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 291-312.

[54] See below, section 6.5.

[55] M. Franzmann, "Tehat the Weaver: Women's Experience in Manichaeism in Fourth-Century Roman Kellis," *Australian Religion Studies Review* 20, no. 1 (2007): 23.

[56] ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟ̈ⲓ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥⲣ̄ϣⲉⲩ·ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁ̈ⲓⲧ’ ⲛ̄ⲁⲧⲣⲓⲕⲉ· and [ⲧ̄ⲣⲁ]ϫ̣ⲓⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲙⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ [ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲉⲧⲥⲛⲁⲙⲁⲧ’· ϫⲉ ⲉⲣⲉⲧⲛⲁ[ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ] ⲕ̣ⲟⲩⲥ̣ ⲥ̣ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲛⲏ̈ ⲛ̄ⲛⲛϩ̣· ϫⲉ [ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲥⲁ]ⲩⲛⲉ ϩⲱⲧ’ⲧⲛⲛⲉ· ϫⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄[ⲭⲣⲉⲓⲁ] ⲛ̄ⲛⲛⲁ· ⲉⲡⲓ̣ⲇ̣ⲏ ⲧⲛ̄[ⲗ]ⲁϫ̣ϩ̣ P.Kell.Copt. 31.16-20, 29-33.

[57] Bagnall, *KAB*, 49.

[58] ⲁⲣⲓ ⲡ̣ϣⲱⲃ ⲧ̣ⲉⲙⲟⲩϫⲧ ⲡϣ̣ϯ̣ⲧ̣ ϣⲁϯⲉⲓ· P.Kell.Copt. 32.31-33. Gardner suggests that Theognostos may have been the author of P.Kell.Copt. 32 and 33, but admits the lack of firm evidence. The other letters by Theognostos (from a second volume of documentary papyri) do not immediately confirm his reconstruction, although the handwriting of P.Kell.Copt. 84 is similar. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 136.

continue her work, either for financial reasons or to produce clothing for the elect.[59] The interpretation of this request as soliciting alms is enhanced by the frame of Manichaean phrases, filled with allusions to biblical texts. The instruction to "do the work" (ⲁⲣⲓ ⲡϩⲱⲃ) is repeated a couple of lines further down as "fight in every way to complete the work."[60] The urgency of this task is reinforced by alluding to the biblical parable of the thief who could come at any hour "to dig through the house." In the original biblical narrative, the lack of knowledge on the hour a thief could come is equated with the lack of knowledge on the date of the arrival of the kingdom of God (Mt. 24:42–44 and 1 Thess 5.2). Just like a homeowner needs to be prepared for burglary, a faithful catechumen should be prepared for the kingdom of God. In Eirene's case, mixing of the warp and sending wheat and oil were presented as her preparation for the coming of the kingdom. Other Manichaean phrases in this letter, moreover, connect the biblical passage about treasures in heaven (Mt. 6:19–20) with the notion of the sun and the moon as storehouses of such treasures, as the author writes: "[S]he who has acquired for herself her riches and stored them in the treasuries that are in the heights, where moths shall not find a way, nor shall thieves dig through to them to steal; which (storehouses) are the sun and the moon."[61] In Manichaean cosmology, the sun and the moon are ships of Light that take the released Light from the Living Soul and gather it before its final ascent. By creatively mixing the biblical passage with Manichaean cosmology, the author draws different strands of thinking about gifts together in one plea for faithful and good stewardship.[62]

In these two letters, the elect may have specifically solicited alms. At the same time, there are indications that we are simply dealing with economic interactions without explicit reference to payment. The author of the letter to Eirene indicates that they will meet again and he will "settle our account" (ϣⲁⲧϣ̄ⲣⲁⲡⲁⲛⲧⲁ ⲁⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲧϣ̄ϯ ⲡ̣ϣ̄ⲱⲡ).[63] How this settlement will be achieved is not clear; it seems unlikely that they would have had to pay if the commodities were given as alms. A minimalist interpretation is to consider whether in this situation, gifts to the elect could have been blended with the manual labor of these ascetics. Maybe they shared in a common venture to produce textiles, something that was not uncommon for Egyptian ascetics or monks. Eirene could have worked together with the

[59] Franzmann, "Tehat the Weaver," 24. The active role of women in the oasis and the religious community is discussed more broadly in M. Franzmann, "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis," in *Women in Occidental and Oriental Manichaeism: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at Paris Sorbonne, Paris, June 27-28, 2014*, ed. M. Franzmann and M. Scopello (Leiden: Brill, Forthcoming).

[60] First in line 29-30: "fight in every way" (ⲛⲓϣⲉ ϣ̄ⲥⲛⲁⲧ ⲛⲓⲛ) and later on: "flight in every way to complete the work" ⲛⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲛⲓϣⲉ ϣ̄ϩⲉ ⲛⲓⲛ· ⲁϫⲱⲕ ⲡϩⲱⲃ P.Kell.Copt. 32.40-42.

[61] ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲥ[ϫ]ⲓ̣ⲟ ⲛⲉⲥ ϣ̄ⲛⲉⲥϫⲣⲏⲛⲁ [ⲁⲥ]ϭⲁⲗⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ̣ⲛⲉϩⲱⲣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲓ [ⲡ]ϫ̣[ⲓ]ϫ̣ⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲗⲉ ϭϣ̄ ⲙ̣ⲁⲓ̈ⲧ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ϧ̣ⲛ̣ⲥⲧⲏⲥ [ϫ]ⲁϫⲧ’ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ϣ̄[ⲧⲁ]ⲩ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲏ ⲛϣ̄ ⲡⲟϩ· P.Kell.Copt. 32.7-13.

[62] Franzmann, "An 'Heretical' Use of the New Testament," 155; Franzmann, "The Treasure of the Manichaean Spiritual Life," 235-42.

[63] Crum, *CD*. 527b. ϯ ⲱⲡ, "to give account."

author of this letter, just like Orion worked with Tehat and brother Saren (P.Kell.Copt. 18 and 58).[64]

A number of other letters have been interpreted within the framework of Manichaean almsgiving. Some of these will be reviewed in the next section on economic interactions, as they represent the same ambiguity concerning gifts and economic transactions. One letter that deserves to be discussed is the only Greek letter from Kellis with Manichaean terminology: P.Kell.Gr. 63. Klaas Worp, the editor of the Greek papyri, understood this letter to Pausanias and Pisistratios as a response to their request for a letter of recommendation. The author, probably an important figure who could vouch for their proper Manichaean character and conduct, replied with this elegant Greek letter, praising them for their good reputation and pious character, wishing to "reveal this as much as possible and to extend it through this letter."[65] Although such praise and the reversal of the authority structure of Manichaean patronage underlying this letter resemble the other letters of recommendation (see below in section 6.4), the letter does not contain any of the formal characteristic elements of letters of recommendation. There is no specific request for hospitality, nor is a third party addressed who should offer it.[66] Instead, the author praises the addressees directly, not unlike the introductory sections of P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32. This similarity suggests that P.Kell.Gr. 63 may be read more fruitfully in the context of almsgiving.

Instead of asking for oil and wheat, the author of P.Kell.Gr. 63 stated: "[M]ay you remain so helpful for us as we pray" and "(later) again we benefit also from the fruits of the soul of the pious."[67] These remarks were embedded in the context of other polite phrases, expressing gratitude with fervor: "[O]nly our lord the Paraclete is competent to praise you as you deserve and to compensate you at the appropriate moment."[68] This latter reference to the Paraclete is one of three times this name is mentioned in papyrus letters. All three are Manichaean letters (P.Kell.Gr. 63, P.Kell.Cop. 19, P.Harr. 107), which share this marked

---

[64] Financial interactions are difficult to reconstruct in a large number of letters. See below on Orion, Tehat and brother Saren (P.Kell.Copt. 18 and 58). Struggles with financial interactions are also attested in, for example, a letter to Pshai (P.Kell.Copt. 70). Financial details are discussed with the head of the household (P.Kell.Copt. 82). Other instances mention payment include: for a cloak, paid in terms ("little by little," P.Kell.Copt. 94), or for the repairs of a *collarium* (P.Kell.Copt. 103), and see also the elaborate account and letters including financial details like P.Kell.Copt. 81, 94 and 95.

[65] [Π]ολλῆς καὶ ἀπεί[ρο]υ οὔσης ἔν τε διανοίᾳ καὶ στόμα[τι] ἡμῶν τῆς ὑμε[τ]έρ[α]ς εὐφημίας [β]ούλ[ομαι διὰ] γραμμάτ[ω]ν ταύτην ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐκφᾶναι κ[α]ὶ ἐπεκτεῖναι· P.Kell.Gr. 63.5-9. A reconstruction of the situation in Worp, *GPK1*, 168-9.

[66] The elements of letters of recommendation are explained in C. H. Kim, *Form and Structure of the Familiar Greek Letter of Recommendation* (Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature for the Seminar on Paul, 1972). With a summary in Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 153-4; K. Treu, "Christliche Empfehlungs-Schemabriefe Auf Papyrus," in *Zetesis: Album Amicorum door vrienden en collega's aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. É. de Strycker*, ed. E. de Strycker (Antwerpen: Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1973), 634.

[67] διαμένοιτε ἡμῖν τοιοῦτοι εὐχομένοις P.Kell.Gr. 63.35-36 and ... ἀπολαύ[ο]μεν δ[έ] πάλιν καὶ τῶν ψυχικῶν τῆς εὐσεβοῦς line 22-23.

[68] Μόνος γὰρ ὁ δ[ε]σπότης ἡμῶν [ὁ] π[α]ρ[άκ]λητος \ἱκανὸς/ ἐπαξίως ὑμᾶς εὐλογῆσα[ι] κ[α]ὶ τ[ῷ] δέοντι καιρῷ ἀνταμείψα[σ]θαι. P.Kell.Gr. 63.28-30.

honorific language.[69] Jean-Daniel Dubois has argued that this all points to almsgiving, which may have been the case, since fruit(s) (καρπος) is used in Manichaean literature for the goods produced and given to the elect (see the parables in P.Kell.Copt. 53, 42.24).[70] The author of the letter to Eirene, moreover, used it to describe her shining exemplary behavior (P.Kell.Copt. 32.4–5). In addition, Dubois proposes to restore the word πεκουλιον̣ (pocket money) in line 35, which could have been one of the good deeds for which gratitude is expressed.[71] In Chapter 4, I suggested that one of the addressees of the letter, Pausanias, may be identified as the *strategos* Pausanias, who may have acted as a major sponsor and benefactor of the local Manichaean community.

6.3.2 Economic Interaction

Economic interactions are notoriously difficult to distinguish from other types of gift exchange, as the financial reward or return gift is often not made explicit in writing. Few letters, even those with Manichaean vocabulary, are devoid of economic transactions. Instead of being strictly separated, the various types of gifts and commercial interactions blended. Due to these characteristics, some of the previous interpretations of the Kellis letters have tended to overinterpret the religious aspects, failing to see unmarked and quotidian alternatives.

The preference for a maximalist religious interpretation is visible when we read about a conflict over a cowl given to anonymous "brothers" (ⲛ̄ⲛⲥ̣ⲛ̣ⲏⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 58). The introduction of the letter is lost and therefore it starts halfway a description of a commercial transaction regarding "good cowls, like the one which you (pl.) sent off for me." The author continues to describe the setting:

> You wrote: "if you like it, keep it, or else 1,300 talents."So, I wrote to you that day that I had given it to the brothers. Do you have no news? I will give you its price. Lauti told me: "the one that you (sing.) want I will bring it to you for 1,200 (talents)."(But) I did not take word from [i.e. "make an agreement with," according to the editors of the papyri] him. I said that there is no need. Now, then, will you (pl.) satisfy me in every way?[72]

What happened between the author, probably Orion, and the recipients? According to the editors, the author "has given a cowl as a free gift to some 'brothers'; which probably should

---

[69] If that is one of the characteristics for Manichaean letters, one might wonder whether P.Kell.Copt. 34, which is too fragmentary to read completely, belonged to the same genre. A final shared characteristic is that both P.Kell.Gr. 63, P.Kell.Copt. 31 and 32 refrain from greeting other people in Kellis, which is otherwise a common feature in all Kellis letters.

[70] Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis," 25.

[71] Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis," 25.

[72] [….]…ⲛⲕⲗⲉϥⲧ ⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩⲥ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ⲥϩⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉⲕⲟⲩⲁϣ̄ⲥ̄ ⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲏ ⲛ̄ⲏⲁⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̣ϣⲁⲛⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ϣⲉ ⲛ̄ϭⲛ̄ϭⲱⲣ ϩⲁⲓ̈ⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ϭⲉ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ⲛ̣̄ⲡⲣⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲟ ϫⲉ ϩⲁⲓ̈ⲧⲉⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲥ̣ⲛ̣ⲏⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧ̣ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱ ϯⲛ̣ⲁϯⲥⲟⲩⲛⲧⲥ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲁ ⲗⲁⲩϯ ϫⲟⲥ ⲛⲏ̣ⲓ̈ ϫⲉ ⲡ̣ⲉⲧ̣ⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲟⲩⲁϣϥ ϯⲛⲁⲛ̄ⲧ̄ϥ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲙ̣ⲛ̣̄[ⲧⲥ]ⲛⲁⲩⲥ̣ ⲛ̄ϣ̣ⲉ ⲙ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲓ̣ⲭⲓ ⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲡⲁϫⲉ̈ⲓ̈ ϫⲉ ⲙ̣̄ ϫⲣⲓⲁ ϯⲛ̣ⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲧⲁⲣⲱϣⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲉ ⲛ̣ⲓ̣ⲙ̣ P.Kell.Copt. 58.1-9. See the notes on this translation in A. Boud'hors, "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 2," *Journal of Coptic studies* 18 (2016): 198-99.

be understood as alms given to the local Manichaean elect."[73] The weaving workshop that had sent the cowl to him wrote to him in response that they wanted to have its price. Orion expressed his discontent because he thought to have indicated clearly that it was considered a gift. Moreover, with Lauti he could have had a lower price.[74] As the letter continues with further business transactions, the actual conflict may not have been a major problem.

This raises the question of whether the editors came up with the best interpretation. Does the author not write "I will give you its price" (ϯⲛ̣ⲁϯⲥⲟⲩⲛⲧⲥ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄)? Was there really a gift to begin with or are we led astray by our interpretation of the "brothers"? Instead of Manichaean elect, this term could very well designate close colleagues, relatives, and biological brothers. In the absence of more specific designators, the simplest interpretation is probably the best. The fact that Orion has "given" (ϩⲁϊⲧⲉⲉⲥ) it to them does not necessarily indicate a gift (as in almsgiving) but could also mean that he sold it to them and will give its price to the weaving workshop.[75]

A comparison with another letter of Orion (P.Kell.Copt. 18), in which he addresses Tehat and Hatre concerning similar business issues, is very instructive in this regard. Several types of garment are to be made and dyed and wool has to be bought for at least 2,500 talents. He orders them (?) to "make them weave a cowl for the two children (ⲗⲁⲩ<ⲉ>) of our brother Sa[..]ren, the presbyter (ⲙ̣ⲡⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲁⲛ ⲥⲁ[..]ⲣⲛ̣ⲛ̣ [ⲡ]ⲡⲣⲉ[ⲥ]ⲃⲛⲧⲟⲣⲟⲥ)."[76] The name Saren reappears in the letter cited above (P.Kell.Copt. 58), where it is said:

> These fabrics and these cowls belong to our brother Saren. Now, as he will come, would you be so very kind ... bid (?) Eraklei to write to get them to come to the Oasis; and I shall also go there and see you. He wants the fabrics to make them into jerkins.[77]

For some scholars, this presbyter was clearly a Manichaean dignitary, member of the elect, to whom the cowls had been given as alms gifts, but I cannot find anything to support these conclusions. If my alternative translation is correct (ⲗⲁⲩ<ⲉ> instead of ⲗⲁⲁⲩ), the cowl is

---

[73] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 23.

[74] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 23. This interpretation is followed to the letter by Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 177.

[75] I cannot find any evidence for the connections Franzmann draws to almsgiving, except for a rather maximalist interpretation of the "brothers." M. Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving: Understanding a Universal Religion with Exclusivist Practices " in *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 41.

[76] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ[ⲧ]ⲛ̄ⲣⲟⲩⲥⲉϩ ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲉϥⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲡⲗⲁⲩ ⲥⲛ̣ⲟ̣ ⲙ̣ⲡⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲁⲛ ⲥⲁ[..]ⲣⲛ̣ⲛ̣ [ⲡ]ⲡⲣⲉ[ⲥ]ⲃⲛⲧⲟⲣⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 18.20-22 (translation modified, the edition offers "make them weave a cowl for the double-fringed gown"). For this reading, compare ⲛ̄ⲗⲁⲩⲉ and variations in P.Kell.Copt. 38.4, 40.5, 41.17, 84.3, 94.4, 102.19, 108.30. Crum, *CD*, 141B instead of ⲗⲁⲁⲩ on page 145b.

[77] ⲛⲓϩⲛⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲓ[ⲕⲗⲉ]ϥⲧ̣ ⲛ̣ⲉⲡⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲁⲛ ⲛⲉ ⲥ̣ⲁⲣⲏⲛ ⲉϥⲛⲁϊ ϭⲉ ⲉ[……] ϩⲉⲗϭⲛⲧ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲧⲟ[ⲛⲟⲩ] . ⲥ̣ϩ̣ⲱ̣ⲛ ⲛ̣ⲣ̣ⲁ̣ⲕⲗⲉ̣ⲓ̣ ⲁⲥϩ̣ⲉ̣ⲓ̣ ⲁⲧⲣⲟⲩⲓ̈ ⲁⲟⲩⲁϩ̣ⲉ̣ ⲧⲁ̣[ⲃⲱⲕ ⲁ]ⲙⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛ̣ⲟ̣ ⲁⲣⲱ̣[ⲧ]ⲛ̄ ϥⲟⲩⲱⲱ̣ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲉ ⲁⲥⲙ̣ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ϩⲛ̄ⲑⲱⲣⲁ̣ϫ̣ […..] P. Kell.Copt 58.b21-23 (translation modified). The editors note the alternative interpretation of Livingstone, suggesting a scarf as subject of discussion. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 25; Cf. Bowen, "Texts and Textiles," 18-28.

produced for a non-Manichaean presbyter, as Manichaean elect were not supposed to beget children.[78]

Presbyters in the Kellis papyri are not exclusively Manichaean. Although the letter of the Teacher explicitly addresses this group (P.Kell.Copt. 61), another letter indicates the presence of non-Manichaean presbyters in the village (P.Kell.Copt. 124), while other presbyters are mentioned without indications of either a Manichaean or a non-Manichaean background (P.Kell.Copt. 92). In P.Kell.Copt. 58, Saren is identified as the owner of the fabrics, which he presumably sent to a workshop for repair or as material for new garments. Orion himself operated in this way when he sent fabric to Lautine for a *kolobion* and a cowl (P.Kell.Copt. 18) and the conflict with Lauti(ne?) concerning the price of the cowl for the brothers derived from identical procedures. Regardless of Saren's exact religious office, it seems likely that the maximalist interpretation has overlooked the involvement of ascetics in the textile manufacture and other religious specialists involved in manual labor, even though many may also have received support from lay followers.[79]

6.3.3 Household-Support Structures

Many other requests for commodities are part of a support structure that is more closely related to the household. Sabine Huebner has described the household as "the most important institution for the health and welfare of its members, and the basis for redistributing resources between generations," and furthermore as having "played a critical role in caring for the vulnerable members of society: children, the ill, the disabled, and the old."[80] As she points out, the social expectations about obligations, mutual support, and reciprocity are primarily informal and the traditional patterns of family support were only sometimes supplemented by legal obligations.[81] The household, widely defined as those people who share one roof, including kin, non-kin, and slaves, supported each other in times of difficulty, whether this was losing one's partner, children, or parents; not having children; or struggling with old age. The average household (as described in Chapter 3) consisted of multiple families or multiple generations. Failure to support each other had strong social

---

[78] Contra Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 41.

[79] I see no reason to follow Dubois' interpretation of the financial arrangements as belonging to a communal fund from which salary was paid to itinerant elect. J. D. Dubois, "Une lettre manichéenne de Kellis (P. Kell. Copt 18)," in *Early Christian Voices*, ed. D. H. Warren, A. G. Brock, and D. W. Pao (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 437; R. Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice (313–450)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 96ff; On economic interactions, see Wipszycka, *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive*, 324; E. Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe-VIIIe siècles)* (Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology, 2009), 519-26; Goehring, "The World Engaged," 39-52. Discussion about the way Christian ascetics were involved in the local economy has been fueled by the economic transactions in the letters from the cartonnage of the Nag Hammadi Codices. Ewa Wipszycka and John Shelton have argued against the monastic nature of some of these letters, as initially proposed by John Barns and defended in Lundhaug and Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, 104-39. Examples of ascetics working in the textile industry include ascetics like Apa Paieous (P.Lond. 1920, 1922).

[80] Huebner, *Family in Roman Egypt*, 3.

[81] Huebner, *Family in Roman Egypt*, 4.

implications.[82] To neglect the obligation to care for one's parents, for example, could affect claims on the inheritance.[83] A similar tension surfaced in some of Pamour III's letters concerning his father Pshai, who somehow excluded Pamour from an important transaction (P.Kell.Copt. 64). Writing to his brother Psais III, Pamour tried to find out whether the items had indeed been sold, and he may even have tried to work around the decision of his father (in Chapter 4, I suggested that this tension may have been related to the inheritance).[84]

The household was also the primary location for most of the gifts and economic transactions found in the papyri. In the Roman world, all members of the household participated in the domestic economy, and the family has been called the "primary site of production, reproduction, consumption and the intergenerational transmission of property and knowledge undergirding production in the Roman world."[85] Women in the later Roman Empire generally worked at home. Some of the freeborn women may have held apprenticeships and a few were active in the agricultural sector, but women mostly worked at home. This general trend is clearly visible in the Kellis papyri, where the women had a central role as key figures (or hub) in the family network when their husbands and sons traveled into the Nile valley to conduct trade and sell agricultural goods from the oasis.[86]

The correspondence of Makarios, Matthaios, and Piene reveals that "mother Maria" in Kellis was kept in the loop for all daily accounts and was actively involved in the domestic economy. Some of the requests by Makarios, her husband, dealt with the everyday concerns of their household, specifically their children. An example of this is the letter in which Charis is greeted first and Maria is asked to "send a pair of sandals to Matthaios, for he has none at all."[87] In other sections of the letters, Maria has to sell particular goods (in the absence of her husband) to raise money for his journey with the children (P.Kell.Copt. 19.32). The financial situation of the household is precarious, since in the same letter Makarios suggests a number of fundraising strategies to Maria. Makarios is not able to afford the entire tariff and asks Maria to write "the woman within" (ⲧⲣⲏⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲛ) to ask her for money, while noting "these young ones" (ⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲗ̄ⲗⲁⲩⲉ) as another source of at least 1,000 talents (?).[88] Even while greeting

[82] Huebner, *Family in Roman Egypt*, 205.

[83] Like in the third-century letter P.Oxy. VII 1067, where the author urged her brother to make sure someone (?) to arrange the burial, otherwise a woman from outside the family will inherit the wealth. P.Oxy. VII 1067 (=BL 8 240) cited and discussed in Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 273.

[84] There seems to be some indication of economic transaction between Psais and Pamour, even though the frustration with father Pshai could well be about the same object. See the notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 45-46.

[85] Saller, "The Roman Family as Productive Unit," 116.

[86] Some references to exceptional situations with women working outside the house are found in R. P. Saller, "Women, Slaves, and the Economy of the Roman Household," in *Early Christian Families in Context*, ed. D. L. Balch and C. Osiek (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 185-204.

[87] ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲓⲁⲑⲁⲓⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲛⲓⲧⲉϥ ϩⲟⲗⲱⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 20.58.

[88] "The woman within" is a curious designator for someone who is greeted twice by Makarios (P.Kell.Copt. 19.54, 65 and 22.78). The male version was sometimes used for a minor ecclesiastical office, cited in Crum, *CD*. 687a. Franzmann has rejected the option of a secluded *electa*, as this does not appear to have been a Manichaean tenet. Franzmann, "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis."

his son Matthaios and their relative Drousiane, he suggests they could write letters in his name or talk to Kouria (Kyria?) in the hope that "perhaps she will give something."[89]

While some of these solicited gifts can be understood as support within the household, they seem to go beyond the immediate family context. The distinctions are not always easy. The heavy usage of fictive kinship terminology makes it impossible to reconstruct who belonged to the household and who to a wider Manichaean network. Despite this difficulty, I think that some exchanges took place between Manichaean catechumens. An example can be found in the postscript of P.Kell.Copt. 66, where Maria sends seven portions of pickled fish and gives two of these portions to Chares.[90] The Manichaean background of Pshemnoute and Chares is firmly attested by the fact that they are addressed in several letters with explicit Manichaean repertoire. Family support thus extended beyond next of kin to those who had become family in a Manichaean sense.

Gift exchange between catechumens may not strike anyone as remarkable, but in light of the Manichaean ideology of giving it stands out. The logic behind ritualized almsgiving suggests that food and inedible gifts, given to anyone other than the Manichaean elect, cannot support the liberation of the Living Soul. Despite this line of thought, there is one section in the *Kephalaia* where gifts to catechumens are discussed (1 Keph. 77). In this chapter, Mani proclaims that those who give are greater than the four greatest kingdoms on earth: "[W]hoever will give bread and a cup of water to one of my disciples on account of the name of God, on account of this truth that I have revealed; that one is great before God." Extending the argument, the chapter includes catechumens as the recipients of gifts: "[W]hoever will give bread and a cup of water to a catechumen of the truth, on account of the name of God and on account of the truth that has become evident to those who came near to the truth."[91] Just like catechumens are praised when they give to the elect, now the donor who gives to catechumens receives praise: "[T]hat whoever will have fellowship with catechumens who are within the knowledge, and helps them, he surpasses these kingdoms that I have counted for you."[92] The entire chapter seems to redirect the standard gift-giving pattern and expand it in order to include the catechumens. Twice in this chapter, the catechumens are the subject of Jesus's biblical commandment to give to "these little ones" (Mt. 10.42 cf. Mk 9:36–37). Indeed, the catechumens *and* the elect are inhabited by the "holy spirit," who will return the favor done for them via the "true father" (1 Keph. 77, 190.4).

---

[89] ⲧⲁϫⲁ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ϯ ⲟⲩⲗⲁⲩⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 19.74.

[90] Ϫⲓ ⲛⲉⲕ ⲛ̄ϯⲥⲁⲱⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲱⲁⲧϭ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲃ̄ⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲃⲟ ϫⲓ ϯⲥ̣ⲙ̄ⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲱⲁⲧϭ̄ ⲉⲩⲡⲁⲣϫ̣ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ϫⲁ̣[ⲣⲏⲥ] P.Kell.Copt. 66.43-46. See the reconstruction of the situation in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 56.

[91] See the following note for the full Coptic text.

[92] ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲇⲉ ϯϫⲱ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲥ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲛⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲧ[ⲛⲁϯ]ⲁ̀ⲓⲕ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲛⲁⲛⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ ⲉ̣[ⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲙⲡⲛ]ⲟⲩⲧ̣ⲉ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ϯⲛⲛⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̀ϭ[ⲁ]ⲗ[ⲡⲥ] ⲁ̣ⲃⲁ̣ⲗ̣ [ⲡ]ⲉⲧⲛⲛⲉⲩ ⲉⲛⲉⲉⲩ ϩⲁⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ [ⲉϥⲟ]ⲩⲁⲧⲃⲉ ⲛ[ϩⲟⲩⲟ] ⲁϯϥⲧⲟⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲣⲣⲟ ⲉⲧⲟ ⲛ̄ⲛ[ⲁϭ ⲛ]ⲡⲣⲏⲧⲉ ϥⲣ̣ϩ̣ⲩ̣ϩ̣ ⲁⲛ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲁⲧⲉϭⲧⲉ ⲉⲡⲉⲓ̣ⲇ̣ⲏ̣ ⲛ̣ⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱⲧ̣ⲛ̄ ⲁ̣ϯⲛⲛⲉ ⲛⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩ̄ⲣ̄ⲃⲟ[ⲏⲑⲟ]ⲥ ⲛⲧⲁ̣[ⲕⲁ]ⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ ⲟⲩ ⲛⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲡⲉ̈ⲓ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁ[ϯ] ⲁ̀ⲓⲕ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲁⲧ ⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲟⲩⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧ[ⲛⲛⲉ ⲉⲧ]ⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲛⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ̣ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲛⲉ [ⲉⲧϭⲁⲗⲡ] ⲙ̣ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩ ⲧϩⲛⲁ̀ⲓ̈ⲧ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲁ̣ⲧ̣[ⲛⲛⲉ ⲧⲉ]ϥⲣⲁ̣ⲏ̣ ⲛⲁ̣ⲕ̣[ⲱ]ⲧⲉ ⲁⲡⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ϣⲁ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ [ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲥⲉϫⲉ] ⲡⲉⲧⲁ ⲡⲥ̅ⲏ̅ⲣ̅ ⲛⲁ]ⲓⲁⲑⲟⲥ ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁϥ ϫⲉ ⲡ[ⲉⲧⲛⲁϯ ⲁ̀ⲓⲕ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲩ] ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲕ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲓ̣ [ⲙⲡⲥⲧⲟ]ⲥ̣ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲁⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲣⲉ̣ⲛ̣ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲑⲏ̣ⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲥ̣……ⲕⲉⲛⲁ….ⲉ ⲉⲛ ⲉⲣⲉ [ⲡ]ⲥ̅ⲏ̅ⲣ̅ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲙⲟⲩⲧ̣[ⲉ] ⲁⲛⲓⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ϫⲉ ⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈ ⲙⲡⲥⲧⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ϫⲉ ⲉⲓⲥ ϩⲉⲧⲉ ⲁⲓ̈ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁϥ ⲛ̣̄ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ [ϫ]ⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁⲕⲟⲓⲱⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ϩ̣̄ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲩϩ̣ⲙ̣ ⲡⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲛϥ̄ⲣ̄ⲃⲟⲛⲑⲉⲓ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ϥⲟⲩⲁⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛⲓ[ⲙ ⲛ ⲧ[ⲣⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲁⲡⲟⲩ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̄ 1 Keph. 77, 189.6-25 (modified translation, Cf. the German edition).

Technical terminology like "alms" and "fellowship," commonly used for the behavior of catechumens toward the elect, is applied here to the gifts to catechumens as well: "[H]e will give them alms and have fellowship with them."[93]

The expansion of the gift exchange to include catechumens may thus contextualize the Kellis evidence for gifts amongst catechumens. As both elect and catechumens worked in the Nile valley, they both depended on the support of family, friends, and coreligionists. 1 Keph. 77 suggests that sometimes gifts to catechumens may have had similar beneficial effects as the normative alms gifts to the elect, as a simple cup of water and bread given to the catechumen on account of the truth will not only be greater than the four kingdoms but also "his end will turn to eternal rest."[94] Unfortunately, none of the Kellis letters allude to this kind of motivation, which makes it very difficult to discern whether the gifts to catechumens were considered of as extensions of the household-support structures, or seen in light of the Manichaean doctrines of the salvation of Light.

6.3.4 Charity to Non-elect

At the outset of this chapter, I cited Augustine's remarks about food exclusivity. He said that Manichaeans never gave to beggars because it would affect the Living Soul. In fact, he notes that it equaled murder, as the Living Soul could not be released when given to someone other than the elect.[95] A thought-provoking reference in this regard is found in a fragmentary passage from a business account. The author, a woman who may be identified as Tehat, addressed her son and urged him to

> have pity for them and you set up (?) some pots for them; for they have father nor mother. And until you know (?), the baked loaves… every widow eats (?)… find it… charity (ⲛⲁⲉ); and he… and he has mercy (ⲛϥⲛⲁⲉ̣) on them in their ….[96]

This passage seems to imply charity to widows and orphans, even though we have to be careful because of its highly fragmentary nature. Could this mean that the Manichaeans in Kellis gave food to charity?

---

[93] [ϥ]ⲛⲁϯ ⲛⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲛⲓⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲛ̄ϥⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ 1 Keph. 77, 190.1.

[94] ⲧⲉ]ϥϩⲁ̣ⲛ̣ ⲛⲁ̣ϫ[ⲱ]ⲧⲉ ⲁⲡⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲱⲁ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ 1 Keph. 77, 189.16-17 (translation modified). In fact, some of these gifts may have derived from non-Manichaeans with a positive attitude toward the church, as the *Kephalaia* suggests that these outsiders may find "rest" (ⲡⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛ 1 Keph. 77, 189.17). This is interesting, as the Sermon on the Great War only describes the damnation of non-Manichaeans and sees no sympathizers outside the church. Pedersen, Studies, 362.

[95] As stressed earlier, pure almsgiving is of pivotal importance to Manichaeans. Compare with the Parthian homily M6020, where the elect are warned only to accept food when they are able to redeem it. Otherwise they have commited the gravest sin against the Living Soul, one that also rubs off on the catechumen who donated the food. The homily is published and discussed in W. Henning, "A Grain of Mustard," *AION-L* (1965), 29-47.

[96] [….] ϣⲛ̄ ϩⲧⲛⲕ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲛⲕⲧⲟⲩⲛ.[…] ϩⲛⲟ ⲛⲉⲩ ϫⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣ⲩ ⲱⲧ ⲟ̣[ⲩⲧⲉ] ⲛⲟ ⲛⲉϫⲣⲓ ϫⲉ ⲕⲛⲉ ⲛ̣ϕ̣ⲁ̣ϕ̣ⲉ̣ … ϫⲏⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲛ ⲟⲩⲟⲛ ⲙ̣ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ϥ̣…. ϭⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲥ̄ . ⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲉ ⲛϥ̄ …. ⲁϩⲣⲏⲏ̈ ⲛϥⲛⲁⲉ̣ ⲣⲁⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ..̄…. P.Kell.Copt. 43.16-22 (slightly modified translation, the lacuna's make the passage very difficult to understand).

In a recent article, Majella Franzmann has weighed the evidence from Augustine against the letter of Tehat. How should the testimony of Augustine affect our interpretation of Manichaeans in Egyptian papyri? Although Franzmann is careful in her assessment, the current scholarly consensus is on Augustine's side, interpreting the Kellis material within the framework offered by him.[97] As indicated in the first two chapters of this dissertation, I have major problems with this approach. Instead of synthesizing the available evidence, we should consider, discuss, and explain the inconsistencies, developments, diverse perspectives, and regional variations. Just as important, moreover, is the rhetorical nature of Augustine's reports on Manichaeism, in which he employed various types of literary constructions and strategies for heresiological reasons. As forcefully argued by Baker-Brian, Augustine employs all of his considerable rhetorical talents to ridicule and denigrate his former coreligionists.[98] In fact, Augustine's remarks about food exclusion have to be read in the larger context of his charge of gluttony. The elect lacked self-control and had to stuff themselves with food, since no leftovers were allowed. Augustine even reiterated accusations about Manichaeans feeding children to death to preclude leftover food (*Mor. Manich.* 2.16.52).[99] He repeatedly emphasized the vices of the Manichaeans, who are not even capable of holding the rules of the Decalogue without distorting them (*Faust.* 15.7). None of this rhetorical context is taken into account by Franzmann. Instead, following the lead of Johannes van Oort, she considers whether the orphans and widows in Tehat's letter might have been those people who had left their family: the elect.[100] This option seems legitimate, as the elect are sometimes portrayed as strangers who left the houses of their parents. They could be understood as spiritual orphans in need of support.[101]

---

[97] Recent scholars who consider Augustine's testimony regarding Manichaeism as reliable and use it as a historical evidence include J. van Oort, "The Young Augustine's Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the Confessiones and Some Other Relevant Texts," *Vigiliae Christianae* 62, no. 5 (2008): 441-66; Coyle, "What Did Augustine Know," 251-63; J. van Oort, "Augustine and the Books of the Manichaeans," in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. M. Vessey (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 188-99. There is, moreover, an irony in Augustine's emphasis on Manichaean gift exclusivity, since he himself urged his readers to give to a common fund under the distribution of the bishop, instead of giving directly to others. Augustine, *Enarrat. Ps.* 63.11, referred to in Finn, *Almsgiving*, 46.

[98] Baker-Brian, "Between Testimony and Rumour," 31-53.

[99] Baker-Brian, "Between Testimony and Rumour," 46. With regard to ex-member testimonial, the sociologist Bryan Wilson wrote: "The sociologist of contemporary sectarianism need to rely neither on fragments nor on biased witnesses. Indeed, with good reason, sociologists generally treat the evidence of a sect's theological opponents, of the aggrieved relatives of sectarians, and of the disaffected and apostate with some circumspection." Wilson, *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism*, 6.

[100] Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 42-3.

[101] Widows and orphans are frequently mentioned together in Early Christian writings (for example in the New Testament, James 1.27) and appear together in Manichaean writing as well (2 PsB. 53.24-25, 62.16-17, 175.20-24 etc). The designation of elect as orphans, widows and strangers is found in the Manichaean psalms, "thou bearest witness of my course, o blessed Light, that I have ministered to the widows, the orphans, the Righteous." ⲕ̅ⲣ̅ⲙ̅ⲡ̅ⲧⲣⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧⲁϭⲓⲙⲡⲱⲧ ⲱ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̅ⲛⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲁ̈ⲓϣ̅ⲙ̅ϣⲉ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲭⲏⲣⲁ ⲛ̅ⲟⲣⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̅ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ 2 PsB. 252 62.16-17. In another passage the disciples are called "wandering orphans" in need of a specific revelation. Ⲙ̅ϣⲡⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲛ̅ⲃⲁ̈ϣ̅ⲙⲉ ϣⲁⲛⲓⲟⲣ[ⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲥⲁ]ⲣⲏⲉ "be a messenger for me to these wandering orphans" 2 PsB. 187.11-13, Cf. 53.24-25. Similar statements in 2 PsB. 175.21-2 in which the singer has "clothed thy

Despite this reinterpretation, Franzmann continues to stress local variation caused by specific "cultural ecologies," and she cautiously questions her own harmonization of the sources. "Perhaps," she rightly suggests, "Augustine was not completely right in every case."[102] I could not agree more. How would converts to Manichaeism have experienced such a rule against sharing food with outsiders? Would they have stopped supporting family members? It is hard to imagine a village life in which the boundaries of solidarity-based giving were strictly limited to people's own religious elites, even though we know modern religious groups that take a strong exclusive stance. I suggest that gifts to family and the poor continued to be given, even though this may have conflicted with some rigorists' interpretations of Manichaean normative texts. One of the Kellis letters, in fact, narrates about the care for two orphaned girls (P.Kell.Copt. 73). The Kellis papyri do not provide an unambiguous answer, but food exclusivity does not automatically follow from the personal letters. They cannot bear the weight of a sectarian interpretation of the Kellis community as a strictly bounded group.

6.3.5 Patronage

If we return to the gifts of Eirene, I wonder whether she would have agreed with being framed as daughter and catechumen. Since we do not hear her own voice, it is only the male author who brings forward his designation of her role. An alternative interpretation of her role as supporter could well be that she was a female patron of an itinerant holy man, a phenomenon well known in Late Antiquity. Although male patronage often stands out as most common, wealthy women functioned as patron on all levels of society.[103] Unfortunately, the lack of further references to the life of Eirene precludes further examination of her role in the Manichaean community as well as in the village at large.

The question of patronage in late antique Egyptian society, however, offers an interesting alternative perspective on the dynamic of gift exchange. The social structure of wealthy patrons giving commodities and/or services to their clients, in return for honor, their vote, or other services, was one of the fundamentals of Roman society.[104] In Late Antiquity,

---

orphans," directly after "served all these holy ones" (ⲁϊⲱⲙⲱⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲧⲏⲣ[ⲟ]ⲩ ⲁ̈ϯ ϩⲓⲱⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲟⲣⲫⲁⲛⲟⲥ). All cited examples, however, can be read as lists instead of summations. In other words, they create the impression that care for orphans and widows was almost as important as the daily almsgiving to the elect. Contra Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 42-3.

[102] Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 48. Likewise, Peter Arzt-Grabner has recently highlighted, on the basis of papyrological sources, how Christians continued to attend private festivals with traditional sacrifices and meals in temple halls. Excusivity was difficult to maintain when weddings and other private festivities were celebrated with non-Christian relatives and friends. P. Arzt-Grabner, "Why Did Early Christ Groups Still Attend Idol Meals? Answers from Papyrus Invitations," *Early Christianity* 7 (2016): 508-29.

[103] C. Osiek, "*Diakonos* and *Prostatis*: Women's Patronage in Early Christianity," *HTS Theological Studies* 61, no. 1 & 2 (2005): 347-70.

[104] Patronage is the "enduring bond between two persons of unequal social and economic status, which implies and is maintained by periodic exchanges of goods and services, and also has social and affective dimensions." P. Garnsey and G. Woolf, "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World," in *Patronage in Ancient Society*, ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill (London: Routledge, 1989), 154.

some of these patronage structures changed as a result of the increasing complexity and fragmentation of society. Urban and rural councilors, emerging bishops, ascetics, military leaders, former magistrates, and the provincial governor and his staff were all potential patrons who competed for the favor of the general population. As a result, villagers could shift allegiances, play their patrons, and seek services that benefited them best.[105] This led the fourth-century Antiochian rhetor Libanius to complain about the decay of well-structured society. In his opinion, peasants used the multiplicity of available patrons to their advantage, while it should be the rural landlord who "assumes the role of the protector, monopolizing the dual functions of a patron, as a provider of protection and resources and as a broker controlling access to the outside world."[106] Libanius himself, as seen in Chapter 4, acted as patron and friend for a Manichaean community when he wrote to Priscianus, the proconsul of Palestine, to argue for its protection.

Within the Kellis corpus, the language of patronage is only used toward catechumens. They could be addressed (as we have seen) as "helpers," "worthy patrons," and "firm unbending pillars" (ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟ̈ⲓ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲛⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥϣ̄ϣⲉⲩ· ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁ̈ⲓⲧ P.Kell.Copt. 31.16–18). This use of patronage is an inversion of the traditional Roman benefaction relations in which the wealthy few patronized the masses. It is, according to Baker-Brian, "one of the most significant modifications of mass and elite relations in the entire postclassical period," even though the catechumens in Kellis clearly belonged to a well-to-do section of society.[107] As a result, more emphasis is placed on the critical role and agency of women like Eirene. They were not that different from wealthy Christian women who were constantly courted for their support by Christian ascetics (like Jerome, whose association with aristocratic Christian women led to his exile from Rome).

Two other types of patronage stand out. The Kellites look at local and regional elites for legal support at the courts of the provincial governor. Two examples from Chapter 4 will suffice to illustrate the patronage ties with Roman officials: P.Kell.Copt. 20 and 38ab. In the former document, we are informed about a petition to the *comes*, who has to approach the *logistes* on behalf of Makarios and Matthaios. In the latter document, a plot of land is given to Psais II, by Pausanias, a Roman official who may have been the *strategos* of the oasis. In both instances, powerful Roman officials interact with members of the Manichaean community in typical Roman patronage structures.

One of the most important patronage relations was between a client and his landlord. At Kellis, the financial obligations to the landlord could be paid in several ways. Sometimes the rent was paid in silver drachmas (P.Kell.Gr. 62), but the KAB shows that commodities were frequently used to replace money (KAB 330ff, 1146, 1167 etc.). Likewise, wages could be paid in barley (P.Kell.Copt. 48), wheat (P.Kell.Copt. 46), or in oil (P.Kell.Copt. 47 for the production of a piece of garment).[108] When we return to the issue of food exclusivity, these

[105] López, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*, 4-5.

[106] Garnsey and Woolf, "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World," 162; Libanius, *Oration* 47.19, 22.

[107] Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 181.

[108] On the numerous small parcels and array of commodities which were used to pay rent, see D. P. Kehoe, "Tenancy and Oasis Agriculture on an Egyptian Estate of the 4th C. A.D.," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12,

financial arrangements suggest that Manichaeans at Kellis would either have participated in this system of barter, or stood out by using monetary means only. The first option would contradict the Manichaean logic as disclosed by Augustine, while the second option cannot be proven beyond doubt, as the letters with recognizable Manichaean repertoire do not deliberate about wages or rent, nor do they inform us about their relation with the landlord.[109]

6.4 Local Characteristics: Geographical Distance and the Absence of the Elect

When all this evidence for the plurality of socioeconomic engagement in the Kellis letters is taken into account, the centrality of Manichaean almsgiving fades into the background. The passages adduced in support of the normative Manichaean gift exchange reveal two local characteristics that have a major impact on our reconstruction of the community. First, I contend that the elect were mainly absent from the village and spent most of their time traveling in the Nile valley. Second, because of their absence, the Manichaeans of Kellis could not celebrate the Manichaean ritual meal on a daily basis. In this section, I will outline the impact of geographical distance on the structure of the Manichaean community. Following up on the discussion of Piene's journeys with the Teacher, I will examine how the relations between catechumens and elect were fostered without the daily recurrence of each other's presence. The next section will consider the impact of the geographical distance on the daily ritual practice, by questioning the identification of the *agape* in the papyri with the Manichaean meal. Together, this will present an alternative image of the ritual life in the local Manichaean community, challenging the normative framework as presented in Manichaean scriptures.

My first assertion is that the geographical distance between the oasis and the Nile valley caused the elect to be absent from the village. All instances in which elect are mentioned in the personal letters record their location outside the oasis. The father addressing Eirene, as well as the father writing to his anonymous daughters, was explicitly located "in Egypt," which designated the Nile valley.[110] The other members of the elect are also reported to reside in Alexandria or the cities of the valley. Apa Lysimachos is reported as residing (?) in Antinoou (P.Kell.Copt. 21), from where he could forward letters to the oasis and back. The Teacher was also traveling toward Alexandria (P.Kell.Copt. 29). In Chapter 4, I presented the evidence for catechumens who traveled with the elect, either as their retinue to support their survival, or as merchants selling their wares. The passages regarding Piene's involvement with the Teacher are most informative, but they represent an exceptional situation. Only some other Kellites traveled with the elect, probably mostly for a shorter

---

no. 2 (1999): 746. He notes that wine was also used to pay for "service" (presumably wages for workers other than tenants. If *Topos Mani* would have constituted a Manichaean monastery, which I will argue it did not, it would have paid a rent in olives.

[109] One could suggest, however, that the "master" in P.Kell.Copt. 20.47 had to be sent a *maje* of something as rent. The passage is too fragmentary to be sure.

[110] Makarios wrote about "when I came to Egypt" and "we delayed coming to Egypt" (P.Kell.Copt. 22). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 207, also 12. Known already from the early monastic period, in the *Vit. Ant.* 57, cited in Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 144.

period of time and without undergoing extensive training (as for example Philammon and others in P.Kell.Copt. 72 and 82).

The Manichaean community in the oasis was several days of traveling removed from the Nile valley and in order to keep a regional network together, letters of recommendation were sent with travelers to introduce them to their new context. Some of these letters could be identified among the Oxyrhynchus papyri, as the Kellis letters have stimulated new interpretations of letters that were previously considered to be Christian. Among these are two Greek letters of recommendation from Oxyrhynchus: P.Oxy. XXXI 2603 and P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965.[111] They do not only reveal a widespread Manichaean community in Egypt, but also illustrate the way in which travelers were vouched for. In one of these letters, Paul wrote brother Serapion about his friends: "[R]eceive them therefore in love, as friends, for they are not catechumens but belong to the company of Ision and Nikolaos."[112] Ammonius, in the other letter addressing Philadelphus, asked to "receive together with the ambassador…, you and the brethren at your place in faith of the Paracletic Mind; for nothing more holy (?) has he commanded us."[113] Both authors conveyed their recommendation to receive the travelers with indications of their belonging to the Manichaean community. In the first passage, they are identified as members of the elect, as they are not catechumens but belong to the company of two individuals who were, supposedly, known to Serapion and his local Manichaean community. Ision and Nikolaos could have been Manichaean presbyters or bishops, whose names carried some authority.[114] With such authorization and recommendation, the traveling elect could be welcomed and received in a proper way. The second passage does not identify the travelers as elect or catechumens, but explicitly reminds its recipients of their shared faith and frames the request by mentioning the "paracletic mind," which is never used in other papyrus letters outside the Kellis corpus.

As a consequence of their central role, the absence of the elect led to a distinctly different ritual setting than that found in the doctrinal Manichaean texts. BeDuhn rightly points out that "those left behind shifted to alternative modes of activity by which they maintained their Manichaean identity and practice. Certain practices were suspended

---

[111] J. H. Harrop, "A Christian Letter of Commendation," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 48 (1962): 140 "numerous theological and mystical overtones." I. Gardner, "Personal Letters from the Manichaean Community at Kellis," in *Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 87 they "deserve reconsideration"; C. Römer, "Manichaean Letter," in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* ed. P. Parson, et al. (London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 2009), 194-96; Gardner, Nobbs, and Choat, "P. Harr. 107," 118; See the critique in Martinez, "The Papyri and Early Christianity," 602.

[112] Προσδέξαι οὖν ἐν ἀγάπῃ ὡς φίλους, οὐ γὰρ κατηχούμενοί εἰσιν ἀ[λ]λὰ τῶν περὶ Ἴσίωνος καὶ Ν̣ικ̣ολ̣ά̣ου ἰδ̣[ί]οι \τυγχάνουσι/. P.Oxy. XXXI 2603.25-28. This letter employs a curious metaphor with a mirror and mentions "elect and catechumens."

[113] σὺν τοῖς κατὰ [τόπον σου ἀδ]ελφοῖς πειθόμε[νος τῷ παρα]κ̣λ̣ητικῷ λόγῳ [… - ca. 10 -]τος μετὰ τοῦ πρεσβευτοῦ ὑπο]δέξῃ. Οὐδὲν γὰρ [ἁγιώτερον] ἡμῖν ἔκρινεν. P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965.8-13. This letter, moreover, also mentions the "elect and catechumens" as well as "the Teacher."

[114] These two individuals are not mentioned in the Kellis letters, unless we identify this Ision with the Ision found in P.Kell.Gr 67 and P.Kell.Copt. 80, which is not entirely unlikely since Ision is a lector in the Manichaean church. Gardner, "Once More," 305n58; I. Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 159 (2007): 223-28.

without an elect present," whereby the "local cell became the sustainers of their own identification with the elusive world Manichaean organization."[115] At Kellis, this led to a new appreciation of the role of catechumens within the community. In absence of the elect, community life hinged on the active role of the nonspecialists. Catechumens played a role in death rituals (Chapter 8), were supported by fellow catechumens (Chapter 6.3.3), and were involved in book writing (Chapter 9). At the same time, the elect held some of their authoritative positions, as we cannot exclude the possibility that they visited the oasis. One wonders whether Orion included the elect in the greeting section of his letters to the oasis because they were present in the village, or whether it was simply another tautological formula indicating the entire community (see Chapter 5). We do know that the elaborate fundraising letters of the elect indicate that despite geographical distance, Manichaean support structures helped them to survive.

6.5 The *Agape*, a Manichaean Ritual Meal?

When it comes down to the evidence for Manichaean alms gifts, the identification of the *agape* (ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ) in four of the Coptic letters is pivotal. It is either the keystone indicating the practice of the daily ritual meal, or it reveals how little we know with certainty about everyday life in this community. From the first publications onward, a few scattered references to *agape* in the Kellis letters have been interpreted as evidence for the practice of the daily ritual meal. In the first edition, it was cautiously noted that "unfortunately, it is not explicit as to whether this is food offered to the elect, or distributed to the poor," and "if the *agape* is to be understood as the Manichaean ritual meal … then those who partook of it must be elect."[116] In other words, the few references to *agape* have been understood in the framework of the Manichaean ideology of gift exchange. If this interpretation were correct, it would offer strong evidence for regular moments of groupness, as communal meals are known for their impact on ancient group cohesion, especially if they take place on a daily basis.[117] It is crucial, then, to gain an accurate understanding of what the letters meant by *agape.* I shall contend that it did not designate the daily ritual meal of the Manichaean elect, but was used far less specifically. Before reinterpreting the six passages in the Kellis letters, we need to make three observations about the meaning and use of the Greek term a*gape* in Late Antiquity, especially since Andrew McGowan has concluded that "we should probably stop speaking of 'the agape' as through there was an ancient consensus about it that we

[115] J. D. BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting of Manichaean Cultic Associations in Roman Late Antiquity," *Archive für Religionsgeschichte* 10 (2008): 266.

[116] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 77n95; See also A. Alcock, "The Agape," *Vigiliae Christianae* 54, no. 2 (2000): 208-09; J. D. Dubois, "Les repas manichéens," in *Entre lignes de partage et territoires de passage. Les identités religieuses dans les mondes grec et romain*, ed. N. Belayche and S. C. Mimouni (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 110 and 115. Nils Arne Pedersen has also interpreted the *agape* in Hom. 29.1-2 as the Manichaean meal, which he now extends with the Kellis attestations. Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1283.

[117] I. Dunderberg, "The Eucharist in the Gospels of John, Philip, and Judas," *Early Christianity* 7 (2016): 484-507 cites relevant literature and explores the role of the Eucharist in three gospels, concluding that "a great deal of identity construction is involved."

could use in clear absence of any modern one."[118] Instead, he argues, a "diversity of practices and terminologies, all of which share some relation to one another," is attested in Christian literature of Late Antiquity.[119]

First, during the first centuries of Christian literature, the *agape* designated a charitable meal, used to support to the poor. Tertullian used the phrase to describe the evening meal (otherwise in Latin *dilectio*) in which believers from all classes came together to eat.[120] By contrasting these occasions with the banquets of Roman *collegia*, he stressed the charitable nature of the *agape* and its egalitarian meaning. In Cyprian's time, communal gatherings started to take place in the morning. This morning assembly entailed the central celebration with a ritual meal, whose character was more symbolic because of the size of the community. These symbolic meals were led by the clergy, and the previously celebrated household banquets slowly became associated with rebellion and heretics.[121] In Augustine's time, the evening *agape* meal was no longer celebrated, and instead the Eucharist had become the central ritual "in which the true and pure church became symbolically visible."[122] By the fourth century, charity and the communion with the poor were no longer expressed through a weekly *agape* meal. Instead the term, now connoting (brotherly) love, charity, and meals, came to be used for a wide variety of charitable and alimentary practices.

Second, the variety of practices labeled with *agape* during the fourth century included charitable almsgiving, meals for the martyrs, and monastic meals. In the *Apophthegmata Patrum,* an Oxyrhynchus presbyter was rebuked for looking down in disgrace on a widow who had asked for grain. His disgrace was considered a minor offense, even though he was giving to her "in charity" (δέδωκας αὐτῃ ἀγάπην).[123] A similar usage of the term *agape* for almsgiving in general is visible in an Arabic biography of Shenoute, which includes a narrative of a layman who dressed up as beggar to see whether his *agape* gifts to the

---

[118] A. McGowan, "Naming the Feast: The Agape and the Diversity of Early Christian Meals," *Studia Patristica* 30 (1997): 317-18.

[119] McGowan, "Naming the Feast," 318; Finn, *Almsgiving,* 103-5.

[120] Tertullian, *Bapt*. 9.2. J. P. Burns, R. M. Jensen, and G. W. Clarke, *Christianity in Roman Africa: The Development of Its Practices and Beliefs* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 234-5, 240-1, 251-2 and 287-90. A more fundamental discussion of the relation between the Eucharist and the *agape* is found in A. McGowan, "Rethinking Agape and Eucharist in Early North African Christianity," *Studia Liturgica* 34 (2004): 165-76; A. McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists. Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999). Earlier studies include B. Reicke, *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos in Verbindung mit der altchristlichen Agapenfeier* (Uppsala: Verlag, 1951); C. Donahue, "The Agape of the Hermits of Scete," *Studia Monastica* I (1959): 97-114; H. Lietzmann, *Mass and the Lord's Supper* (Leiden: Brill, 1979); A. G. Hamman, "De l'agape à la diaconie en Afrique chrétienne," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 42 (1986): 241-21. Most of these studies have been summarized in R. Halterman Finger, *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

[121] Cyprian, *Ep*. 63.16.2-17.1, discussed in Burns, Jensen, and Clarke, *Christianity in Roman Africa*, 252. On the connection between the discourse of heresy and the household, see H. O. Maier, "Heresy, Households, and the Disciplining of Diversity," in *A People's History to Christianity. Late Ancient Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 213-33.

[122] Burns, Jensen, and Clarke, *Christianity in Roman Africa*, 290.

[123] *Apophthegmata patrum* 13.16. Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 666-67, no. 171.

monastery were indeed distributed as alms to the poor.[124] The *agape* (αγαπη), moreover, could designate the gifts and meal associated with the festivals for the martyrs in Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxy. LXVI 3864, fifth century), just like sources from a later date refer to the *agape* festival of Apa Apollo (SB X 10269, seventh century).[125] In the description of the life (and death) of Phib, placed in the fourth century, monks of the community of Apa Apollo came together for a specific *agape* meal, which is closely associated with the burial and commemoration of Phib.[126] Papyri from this monastery also attest to the celebration of this festival, as they order wine for the *agape* of Apa Phib.[127]

Third, the association with *agape* and burial or commemoration meals is more widespread, as the *refrigerium*, the meal of commemoration at the cemetery, was also designated as *agape*. In Rome, for example, the Christian inscriptions under the San Sebastiano include the words "in agape."[128] The relation between this funerary context and the cult of the martyrs, such as the festival associated with Apa Apollo, is relatively direct. The martyrs belonged to the Christian ancestors and the meals for their commemoration brought charitable gifts and funerary meal together. In the papyri, the phrase *prosphora* (offering) is often used to designate the gifts given for the mass for the dead, as for example in the Apion archive.[129] However, these *prosphora* donations *mortis causa* are relatively late (mostly sixth century).[130] Chapter 8 will delve into the evidence for funerary meals at Kellis, as Peter Brown has suggested that the Early Christian practice of *agape* meals at the cemetery

---

[124] Besa, *Vit. Shenoute*, 33-35 cited in Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 672-5, no. 173; López, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*, 65 noting that similar stories circulated about John the Almsgiver (Life of John the Almsgivger 9).

[125] According to Papaconstantinou, the bags mentioned in letter P.Oxy. LXVI, 3864 were to be delivered in exchange for goods or services for the benefit of the festival at Oxyrhynchus. A. Papaconstantinou, "L'agapè des martyrs: P.Oxy. LVI 3864," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 92 (1992): 241-42. See the text of SB X 10269 and the discussion by H. C. Youtie, "P.Yale Inv. 177," *Zeitschrift fuï Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 16 (1975): 259-64.

[126] T. Vivian, " Monks, Middle Egypt, and Metanoia: The Life of Phib by Papohe the Steward (Translation and Introduction)," *Journal of Early Christian History* 7, no. 4 (1999): 554.

[127] ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲁⲡⲁ ⲫϊⲃ cited and discussed in Clackson, *Coptic and Greek Texts*, 6, 12.

[128] S. Diefenbach, *Römische Erinnerungsräume. Heiligenmemoria und kollektive Identitäten im Rom des 3. bis 5. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 54-55. The catacomb painting is no longer understood as an *agape* meal, but broader in the context of Roman funerary meals. The graffiti with the phrases Agape and Irene could have been names instead of similar wishes for peace and love, see R. M. Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (London: Routledge, 2000), 53-4.

[129] P.Oxy. LXVII 4620.3960 "for the holy mass (?) for our (?) grandmother, 416 artabas," discussed at T. Hickey, *Wine, Wealth, and the State in Late Antique Egypt: The House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 101-02; E. Wipszycka, *Les ressources et les activités économiques des églises en Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle* (Bruxelles: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1972), 69-77. Various other instances of *prosphora* for religious institutions include P.Oxy. XVI 1898 (receipt for received corn, 587 CE), 1901 (a testament including *prosphora* to a church), 1906 (donations for churches in (?) Alexandria). See the other references in the literature cited above.

[130] J. P. Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1987), 77-80.

lived on in the Manichaean community of Kellis.[131] For now, it is sufficient to note that one passage in the Coptic Manichaean texts indeed used *agape* for a commemoration meal (1 Keph. 115, 279.15), but nothing in the Kellis texts relates the *agape* to burials or commemorations.

What these three observations about the use of *agape* in late antique literature show is the variety of meaning the term could carry in different circumstances. Without detailed analysis, we cannot, therefore, assume one or the other interpretative framework to explain the references to *agape* in the Kellis documentary papyri and the account book (KAB).

The *agape* in Kellis consisted of various types of food gifts (see Table 11 for a list of the texts). Oil, wheat, olives, grapes, lentils, and lupin seeds were gathered, presumably also for meals. Orion wrote to Hor that he had received oil from Sabes, and left it (somewhere), "since we take in much oil for the *agape*, in that we are many, and they consume much oil."[132] After having discussed some of the other business arrangements, Orion returns to the topic and promised to "make the *agape* for the …."[133] Earlier in his correspondence with Hor, Orion had dealt with a similar situation, this time when he had received oil from Raz, which he left (somewhere, with someone?) "for the *agape*, like you said." Just like in the other letter, Orion offers to take responsibility: "Do not bother (?) yourself with the *agape*. I will do it rejoicing," and he promises to send "his share" (ⲡϥⲙⲉⲣⲟⲥ) to brother Pakous, who is harvesting outside the village.[134] In both instances, the *agape* clearly does not stand for a funerary meal, but was not a typical Manichaean meal either, as parts could be sent elsewhere. In fact, in a business account some of the food was requested as a gift by someone who was very much alive: "[T]he lentils and lupin seeds: make them as an *agape* for me."[135] While this may have been some sort of charitable alms gift, there is no reason to think that the author of the business account was a Manichaean elect. Similarly, another business account (more closely associated with events mentioned in some of Makarios's letters) lists "the *agape* of Theodora: she has given a *maje* of olives and a half *maje* of grapes."[136] This final example shows how an *agape* gift could be the responsibility of one individual, not unlike Orion's statements about taking responsibility for the *agape*.

---

[131] P. Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife. A Manichaean View of an Early Christian Practice," in *East & West: Papers in Ancient History Presented to Glen W. Bowersock*, ed. T. C. Brennan and H. I. Flower (London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 145-58.

[132] ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ϣⲁⲛⲭⲓ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ ⲁϩⲟ̣ⲩⲛ ⲁⲧⲁϩⲁ̣ⲡⲏ ϫⲉ ⲧ̣ⲛ̄ⲁϣ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱⲙ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ. P.Kell.Copt. 17.22-25. Dubois' understanding of the bronze vessel in P.Kell.Copt. 47 as belonging to "l'existence d'un chaudron ou d'une poêle de bronze servant à la cuisson ou la friture. On peut donc deviner quelques aspects des pratiques culinaires des manichéens" is sheer speculation. Dubois, "Les repas manichéens," 109.

[133] ϯⲛⲁ̄ⲣ ⲧⲁϩⲁⲡⲏ ⲁⲛⲉ̣ⲡ̣….. P.Kell.Copt. 17.34.

[134] ⲙⲡ̄ⲣ̣ⲥ̣ⲥ̣ⲧⲁ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲁϩⲁⲡⲏ ϯⲛⲁⲉⲥ ⲁ̈ⲣⲉϣⲉ "Do not bother (?) about the agape. I will do it, rejoicing." P.Kell.Copt. 15.23-24. ϯⲛⲁϫⲟⲩ ⲡϥⲙⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲣⲏⲥ "I will send his share south to him." P.Kell.Copt. 15.26-27.

[135] ⲛⲁⲣϣⲓⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲛⲧⲁⲣⲙⲟⲩⲥ ⲁⲣⲓⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁⲕⲁⲡⲏ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ P.Kell.Copt. 47.10. The alternative spelling of ⲁϩⲁⲡⲏ is a common error, see H. Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den koptischen dokumentarischen Texten* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 3-5.

[136] ⲧ'ⲁϩⲁⲡⲏ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉⲟⲇⲱⲣⲁ ϩⲥ'ϯ ⲟⲩⲛⲁϫ' ϫⲁⲓⲧ' ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩϩ̄ ⲛⲁϫ' ⲉⲗⲁⲗⲉ "The agape of Theodora: She has given a *maje* of olives and a half *maje* of grapes." P.Kell.Copt. 44.12.

Text no.	Objects	Sequence	Actors	Rules structuring behavior
P.Kell.Copt. 15.14	Oil, wheat (about 720 T for 6 *maje* wheat).[137]	Orion received from Raz and left it (?) somewhere (?) on instruction of Hor.	Orion, Raz, Hor; Raz consequently acts as middleman transferring goods back and forth.	Expensive.
P.Kell.Copt. 15.23	?	His "share" is sent to Pakous "if he does not come by that day."	Orion, Pakous.	Time-specific meal? Orion takes responsibility for specific task of sending.
P.Kell.Copt. 17.18	Oil (if an *agon* is half a *chous*, the price would be between 800 to 1000 T/*agon*).[138]	*Agon* of oil, received by Orion (?) and he left a portion somewhere on instruction of Hor. Idem with *agon* of oil Orion received from Sabes, also left it somewhere.	Orion, Hor, Sabes, Lautine, Timotheos. Sabes sent a *Solidus* (*holokottinos*) together with the oil.	Explicitly stated that "we take much oil for the agape, in that we are many, and they consume much oil."
P.Kell.Copt. 17.33	?	Orion will make the agape for … (someone?)	Orion.	Personal responsibility of Orion.
P.Kell.Copt. 44.12	*Maje* of olives and half a *maje* of grapes.	Theodora has given it (to Tehat? Why recorded here?)	Theodora.	Personal responsibility of Theodora.
P.Kell.Copt. 47.10	Lentils and lupin seeds.	Author requests it?	Tehat?	Can be requested?

Table 11: References to agape in the Coptic personal letters.

It is not easy to see what these passages amount to. They functioned within the variety of meanings of the term *agape*, connecting meals with charity and alms. None of the authors express anything like a Manichaean meaning or connotation, even though Orion's letters contain some of the more explicit Manichaean phrases. The baseline and most minimalist interpretation is therefore to consider these references as instances of charitable alms gifts of a general character, not unlike the *agape* gifts listed in the accounts of the large estate (KAB, see below). Before accepting this minimalist interpretation, I will examine the Manichaean usage of the term *agape* in the Coptic liturgical and theological documents.

[137] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 144; Bagnall, *KAB*, 47-48 on *maje* and page 52 on the price of wheat.
[138] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 64 and 61.

Manichaean descriptions of their meal ritual were deeply indebted to Christian meal terminology. Nils Arne Pedersen has shown how the Greek and Coptic descriptions of the Manichaean meal incorporated elements from the Christian Eucharist, while at the same time rejecting non-Manichaean meals, as the *Kephalaia* dismissed the Christian Eucharist (ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲩⲭⲁ̣ⲣⲓⲥⲧⲉⲓⲁ̣ "your Eucharist," 1 Keph. 130, 308.21) in favor of the Manichaean holy meal.[139] One of their psalms explains that Manichaeans, just like Christians, collected alms during the service "when thou comest in with thy gift to set it on the altar, be reconciled with thy adversary that thy gift may be received from thee."[140] Their ritual meal, moreover, could be designated as "the table," for example in the description of the ideal community life after the Great War: "[T]hey will come and find the writings written and they will find the books adorned. They will find the table and those who prepare it."[141] The same sermon also used the term *agape* for "the gifts [that] have been distributed and been [---] among the friends of the *agape* (ⲛ̄ϣⲃⲉ̣[ⲣⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ)! Behold, the sects have been smitten and destroyed. Behold, the alms (ⲧⲏⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ) are appointed with those who give them."[142] Whether the "friends of the agape" were the elect (as those who received the gifts) or the catechumens (as they are "those who give them [i.e. the alms gifts]," ⲛⲉⲧ[ϯ ⲙ̄]ⲛⲁⲥ) remains a question.[143] What these passages show is that Manichaeans used the same terminology as Christians, which makes it almost impossible to distinguish Manichaean *agape* gifts from Christian counterparts.

Before we accept the ambiguity and stick with the minimalist interpretation, we may want to explore one alternative option. Although it cannot be proven without doubt, I think that a comparison with the *agape* gifts in the KAB can contribute to our understanding of *agape*'s meaning in the village of Kellis. The monthly expenditures listed in the accounts of a large estate include frequent alms gifts, recorded, although inconsistently, in the first four months of the year (during Thoth, Phaophi, Hathyr, and Choiak, with the exception listed in Pharmouthi). These expenses are strictly related to agricultural products like wheat, wine, or cheese, just like the *agape* gifts in the Coptic letters, in which oil seems to take a central position besides olives, grapes, lentils, and lupin seeds.[144] The editor of the account book

---

[139] 1 Keph. 130, 307.17-310.31, discussed in Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1267-97; Pedersen, *Studies*, 283-6.

[140] ⲉⲕⲛⲏⲩ ⲁ̣ϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕ̣ϣⲱⲣⲟⲛ ⲁⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲁⲡⲑⲩⲥⲓⲁⲥⲧⲏⲣⲓⲟ̣ⲛ̣ ϩⲱⲧⲡ̄ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲁⲛⲧⲓⲁ̣ⲓⲕⲟⲥ ϫ̣ⲉⲩⲛⲁ̣ϫⲓ ⲡⲉⲕ̣ϣⲱⲣⲟⲛ [ⲛⲧⲟ]ⲟⲧⲕ 2 PsB. 239, 39.29-30. Compare the references to Early Christian alms boxes in church and the gifts brought forward after the Eucharist, discussed in Finn, *Almsgiving*, 41-47. Similar gatherings of (non-food) alms gifts seem to be the topic of 1 Keph. 158.

[141] ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲃⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲩⲥⲏ[ϩ ⲛⲥ]ⲉ̣ⲃⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϫⲙⲉ ⲉⲩⲕⲟⲥⲙⲉ: ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲃⲛ̄ ⲧ̄ⲧⲣⲁⲡⲉ̣[ⲍⲁ ⲙⲛ̄] ⲛⲉⲧϭⲱⲣϭ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲥ Hom. 28.10-12 (slightly modified translation).

[142] ⲁⲩⲥⲱⲣ ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲓⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ [ⲁ]ⲩ ..[ⲟ]ⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϣⲃⲉ̣[ⲣⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ: ⲉⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲁ̣ⲟⲅⲛⲁ ⲁⲩϣⲁϭⲉ ⲁ[ⲩⲕⲁ]ⲧⲁⲗⲩⲉ· ⲉⲓⲥ ⲧⲏⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ ⲁⲥⲧⲱϣ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲧ[ϯ ⲙ̄]ⲛⲁⲥ Hom. 29.1-4.

[143] Discussion at, Pedersen, *Studies*, 304-5. I do not understand why Pedersen follows Merkelbach's interpretation of love (ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ) in 2 PsB. 171.25-173.10 as the ritual meal rather than the virtue of love. I do think, however, that these songs could have been sung during the communal gatherings with the meal ritual. R. Merkelbach, *Mani und Sein Religionssystem* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1986), 57-8; See A. Villey, *Psaumes des errants: Écrits manichéens du Fayyūm* (Paris: Cerf, 1994), 122-3 and 401-7 on this particular psalm. On their liturgical setting in relation to the meal see pages 32-34.

[144] In P.Kell.Copt. 15.14-16 oil is received and "left [with them] for the agape" (ϩⲁ̈ⲓⲭⲓ ⲡⲁ̣ⲣ̣ⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ ⲡⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲣⲁⲍ ⲉⲓⲉ̣ ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲕⲁ̣ϣ̣ϥ ……. ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ). P.Kell.Copt. 17.22-25 also mentions oil for consumption, "we take

suggested that "the usage in the KAB is certainly compatible with the view that these offerings were intended for use in a communal meal."[145] This communal meal could have been organized with a certain periodicity and may have been the result of private donations, since individual persons were listed as responsible. In both examples, the responsible individuals were women, as the accounts mention "for alms of That" and "for alms of Tanoup," which is not so different from the earlier mentioned "*agape* of Theodora."[146]

The single exception to the pattern of *agape* gifts in the KAB is the *agape* recorded in the month Pharmouthi (roughly March/April in our calendar). This month also received special attention in another section of the account book, which discussed arrangements for Easter, called the "festival of Parmouthi" (ἑορτὴ Φαρμοῦθι, 1 *marion* of wine is recorded, about 11 liters, KAB 1717).[147] Church canons, like the fourth-century canons of Athanasius, attest that Easter was supposed to be the day *par excellence* for almsgiving.[148] The combination of factors makes it tempting to consider whether at least some of these alms gifts could have been for the festival of Easter. The clustering of the *agape* gifts in the first four months of the year, a period closer to the harvest season than to Easter, may be explained as the collection and storage of gifts before the festival. The lack of references to *agape* in the months between Choiak and Easter could then partly be explained by a sober lent season (see Table 12 on the gifts listed in the KAB).[149] Likewise, the reference to a share of Pakous, which has to be sent south of where he is "harvesting," "if he does not come by that day,"[150] suggests that there is a time frame within which the food had to be delivered. Did Pakous's share have to arrive at the same time as the celebrations in Kellis?

Month	Egyptian calendar	Indication modern calendar	List of gifts
1	Thoth 1	August 29	*Agape* gifts (KAB 88, 186, 749)
2	Paophi 1	September 28	*Agape* gifts (KAB 101, 103, 755,

much oil for the agape, in that we are many, and they consume much oil" (ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ϣⲁⲛϫⲓ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̀ⲛⲏϩ ⲁϩⲟ̀ⲩⲛ ⲁⲧⲁⲅⲁ̀ⲡⲏ ϫⲉ ⲧ̀ⲛ̄ⲁϣ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱⲛ ϩⲁϩ ⲛ̀ⲛⲏϩ). In P.Kell.Copt. 44.12 olives and grapes are mentioned and in P.Kell.Copt. 47.10 lentils and lupin seeds. The fact that cheese and wine are included in the KAB *agape* (116, 448, 940) makes it less likely that this was food given to the elect.

[145] Bagnall, *KAB*, 84.

[146] Εἰς ἀγάπη θατ KAB 106, Εἰς ἀγάπη Τανουπ KAB 940. The identification of the former with Tehat in the Coptic accounts is considered 'stretching the evidence' by the editors of the Coptic papyri. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 46.

[147] This is a more common phrase for Easter in Coptic, see J. Drescher, "The Coptic Dictionary: Additions and Corrections," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 16 (1961-62): 288. Bagnall suggests that the Easter celebration of either *Pharmouthi* 9 in the year 364 CE or those of *Pharmouthi* 26 in the year 379 CE was meant. Bagnall, *KAB*, 84.

[148] Finn, *Almsgiving*, 79.

[149] As suggested in an unpublished teaching document by Jason Magnusson, which seems to neglect the difference between the Coptic calendar and the Gregorian calendar. *Agape*-gifts without date are mentioned in KAB 106 and 116.

[150] ⲙⲡ̀ⲣ̀ϣⲓϫⲧⲁ ⲛ̀ϥⲉⲕ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ϧⲛⲁⲉⲥ ⲁ̀ⲓ̀ⲣⲉϣⲉ ⲁϩⲉ ⲡ̀ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛ ⲡⲁⲕⲟⲩⲥ ϩⲁⲣⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲧϣⲁⲧ̀ϩ ⲉ̀ϥⲕⲱⲧ̄ϥ̄ ⲉ̀ϥⲧⲏⲏ̈ ⲟⲩⲃⲉ ⲡϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲏ̄ⲙⲟ ϧⲛⲁϫⲟⲩ ⲡϥⲏⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲣⲏⲥ. "Do not bother (?) yourself about the agape. I will do it, rejoicing. Yes, our brother Pakous is south of the ditch, harvesting. If he does not come by that day, I will send his share south to him." P.Kell.Copt. 15.24-27.

			1562)
3	Hathyr 1	October 28	*Agape* gifts (KAB 448, 940, 1548, 1564)
4	Choiak 1	November 27	*Agape* gifts (KAB 119)
5	Tybi 1	December 22	—
6	Mecheir 1	January 26	—
7	Phamenoth 1	February 25	Death Mani (month of Adar)[151]
8	Pharmouthi 1	March 27	*Agape* gifts (KAB 1525) & Easter
9	Pachon 1	April 26	—
10	Pauni 1	May 26	—
11	Epeiph 1	June 25	—
12	Mesore 1	July 25	—
—	Intercalender days (Epagomenic days)	August 24–28	—

Table 12: Agape *gifts in the KAB per month and related to modern calendar.*[152]

In summary, one alternative interpretation of the *agape* in the KAB and the documentary papyri associates the designated gifts with annual celebrations like Easter and the Bema festival. Several features indicate that this may be a more plausible explanation for this meal than the daily ritual meal of the elect. First, there is the regularity in the *agape* gifts in the KAB, which suggests an annual event rather than a daily, weekly, or monthly obligation. Second, the names connected to the *agape* suggest that individual sponsors were responsible for gathering the food supplies. Additionally, as Chapter 7 will show, there are several references to Easter in the Manichaean documents from Egypt, including from Kellis, confirming that lay Manichaeans continued to celebrate a festival under this name.[153] At the same time, I have to admit that there is not enough evidence for a solid connection of the *agape* with either Easter or Bema. A careful minimalist interpretation as charitable gifts may therefore be preferable.

6.6 Conclusions

This chapter's overview of the various types of gift-giving and material support in the documentary papyri has sketched a relatively ordinary picture of village life. Economic interactions are not always spelled out and gifts were often recorded without any additional information. The absence of detailed exposés about almsgiving and the boundaries of the Manichaean community suggest that either religious groupness was not the common framework in which everyday life experiences were interpreted or that Manichaean features

[151] Listed as the 4th of *Phamenoth* in 2 PsB. 17.26 and 18.7.

[152] Indication from J. Rowlandson, ed. *Women & Society in Greek & Roman Egypt. A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xv. I am following Bagnall's indication of the dates. Bagnall, *KAB*, 82.

[153] See also the five Easter-psalms in the first (unpublished) volume of the Psalmbook. M. Krause, "Zum Aufbau des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmen-Buches," in *Manichaica Selecta I: Studies Presented to Professor Julien Ries on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen (Lovanii: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991), 183.

simply never ended up in papyrus letters.[154] While scholars of Manichaeism have highlighted passages that may have been related to the Manichaean gift exchange, I have located these gifts and transactions in the everyday world of domestic support structures, economic interactions, and the occasional charitable distribution. The blending of these various support sectors is part of the development of informal networks of care in this period. Peregrine Horden has argued that individuals in ancient societies employed a broad spectrum of resources that could be called on by the needy: the nuclear family, the household, neighbors, patrons, institutions, and more formal communities. In fact, he suggests that informal networks of mutual support and care in antiquity were typically "operating *between*, at least as much as *within*, dwellings."[155] Hampered by inconsistencies and a dearth of situational information, the individual actions and transactions are often difficult to allocate to either one of these categories. As a result, the data from the Kellis corpus is often open to multiple interpretations, depending on the weight given to external descriptions of Manichaean giving practices (like those in the *Kephalaia* or in the work of Augustine).

This brings us to Augustine's claims on the limits of Manichaean gift exchange and the formation of the Manichaean community through gifts. The plurality of the types of gifts attested in the Kellis corpus suggests that Augustine's description cannot be held as the normative framework for the lives of these Manichaeans. This is, first, because of the rhetorical nature of Augustine's remarks. His claim that Manichaeans could only give to the elect, or otherwise would have murdered the Living Soul, may have been the logical consequence of some of their teaching, but it also served within Augustine's polemic against Manichaean indulgence and heartlessness. Second, it is methodologically unsound to transpose this prohibition from one historical context to another without further examination. One Kellis letter, although fragmentary, seems to suggest that charity to widows and orphans was practiced by some of the Manichaeans in the oasis. Other types of gifts, such as support within the household or economic interactions, show no trace of exclusivity. It is most probable that these Manichaeans interacted with their neighbors without restricting their transactions to fellow Manichaeans only. In other words, Majella Franzmann's understanding of exclusive Manichaean communities as constituted by strictly demarcated boundaries seems to be without direct factual support in this corpus of texts.[156]

A final conclusion relates to the specific geographical setting. Due to the distance between the oasis and the Nile valley, the Manichaean elect were mostly absent from the village. This left the community in Kellis with the elect's letters and the assurance of their prayers. Alms were requested, and probably also given, over a distance. As consequence, these elect became incorporated in a domestic network of support and long-distance

---

[154] Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 91.

[155] P. Horden, "Household Care and Informal Networks. Comparisons and Continuities from Antiquity to the Present," in *The Locus of Care: Families, Communities, Institutions, and the Provision of Welfare since Antiquity*, ed. P. Horden and R. Smith (London: Taylor and Francis, 1997), 39.

[156] Franzmann, "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving," 42 states: "the majority of cases of almsgiving documented for the Manichaean community at Kellis appear to bear out the truth of Augustine's statements that community almsgiving, at least with food and drink, was completely exclusive."

economic interactions. What we witness, therefore, in the Kellis letters, is the disintegration of the central position of the elect. Although they were the only vehicles of salvation in the Manichaean ideology, their limited role in Kellis suggests that the Manichaean Kellites lived differently because of their absence. Most noticeable is the absence of secure evidence for a daily ritual meal. The distance between the elect and catechumens must have made it difficult to perform this soteriological ritual. Additionally, the exchange of gifts between catechumens and the single chapter on almsgiving to catechumens in the *Kephalaia* may point to an alternative tradition, with strong emphasis on lay participation.

Chapter 7. The Deacon's Practice: Manichaean Gatherings and Psalms

> They said … a deacon who was turned away from there, the one who … while he was with me, I used to argue with him daily. Because during his practice he would be angry with me saying: what do you have against me? (Makarios in P.Kell.Copt. 19.47–51).[1]

7.1 Introduction

Makarios comes across as a difficult person. His letters are filled with complaints, revealing conflicts with his wife and, in one instance, with a deacon. For some reason, he informed his family in the oasis of a conflict that he had on a "daily" (ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ) basis with an otherwise unidentified deacon. Whether the conflict arose over the deacon's practice or over something else that happened during this "practice" (ⲡⲧⲣⲉϥⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ) remains uncertain. Despite this uncertainty, this small papyrological vignette points to the existence of an ecclesiastical structure with regular gatherings. If elect and catechumens met on a daily basis, these moments of groupness could lead to strong identification with the community, or to situations of internal conflict between elect and catechumens.

The *Kephalaia* offers another glimpse into the communal gatherings of Manichaeans. In one of the chapters, a Manichaean elect recalls how he presided over a meeting of fifty elect. In his leadership role, he watched over their daily fasting, which brought into existence a large number of angels (1 Keph. 81).[2] Again, the actual situation and question is difficult to reconstruct, but the context matters. The passage presupposes a gathering of elect who meet regularly on "the Lord's day" (i.e., the Sunday). Rather than pursuing an ascetic lifestyle in private or during long missionary journeys, the elect in this passage came together for their ascetic practice. Interestingly, no reference is made to the presence of catechumens. In a third text, situated in around the same time, Augustine made fun of a failed attempt to make several Manichaean elect live together in one house. The initiative by the catechumen Constantius in the city of Rome failed, according to Augustine, because the elect could not keep the Manichaean rule of life. Conflict broke out among the elect, exposing their most horrible behavior for all to see.[3] In contrast to the previous two texts, this story presupposes that elect lived dispersed lives, scattered over the city. The problems arose only when they had to live together for a longer period of time, which made their otherwise hidden lax attitude visible to their lay supporters. Despite the obvious rhetorical agenda of Augustine,

---

[1] ⲡⲁϫⲉⲩ […..] ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ ⲉϥⲁⲩⲡⲁⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲛⲟ ⲡⲉⲧⲁⲩϩⲁ̣[…..ⲉ]ϥⲣⲁⲧⲏⲓ ⲛⲉϣⲁⲓⲛⲓϣⲉ ⲛⲙ̄ⲛⲉϥ ⲙ̄ⲛⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ϩⲙ [ⲡⲧⲣⲉϥⲙⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲁ ϣⲁϥⲃⲱⲗ̄ⲕ ⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲁϩⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲙ̄ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲓ. (slightly modified translation). The interpretation and translation of this passage is difficult. I take ϩⲙ [ⲡⲧⲣⲉϥⲙⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲁ to mean "during his practice" instead of "because in his practice." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 165.

[2] This chapter is discussed together with 1 Keph. 88 as examples of the tension between the elect and catechumens in Baker-Brian, "Mass and Elite," 165-84.

[3] The story if found in Augustine, *Mor. Manich.* 10.74, translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 36.

these three short narratives do provide insight into the group styles of the Manichaeans. Communal gatherings are presented in all three stories without much further ado. The conflicts, or potential conflicts, are the focus of what is being told, not the gathering itself.

Regular communal gatherings, especially those that take place on a daily or weekly basis, were not the most common way of organizing religion in antiquity. Most ritual actions in Greek, Roman, and Egyptian religion were performed by specialists, on specific occasions, with a limited audience. Zoroastrians, likewise, gathered as a family, or for specific rituals, but not regularly as a wider community.[4] Philosophical groups, voluntary associations, and some elective cults (like those associated with Isis or Mithras) held communal gatherings with meals in small groups, but we do not know how often. Christians and Jews are known to have held regular gatherings, but it is unknown to what extent everyone participated in these meetings. In fact, the well-known group style with weekly gatherings cannot have characterized the majority of these people's lives, as the church buildings were far too small to include more than five percent of the population.[5] Instead, a myriad of other occasions must have provided opportunities to gather, but this was often outside, at graveyards and in connection with tombs of martyrs or other saints.[6] Another group style, cenobitic monasticism, developed frequent gatherings as one of its hallmark characteristics.[7] Building on this general (and admittedly rough) pattern, this chapter will examine the evidence for types of communal Manichaean gatherings. I will argue that a distinct Manichaean group-identification was modeled through gatherings and the participation in ritualized practices, such as reading and psalm singing. Taking part in collective meetings created and sustained the affiliation of the individuals with the imagined community and offered moments of intensified collective belonging and emotional arousal that contributed to the rise of a distinct Manichaean group.

This chapter will present two repetitive practices of the Kellis community: (1) communal gatherings and (2) psalm singing. Two additional practices, (3) communal reading and (4) book production, will be discussed in Chapter 9. This chapter will approach psalm singing during communal gatherings as constituting performed identifications, during which the participants enacted roles in the cosmological narrative and identified

---

[4] On the types of Zoroastrianism(s), see de Jong's discussion of the role of religion at the court. A. F. de Jong, "Sub Specie Maiestatis: Reflections on Sasanian Court Rituals," in *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, ed. M. Stausberg (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 345-65. Seasonal festivals (the Gahambar) are the main exception to Zoroastrianism's non-congregational nature.

[5] MacMullen, *The Second Church*, 97-98 rejects the "modern model" of preachers in front of a large congegration attending the ceremony. He concludes that there existed two forms of Christianity, one in the city and another beyond the city walls. On the other hand, there are several Early Christian authors who refer to daily prayers. Tertullian mentions morning and evening prayers, while the Apostolic Tradition refers to five moments of daily prayer. M. E. Johnson, "Worship, Practice and Belief," in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Ph. F. Esler (London: Routledge, 2000), 484-5; V. A. Alikin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 79-102.

[6] Cf. for ancient Judaism, J. N. Lightstone, *The Commerce of the Sacred* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

[7] A. Veilleux, *La liturgie dans le cénobitisme pachômien au quatrième siècle* (Roma: Libreria Herder, 1968); Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt*.

themselves deeply with features of Manichaean teaching. Section 7.2 will lay out the scarce extant Kellis evidence for these gatherings. This is followed by a reinterpretation of the relation between Manichaeans and Christians in the village and an examination of the evidence for a Manichaean monastery. Finally, section 7.5 will combine these insights to argue that distinct religious groupness was fabricated through songs.

7.2 Communal Gatherings

While previous studies have assembled evidence for various types of Manichaean communal gatherings, there is no systematic study of the context and frequency of these events. While I cannot fill this gap, I do discern four types of gatherings: incidental gatherings, daily communal rituals, weekly gatherings, and annual celebrations. The methodological choice against expanding information from Iranian or Chinese sources beyond their cultural and linguistic context, as formulated in Chapter 1, is relevant in this instance, as Gregor Wurst has highlighted major differences between the eastern Manichaean calendar and the flimsy evidence for communal gatherings in the Coptic Manichaean documents.[8] I will therefore not take uniformity of practice for granted, but take an inventory of regional and local traditions before embarking on transregional or transhistorical comparisons.[9]

7.2.1 Incidental Communal Gatherings

We know about quite a number of situations that entailed incidental gatherings of Manichaeans for specifically religious aims. When catechumens traveled along with members of the elect, this would have involved regular interaction about distinct Manichaean topics and practices. Presumably, they would have prayed together, held their confession rituals, and participated in almsgiving and the ritual meal. Unfortunately, there is no detailed evidence for these interactions between catechumens and elect while traveling. The most common assumption is that they were involved in mission or proselytizing, presumably because Christian authors warned against the missionary practice of Manichaeans.[10] Authentic Manichaean sources, however, are mostly silent about what happened during missionary journeys, apart from the hagiographical stories about Mani and

---

[8] G. Wurst, *Das Bemafest der ägyptischen Manichäer* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1995), 33. I will refrain from giving extensive parallels from Early Christian literature. There have been many studies into the frequency and liturgy, of Christian gatherings. A general summary is found in Alikin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering*. For gatherings and prayer-times in the monastic literature from Egypt, see A. Müller, "The Cult in the Cell," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 18-19, no. 1 (2017): 187-200. I would be hesitant to draw direct connections, but it is noteworthy to see the similarities, for example in the hour appointed for prayer and psalm singing in the division of the day and night, a practice that is already found in the Didache (Did. 8.3 on praying the Lord's prayer in the morning, at noon and in the evening). C. Osiek, "The Self-Defining Praxis of the Developing *Ecclesia*," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. M. M. Mitchell and F. M. Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 274-92.

[9] The comparison with Ancient Christianity, moreover, is only of limited use, as there exist widely divergent opinions on the frequency and nature of Christian gatherings. G. Rouwhorst, "The Reading of Scripture in Early Christian Liturgy," in *What Athens Has to Do with Jerusalem. Essays on Classical, Jewish, and Early Christian Art and Archaeology in Honor of Gideon Foerster*, ed. L. C. Rutgers (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 305-31.

[10] Missionary purpose is assumed in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 75; Mirecki, "Scribal Magic," 143-4.

his first generation of disciples. As seen in Chapter 4, the Kellis letters sometimes refer to traveling with the elect, but they never inform us about what happened during these trips. As much as we would have liked Matthaios and Piene to tell us more intimately about the purpose of these trips and the interactions they had with the elect, the details escape us.

A second set of incidental communal gatherings will be discussed in the next chapter, as Matthaios wrote about members of the elect who should have gathered around the body of "my great mother" (P.Kell.Copt. 25). This gathering was either a ritual to support her in her final hours, or a commemoration ritual aiding the journey of her soul through the heavenly spheres. Several of the psalms found in Kellis give a glimpse into the liturgy of the commemoration, but almost nothing is known about actual life-cycle rituals such as burials. Whether or not commemoration rituals were performed for everyone or only for a selected few is unknown. A similar lack of information characterizes situations in which spells, amulets, and horoscopes were used. Was it a family affair? Would individuals have hired a religious specialist to visit them? The performance of these rituals could have been related to the indications in the calendars of good and bad days, found at House 3 (P.Kell.Gr. 82 and 83, discussed in Chapter 3).

Finally, it is likely that many ritual actions did not require a communal gathering beyond the domestic context of the family, who could hire a ritual specialist for specific purposes. In both examples of incidental gatherings, the group style is different from the reports sketched in the introduction of this chapter.

7.2.2 Daily Communal Gatherings

Far more is known about daily gatherings, which have been described and regulated in documents from the eastern and western Manichaean tradition. Chapter 6 has highlighted the daily obligation of almsgiving for the ritual meal, which must have been combined with one of the daily prayers during sunset. Arabic sources list four moments of prayer (for the catechumens, seven for the elect), of which the last must have coincided with the meal ritual.[11]

In the *Kephalaia*'s description of perfect catechumens, this *daily* observance is emphasized, including their daily communion with the elect:

> The hours of prayer are kept by him; he observes them and comes daily to prayer. Hour by hour and day by day, all these hours of prayer will [...] his fasting, and his alms that he gives on every day of the year. The alms will be counted [...] to his good, and the fasting that he has performed, and the garment that he has put upon

[11] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 39, 52, 129, 139-40, 158. At page 143 he concludes "Although some sources suggest that Auditors delivered foods to the ritual locale at their convenience throughout the day, and did not remain for the ceremony (e.g., M 77), the majority of evidence points to the presence of Auditors just before the meal itself, at the time corresponding to their last obligatory prayer period of the day." Greek and Middle Persian sources only mention three moments of prayer for catechumens (see below on the daily prayers). F. de Blois, "The Manichaean Daily Prayers," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 49-54.

> the saints. A daily communion. And they fellowship with them in their fasting and their good.[12]

Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving were not only individual practices, but they were performed communally. The *Kephalaia*, however, mainly discusses almsgiving and its soteriological effect, without detailing the observed procedures. By gleaning together fragmentary evidence from various sources, it seems that the catechumens only briefly entered to bring their gifts and left the room before the actual meal took place, unless they participated in the weekly confession rituals. Songs and prayers must have been part of the liturgy, but this can only be proven in songs from the eastern Manichaean tradition.[13] In the Coptic Psalmbook there is one song, listed among the Psalms of the Wanderers, which may have been sung during the ritual meal, as it refers to the "holy fruits" (ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ), the almsgiving, daily weeping, and "psalm singing" (ϩ̄ϒⲁⲗⲉ).[14]

Where daily observance of various ritual moments characterized the lives of Manichaean catechumens, there was a need for time management. How could ordinary people have managed their religious commitments as well as their work and other everyday obligations? Iris Colditz has highlighted Manichaean reflections on this problem. Their solution was to divide the day into three parts: one for government duties, one for earning one's living, and a last part for the service to the elect.[15] We do not know how widespread this tripartite schedule was, but the existence of such reflections and systematizations suggests that in some regions, the lives of catechumens must have been highly defined by Manichaeanness—or were thought of as highly religious.

The Kellis papyri, on the other hand, contain few indications of daily gatherings, and none of this tripartite division of the day. In Chapter 6, I have argued against the interpretation of the *agape* as the daily ritual meal, which leaves hardly any concrete evidence for communal gatherings on a daily basis. What we do have is a wooden tablet with a copy

---

[12] ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲩⲛⲱϧⲛⲏ ϫⲁⲁⲛϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲥⲡⲁⲣⲁⲧ[ⲏⲣ]ⲏ̣ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲁⲡⲱϧⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲛⲛⲉ ⲕⲁ ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ[ⲟⲩ] ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲓⲟⲩⲛⲁⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄[ϧⲗ]ⲏⲗ ⲥⲉⲛⲁ .. ⲟⲩⲁⲕ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲥⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲧⲉⲥⲛⲏⲧϩ̣[ⲁⲉ ⲉⲧϥ]ϯ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲥ ϩ[ⲛ̄] ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲁⲛⲡⲉ ⲥⲉⲛ[ⲁⲱ]ⲡ [ⲛⲛⲏ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲏⲁⲉ … ⲓϫⲛ̄ ⲛⲉϥⲁⲅⲁⲑⲟⲛ ⲧⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲉⲉⲥ ⲧϩ[ⲃ]ⲥⲱ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉⲥ ϩⲓϫⲱⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲟⲩⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓⲁ ⲛⲛⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲉⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛ ⲡ̀ⲟ̀ⲩ̀ⲣ̀[ⲁⲑⲟ]ⲛ̣. 1 Keph. 91, 233.12-19.

[13] Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1280 states: "Both passages in Hegemonius seem to imply that the elect's meal was secret for the catechumens." BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 137-57 on the liturgy, in particular 139-40 on the Chinese Hymnscroll and page 152 on a Sogdian liturgy with instructions for readings and songs. Sundermann, "A Manichaean Liturgical Instruction," 204 citing the Monastery Scroll and the newly published M546 fragment that seems to give liturgical instructions. Various hymns are mentioned in this texts, sung by those who come to bring their alms and, in response to the alms-service, by the elect. J. D. BeDuhn, "The Cantillated Manichaean Meal Hymns of the Turfan Collection," in *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, ed. D. Durkin-Meisterernst, et al. (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004), 30-36.

[14] 2 PsB. 162.21-163.33, citation from lines 22, 27 and 29. BeDuhn correctly points out that Allberry mistakenly translated "compassion" instead of "almsgiving" ([ⲟ]ⲩⲉⲁⲩ ⲛ̄ϯⲙ̄ⲧⲏⲁⲉ). BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 148n24. ϩ̄ϒⲁⲗⲉ is translated by Allberry as "making music."

[15] Colditz, "Manichaean Time-Management," 87 citing 2 PsB. 222.5-10 and similar texts from the Eastern tradition (such as Sogdian M135,39–63, for which she cites Zoroastrian parallels).

of the prayers (see section 7.5.2 below) that were supposedly prayed several times a day. Likewise, the psalms found on papyrus and wood (section 7.5.1 below) may have been sung at various moments, in smaller or larger communal settings. There is, however, no indication in the personal letters about these communal gatherings, which leaves the question open as to whether the Manichaeans of Kellis actually performed these daily communal rituals, or took them for granted and simply never mentioned them in their personal letters.

7.2.3 Weekly Communal Gatherings

Weekly gatherings took place on Sunday and Monday. The day of the sun was characterized by fasting for the catechumens (the elect fasted more often), as the *Kephalaia* states: "[T]hey who have not strength to fast daily should make their fast on the Lord's day."[16] Psalms sung on the Lord's day are known from both the western and the eastern Manichaean tradition.[17] A wonderful illustration of what happened during these gatherings is found in the description of a Manichaean leader under whose leadership fifty elect gathered to fast (1 Keph. 81, cited in the introduction). He described how "seven angels shall be engendered by the fasting of each one of the elect; and not only the elect but the catechumens engender them on the Lord's day," so that each Sunday at least 350 angels were engendered. After three Sundays, the leader "gave thanks for them on account of the great profit and good that I had achieved."[18] Following this Sunday gathering, the day of the moon was set apart for the weekly confession of sins, a practice that they conceived of as a specific gift of Mani himself.[19] These gatherings are referred to in the *Kephalaia* as a set of "second" fifty days.[20] The Middle Persian and Parthian Monday hymns show that psalm singing constituted a large part of the ceremony. Communal reading and preaching also belonged to the liturgy, which was otherwise focused on the actual confession rituals of elect and catechumens.[21] References to the confession ritual on a Monday in western sources are scarce, but it may have been

---

[16] ⲛⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ ϭⲁⲛ [ⲙⲛⲁⲩ ⲁⲛⲏⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ]ⲙⲛⲛⲉ ϣⲁⲩ⿱ⲣⲛⲏⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ϩⲱⲱⲩ [ϩⲙ] ⲡϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁⲕⲏ 1 Keph. 79, 191.31-192.1. cf. 1 Keph. 109, 262.15-21.

[17] Including the unpublished hymns from first part of the Psalmbook. Iranian examples are published in C. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag: Manichäische Festtagshymnen. Edition der Mittelpersischen und Parthischen Sonntags-, Montags- und Bemahymnen* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 135-36. Asmussen argued that "the Manichaean [confessional] texts must be considered and studied as an exclusive Central Asian phenomenon." Asmussen, *Xuāstvānīft*, 124. This position is rejected in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 143.

[18] ϣⲁⲩϫⲡⲟ ⲥⲁϣϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛⲧⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲡⲟⲩ[ⲉ ⲡⲟⲩ]ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲟⲩ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲧⲉ ⲁⲗ[ⲗⲁ ⲛ]ⲕⲁⲧⲏϫⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ϫⲡⲟ ⲙ̣ⲛⲁⲩ ⲙⲡϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁ[ⲕⲏ ….and ..ⲁ̈ⲓ[ⲣ̄ϫⲁⲣⲓⲍ̣ⲉ ⲛ̣̀ⲉ̣ⲩ] ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲛⲁϩ ⲛϩ̣ⲏⲩ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲡⲁϩⲁⲑ[ⲟⲛ] ⲉⲧⲁ̈ⲓⲉⲉϥ. 1 Keph 81. 193.29-31 and 194.12 (translation slightly modified).

[19] C. Reck, "Some Remarks on the Monday and Bema Hymns of the German Turfan Collection," in *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi "Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico,"* ed. A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 300-01.

[20] 1 Keph. 109, 262.12, 19-20, 263.28 discussed in E. Smagina, "Some Words with Unknown Meaning in Coptic Manichaean Texts," *Enchoria* 17 (1990): 122. Translated and referred to as Mondays by Reck, who has also gathered other references to this Monday gathering Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 10-14 and passim.

[21] For the liturgy see the reconstruction of Henning in Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 12-13.

alluded to in the Psalmbook as the "day of forgiveness of sins."[22] This ritual took place either early in the morning after the fast of the Sunday, or around sunset, combined with the delivery of the alms for the evening meal.

The texts from the eastern Manichaean tradition reveal a highly formalized confession, with recurring weekly recitations of sinfulness without strong indications of personalized confessions or penalties.[23] These rituals worked as a technique to discipline the self, not through coercion, but through self-examination and repetition. Manichaean elect and catechumens observed their deeds and aimed to distinguish good from evil in themselves. Through the "extensive cataloguing of offenses," Manichaeans were engaged in what BeDuhn called a "self-forming process" in which the self and accompanying behavior was shaped into the correct shape.[24] This account of the function and meaning of confession rituals is largely based on Augustine's testimony and Middle Persian, Turkic, and Sogdian confessional texts. Coptic material offers less information on confession, even though the *Kephalaia* suggests that failure to confess could result in hindrances after death (1 Keph. 128, 305.19–24).[25]

Other types of gatherings are alluded to in the Kellis papyri. One of the letters makes clear that the Teacher taught Piene to read (and write?) Latin and he "made him read in every church" (ⲉϥⲧⲣⲉϥϣⲱ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 25.46). This passage, moreover, has to be read in light of another passage that mentions Ision the lector, who ordered a brand new notebook (P.Kell.Gr. 67.21). Clearly, these Kellites participated in gatherings with a need for trained readers. The reading of Piene and Ision in the church may, furthermore, have been related to the ambiguous "service for the church" that had to be performed for the sake of (?) two young orphaned girls (ⲡⲱⲛϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 73.16–17). Presumably, this "service" designated some sort of ritual, as the consequences were described as "a hard burden at the judgement" and "so that we may attain life eternal."[26] Read in tandem, these passages convey the impression of frequent gatherings with readings, prayer, and other communal rituals.

Most of the papyri and wooden tablets with psalms and prayers found at Kellis would have played a role in these communal gatherings. In Chapter 9, I will argue that the content and materiality of some of the wooden boards with psalms suggest that they were

---

[22] 2 PsB. 140.19-24 discussed at Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 31-32; J. D. BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," in *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature*, ed. A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J. D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 277-8.

[23] BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," 284.

[24] J. D. BeDuhn, "The Near Eastern Connections of Manichaeans Confessionary Practice," *Proceedings of the ARAM Eighteenth International Conference: the Manichaeans* 16, no. 2 (2004): 177.

[25] Funk's German translation of this fragmentary chapter is entitled "über die Buße (μετάνοια)," but the actual passage does not make clear whether indeed penance is discussed or confession and forgiveness in general. I understand this chapter (as well as the following about envy) as Manichaean parallels to Early Christian discourse on forgiveness, as 1 Keph. 128, 305.28 and 30 seem to allude to the biblical question about how often someone should grant forgiveness (cf. Mt. 18).

[26] Ϫⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡⲱⲛϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉⲓⲱⲧⲏ ϫⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡϩⲉⲡ…. ϫⲉ ⲉⲛⲁⲡϩ ⲡⲱⲛϩ ⲛⲱϣϣ [ⲛⲏϩⲉ] P.Kell.Copt. 73.16-17, 23.

used in liturgical settings. Rather than a group style associated with the family or itinerant religious specialists, these texts derived from settings with a more formalized or regulated liturgy.

The final passage with information on communal gatherings has already been cited at the outset of the chapter. Makarios wrote to his family, informing them about a conflict with "a deacon" (ⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ), presumably a Manichaean elect or otherwise a Christian church official, taking place "during his practice":

> They said … a deacon who was turned away from there, the one who … while he was with me, I used to argue with him daily. Because during his practice he would be angry with me saying: what do you have against me?[27]

It seems that Makarios had a conflict during the deacon's religious (?) "practice" (ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ). The Coptic term ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ is attested several times in other Manichaean documents, but unfortunately it never refers to a specific ritual, which makes it difficult to determine the nature of the situation in which Makarios came into conflict with the deacon.[28]

Another complication is that deacons are not common in the Manichaean church hierarchy. They do not appear in the standardized lists of twelve teachers, seventy-two bishops, and 360 presbyters. Sometimes, however, they seem to have taken the place of the bishops (1 Keph. 9, 42.2–8, Hom 22.3–7). This may indicate that the Manichaean church structure was adapted under influence of the Christian hierarchical structure.[29] If we assume the deacon was a Manichaean elect, the conflict most likely arose during a communal gathering in which elect and catechumens came together. The adjective "daily" (ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ) may have been an exaggeration, but we cannot exclude the possibility that Makarios was in daily contact with the elect during his time in the Nile valley.

One tentative interpretation is to connect this passage with the confession rituals on Mondays. For Jason BeDuhn, this passage indicates the tension between the catechumen and the elect, who suffered the "scrutinizing gaze of the laypeople."[30] These tensions could have been the result of shared living, as in Augustine's story about the communal house in Rome,

---

[27] P.Kell.Copt. 19.47-51. See the Coptic text and notes at the epigraph of this chapter.

[28] [ϩ]ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲧⲱϣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲏⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲏ ⲉⲧⲙⲏⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲓϫ̀ⲱⲕⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ̀ⲩⲭⲏ ϩⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲃⲱ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ. 2 PsB. 101.28 "through such an order and through this constant exercise, I have flavoured my soul in this divine teaching." 1 Keph. 142.23 is about the "practices of life's concerns" (ⲛ̄ⲧ̀ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ ⲛ̄ⲙ̀ⲣⲁⲩϣ ⲙ̄ⲡⲃⲓ[ⲟ]ⲥ) instead of ritual. In Egyptian Christian texts, the term is used for prayer, meditation and reading, for example in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (John the Dwarf 35, Zeno 5, etc.).

[29] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 75. Lim notes the curious passage in Augustine's epistles where the laying on of hands is attributed to "priests or bishops or deacons" (*presbyteris uel episcopis aut diaconis*). Augustine, *Ep*. 236. Lim, "Unity and Diversity," 234n10 and 237. Similar observations about the ambiguity of this title in relation to the position of the bishops are discussed by Leurini, who suggests that Western Manichaeans adopted the title bishop because within a Christian milieu it would have been impossible to accept the superiority of the deacon over the presbyter. Leurini, *The Manichaean Church*, 190-212. The deacon, in the Kellis passage, is described as someone who "was turned away from there," which suggests a level of rejection from an unknown third party (ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ ⲉϩⲁⲩⲡⲁⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟ P.Kell.Copt. 19.48).

[30] BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting," 264-5.

but other potential sources of conflict should not be overlooked.[31] Manichaean texts instructed catechumens and elect to observe the behavior of those in their community. One of the passages in Mani's letters, discovered among the papyri remains in Kellis, contains instructions regarding this pastoral care and policing:

> His sins are drawn to his brother, the one in whom he sees this sin, from his mouth to the ear of his brother; so that he will speak with him in gentleness, with an embrace between him and his brother […] is my child, until he finds the way to lead him (?) away from the sin by good advice (lit: "whisper") in which there is no envy.[32]

Emphasizing that even the children who have gone astray will receive grace, the text continues: "[H]e will bring them to repentance and forgive them their sins."[33] Therefore, catechumens are instructed to live in peace and bear up with the brothers "whom you serve."[34] Where the initial part of the letter seems to deal with pastoral care among the brothers (i.e., the elect), the final citation refers to either the elect with a specific pastoral duty or the catechumens who served the brothers. Both options presuppose community gatherings in which feedback and introspection were considered appropriate. Such a marked religious setting with confession and correction potentially contributed to rising tension and conflict. This may have led to the argument between Makarios and a deacon, although the content of their conflict remains unknown.

7.2.4 Annual Communal Gatherings

The third type of communal gathering fundamentally structured the Manichaean calendar. Eastern Manichaean sources inform us about a cycle of communal fasts, culminating in the annual Bema festival, which lasted for four days, presumably at the end of a month of fasting.[35] During this festival, the passion of Mani was commemorated.[36] For four days,

---

[31] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 36.

[32] ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ϥ̣ⲛ̣ⲁⲃ̣ⲉ̣ [ⲥ]ⲏ̣ⲕ̣ ϣ̣ⲁ̣ⲡ̣ⲉϥⲥⲁⲛ ⲡ̣ⲉⲧ̣ⲉϥⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲡⲛⲁⲃ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̄ϩⲉⲧ̄ϥ̄ ϫⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧϥⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ ⲁ̣ⲡ̣[ⲙ]ⲉ̣ⲥ̣ϫⲉ ⲛ̣̄ⲡ̣ⲉ̣ϥⲥⲁⲛ ⲛ̣ϥ̣’ⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲛⲏ̄ⲛⲉ[ϥ ϩ]ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲏ̄ⲧϩ̣ϫ̣’ⲟ̣ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ ⲛ̣̄ⲏ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲥⲡⲁⲥⲛ̣[ⲟⲥ] ⲟⲩⲧⲱϥ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ …[…]ⲡⲁϣ̣ⲏ̣ⲣⲉ ⲡⲉ: ϣⲁⲧ’ϥ̣ⲛ̣̄ [……].’ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲛⲁⲃⲉ ϩⲛ̣̄ⲟ̣ⲩⲕ̣̣ⲉ̣ⲥ̣ⲕ̣ⲥ̣ ⲉ̣ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲛⲟⲩϥ ⲉⲛⲏ̄ ϕ̣ⲣ̣ⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧϥ… P.Kell.Copt. 53, 32.16-24 (slightly modified translation).

[33] ⲛ̣ϥ̣̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲁⲧⲙⲉⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲛⲟⲓⲁ ⲛ̣ϥ̣̄ⲣ̄ [ⲡⲕⲉ]ⲕ̣ⲱ̣ ⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲛ̣[ⲁ]ⲃ̣[ⲉ] P.Kell.Copt. 53, 41.3-4.

[34] ⲛⲉⲕⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲉⲧⲕ’ϣ̣̄ϣ̣ⲉ ⲛⲉⲩ. P.Kell.Copt. 53, 42.14-15.

[35] The Manichaean calendar is not uncontested, especially the sequence and number of Yimki-celebrations has been discussed. During these two-day fasts, martyrs from the Manichaean traditions were commemorated. W. Sundermann, "Bema." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last Updated: December 15, 1989, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bema-festival-manicheans (accessed January 10, 2017); W. Sundermann, "Festivals II. Manichean." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: January 26, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/festivals-ii (accessed January 10, 2017), citing W. Henning, "The Manichaean Fasts," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1945): 148; C. R. C. Allberry, "Das manichäische Bema-Fest," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche wissenschaft* 37 (1938): 2-10; J. P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings* (Delmar: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975), 178, 198. Wurst considers the month of fasting a late development, not present in the Western Manichaean tradition Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 23-28.

[36] Although it was also conceived of as an end-of-year festival with eschatological overtones or a festival of gnosis Sundermann, "Bema."; J. Ries, "La fête de bêma dans l'église de Mani," *Revue d'etudes augustiniennes*

catechumens and elect would fast, pray, sing, and refrain from all worldly activities.[37] The liturgy of the festival has been preserved in various Iranian languages, with one version published in 1936 as the *Bet- und Beichtbuch*.[38] These liturgical texts can, moreover, be read in dialogue with the large number of Bema hymns and psalms in various languages.[39]

Before turning to the Bema festival and the Coptic Bema psalms, we should stop to consider the existence of a series of communal vigils in Coptic Manichaean documents.[40] A fragmentary passage in the Psalmbook mentions the "day of.. Sunday… the redemption of the Catechumens. O Monday … the day of the forgiveness of sins" and continues to list the "first vigil" and "second vigil" (ⲡϣⲁⲣⲡ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲛⲟⲥ, ⲡⲛⲁϩⲭⲛⲉⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲛⲟⲥ).[41] The nature and occasion of these gatherings, as well as their relation to the Yimki fasts of the eastern tradition, is not clear. The Yimki fasts were a series of double fast days to commemorate Manichaean martyrs, a practice that is unattested in the Coptic Manichaica. The publication of the "psalms of the vigil" from the first part of the Psalmbook may shed more light on the vigils of 2 PsB. 140.25 and 28.[42] Until that time, it remains uncertain how Egyptian Manichaeans would have prepared themselves for the Bema festival.

The celebration of the Bema festival in the western Manichaean tradition took one day instead of four, but is still widely attested in the sources. The Coptic Psalmbook, for instance, contains a large number of Bema psalms. At least one of these psalms was also found at Kellis (T.Kell.Copt. 4, side a, parallel with Bema Psalm 222 of the Medinet Madi

---

et patristiques 22, no. 3-4 (1976): 226, 231. The conceptualization of Mani's death and salvation as constituting a "new year," may have developed into a New Year festival as attested in Manichaean letters from Bäzäklik. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 34; Yoshida, "Manichaean Sogdian Letters," 233-36.

[37] Colditz, "Manichaean Time-Management," 78.

[38] W. Henning, "Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch," *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin. Phil. Hist. Klasse* 10 (1936): 1-143. English translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road,* 133-144.

[39] The parallel between the Manichaean Yimki fasts and the Zoroastirian Gahanbar, culminating in the Nowruz (New Year) festival, has been noted frequently. Klimkeit, *Gnosis at the Silk Road,* 33n25.

[40] The first indication has been found by Böhlig in an unpublished section of the Psalmbook, mentioning the ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲛⲟⲥ (vigil) psalms, which he takes as evidence for the Yimki-fasts. A. Böhlig, "Neue Initiativen zur erschließung der koptisch-manichäischen Bibliothek von Medinet Madi," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 80, no. 3 (1989): 146; A. Böhlig, "Zur Facsimileausgabe der Dubliner Manichaica," in *Studia Manichaica. II. Internationaler Kongreß Zum Manichäismus*, ed. G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 72-75. The second and more convincing indication has been found by Gregor Wurst at the end of the Psalms of the wanderers. This seems to have been a fragmentary outline of a hymnic version of the festal calendar, mentioning the Sundays and the Mondays and several vigils and days (ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲛⲟⲥ, not the Yimki celebrations but vigils, according to Wurst, even though the vigils correspond to the first Yimki-fast for the First Man). Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 29, 30-31; BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," 277-8 points to a passage of Leo the Great of Rome reporting on the Manichaean ritual observance of the Sunday and the Monday.

[41] ⲡϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̀ⲟ̀ⲩ…ⲧ[ⲕ]ⲩⲣⲓⲁⲕⲏ…ⲡⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲕ̀ⲁ̀ⲧ̀ⲏ̀ϫ̀ⲟ̀ⲩⲙ̀ⲉ̀ⲛ̀ⲟ̀ⲥ̀ ⲧ̀ⲁ̀ⲉ̀ⲩ̀ⲧ̀ⲉ̀[ⲣⲁ…] ⲡϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲕⲁ ⲛⲁⲃⲉ. 2 PsB. 140.19-23. The vigils are mentioned in line 25 and 28. Reconstruction and translation in German at Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 31-32.

[42] Sundermann, "Festivals II. Manichean."

Psalmbook).[43] These songs commemorate Mani's suffering and death, but also carry strong eschatological overtones. Bema Psalm 222 characterized the *bema* (the seat of Mani) as "a landing place of your days, a place of cleansing of your life, a chest filled with teaching, a ladder to the heights, a counting balance of your deeds."[44] The *bema* was a five-step elevation or platform representing the judgment seat of Jesus, onto which Mani would descend during the festival. After the celebrations, the souls of the Manichaeans were imagined to ascent up the steps of the *bema* into the Light (2 PsB. 7.32, 22.6–10).[45]

The *bema* is not only a place of forgiveness and judgment, but also one of teaching. Nils Arne Pedersen, following Anton Baumstark, has shown that the *Sermon on the Great War* (Hom. 7.8–42.8) was read aloud at the festival, as were narratives of the life of Jesus.[46] At least some of the Bema psalms share this didactic purpose, as entire sections of the life and suffering of Mani were sung during the festival (Bema Psalm 226).[47] Psalms like Bema Psalm 237 show how despite the central role of Jesus as the eschatological judge on Mani's throne, other Manichaean supernatural entities were also praised. The festival and these songs functioned, therefore, not only as "a ladder to the heights" (ⲟⲩϭⲗⲟϭⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲓⲥⲉ) contributing to salvation, but also strongly as a "chest filled with teaching" (ⲟⲩⲕⲓⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ), describing and defining Manichaean history, cosmology, and the regulations for a correct Manichaean life (2 PsB. 8.1–4).[48] They served as intense moment of groupness, defining and describing the desired behavior in terms that shaped the world view of the participants.

Augustine stated that "the paschal feast of our lord was celebrated with little or no interest, though sometimes there were a few half-hearted worshippers," who did not engage in a "solemn ceremony" with special fasting, while on the contrary "great honour is paid to your (feast of the) Bema, that is, the day on which Manichaeus was martyred." "In fact," he reports, "it was a great pleasure to us that the fest of the Bema was held during Pascha, as we used to desire with great ardour that festal day since the other which was once so very precious had been removed."[49] Not only Augustine recognized the strong resemblance between Easter and the Bema festival; scholars have noted the similarities with the Syriac

---

[43] German translation in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 153-236; G. Wurst, ed. *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library. Psalm Book. Part II, Fasc. 1. Die Bema-Psalmen* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996).

[44] ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ⲡⲃⲏⲛⲁ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉ ⲁϩⲉ· ⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛ̄ϫⲱⲕⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲱⲛϧ̄· ⲟⲩⲕⲓⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ· ⲟⲩϭⲗⲟϭⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲓⲥⲉ· ⲟⲩⲛⲁϣⲉⲥϣⲓ̈ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲛⲉϩⲃⲏⲩⲉ… 2 PsB. 8.1-4. A full and improved translation of this psalm, incorporating the Kellis text, is given at Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 78.

[45] Pedersen, *Studies*, 272-3.

[46] Pedersen, *Studies*, 315-19, 345 and 400.

[47] According to Wurst, the remembrance of Mani became more central in the western Manichaean tradition. Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 151, cf. pages 22-5 on Psalm 226. This element is less central in eastern Manichaean texts. Reck, *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag*, 29. I am following Wurst's numbering of the Bema psalms.

[48] Similarly, in the Bema liturgy in Persian, Parthian and Sogdian, which contains the final portion of Mani's "letter of the seal," to be read during the Bema festival. The songs, moreover, include extensive praise of the supernatural entities as well as the members of the living community, catechumens elect and in particular those with a function within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 133-39.

[49] Both citations from Augustine, *Fund.*, 8, translation by S. Lieu in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no 77.

Easter festival.[50] In general, Manichaean texts show a tendency toward a Christianization of Mani's suffering and death, which is described in the *Homilies* as a crucifixion, as well as a strong rejection of Christian practices and festivals. They considered these "feasts of the sects," in particular those of the Christians, to be filled with pollution.[51] Therefore, Manichaeans considered their Bema festival superior and "victorious" (Hom. 73.28).[52]

The Kellis evidence confirms that the Manichaeans celebrated Easter. The Easter celebrations are attested twice in the Kellis papyri and once in a Manichaean letter from Oxyrhynchus. In one of the Kellis letters, Ploutogenes asked Pshai to intervene with Kapition who had promised to do something "by all means, a few days after Easter."[53] The second reference is by Makarios to Maria, asking for fruits "for Easter."[54] A similar request was made by Besas to his mother Maria in Oxyrhynchus: "Do not neglect to send me the cloak for the Easter festival."[55] These passages raise the question which festival was celebrated: Easter or Bema?

One could imagine local Manichaeans participating in Easter rituals, presumably together with all other Christians from the village. The suffering of Jesus on the cross was important for Manichaeans, who considered Jesus one of the Apostles of Light, whose death illustrated the rejection of the message of Light by the world.[56] It is, however, also possible that Manichaeans identified Easter with the Bema festival and celebrated the latter under the name of "Pascha." This cannot be proven beyond doubt, but Augustine's testimony about the unpopularity of Easter suggests a close relation between the two.[57] In the personal letters from Kellis there are no references to the Bema festival, but a version of a Bema psalm was found (T.Kell.Copt. 4, side A is Bema Psalm 222 in the Medinet Madi Psalmbook).[58] It is

---

[50] G. A. M. Rouwhorst, "Das manichaeische Bemafest und das Passafest der syrischen Christen," *Vigiliae Christianae* 35, no. 4 (1981): 404-5. While some similarities cannot be denied, it is not clear whether they derive from a genealogical connection. Gegor Wurst has rejected such a "genetischer Zusammenhang," despite the similarities between the two traditions. Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 15.

[51] ⲛ̀ϩⲁⲡ ⲛ̀ⲛ̀ⲁⲟⲅⲛⲁ… Hom. 73.12.

[52] On the analogy with Christ's passion, W. Henning, "Mani's Last Journey," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10, no. 4 (1942): 941-53; De Jong, "The *Cologne Mani Codex* and the Life of Zarathushtra," 129-47. Gardner, "Mani's Last Days," 159-208. On the various biographies of Mani, see Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 33-61.

[53] ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲙ̀ⲛ̀ⲛ̀ⲥⲁ ϩ̀ⲛ̀ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈ ⲛ̀ϩⲟⲟⲩ ϩ̀ⲛ̀ ⲡⲡⲁⲥⲭⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 86.11-13. I follow the alternative translation of A. Shisha-Halevy, "Review Article of: Gardner, Iain; Alcock, Anthony; Funk, Wolf-Peter: Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis Volume 2," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 106 (2016): 273.

[54] ⲛ̀ⲧⲧⲡⲁϩⲭⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 22.18.

[55] μὴ οὖν ἀμελήσῃς πέμψαι μοι τὸ ἱμάτιον εἰ<ϩ> τὴν ἑορτὴν τοῦ Πάσχα. P.Harr. I 107.18-21. I have modified the translations and used "Easter" rather than "Pascha" festival.

[56] In one of the Manichaean psalms of the Wanderers, the suffering and death of all the apostles is listed, to contextualize the past, current or future suffering of the Manichaean community (2 PsB. 142-143). Despite Augustine's accusations of Manichaean docetism, suffering played an important role in Manichaean theology.

[57] Pedersen, *Studies*, 271.

[58] Moreover, one of the Syriac-Coptic writing exercises includes the Coptic phrase "we have made a festival," a phrase which is often used for the Bema festival (ⲁⲛ̄ ϣⲁⲓ̈ⲉ, T.Kell.Syr/Copt 1.28. Parallels in 2 PsB. 14.13 and 25.27).

therefore most probable that the Bema festival was celebrated in the oasis. Some of the Egyptian Manichaeans, moreover, may have participated in the Easter celebrations of local Christians, or at least referred to this festival as a fixed point in time.

7.3 Did Makarios go to Church? On the Location of Manichaean Gatherings

With this overview of Kellis evidence for communal Manichaean meetings, the question about their participation in Christian church gatherings may be raised.[59] Some (non-Manichaean) Christians gathered weekly, or even daily, either at home, at the graveyard, or in one of the three church buildings at Kellis.[60] Would Manichaeans have attended these gatherings or would they only have met regularly with their fellow Manichaeans? Three scenarios have to be considered, some more probable than others. A first option is that Manichaeans held gatherings in specific church buildings; a second option is that they celebrated their rituals in domestic settings; while in a third option they participated in Christian liturgical gatherings in addition to their own meetings.

First, there is no indication that Manichaeans used specific buildings that were set apart for religious gatherings. The possibility of a Manichaean monastery in the oasis will be rejected in the next section.[61] Archaeologists, furthermore, have speculated about the possibility of a Manichaean use of the West Church and its ancillary building(s), primarily because of the poverty of the adjacent graves, which might indicate Manichaeanness (but see Chapter 8).[62] Some support for independent Manichaean church gatherings can be found in Cyril of Jerusalem's admonition to ask specifically for the catholic church when visiting another city, as Manichaeans may mislead newcomers with their churches. Therefore: "[W]hen you visit or sojourn in another city, inquire not merely where the congregation for the *kyriakon* is taking place (for other profane sects attempt to call their dens *kyriaka*), nor simply where the Church is, but to seek for the Catholic Church."[63] Unfortunately, he does not indicate where these Manichaean church gatherings took place. The increasingly strict legislation against Manichaeans suggests that monumental basilica-type churches (such as

---

[59] I owe the sub-title to M. A. Williams, "Did Plotinus "Friends" Still Go to Church? Communal Rituals and Ascent Apocalypses," in *Practicing Gnosis*, ed. A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J. T. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013): 495-522.

[60] On daily prayers and the domestic consumption of the Eucharist, see K. Bowes, "Personal Devotions and Private Chapels," in *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, ed. V. Burrus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 193-99. On graveyard gatherings, see section 8.5 below.

[61] Gardner, following Puech, has raised the question whether Manichaeans may have had two distinct types of religious buildings: churches and monasteries. Only to admit that the Kellis churches cannot answer this question for us. Gardner, "Monastery," 256, citing Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles," 255 ; cf. J. Ries, *L'église gnostique de Mani* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 194-99.

[62] Bowen, "Some Observations," 177.

[63] Κἂν ποτε ἐπιδημῇς ἐν πόλεσι, μὴ ἁπλῶς ἐξέταζε ποῦ τὸ κυριακὸν ἔστι (καὶ γὰρ αἱ λοιπαὶ τῶν ἀσεβῶν αἱρέσεις κυριακὰ τὰ ἑαυτῶν σπήλαια καλεῖν ἐπιχειροῦσι), μηδὲ ποῦ ἔστιν ἁπλῶς ἡ ἐκκλησία, ἀλλὰ ποῦ ἔστιν ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* XVIII, 26.1-16 cited and translated at R. Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans in Greek Patristic Anti-Manichaica (4th-6th Centuries)," in *Manichaeism East and West*, ed. S. N. C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 159-70. I am grateful for Rea Matsangou's suggestions on this topic. She points to the decree by Gratian (379 CE) in which Manichaeans are prohibited to congregate in churches.

the Large East Church at Kellis, or the church at Ain el-Gedida) were impossible. Rather, they may have used multipurpose spaces financed by wealthy catechumens.

Second, this latter alternative, meetings in houses and other multipurpose spaces, is the preferred interpretation for most Manichaean gatherings, because that is how most Roman *collegia* and early Christ groups gathered.[64] Additional support for a domestic location of Manichaean gatherings is found in the Roman legislation against the Manichaeans. Domestic buildings, "houses and habitations" (*domus et habitacula*) were targeted in laws from 372 CE onwards.[65] Subsequent legislation, such as the rescripts issued by Theodosius, forbade the transfer of property to Manichaeans and ordered the confiscation of their real estate.[66] While houses appear to have been the most logical location for Manichaean gatherings in Kellis, some practical and archaeological questions remain. Most of the rooms in which Manichaean documents were found cannot have contained more than a handful of individuals, as they were rather small (roughly between eighteen to forty-three square meters at largest) and must have been relatively dark. Alternatively, the courtyard could have been used to come together. In House 1, the courtyard was roughly 110 m2, and the adjacent room had a *stibadium* for dinner occasions. The House 2 courtyard, only accessible through the streets, was roughly 195 m2. Part of this space was used to keep animals, but there are no further indications of what type of social activities could have been employed in this space. I would suggest that rather than meeting in their own houses, Manichaeans either went outside to the courtyard or to the larger houses of their patrons. In this context, the *Kephalaia* suggest that a wealthy catechumen should construct "a house" (ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲛⲁⲙ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ) or "a place" (ⲟⲩⲧⲟ̣[ⲡⲟⲥ]) for the church "so that it will be turned for him into a portion of alms in the holy church."[67]

Third, the last option is to consider whether the Manichaeans of Kellis would have participated in the non-Manichaean Christian liturgy, either because they considered themselves to be Christians or to proselytize secretly from within the Christian church. In Kellis specifically, the situation is hampered by the sparse sources on the "catholic" church (see Chapter 3). The church buildings contain no indications of the type of gatherings held there, nor are there local sources on the relation between Christians and Manichaeans. If the absence of evidence for conflict or polemic means something, it either points to a certain

---

[64] An overview of the membership size of Greco-Roman associations is presented by Kloppenborg to provide a framework for the size and membership practices of Early Christ Groups, about which few is known. J. S. Kloppenborg, "Membership Practices in Pauline Christ Groups," *Early Christianity* 4, no. 2 (2013): 183-215. Similar considerations in L. H. Martin, "When Size Matters. Social Formations in the Early Roman Empire," in *"The One Who Sows Bountifully": Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers*, ed. C. J. Hodge, et al. (Providence: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 229-241.

[65] C.Th. 16.5.3 (372 CE), cited from Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no 26. On the post-Constantinian marginalization of heterodox groups in the domestic sphere, see Maier, "Heresy, Households," 213-33.

[66] C.Th. 16.5.7 (381 CE), C.Th 16.5.9 (382 CE) and C.Th. 16.5.11 (383 CE). Discussed in depth in the forthcoming dissertation of R. Matsangou and in P. Beskow, "The Theodosian Laws against Manichaeism," in *Manichaean Studies. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism*, ed. P. Bryder (Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988), 1-11; Bowes, *Private Worship*, 92-98.

[67] …ⲧⲁⲣⲟⲩⲉ̣ⲉ̣ϥ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲓⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛⲏⲧⲛⲁⲉ [ϩ]ⲛ̄ ⲧ[ⲉ]ⲕⲕ[ⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ] ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃ[ⲉ] 1 Keph. 80, 193.12-14 (modified translation).

level of mutual acceptance or to the successful concealment of Manichaean practices. In Chapter 4, I have argued against the latter option. Manichaeans could not have kept their religious affiliation secret in a village as small as Kellis. The neighbors must have observed specific Manichaean behavior, frequent gatherings in their houses, or their absence from other religious settings. It is far more likely, in my opinion, that the difference in belief and practice was glossed over or tolerated. Definitive conclusions, however, cannot be reached. Specific evidence, either for Makarios's participation in non-Manichaean communal gatherings or for his absence, has not been transmitted in our corpus.

7.4 A Manichaean Monastery in the Oasis?

A number of passages in the papyri have led to a discussion about the possibility of a Manichaean monastery in the oasis. The initial, carefully phrased suggestion by Iain Gardner has had a profound impact on the understanding of Manichaeism in Kellis.[68] Could this be the missing link connecting the earliest monastic movement in Egypt with similar institutions in the Buddhist East?[69] Moreover, if there was a Manichaean monastery, it must have been roughly contemporary with the earliest cenobitic experiments of the first generation of Pachomian monks. Some scholars, therefore, have considered the possibility of a Manichaean influence on the development of Egyptian monasticism.[70] With these larger questions in mind, much weight has been given to some ambiguous phrases like "topos Mani" in the Kellis Account Book. Against such tantalizing suggestions, this section will argue that there is no conclusive evidence for the existence of a Manichaean monastery in the oasis.

The role and origins of monastic communities within the Manichaean tradition has been a matter of debate for decades. One the one hand, there are scholars like Jes Peter Asmussen and Samuel Lieu, who consider Manichaean monasticism a feature of the Central Asian tradition, maybe even an imitation of Buddhist practice.[71] On the other hand, Ludwig Koenen regarded monasticism as an early element of the Manichaean church, maybe even

---

[68] Gardner, "Monastery," 247-57. Despite his rather careful suggestion, the existence of the Manichaean monastery has been taken for granted in much of the current literature, for example in Christoph Markschies, *Gnosis. An Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 63.

[69] As suggested by Stroumsa, "The Manichaean Challenge to Egyptian Christianity," 307-19. A similar notion was discussed earlier in Vergote, "Het Manichaeisme in Egypte," 77-83.

[70] Stroumsa, "The Manichaean Challenge to Egyptian Christianity," 307-19. Discussed and rejected by W. Harmless, *Desert Christians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 435-39. Many elements in Manichaean doctrine and its social organization resemble Pachomian monastic traditions, with examples including the portrayal of the founder as "enlightener," a marked interest in visionary ascent to the heavenly spheres, as well as a deep connection between ascetic practice, spiritual discernment and pedagogy. F. Vecoli, "Communautés religieuses dans l'Égypte du IVème siècle: Manichéens et cénobites," *Historia Religionum* 3 (2011): 23-46; K. A. Fowler, "The Ascent of the Soul and the Pachomians: Interpreting the Exegesis on the Soul (NHC II,6) within a Fourth-Century Monastic Context," *Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2017): 63-93. The commonality between "gnostics" and Pachomian monasticism is an important feature in the discussion about the social provenance of the NHC. Lundhaug and Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*.

[71] Asmussen, *Xuāstvānīft*, 260n14; Lieu, "Precept and Practice," 155-56.

inherited from the Baptist community of Mani's youth.[72] Those who follow the latter line of thought point to the Middle Persian text M2, which describes how Mar Adda founded many monasteries in the Roman Empire. Supporters of the former position, however, regard this as an anachronistic projection of Central Asian practice on the western Manichaean tradition.[73] The evidence for Manichaean monasteries in the East, moreover, is not consonant with Egyptian-Christian monasticism. The Chinese *Compendium* refers to monasteries as centers of learning rather than as communal dwellings. Instead, eastern Manichaean sources in general portray the elect as itinerant holy men and women, who had to live as wandering beggars, depending on the grace of their lay supporters for food and a place to stay (as also argued for the elect in the Kellis corpus, see Chapter 6.4).[74]

Strong incentives to reexamine the thesis of Manichaean monasticism in the West came from two passages in the KAB, in which the *topos mani* (Τόπ[ος] Μανι) is mentioned as a tenant owing olives and dates (KAB 320, 513), to be paid as rent on leased land. The term τόπος was regularly used to designate monasteries in fourth- and fifth-century sources. Two KAB references to monks, moreover, support the existence of a monastery. Petros the *monachos* paid "in place of Mani" (ἀντὶ Μανι ἓκοψα KAB 975, presumably the same person pays for dates, 1433, and for olives, 1109). A second monk, Timotheos *monachos,* who acted as an intermediary for the son of the largest single tenant of the estate, was never explicitly associated with any institution (KAB 1080).[75]

A little more information is provided by two papyrus letters. One of these letters (P.Kell.Copt. 12) is associated with the Manichaean community, as the author greets a number of people known from Manichaean letters.[76] With regard to the monastery, however, it only attests to a young boy sent to the monastery (μονοστή[ριον]) to learn the linen-weaving

---

[72] Koenen, "Manichäische Mission und Klöster," 93-108.

[73] Werner Sundermann's early dating of other Parthian fragments has suggested that at least some type of monastic organization came from Mani's own lifetime. In this fragment, Mani stayed in a "monastic house" (*manistan-kadag*, Middle Persian text M 4579). W. Sundermann, *Mitteliranische manichaïsche Texte Kirchengeschichtlichen Inhalts* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 70.

[74] W. Sundermann, "Mani, India and the Manichaean Religion," *South Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (1986): 17. On the *Compendium*, see E. Chavannes and P. Pelliot, "Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine (2)," *Journal Asiatique* (1913): 108-14. 99-199, 261-394. The Chinese *Traité* explicitly designates elect who retire "to a room alone," separating themselves from the catechumens, "like a sick man." For the translation, see S. N. C. Lieu and G. B. Mikkelsen, eds., *Tractatus Manichaicus Sinicus. Pars Prima: Text, Translation and Indices* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 61. The monasteries (*manistan*) of the East were rigidly stratified and economically active in the Uighur kingdom. G. Shimin, "Notes on an Ancient Uighur Official Decree Issued to a Manichaean Monastery," *Central Asiatic Journal* 35 (1991): 209-23; B. Utas, "Manistan and Xanaquah," in *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce II*, ed. H.W. Bailey (Leiden: Brill, 1985): 655-64; Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*, 103-10.

[75] Bagnall, *KAB*, 82. Timotheos could have been the brother of Nos and therefore one of the sons of Kome, the largest single tenant. The term *monasterion* is also found in an unpublished piece from the temple area (P.96.31,9). Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 275. The Petros figure in P.Kell.Copt. 38-41 may or may not have been the same as the monk in the KAB.

[76] The letter mentions Tapshai, Andreas, Pshemnoute, and Kyria, all of who feature in the Makarios archive. Despite the absence of marked Manichaean language, therefore, this letter is generally read against a Manichaean background.

trade, presumably from an ascetic (?) father, Pebok.[77] The second letter refers to a monastery in connection with an accepted standard measure of an ascetic father, as twenty *chous* is said to be paid "per the *chous* (—measure) of my father Shoei of the monastery" (ϣⲟⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲑⲁⲛⲉⲧⲁ).[78] The Coptic word ϩⲉⲛⲉⲧⲉ, in this passage, may have referred to a local place name in the oasis, but in combination with the father figure the traditional meaning of monastery is most likely.[79] If a monastery was meant in this second letter, the prosopography and find location may point to a non-Manichaean Christian context, as the letter was found together with a letter with Christian terminology (P.Kell.Copt. 124) in House 4.[80] Without strong Manichaean language in the letters, and with only weak prosopographical connections, it is most problematic to read these letters as evidence for the existence of a Manichaean monastery. They inform us about the presence of a monastery in the context of education and economic activities, without further identifying the type of asceticism practiced in this institution.[81]

The connection to Manichaeans in the KAB is equally problematic. While Τόπ(ος) was generally used to refer to a monastery, it also held a more general meaning. In the third century, it was used to designate a church community (as seen in P.Oxy. XII 1492).[82] In the KAB, moreover, it is used twice to designate other place names (KAB 408, in 545 the "place of Pisechthis," Τόπῳ Πισήχ[θιος]). The identification as a Manichaean monastery, moreover, rests heavily on the interpretation of Μανι as a personal name. Several scholars have already pointed out that the Greek Μάνης or Μανιχαῖος was a title instead of a personal name, and it seems unlikely that the construction Τόπος Μανι meant "the monastery of Mani."[83]

---

[77] Κα[θὼς ἐδήλως]ά σοι περὶ τὸν υἱὸν [...]βάλε εἰς τὸ μονοστή[ριον ὅπου δι]δάσκι αὐτὸν λίγ̣ο̣υ[φικὴν. P.Kell.Gr. 12.16-20. See also P.Kell.Copt. 12.18-20, Samoun instructing his father Tithoes about his son Tithoes.

[78] ⲛ̄ⲡⲕⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲁ̣ⲉ̣ⲓ̣ϣ̣ⲧ ϣⲟⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲑⲁⲛⲉⲧⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 123.12-17.

[79] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 274-5.

[80] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 276.

[81] The retreat into the desert is now being recognized as a literary topic, not entirely in tune with the actual locations of hermitages and monastic settlements. In the Shenoutan corpus are references to Manichaean monks in the same region, see S. G. Richter, "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Panopolitan Region between Lykopolis and Nag Hammadi," in Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt, ed. G. Gabra and H. N. Takla (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008), 121-29. Many other itinerant monks were condemned and written out of the historical accounts of monastic life, see Choat, "Philological and Historical Approaches," 857-65.

[82] Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord*, 133 lists also P.Oxy. VIII 1162 as one of the letters of recommendation addressed to a topos. See also Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 486-7n11; Wipszycka, *Les ressources,* 13-14. Note also P.Bal. 187.5.

[83] Recognized by Bagnall, KAB, 84 "Mani is usually referred to in Greek texts as Manichaios, not as Mani, and some caution may be in order." Pedersen suggests to read "Mani(chaiōn)," "the monastery of the Manichaeans," but as he himself states "the fact that there are no other examples of this abbreviation makes it very uncertain." Pedersen, "Manichaean Self-Designations," 189; J. D. Dubois, "Y a-t-il eu des moines manichéens dans le site de Kellis?," Monachismes d'Orient, images, échanges, influences, ed. F. Jullien and M.-J. Pierre (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 327-37. I have previously suggested to read either Τόπ' Μονι or Τόπ' Μν, relating the place to Moni son of Belles. My examination of the digital photographs, however, confirms Bagnall's reading of Μανι. Moni's name, moreover, is consistently spelled as Μωνι. I thank Roger Bagnall for sharing digital photographs of the relevant passages. Preisigkes, *Namenbuch,* gives three instances of names resembeling "Mani" in SB I 5662 (Μανης), 1276 (Μανευς), and 5972 (Μανας).

Having reviewed the papyrological evidence for the monastery, it becomes clear that it showcases only the bare minimum. In fact, there is only one secure reference to a "μονοστή[ριον]," in the context of the textile industry, and two references to "μοναχ[ός]," one of whom is paying on somebody's behalf. These passages mean that an early experiment with monastic structures cannot be excluded, but a Manichaean affiliation seems to be out of the question. Stimulating as it may sound, there is no evidence from the Roman Empire for a Manichaean group style with elect living communally in monastic buildings.

7.5 Teaching and Emotional Arousal through Music, Song, and Prayer

The Manichaeans of Kellis came together on various occasions for specific religious purposes. Our examination of the extant evidence, in the previous sections, has shown that there is enough to suggests communal gatherings took place on an incidental, weekly, or annual basis, while evidence for daily meetings is scarcer. What happened during these gatherings was not too different from what happened in the meetings of their Christian neighbors: they ate, listened to readings, prayed, and sang. The material evidence for prayer and singing in the form of papyri and wooden tablets with Manichaean prayers and songs is found in several houses. The next two sections will briefly introduce these textual finds, to discuss their relationship with the Medinet Madi corpus, before turning to the function of these texts in the process of creating a feeling of distinct religious groupness.

7.5.1 Manichaean Psalms

Psalms and hymns are known from all over the Manichaean tradition. Fragments have been attested in Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Turkic, Chinese, and Coptic. In these songs, Manichaeans describe themselves as "lovers of hymns" and "lovers of music."[84] They sang and made music for the community, but also for the supernatural beings: "[Y]ou make music to the Aeons and play the lute to the Aeons of the Aeons."[85] The two Coptic volumes of Manichaean psalms, found at Medinet Madi, stand out by their sheer size and volume. So far, only the second volume has been edited and translated, but some sections of the first half are known.[86] These documents provide us with the opportunity to connect various parts of

---

[84] ⲟⲩⲛⲁϊϩⲩⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲛⲁϊⲥⲛⲏ̀ 2 PsB. 168.20. On music and songs, see also H. C. Puech, *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), 179-233 ; Ries, *L'église gnostique de Mani*, 191-202. Not that a number of these songs in Middle Persian and Parthian are known to have been performed in honour of the local hierachy. This seems to have been an Eastern feature, unknown in Western Manichaean sources. C. Leurini, *Hymns in Honour of the Hierarchy and Community, Installation Hymns and Hymns in Honour of Church Leaders and Patrons: Middle Persian and Parthian Hymns in the Berlin Turfan Collection,* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).

[85] ϣⲁⲣⲉϩⲛ̀ⲛⲏ̀ ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ· ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ̀ⲣ̀ⲕⲓⲑⲁⲣⲁ ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ ⲛ̀ⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ 2 PsB. 168.27.

[86] Schmidt and Polotsky, "Ein Mani-Fund in Ägypten," 4-90; C. R. C. Allberry, ed. *A Manichaean Psalm-Book. Part II* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938). Several preliminary translations of psalms from the first part have been published this far, including N. A. Pedersen, "Über einen manichäisch-koptischen Hymnus von der Erlösung der Seele (Das *manichäische Psalmenbuch*, Teil 1: Faksimileausgabe Band 3, Tafel 127-128)," in *The Nag Hammadi Texts in the History of Religions. Proceedings of the International Conference at the Royal Academy of Sciences and Letters in Copenhagen, September 19-24, 1995. On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Nag Hammadi Discovery*, ed. S. Giversen (Kopenhagen: Historisk-filosofiske Skrifter, 2002), 199-210; G. Wurst, "A Dialogue between the Saviour and the Soul (Manichaean Psalmbook Part I, Psalm No. 136)," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 35 (1995): 149-60; G. Wurst, "Die Bedeutung der manichäischen Sonntagsfeier

the world and discover intertextual connections with Syriac hymnology, the Odes of Solomon,[87] and the Mandaean psalms.[88] These complex patterns of appropriation and intertextuality show the influence of various cultural environments on the Psalmbook.

The Coptic psalms from Medinet Madi and Kellis represent a later development, despite the fact that they date back to several centuries before the Parthian, Middle Persian, and Sogdian hymns. The wooden boards and papyri with Manichaean psalms found at Kellis contain a number of parallels to psalms from the Coptic Psalmbook. The Kellis Psalms from House 3 can be assigned to the 360s CE, while the manuscripts of the Medinet Madi codices have been dated to the early fifth century. The Kellis Psalms show traces of an earlier stage in the textual history: some are written in a coarse hand, different from the professional scribes behind the Medinet Madi Psalmbook.[89] Table 13 lists all Psalm fragments from Kellis that have a parallel in the published and unpublished Medinet Madi Psalms.

Kellis Psalm fragments	Medinet Madi Psalms
T.Kell.Copt. 2, A4	Psalm 57 (1 PsB. Facsimile, plate 77?).[90]
T.Kell.Copt. 2, A2[91]	Psalm 68 (1 PsB. facsimile, plates 97 and 98).
T.Kell.Copt. 4, side a	Psalm 222 (2 PsB. 8.6–9.1).
T.Kell.Copt. 4, side b[92]	Psalm 109 (1 PsB. facsimile, page 154).
T.Kell.Copt. 6, side a	Psalm 261 (2 PsB. 75.10–76.25).

(manichäisches Psalmenbuch I, 127)," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit* ed. S. Emmel, et al. (Wiesbaden Reichert Verlag, 1999), 563-80; J. Kristionat and G. Wurst, "Ein Hymnus auf die Lichtjungfrau," in *Vom Aramäischen zum Alttürkischen. Fragen zur Übersetzung von manichäischen Texten*, ed. J.P. Laut and K. Röhrborn (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 187-98; S. G. Richter, "Ein Manichäischer Sonnenhymnus," in *Studia Manichaica IV*, ed. R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann, and P. Zieme (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 482-93. A section of the Psalms on the Lord's Day is published in S. Giversen, "The Manichaean Texts from the Chester Beatty Collection," in *Manichaean Studies*, ed. P. Bryder (Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988), 265-72; S. Giversen, "The Inedited Chester Beatty Mani Texts," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986), 371-80.

[87] H. J. W. Drijvers, "Odes of Solomon and Psalms of Mani," in *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions*, ed. R. van den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 129 considers *Ode of Solomon* 38 the oldest anti-Manichaean document known so far.

[88] T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book* (Uppala: AlmQuist & Wiksells Boktryckeri Ab, 1949); Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 69; E. Segelberg, "Syncretism at Work: On the Origin of Some Coptic Manichaean Psalms," in *Religious Syncretism in Antiquity: Essays in Conversation with Geo Widengren*, ed. B. A. Pearson (Missoula: Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion and the Institute of Religious Studies, 1975), 191-203 has to be regarded as outdated.

[89] Gardner, *KLT1*, xiv.

[90] The index for psalm 57 corresponds to the first line of psalm A4, but the photographs from the first part of the Psalmbook do not help with further identification. Gardner, *KLT1*, 17.

[91] Published in I. Gardner, "An Abbreviated Version of Medinet Madi Psalm Lcviii Found at Kellis: A/5/53 B (Folio 4, Text A2)," in *The Manichaean Nous*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and J. van Oort (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 129-38; I. Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," *Orientalia* 62, no. 2 (1993): 30-59; Gardner considers it a "more fluid and oral rendition" in comparison with the Medinet Madi version. Gardner, *KLT1*, 18-24.

[92] The connection between these two psalms on side a and b, suggest that they belonged to a codex with more psalms Gardner, *KLT1*, 33, texts and notes on 33-41.

P.Kell.Copt. 1, side a	Psalm 246 (2 PsB. 55.3–13).
P.Kell.Copt. 2, C1	Psalm (1 PsB. facsimile, plate 277–278).[93]
P.Kell.Copt. 2, C2	Psalm 126 (1 PsB. facsimile, plate 174–175).[94]

Table 13: Parallel versions of Psalms found at Kellis.

In total, twenty-one documents with psalms or hymns have been found (T.Kell.Copt. 2, 4, 6, 7, P.Kell.Copt. 1,2,3, P.Kell.Gr. 91, 92, 94 and P.Kell.Copt. 55 and the B fragments of P.Kell.Gr. 97). This large number indicates the centrality of singing and the production (copying) of these psalms; singing clearly belonged to the ritualized practices of the local Manichaean community.[95] These songs were not meant to be sung privately. The practice of singing antiphonally is described in the Bema psalms: "He that sings a psalm is like them that weave a garland, while they that answer after him are like them that put roses into his hands."[96] Other indications of the performance of the psalms abound.[97] Many of them are, for example, organized with repetitive refrains (as for example visible in 2 PsB. 170.16–40). Similar traces of the performance have been found in T.Kell.Copt. 7 (from House 4), in which each strophe starts earlier on the page than the other lines, helping the singer to discern the next section in the psalm. The additional '//' at the end of the strophe could have helped them to identify the last line.[98]

One of the psalms of the Medinet Madi Psalmbook includes an explicit reference to the communal singing under the leadership of a cantor, as the text clearly indicates the various sections: "I will utter the hymn of Amen," and the entire community: "[L]et us answer together, Amen. *Purify me.*"[99] According to Christopher Brunner, in one of the few studies of Manichaean hymnody, these indications of unison and antiphonal singing point to a communal and embodied experience that became less visible with the emergence of trained choirs and hymn leaders, which are mentioned in seventh- and eighth-century texts as well as in the work of Augustine.[100] It has been suggested that the officials came to dominate the singing and that the community's response was limited to simple acclamations.[101]

---

[93] But see the cautious notes in Gardner, *KLT1*, 64-5.

[94] According to G. Wurst, cited in Gardner, *KLT2*, 173 addenda and corrigenda to P.Kell. II.

[95] Gardner, *KLT1*, viii, xiv; Gardner, *KLT2*, 5-6.

[96] ⲓ̣ⲉⲧϫⲱ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩϩⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧϣⲱⲛⲧ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱϥ ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲟⲩⲣⲧ̄ ⲁ̀ⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ 2Ps 241, 47.15-17. Discussed at Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 139-40.

[97] Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 32-40 on refrains. D. Durkin-Meisterernst and E. Morano, eds., *Mani's Psalms. Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian Texts in the Turfan Collection* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), xxi.

[98] Gardner, *KLT1*, 53. Similar indications are found in P.Kell.Copt. 1 side b.

[99] ⲉⲓⲁ̀ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲟ ⲡ̀ϩⲩⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡ̀ϩⲁⲙⲏⲛ ⲛⲁⲣ[ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲭⲃⲉ] ϩⲓ̣ⲩⲥⲁⲡ ϩⲁⲛⲏⲛ *ⲧⲟⲩⲃⲁ̈ⲓ*. 2 PsB. 186.1-2 (italics added). On Singing in unison, see 2 PsB. 36.14, 37.26 and 99.31-4. Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 37-38.

[100] C. J. Brunner, "Liturgical Chant and Hymnody among the Manicheans of Central Asia," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 130 (1980): 346; Augustine, *Conf.* 3.7.14, 10.33.49; *Faust.* 13.18; 15.15; *Enarrat. Ps.* 140.11.

[101] Brunner, "Liturgical Chant," 347.

Apart from the Coptic Psalm fragments, three or four Greek hymns were found in House 3 (P.Kell.Gr. 91 (?), 92, 94, 97). The absence of the recognizable pattern of the Coptic psalms with their doxologies, as well as the small format of P.Kell.Gr. 91, 92 and 94, has led to an identification as amulets.[102] Their content, on the other hand, contains nothing resembling other Greek amulets, but features extensive praise of the Father of Light and other Manichaean supernatural beings (in particular in P.Kell.Gr. 91). Hymns to the Father of Light are well known from the Middle Persian and Parthian texts. There are strong similarities between P.Kell.Gr. 91, 92, and the first sections of the Parthian *Praise of the Great Ones*.[103] In particular, psalm P.Kell.Gr. 97, texts B1, is much longer and of a different nature than most of the other published psalms. It praises the "Lady" (πότνια), the communal soul, for her role in the cosmological narrative. The psalm describes her as the soul of the First Man, the Virgin of Light, dressed in the five sons: fire, wind, water, light, and air.[104] The song continues with her taking on the five intellectuals (or noetic qualities). Even though both scenes are well known from the *Kephalaia* and other Manichaean sources, they are not commonly found in Coptic Manichaean psalms. This appears to suggest that the Greek songs belonged to an earlier stage, in which the use of Coptic was not yet established. Gardner assigns the composition of the Greek *Psalms* to the early fourth century, contemporary with the documentary letter P.Kell.Gr. 63, which also has no apparent relation with the families of Makarios and Pamour.[105]

A recent reinterpretation of P.Oxy. XVII 2074 has provided another parallel for the composition of Manichaean hymns in Greek. Geoffrey S. Smith highlighted several Manichaean concepts and terms in this hymn, including the Virgin of Light and the diadem of Light. Just like P.Kell.Gr. 97, it contains a hymn of praise to the Virgin for her role in the cosmological battle of the First Man.[106] Most noteworthy is the way both songs may have derived from poetical reflection on the *Third Synaxis of the Third Discourse,* one of the unpublished chapters of the Manichaean *Synaxeis* codex from Medinet Madi. P.Kell.Gr. 97 and P.Oxy. XVII 2074 have to be regarded as literary parallels, both reflecting the development from early texts like the *Third Synaxis of the Third Discourse*, in which the Virgin Soul of the First Man is praised for her role in the battle against Darkness.[107] The rediscovery

[102] Discussed at Gardner, *KLT1*, 134, 137, and 143; C. Römer and N. Gonis, "Ein Lobgesang an den Vater der Grosse in P.Kellis II 94," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 120 (1998): 299-300. For P.Kell.Gr. 94, they suggest as a new translation: "O Grund unseres Lobgesangs! Es ist die Zeit der Freude und der vollendeten Lobpreisung! Ruhm, Vater, Deinem Namen, und Ehre der Größe in alle Ewigkeit! Amen." On the usage of amulets Kim Haines-Eitzen, "Late Antique Christian Textual Communities," in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Rousseau (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 256.

[103] Gardner refers to the collection and translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 29-30. The Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian psalms are now published as Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano, *Mani's Psalms*, § 398c – 450b.

[104] Gardner, *KLT2*, 103 and 106-8.

[105] Gardner, *KLT2*, 5.

[106] G. S. Smith, "A Manichaean Hymn at Oxyrhynchus: A Reevaluation of P.Oxy 2074," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24, no. 1 (2016): 93.

[107] Smith, "A Manichaean Hymn at Oxyrhynchus," 94 building on the remarks by W. P. Funk in the unpublished Synaxis codex.

and identification of these *potnia* hymns highlight the connections between the Manichaean tradition in Kellis and Oxyrhynchus, as well as the historical layers behind the better-known collections of Manichaean psalms.

7.5.2 The Daily Prayers

A single wooden tablet, found in the backyard of House 3, has proven to be one of the most important discoveries for the history of Manichaeism.[108] It was first published as the *Prayer of the Emanations* (P.Kell.Gr. 98) and its Manichaean nature was contested. Now, it has been recognized as the text of the daily Manichaean prayers.[109] In fact, parallel versions in other languages have established the Manichaean nature of this text beyond doubt. More importantly, the wooden tablet shows the strength of the transregional Manichaean tradition. A single text, known in Greek, Arabic, Middle Persian, Parthian, and Sogdian attests to the unity in Manichaean practice over the ages and throughout a large geographical area. This similarity is understood by Iain Gardner as the result of a tradition building on an Aramaic *Vorlage* by Mani himself. This would also explain the lack of recognizable names of Manichaean deities, as the text from the daily prayers was from before the "scholastic" tradition in which this terminology played a large role.[110] Our interest here, however, is in what the discovery of this wooden board says about Manichaean practice in Kellis.

According to Ibn al-Nadim, who transmitted the Arabic version of the daily prayers, Manichaean catechumens prayed four times a day, with prostrations before the sun and the moon:

> And (Mani) imposed prayers, four or seven: and this means that a man stands and washed himself with flowing water, or with something else, and faces the greater luminary (that is, the sun by day or moon by night) standing. Then he prostrates himself and during his prostration he says.[111]

---

[108] Bermejo-Rubio, ""I Worship and Glorify," 253 states, this "entails the recovery of the whole text of the probably most important prayer in the history of Manichaean worship."

[109] First publication in G. Jenkins, "The Prayer of the Emanations in Greek from Kellis (T.Kellis 22)," *Le Muséon* 108 (1995): 243-63. Contested in A. Khosroyev, "Zu einem manichäischen (?) Gebet," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della ricerca.*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2005), 203-22. Rebuttal in Gardner, *KLT2*, 112-15; F. Bermejo-Rubio, "Further Remarks on the Manichaean Nature of ΕΥΧΗ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΒΟΛΩΝ (P.Kell.Gr. 98)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 168 (2009): 221-38. The discovery of other versions of this texts, however, was only recently. The text is now discussed in its proper context in Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 245-62; I. Gardner, ""With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue": The Recovery of the Text of the Manichaean Daily Prayers," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4, no. 1 (2011): 79-99. I will follow Gardner's reconstruction in these next paragraphs. The Iranian texts are published in Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano, *Mani's Psalms*, §360-9.

[110] Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 258-9. Even without the names of Manichaean deities, the combination of expressions is recognizable as characteristic (but not exclusive) Manichaean. Bermejo-Rubio, "Further Remarks," 237. Noteworthy is the absence of Christ and his redemptive work in the Arabic version, which may have been an omission for religious reasons. Gardner, ""With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue," 93-4.

[111] al-Nadim, *The Fihrist*. Citation from unpublished translation by F. de Blois in Gardner, ""With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue," 83.

After the ritual preparation through washing with flowing water, Manichaeans face the sun or the moon to prostrate themselves during each of the ten prayers.[112] This sequence of prostrations may have been indicated at the start of each stanza of the Kellis version of the daily prayers, as προσκυνῶ in "I worship and glorify" (προσκυνῶ καὶ δοξάζω) indicates the ritual obeisance before the supernatural beings.[113] The prayer was not only performed in the geographical direction of the sun and the moon, but also directed toward them. The *Kephalaia* informs us that catechumens prayed to the "sun and the moon, the great Light givers."[114] For Manichaeans, the sun and the moon were the ships that brought the Light particles from the soul toward their liberation, but they were also supernatural entities themselves.[115] In the Coptic letter P.Kell.Copt. 32, we have encountered the idea of the sun and the moon as storehouses for spiritual riches, while in the Kellis version of the daily prayers they are venerated for their light-giving power (see Table 14 for all stanzas of the daily prayers). The author of the letter apparently not only referred to cosmological or theological notions, but to elements known intimately from the daily prayers.[116]

The final stanza of the Kellis version of the prayer concludes with the veneration of "all the righteous" and a request for salvation from the cycle of reincarnation (πάντας δικαίους P.Kell.Gr. 98.106–123). Catechumens, thus, prayed this prayer for salvation, as elect were generally considered free from the cycle of transmigration.[117] These "righteous" who have overcome evil are the Manichaean elect.[118] They are requested to bless the petitioner so that he will be released from the cycle of reincarnation and may attain salvation in the realm of light. In a sense, this request accumulates all the previous stanza into this final prayer. Where all other supernatural powers have defeated the powers of evil, the elect have overcome all evil. This in turn gives them the possibility to release the Living Soul from its imprisonment and thereby bless the catechumens.

Cosmological layers and supernatural beings
1) The great Father of the lights
2) All the gods, angels, splendors, enlighteners and powers
3) The great powers, the shining angels
4) The shining mind, king, Christ

[112] This description of the Manichaean believers washing themselves first with flowing water before the daily prayers has to be considered in light of geographical and temporal diversity. It may have been difficult to find flowing water in the Egyptian desert, even though Kellis was located in an oasis.

[113] Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 246. Note that *proskynesis* was not uncommon in the Early Christian tradition. Tertullian could suggest that to kneel and prostrate before God was a daily observance, even though not always practiced in the communal liturgy. Tertullian, *Or.* 23.

[114] ⲉϥⲁϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲁⲡⲣⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡ ⲡⲟⲟϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ ⲙⲫ[ⲱⲥⲧⲏⲣ… 1 Keph. 192.33 – 193.1.

[115] Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 254-5.

[116] In similar vein, the Syriac/Coptic text in P.Kell.Syr/Copt. 2 deals with the moon.

[117] Pointed out by Bermejo-Rubio, "Further Remarks," 234n86.

[118] Bermejo-Rubio, "Further Remarks," 234, refering to 1 Keph. 7, 36.5-6, Hom. 14.8-9, 15.12, 31.5, 53.6, 2 PsB. 140.12 etc.

5) The living God
6) The great light givers, the sun and moon and the virtuous powers in them
7) The five great lights
8) All the gods, all the angels
9) All the shining angels
10) All the righteous

Table 14: The ten daily prayers with prostrations directed toward supernatural beings.[119]

Is there anything we can say about the frequency of prayer? According to the account by al-Nadim, these prayers should be prayed four or seven times a day, but François de Blois has argued that this may have been an adjustment to the four public prayers of the Muslims.[120] The *Prayer of the Emanations* stipulates prayers "at least on the third day" (ἢ κἂν τρίτης ἡμέρας), which may have meant "three times daily."[121] The Parthian parallel texts settle the debate by indicating that these prayers should be performed "three times daily."[122] This is not to say that the Manichaeans of Kellis performed this prayer three times daily. Maybe they prayed less often, or used the wooden board with the daily prayers only in communal gatherings or for writing exercises.[123]

Frequent performance of this prayer, three times a day ten prostrations, would have had a large impact on the individual's Manichaeanness, in particular because this required physical effort. If the prayer was performed outside, it may have been visible to members of the household and neighbors. Still, if it was prayed indoors, it required ritual washing and a conscious decision to face the direction of the sun or the moon. In both instances, the daily prayers constituted marked moments of Manichaeanness that stood in stark contrast with the ritual practices of Christians or neighbors visiting the temple of Tutu.

The highly marked Manichaeanness of the daily prayers was not the only ritualized moment involving prayers. The document with the prayer for the sick illustrates a wider ritual spectrum, which was less group specific. Just like in the Christian tradition, Manichaeans knew special prayers for the sick. P.Kell.Gr. 88 was initially classified as an amulet, but has been reconsidered as a prayer for the sick, recited with the laying on of hands, and addressed to the "eternal God" (θεος αἰώνιος) who is "our savior and refuge and helper of our assistance."[124] Without any indication of Manichaean repertoire, the request is to keep "away from him every disease and every infirmity and every spirit of illness."[125] The

[119] Summarized at Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 247.

[120] De Blois, "The Manichaean Daily Prayers," 51.

[121] P.Kell.Gr. 98.124-130. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 258.

[122] Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 261; Bermejo-Rubio, ""I Worship and Glorify," 252-3, referring to Psalm fragment §368 in Durkin-Meisterernst and Morano, *Mani's Psalms*.

[123] Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 253 suggests that the wooden board may have served as an example for writing exercises.

[124] ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν καὶ καταφυγὴ καὶ β<ο>ηθ<ὸς> τῆς ἀντιλήμψεως ἡμῶν P.Kell.Gr. 88.20-23.

[125] Χώρισον ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν καὶ πὰν πν(εῦμ)α ἀσθενίας P.Kell.Gr. 88.11-14. Worp, *GPK1*, 220-22.

publication of an almost exact parallel in P.Barc. 155.9–156.5 reveals its background in a collection or book with liturgical prayers.[126] Although the vocabulary stays close to a shared religious repertoire, including biblical texts, there is no reason why it could not have been used by Manichaeans. The find location in House 3 suggests a connection with the other papyri. The adaptations of P.Kell.Gr. 88 in comparison with the text in P.Barc. 155 may indicate something about its usage. The absence of Jesus in an intercessory role, found in the concluding doxology of the prayer in P.Barc. 156, may point to the diffuse identities of the practitioners: Jesus was important to Manichaeans as well, but not in the same name-giving, identity-creating role.[127] As with the amulets and horoscopes found in House 3, I see no direct connection to Manichaeism, but propose to understand these documents as belonging to a wider set of ritual practices that were performed by fourth-century Kellites, including those we call Manichaeans.

7.5.3 Mechanisms Contributing to Groupness

The previous sections have highlighted the wooden boards and papyri with psalms and prayers. Many of these texts are strongly linked to the Manichaean tradition, especially when they correspond to Medinet Madi psalms or Middle Persian prayers. Some of these texts contained linguistic and material markers of their liturgical use in communal gatherings. Although such gatherings are not necessarily the cradle of positive identifications with the group, they provide potential opportunities for groupness. What people do together generally fosters a sense of cohesiveness or commonality. Richard Jenkins has stressed how enactment in communal ritual can affirm the group's communal identity: "[O]rganised collective identity is endowed, via collective ritual and 'communitas,' with personal authenticity and experiential profundity."[128] In this way, group-identifications are molded as essential or primordial, "we have to be made to *feel* 'we.'"[129] Despite the deconstruction of groupism (Chapter 2), it seems unwarranted to assume that people living in close proximity to each other would not have interacted regularly, just as it would be implausible to argue that such regular interaction did not lead to some type of collective belonging.[130] My

---

[126] Römer, Daniel, and Worp, "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung". It was designated "P.Monts.Roca inv. 155b.19-156a.5" by A. Maravela, "Christians Praying in a Graeco-Egyptian Context: Intimations of Christian Identity in Greek Papyrus Prayers," in *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, ed. R. Hvalvik and K. O. Sandnes (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 291-323.

[127] Maravela, "Christians Praying," 303; Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian*, 231. The laying on of hands is described as one of the five mysteries of Manichaean practice (1 Keph. 9, 37.28-42.23). Mani was known as a doctor, and his disciples were portrayed as healers through laying on of hands. C. Römer, "Mani, der neue Urmensch. Eine neue Interpretation der P. 36 Des Kolner Mani-Kodex," in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. Roselli (Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986), 333-44; Coyle, "Hands and Imposition of Hands in Manichaeism," 89-99.

[128] R. Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 152.

[129] Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 152.

[130] M. D. Varien and J. M. Potter, "The Social Production of Communities. Structure, Agency, and Identity," in *The Social Construction of Communities. Agency, Structure, and Identity in the Prehispanic Southwest*, ed. M. D. Varien and J. M. Potter (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2008), 3; W. H. Isbell, "What We Should Be Studying. The "Imagined Community" and the "Natural Community," in *The Archaeology of Communities: A New World*

argument here, however, is more specific in pointing to communal gatherings as both the result of groupness and as fundamental elements in the reproduction of this identification with the imagined group. Regular and emotional involvement with Manichaean psalms and prayers, I contend, constituted emotional involvement with the group, which became real for the individuals involved, in four different ways.[131] Manichaean psalms and prayers have (1) a pedagogical and (2) a didactical function; (3) they are efficacious in themselves by performing salvation; and (4) they construct an image and narrative by commemorating the community's history. All four mechanisms will be briefly discussed.

Songs have a didactical function, by which I mean that they aim to teach both the singers themselves and the wider community around them. Most religious teaching in antiquity was implicit and took place through shared experience and practice in the domestic context. Some groups developed other means to socialize their children and new converts in the community. Correct behavior and doctrine were discussed by religious leaders in sermons or in catechetical lectures, often with mixed results.[132] Songs were composed, therefore, to make difficult theological notions easier to remember. Arius is said to have written several easily memorizable songs (the compilation is known as *Thalia*), Ephrem is known for his Syriac hymns on virginity, and Greek church fathers like Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom were prolific poets whose songs were incorporated in the Ancient Christian liturgy.[133] It is not a stretch to see how Manichaeans, likewise, used songs to give instruction about central doctrines and narratives. Bema Psalm 223, for example, summarized the core elements of the Manichaean myth and the creation of the world, while Bema Psalm 226 narrated Mani's final days.[134] Augustine also stressed how Manichaean songs conveyed doctrinal teaching about Manichaean supernatural beings (Faust. 15.5).

Perspective, ed. M. Canuto and J. Yaeger (London: Routledge, 2000), 245-52; N. MacSweeney, "Beyond Ethnicity: The Overlooked Diversity of Group Identities," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 22, no. 1 (2009): 105.

[131] In many respects, my argument in this section builds on the insights of performance theory. Cf. on the collective reading-experience of Bohairic Coptic religious texts, Zakrzewska, "The Bohairic Acts of the Martyrs," 223-38.

[132] Scholars as Frankfurter and Rebillard regard the impact of these sermons rather minimal. For Maxwell, however, it was part of popular culture and profoundly shaped by everyday concerns. Maxwell, "Popular Theology in Late Antiquity," 287. For Richard Lim, Christianization "involved the slow molding of attitudes and habits of life through pastoral care" R. Lim, "Converting the Un-Christianizable," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Seeing and Believing*, ed. K. Mills and A. Grafton (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 86.

[133] J. A. McGuckin, "Poetry and Hymnography (2): The Greek World," in *The Oxford Handbook to Early Christianity*, ed. S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 646-7; S. P. Brock, "Poetry and Hymnography (3): Syriac," in *The Oxford Handbook to Early Christianity*, ed. S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 659-60. Examples of such didactical songs are known from various periods, including the Reformation period. R. Sherman, "The Catechetical Function of Reformed Hymnody," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 55, no. 1 (2002): 79-99. I did not have the opportunity to consult M. E. Gordley, *Teaching through Song in Antiquity: Didactic Hymnody among Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

[134] Despite an earlier interpretation by Ries, this psalm cannot have been a liturgical version of the Epistula Fundamenti, as Wurst has argued convincingly the similarities are restricted to the general

Some of these songs were not only didactical, in the sense that they conveyed doctrinal information, but also pedagogical, as they urged the audience and singers to perform certain rituals and think of themselves in certain Manichaean terms.[135] These pedagogical psalms are different from didactical psalms because they do not address the supernatural agents, but the community of "my brothers" (ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ 2 PsB. 39.23). They explain the forgiveness of sins in the context of biblical commandments, which is the main purpose of the Bema festival during which the psalm was sung. They urged the community to follow the biblical example: "[L]et us be merciful to one another that we may ourselves receive mercy; let us forgive one another that we ourselves be forgiven."[136] In this case, the formulation in the first person plural stimulates the identification with the group, and, by addressing the community or the soul of the individual, these songs contribute to the internalization of the behavioral norms.

As with other religious performances, didactical and pedagogical psalms could come to constitute ritual scripts that shape self-understanding and self-identification. Wade Wheelock has pointed out how speech acts have a performative nature, which leads to closer identification of the actor and the narrative. He states that "the first person of the ritual text comes to life as the 'I' or 'We' of the participants who speak the liturgy and who then proceed to fashion around themselves a whole world out of language."[137] This is exactly what happened in many of the Coptic Manichaean psalms. They were sung in the first person singular and plural, so that the performers would identify themselves with Manichaean cosmology and actively express and embrace the Manichaean perception of reality.[138] Drawing on Manichaean images and phrases, these songs fabricated groupness by stimulating the identification of the self with the Manichaean world view through daily

---

phenomenological level and do not suggest literary dependency. J. Ries, "Une version liturgique copte de l'Epistola Fundamenti de Mani réfutée par Saint Augustin?," *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972): 341-49; G. Wurst, "Bemapsalm 223: Ein liturgische Version der *Epistula Fundamenti*?," in *Manichaica Selecta 1*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen (Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991), 391-99. On the polemical function of some of the Iranian Manichaean psalms see O. Skjærvø, "The Manichean Polemical Hymns in M 28 I," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 9 (1995): 239-55.

[135] This function was recognized by Gregor Wurst as a genre of "lehrhaft-paränetische Psalmen" (among which he numbered Bema Psalm, 222, 236, 238 and 239). Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 84-86 on the genre and pages 96-98 on "lehrhaft-paränetische Psalmen."

[136] ⲛⲁ]ⲣⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ϫⲉⲩⲁⲛⲁⲉ ⲛⲉⲛ ϩⲱⲱⲛ ⲛⲁⲣⲛ̄ⲓ̣[ⲱ] ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲉⲣⲏⲩ ϫⲉⲩⲁⲕⲱ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲱⲱⲛ. 2 PsB. 41.3-4. Discussed at Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 97-98.

[137] W. T. Wheelock, "The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50, no. 1 (1982): 65.

[138] BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 58. Note that, for example, in the Chinese Hymnscroll the Manichaean supernatural beings are listed but there are less indications of this sense of participating in a cosmological narrative. S. N. C. Lieu, "From Turfan to Dunhuang: Manichaean Cosmogony in Chinese Texts," in *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, ed. D. Durkin-Meisterernst, et al. (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004), 173. On the impact of the Byzantine liturgy and the greater emphasis on biblical reenactment in songs and prayers, see D. Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

repetition. If Kellites indeed gathered daily for prayer and singing, this must have had a large impact on their Manichaeanness.

A further, nonlinguistic element of the pedagogical function of psalms is their embodiment in ritual gestures. Although little is known about the ritual settings in which these songs were sung, certain elements in the text suggest that ritual gestures belonged to the performance. In Bema Psalm 227, the Angel is said to give gifts to the soul, including "the holy seal" (ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲫⲣⲁⲅⲓⲥ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ 2 PsB. 22.11). This seal has been understood as signifying the postmortem gift of forgiveness.[139] Following previous interpretations by Puech, Wurst suggests that the new forgiven status was conferred through ritual action, performed by the laying on of hands after a night filled with waiting and singing.[140] I have some doubts about our knowledge of this type of Manichaean rituals (see Chapter 8 for a discussion on initiation and visionary ascent rituals), but it is easy to imagine other ritual gestures as part of psalm singing and prayer. The prostrations accompanying the daily prayers are but one example of what this would have looked like. Mostly, however, details of such gestures remain invisible in the Kellis finds.

A third way in which psalms shaped groupness is the notion of immediate efficacy and the emotional arousal caused by music. Several Early Christian authors warned against the power of songs, melody, and music. Clement of Alexandria, for example, associated music with sexual arousal, drunkenness, and animalistic behavior.[141] Positive connotations were aided by his conceptualization of Christ as the New Song and the notion of divine music, stressing the life-giving qualities of harmonious music that counteracted negative bodily passions.[142] At several points in the Manichaean Psalmbook, the songs refer to a similar notion of power in music and songs. It portrays the results of pious singing as immediate, happening "today" (ⲛ̄ⲡⲟⲟⲩⲉ): "[N]umber us also among thy Elect today."[143] At times, the performance of the ritual is perceived as a guarantee for the future ascension. In this way, the song's efficacy put Mani in the midst of the community on this "day" (ⲛ̄ⲡⲟⲟⲩ 2 PsB. 41.25).[144] Thus, in many of these instances, psalms not only reiterated doctrinal statements or narratives meant for teaching, they achieved something in the cosmological world with immediate results.

The best example of the performative ritual power of Manichaean psalms and prayers is the *Kephalaia* chapter on the Yes and Amen (1 Keph. 122, 290.29–295.8). This chapter conceptualizes ritual speech as entities, capable of achieving a goal. It describes how the

---

[139] Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 135.

[140] Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 137; Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles," 341-42. Coyle incorrectly took the entire passage to intimate an "initiation rite celebrated on the great *Bēma*-feast, in the way Christian baptism was ordinarily celebrated at Easter." Coyle, "Hands and Imposition of Hands in Manichaeism," 99.

[141] Clement of Alexandria, *Paed*. 2.4.40-41, 2.4.42.1 and 3.11.80.4, discussed in C. H. Cosgrove, "Clement of Alexandria and Early Christian Music," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14, no. 3 (2006): 255-82.

[142] Cosgrove, "Clement of Alexandria and Early Christian Music," 279.

[143] ⲁⲡⲙⲉ ϩⲱⲱⲙ [ⲁⲛⲉⲕⲥⲱ]ⲧ̣ⲧ̣ⲓ ⲛ̄ⲡⲟⲟⲩⲉ. 2 PsB. 44.31. "Today" is also used in this way in 2 PsB. 8.18, 21.6, 26.16, 29.9 (?), 41.25, in the Psalms to Jesus (see Chapter 8). The same use of the present tense is found in Bema Psalm 239 (2 PsB. 39.19-41.7).

[144] Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 138-41, citation from page 141.

phrases "Yes" and "Amen" were acclaimed after prayers and psalms, "when the congregation will utter an entreaty and a question, and they all answer and say 'verily and amen,' they shall seal the entreaty…"[145] This sealing of the prayers happened because Yes and Amen corresponded to the supernatural archetypes Summons and Obedience (also known as Call and Response). Just like these cosmological entities, Yes and Amen were considered portals to liberation (1 Keph. 122, 291. 14–15, cf. 1 Keph. 75, 181.32–183.9), assisting in the ascent of the prayers and songs, sending them upwards into the world of Light.[146] The performative nature of these speech acts is explained cosmologically, since Yes and Amen gather all that is good into one single beautiful image that travels daily to the world of Light. The communal speech act, all the "sound of all the people who respond," comes together "and it fixes and paints and it is formed and becomes a good image."[147] Not only do these speech acts secure the transition of the prayers and songs to the world of Light, but also they are described as a great power, assisting in prayers of healing, protection, and forgiveness. In case of lust, for example, its power is "immediate" (ⲛ̣̀ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ) and it "annuls the lust and the temptation."[148] This power of words and songs, however, also presented a potential threat. Music and melody might corrupt people through the manipulation of their senses (1 Keph. 56).[149] Indeed, the transformation of the Manichaean body, through psalm singing, prayer, and ascetic practice, is the subject of a number of *Kephalaia* chapters. It is described as the closure of the orifices to loathsome sound and melodies of lust and wickedness and the openness to the sounds of psalms, prayers, and lessons of truth (1 Keph. 56, 143.10–20). As for both psalms and sermons "(everywhere) it is heard and is answered, it will bring forth power."[150] Their sound brings life and leads people into rest (1 Keph. 139, 342.9–13). Prayer and psalm singing are thus the result of a bodily transformation, but are

---

[145] ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲧⲱⲃϩ̄ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲧⲱⲃϩ ⲙ̣[ⲛ ⲟⲩϣⲓⲛ]ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϫⲟⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲕⲁ̣ⲓ ϩ[ⲁⲛⲏ]ⲛ ϣⲁⲩⲣⲥⲫⲣ̣ⲫⲓⲥ ⲙⲓⲧⲧⲱⲃϩ̄… 1 Keph. 122, 292.5-8. I cite the Coptic text from Funk's edition and the translation from an improved reading (incorporating addenda otherwise unavailable to me) in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 85.

[146] A. Böhlig, "Ja und Amen in Manichäischer Deutung," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 58 (1985): 59-70.

[147] ⲡ̄ϩⲣⲁⲩ ⲙ̣̀ⲙ̣̀ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱϣⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱϥ ϣⲁϥⲥⲱⲟⲩ[ϩ] ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ̣̀ ⲛ̄ϥⲉⲓ ⲁⲛⲉϥⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲛ̄ϥⲡⲏⲥⲥⲉ ⲛ̄ϥⲍⲱⲅⲣⲁⲫⲉ [ⲁⲛ] ⲛ̄ⲥⲉ[ⲙⲁ]ⲛⲕϥ̄ ⲛ̄ϥ̄ⲣ ⲟⲩϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲥ…1 Keph. 122, 292.16-17, 18-19.

[148] ⲛ̄̀ⲥⲟⲩⲱϥ ⲛⲧⲉⲡⲑⲩⲙⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ ⲡⲡⲉⲓⲣⲁⲥⲙⲟ̣ⲥ̣ [ⲉ]ⲧⲁϥⲃⲓ ⲁϩⲣⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧϥ̄. 1 Keph. 122, 293.16. The eschatological future described in the Sermon on the Great War includes the "sound of righteousness" as an important feature of the peace after the Great War. People will "sing psalms and give glory in every land, singing in every city, in every place, in every province." ⲉⲩϩ̄ϯⲁⲗⲉ ⲉⲩϯ ⲉⲁⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ϫⲱ[ⲣⲁ ϫ]ⲱ̣ⲣⲁ: ⲉⲩϩⲱⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ· ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲛⲁ [ⲛⲁ · ⲕ]ⲁⲧⲁ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ϣ· Hom. 24.11-13.

[149] Similar warnings against the disruption of rationality by the senses appear in the work of Clement of Alexandria and others Cosgrove, "Clement of Alexandria and Early Christian Music," 255-82. Augustine, *Conf.* X 33, 49-50 expresses the same fear of getting carried away in music. I am particularly impressed by the analysis of the role of music in Early Christian discourse in J. B. Weimer, *Musical Assemblies: How Early Christian Music Functioned as a Rhetorical Topos, a Mechanism of Recruitment, and a Fundamental Marker of an Emerging Christian Identity* (University of Toronto: Unpublished dissertation, 2016).

[150] …ⲙ̄]ⲥⲉⲥⲁⲧⲛⲉϥ ⲛⲥⲉⲕⲁⲥⲙⲏ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ϣⲁϥⲃ̣[ⲓ ⲟⲩ]ϭⲁⲙ ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ 1 Keph. 139, 342.5-7. My translation, closely following Funk.

also a cause of this very same transformation. Eastern Manichaean texts also indicate how singing leads to the purification of the body, as a recitation entitled "The True Word of Life" says: "You who sing, O Elect, shall find eternal life. Purify the Light self so that it in turn will save you."[151]

When we return to one of the Bema psalms cited above, we see how it equates singing with the activity of weaving a garland for the soul:

> He that sings a psalm is like them that weave a garland. They that answer after him are like them that put roses into his hands. The Victory of the Judge of Truth and his glorious Bema, may it be given to all of us also, his Elect and his catechumens.[152]

Since the garland and roses are the gifts received by the soul in the first stages of its ascent, the equation of singing with weaving received this additional layer of meaning. In Gregor Wurst's words: "Der Punkt ist also folgender, daß die Gemeinde durch ihr Psalmensingen sich selbst einen Kranz windet; und damit kann nur der Siegeskranz der Erlösung gemeint sein."[153] If the song creates a postmortem gift, or contributes to its coming into being, this means that the gathering itself had soteriological efficacy. It was not only a social occasion for celebration, learning, or remembrance, but it could also be conceived of as so much more.

From the outside perspective of modern scholars, songs and music provide an additional dimension in the formation of groups. Cognitive studies in religion and psychology have shown how songs and music can arouse emotions and evoke mental processes and memory reinforcement that stimulate the social affiliation of the individual with the group. While most of the four mechanisms listed here are of a doctrinal nature, the primary drive that made the group 'present' for individuals could very well have been emotional and affective. Studies of modern Pentecostals have highlighted how music, speech acts, and ritual gestures contribute to the intense (and often bodily) experience of God's intimate presence.[154] The Manichaean tradition may have resembled some of these practices, as they are said to have acclaimed the "Yes and Amen" after each entreaty (1 Keph. 122), not unlike the Pentecostal practice of crying out "Amen" and "Hallelujah" to affirm the preacher's message. Such verbal action during communal gatherings contributed to the conceptualization of the group and the individual's self-identification with this collective.[155]

---

[151] M 7.R.i.5-8 cited in BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 186.

[152] ⲡ̣ⲉⲧϫⲱ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩϯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧϣⲱⲛⲧ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩϣϣⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱϥ ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲟⲩⲣⲏ ⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲡ̀ⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲡⲕⲣⲓⲧⲏⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥⲃⲛⲏⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲓ ⲛ̄ⲉⲁⲩ ⲉϥⲁⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲛⲉⲛ ϩⲱⲱⲛⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲛⲉ ⲛⲉϥⲥⲱⲧⲡ̄ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲉϥⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ 2Ps 241, 47.15-20 (modified translation).

[153] Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 140.

[154] T. M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), 111-32 and passim. The same argument is made more briefly in T. M. Luhrmann, "Metakinesis: How God Becomes Intimate in Contemporary U.S. Christianity," *American Anthropologist* 106, no. 3 (2004): 518-28. The same phenomenon is discussed, with references in J. Inbody, "Sensing God: Bodily Manifestations and Their Interpretations in Pentecostal Rituals and Everyday Life," *Sociology of Religion* 76, no. 3 (2015): 337-55.

[155] For this paragraph, see Weimer, *Musical Assemblies*. Studies on ritual as performance are discussed in C. Bell, *Ritual. Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 72-76, 159-64. Birgit Meyer

The fourth way in which psalms and prayers contribute to groupness, or to the conceptualization of the transregional Manichaean community, is through their retelling of salvation history. The psalms elaborate on the life of Mani, in particular those sung during the Bema festival, but also reflect on the examples of other apostles. For this purpose, they appropriated elements from the apocryphal *Acts of the Apostles* and used them in their religious history. The Psalm of Endurance cites Paul, Andrew, the two sons of Zebedee (John and James), Thomas, and Thecla as predecessors of the apostle Mani and exemplary figures to be followed by all. Like them "we also, my brothers, have our part of suffering."[156] In the Egyptian monastic tradition, songs in memory of patron saints and monastic fathers stand out. These songs had a place in the Eucharistic liturgy.[157] Likewise, inscriptions, graffiti, and dipinti at Egyptian monasteries displayed socially distributed memory and presented (or constructed) the monastic genealogy by listing the names of deceased, commemorated, or penitent monks, placing them in a narrative lineage of the monastery's (invented?) history.[158] Manichaean psalms served a similar function, not only in their didactic retelling of Mani's story, but also by including several individuals in the secondary doxology at the end of the psalm:

> Glory and victory to our lord Mani and all his holy elect. Victory to the soul of Pshai, Jmnoute; and the soul of the blessed Maria.[159]

As will be argued in Chapter 8, these individuals were probably not martyrs, but important wealthy catechumens, who were remembered for their almsgiving or in the context of death rituals. By placing their names at the end of the psalm, just after the first doxology that praised Mani and all his elect, they become part of the socially distributed memory. Their names, and presumably their stories, became part of the liturgy in which powers like Yes

---

has coined the notion of "sensational form" to designate how media shape religious subjects through various sensorial channels. Meyer, "Material Mediations and Religious Practices of World-Making," 8.

[156] ⲁⲛⲁⲛ ϩⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲓⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲓⲥⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲩ. 2 PsB. 143.20 cf. 194.7-21. On the use of apocryphal texts in the Manichaean tradition, see P. Nagel, "Die apokryphen Apostelakten des 2. und 3. Jahrhunderts in manichäischen Literatur," in *Gnosis und Neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, ed. K.W. Tröger (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1973), 149-82; J. D. Kaestli, "L'utilisation des actes apocryphes des apôtres dans le manichéisme," in *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, ed. M. Krause (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 107-16. Reevaluation in G. Kosa, "The Protagonist-Catalogues of the Apocryphal Acts of Apostles in the Coptic Manichaica — a Re-Assessment of the Evidence," in *From Illahun to Djeme. Papers Presented in Honour of Ulrich Luft*, ed. E. Bechtold, A. Gulyás, and A. Hasznos (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 107-19.

[157] A tradition that continued into the monastic hymns from 14th -century Scetis (at Wādī al-Naṭrūn). S. J. Davis, *Coptic Christology in Practice: Incarnation and Divine Participation in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 94-95; S. J. Davis, "Shenoute in Scetis: New Archaeological Evidence for the Cult of a Monastic Saint in Early Medieval Wādī al-Naṭ rūn," *Coptica* 14 (2014): 9.

[158] M. Choat, "Narratives of Monastic Genealogy in Coptic Inscriptions," *Religion in the Roman Empire* 1, no. 3 (2015): 403-30.

[159] ⲟⲩϩⲁⲩ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩϭⲣⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛ̄ϫⲁⲓⲥ] ⲧ̣ⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲛⲓϫⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛ̣ϣϥ[ⲱⲧⲧ̄ⲓ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲟⲩ]ϭⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧϒⲩⲭⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙ̄ϫⲁⲓ ϫⲙ̄[ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲧϒⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲏⲁⲕ]ⲁ̣ⲣ̣ⲓ̣ⲁ̣ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲣⲓⲁ. 1 PsB. 99.9-11, reading and translation after Gardner, *KLT1*, 24.

and Amen established health, protection, and liberation. Cosmology, invented history, and the names of these individuals came together in the final lines of the communal songs.[160]

7.6 Conclusions

The rise of distinct religious groups as a new group style in the wide variety of religious social formations in antiquity was closely tied to the practice of regular communal gatherings. Greg Woolf states that "a second-century observer might have been unlikely to pick out the rise of differentiated groups as *the* religious innovation of his or her age."[161] Nevertheless, by the fourth century, Kellites and other inhabitants of Roman Egypt must have had some experience with distinct religious groups that claimed transregional connections, but came together with a select number of local individuals only. The church buildings in Kellis attest to this type of ritual gatherings, although detailed information about who gathered in these buildings is no longer available.

The impact of such gatherings must have depended on the frequency and type of gathering. Within the Manichaean tradition, almsgiving, prayer, and a daily ritual meal would have created the opportunity to meet each other and reiterate the affiliation with the community and its goals. I have argued in Chapter 6 that the ritual meal was not performed regularly in Kellis, or was performed at a distance. In result, I think that the community gathered less frequently, or primarily without the elect. Regular meetings with songs and prayers, on the other hand, are most probable. The wooden boards and papyri with prayers and psalms belonged to these settings. No matter the size of these events, they constituted marked moments in time, when the participating Kellites experienced and understood themselves in Manichaean terms. According to Richard Jenkins: "[T]he enhancement of experience which ritual offers cognitively and particularly emotionally, plays an important role in the internalization of identification."[162] One could say that these shared communal actions are "embodied expressions of identity," particularly when they involved the embodied daily prayers with its thirty prostrations toward the sun and the moon.[163]

If the confession rituals were performed each Monday, they would have constituted the most powerful occasions for identity formation and consolidation, shaped by the

---

[160] At Kellis, however, this secondary doxology is not attested. Presumably it was included in the process of collecting songs and constructing the manuscript of the Medinet Madi Psalmbook. W. B. Oerter, "Zur Bedeutung der Manichaica aus Kellis für Koptologie und Manichäologie. Vorläufige Anmerkungen," in *Religionswissenschaft in Konsequenz. Beiträge im Anschluß an Impulse von Kurt Rudolph*, ed. R. Flasche, F. Heinrich, and C. Koch (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2000), 106-7. Gregor Wurst considers these doxologies as a colophon which was in the course of the transmission added to the psalm. See also the use of "it is finished" (ⲁϥϫⲱⲕ) before the second doxology in 2 PsB. 177.29, cited in Wurst, *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library. Psalm Book. Part II, Fasc. 1. Die Bema-Psalmen*, 37nD4.

[161] Woolf, "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions," 34 (his italics).

[162] Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 150-1.

[163] M. Tellbe, "Identity and Prayer," in *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, ed. R. Hvalvik and K. O. Sandnes (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 19 building on the work of Rappaport.

disciplinary practices of comparing the self to the Manichaean ideals.[164] It is tempting to understand some of the references in the papyrus letters in light of these gatherings, but we do not know whether Makarios and the deacon argued about Manichaean behavioral expectations or about something entirely unrelated. The pastoral tone of Mani's *Epistles*, as well as some of the biblical texts found at Kellis, imply a certain level of reflection and behavioral exhortations. The communal reading of these passages may have constituted intense moments of groupness, either leading to increasing affiliation with the group, or to potential conflict and rupture.

A second mechanism of social construction and identification is found in the text of the psalms and prayers, which facilitated a close emotional identification with the Manichaean group and cosmos through their use of the first person singular/plural, repetition, and antiphonal singing or singing in unison. Through this style, individuals could identify themselves with the main actors of the cosmological narrative. It was also used in psalms that were strongly related to the commemoration of the departed, to which we will now turn.

[164] BeDuhn, "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual," 271-99. Compare the punishments and fines imposed for non-participation in some Greco-Roman associations, Kloppenborg, "Membership Practices in Pauline Christ Groups," 183-215.

Chapter 8. Matthaios's Grief: Manichaean Death Rituals in an Egyptian Context

> I was in distress that she died when we were not with her, and that she died without finding the brotherhood gathered around her (Matthaios).[1]

8.1 Introduction

Grief is a strong emotion. Grief over the death of a loved one activated all kinds of expectations about care within the family, burial, and commemoration, as well as particular Manichaean notions about the cosmos or the afterlife. Matthaios, the son of Makarios, expressed his grief about the departure of his "great mother" (ⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϩ) in a letter to his mother. His distress seems primarily focused on the absence of "the brotherhood" when she died. Somehow, Matthaios would have wanted to be there, maybe even to gather around her together with "the brotherhood." These few words, written to express grief about her departure, conveyed real distress, even though such expressions also belonged to a conventional genre in papyrus letters. At the same time, this letter opens a window on the role of Manichaean beliefs and rituals pertaining to death and commemoration in the community.

To examine instances of Manichaeanness related to death and commemoration, we will go back and forth between the oasis and the Nile valley. I will place Matthaios's grief in the context of other letters in this village, as well as the systematized theological works from Medinet Madi and their Egyptian-Christian *umwelt*. When gleaned together from various sources, these details will intimate the Manichaean attitude toward death and the ritual practices they considered appropriate to protect and assist the soul during its journey after life on earth. By studying these sources, this chapter will take up the question of the impact of groupness on behavioral norms. Where and when can we identify instances in which everyday behavior is characterized by Manichaeanness? Just as in the preceding chapters, I will take our point of departure in the village setting as found in the papyri and the archaeological record. From this level, I will expand our focus regionally, as well as in comparison to other fourth-century settings.

Before delving into the documentary papyri, we need to be reminded that death, commemoration, and burial are sometimes regarded as strongly associated with a religious group identity.[2] The traditional explanation, still dominant in some studies of late antique funerary practices, is that there existed a strong and direct correlation between burial customs and theological beliefs. In other words, religious groups came to define the social imaginary in such a way that individual options surrounding death, commemoration, and burial became limited to institutionally mediated choices. As a result, distinct burial practices

---

[1] ⲁ̅ⲡ̅ⲗⲩⲡⲏ ϫⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲛϩⲁⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲱ ϫⲉ ⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ ⲁ̅ⲛ̅ⲥϭⲏ̅ ⲧⲏⲛ̅ⲧⲥⲁⲛ̀ ⲉⲥⲥⲁⲩϩ ⲁϫⲱⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 25.53, 56.

[2] U. Volp, *Tod und Ritual in den christlichen Gemeinden der Antike* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); R. Gilchrist, "Transforming Medieval Beliefs: The Significance of Bodily Resurrection to Medieval Burial Rituals," in *Ritual Changes and Changing Rituals. Function and Meaning in Ancient Funerary Practices*, ed. M. Prusac and J. R. Brandt (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 379-96.

came to be thought of as coterminous with religious groups.[3] Fortunately, more and more archaeological studies highlight the complex relation between mortuary practices and social representation.[4] The relation between burial and religion is not clear cut, as funerary patterns can reflect culture, gender, social standing, religion, and much more, either as a result of a deliberate differentiation, or following from the available resources.[5] Most recently, Eric Rebillard has challenged the postulated correlation between death rituals, burial, and religious identification by arguing that the family remained responsible for burials during the larger part of Late Antiquity. Rather than fundamentally affecting funerary practices, the institutional church's group norms had little impact on everyday life.[6] This chapter will argue that situations surrounding death were strongly related to Manichaean groupness, particularly during commemorative events, even though Manichaean burials are invisible in the material record.

8.2 Death and the Deceased in Documentary Papyri

Matthaios was not the first of his family to address situations related to the departure of relatives or acquaintances. News about the health and well-being of relatives was a central concern of papyrus letters, since this was the only way of conveying information to those who stayed behind in the oasis. Makarios also wrote to Maria to inform her about the death of an acquaintance: Joubei. Unfortunately, this section of his letter (P.Kell.Copt. 24.40) is fragmentary, and it remains unclear whether he was a member of the family or a family friend.[7] At any rate, it is most probable that Joubei belonged to the same Manichaean community or was closely associated with the household of Makarios in the Nile valley (see his connections to Apa Lysimachos and with "the brothers" in P.Kell.Copt. 24.40–41). Joubei's death returns in one of the letters of Apa Lysimachos (P.Kell.Copt. 30.24) and the freight charges on his account were included in a business account (P.Kell.Copt. 44.17). The latter probably indicates that his body was taken to the oasis for proper burial, or otherwise that commodities were bought for the funerary arrangements at a price of six hundred talents, as much as a ten-day wage for a Kellis weaver.[8] As the account may have been

[3] For a critical analysis in two specific late antique villages in Middle Egypt, see Pleşa, "Religious Belief in Burial."

[4] The strong religiously marked interpretation is for example advocated by J. G. Davies, *Death, Burial and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1999); M. Dunn, *Belief and Religion in Barbarian Europe c. 350-700* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013). For an introductory overview of the theoretical debates in archaeology, see R. Chapman, "Death, Burial, and Social Representation," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, ed. L. Nilsson Stutz and S. Tarlow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 191-200.

[5] A distinction can, therefore, be made between "functional data" and "intentional data," see H. Härke, "The Nature of Burial Data," in *Burial and Society: The Chronological and Social Analysis of Archaeological Burial Data*, ed. C. K. Jensen and K. H. Nielsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1997), 19-27.

[6] E. Rebillard, *The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 36 and 176-8.

[7] Makarios sent condolences to Takoshe for the departure of her husband (P.Kell.Copt. 20.44-45). Could this have been Joubei?

[8] Suggestion based on the price level gleaned together from the KAB and P.Kell.Copt. 48 Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 61; Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 188n45. It has been suggested to read "camel" at the

written by Tehat, we have several individuals from the same family network involved in one event pertaining to death and burial.[9] One wonders whether Apa Lysimachos's involvement in the situation may have been similar to the role of the "brotherhood" in Matthaios's letter.

Grief also constitutes the background of other letters. Sometimes death is mentioned only in passing, as in an order of a warp of "my brother Pshai, who has just died (lit. who left his body)."[10] More dramatic is the letter to Psais, in which the death of a little girl is reported: "[T]hen death forced itself on me and carried her away from me. I am powerless. It is not only her—Nonna's children have also died."[11] Yet another letter comes closer to a letter of condolence. As in other (often Greek) letters of this genre, it puts an emphasis on the great evil that happened and the grief in the heart of the author:

> What indeed will I write to you (pl.) about the great evil that has happened? Comfort the heart of Pamour and Pegosh. No one can do anything. God knows the grief that is in my heart. For you are the ones who ought to comfort him; surely we know that a great evil has befallen him. And we also heard that the old woman died. My heart grieved. Comfort the heart of the others too on her account. ….. Comfort the heart of our brother Papnoute about this evil that has happened.[12]

I suggest that the first section of this passage refers to the departure of the wife of Pamour, Maria, whose inheritance to their son Horos is mentioned in a Greek document (dated in May 363 CE, P.Kell.Gr. 30).[13] Philammon expressed his sorrow to the brothers Pamour and Pegosh, before he continued to write about the death of an "old woman," presumably a village acquaintance.

---

start of the sentence, in which case 15 camels would cost about 40 talents, which is close to the 50 talents mentioned in line 4. It remains, however, hard to see what 15 camels could have brought for the burial of Joubei. A. Alcock and I. Gardner, "The Coptic Economic Texts from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit*, ed. S. Emmel, et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999), 231-40. A parallel text is W.Chr. 499 (= BL 11.126 from the second century), in which a woman sent the body of her mother, prepared for the funeral, with a private boat to her "brother." She explicitly mentions she has paid the shipping costs. Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters*, 289. Another letter pertaining to the details of the transportation of a corpse is P.Oxy. VII 1068 (reporting a delay and requesting additional support).

[9] On the identity of Tehat, see the suggestions in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 257.

[10] ⲡⲁⲥⲁⲛ ⲡϣⲁϊ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ̣ⲉⲓ ⲁ[ⲃ]ⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲛⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 111.26-27.

[11] ⲁ ⲡⲛⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ϫⲓⲧ ⲛ̄ϫ̣ⲛⲁϩ ⲁⲩϥⲓⲧϭ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧ’ ⲉⲩ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁϭⲁⲙ’ ⲙⲛ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̣̄ⲧⲁⲥ ⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̣ⲉ̣ⲧϭ̄ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲛⲛⲁ ⲁⲩⲛⲟⲩ ϩⲱⲟⲩ ⲁⲛ P.Kell.Copt. 115.27-30. Earlier in the letter, the author already mentioned the departure of Nonna's children: ⲛ̣ϣ̣ⲏ̣ⲣ[ⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲛⲟ̣ⲛ̣ⲛⲁ ϣⲱⲛⲉ ⲁⲩⲛ̣ⲟⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 115.17-18. In P.Kell.Copt. 92, Nonna and her daughter were still well. Clearly there are more people deceased here than just Nonna's children. Other letters express a similar emotion, while the events are often beyond our knowledge, as in P.Kell.Copt. 68.36 where they are "grieving about….," followed by a lacuna (ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲣ̄ϧⲩⲡⲏ ⲉⲧⲣ̣ⲉ̣ ..). See note at Shisha-Halevy, "Review Article of: Gardner," 275.

[12] ⲉⲩ ϭⲉ ⲡⲉϯⲛⲁⲥⲁϥⲥ ⲛⲛⲧⲛ̄ ⲉⲧ̣ⲣⲉ ⲡⲓⲛ̣ⲁ̣[ϭ ⲙ̄ⲡ]ⲉⲧϩⲁⲩ ⲉⲧⲁϩϣⲱⲡ̣ⲉ̣ ⲥⲗⲥⲗ ⲡϩ[ⲛⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛ]ⲟⲩⲣ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲡⲉϭⲱϣ ⲛⲏ̄ⲧⲉ ⲣⲱⲛⲉ ϕ̣ⲁ̣ⲛ̣ ⲁ̣[ϩ̄ϩ]ϣ̣ⲃ· ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲧ’ ⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲁⲧⲗⲩⲡⲏ ⲉⲧ’ ϩ[ⲛ̄ ⲡ]ⲁϩⲛⲧ’ ⲛ̄ⲧⲱⲧⲛ̄ ϩⲁⲣ ⲡⲉⲧ’ ⲛⲡ ⲁⲥⲗ̄ⲥⲱⲗϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲛ ⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲛⲁϭ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧ’ϩⲁⲩ ⲉⲓ ⲁϫⲱϥ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲛ ⲥⲱⲧⲛⲉ ⲁⲛ ϫⲉ ⲁⲧ’ϩⲗ̄ⲱ ⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲛⲁ ⲁⲡⲁϩⲛⲧ’ⲙ̄ⲕⲁϩ ⲥⲗ̄ⲥⲗ̄ ⲡϩⲛⲧ’ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲩⲉ ϩⲱⲟⲩ ⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲛⲧϭ̄….ⲥⲗ̄ⲥⲗ̄ ⲡϩⲛⲧ’ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲥⲁⲛ ⲡ̣ⲁⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ̣ ⲡⲓⲡⲉⲧ’ϩⲁⲩ ⲉⲧⲁϥϣⲱⲡⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 80.7-16, 30-31. The editors suggest to interpretat ⲧ’ϩⲗ̄ⲱ (lit. "old woman") as "matron." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 123.

[13] This connection was brought to my attention by H. F. Teigen.

Only a few letters explicitly address the religious consequences or settings behind these references. The first passage contains Matthaios's disappointment about the absence of "the brotherhood" when his great mother died (to which we will return soon). The second passage is, unfortunately, no less ambiguous. Just as in Matthaios's letter, the author of P.Kell.Copt. 73 writes about a situation after the departure of a relative or acquaintance. Unlike Matthaios, there are no expressions of grief, nor does the letter belong to the genre of letters of condolence.[14] Instead, a remarkably explicit religious issue is discussed. It seems that proper ritual action had to be decided on by the author and his family.

To be precise, this latter letter belongs the correspondence between Pegosh and his brother Psais. Apparently, the fate of two young orphans is discussed, as they ended up being Pegosh's responsibility after the death of their mother. The deliberation about the right course of action suggests that a heavy religious burden was attached to the situation. Pegosh wrote:

> Now then I greet you my beloved brother: "How are things going?" Well, the young man heard that his sister had died and left two daughters behind. When he heard about it, he said: "Write to him that he may send one of them to me," in order that from these (two) daughters I will keep her for you (pl.). He said: "I will take care of her like a daughter." He said it a second time. (After) I had waited, I wrote to him: "You must persuade my father." If you are convinced, then I will arrange the matter. And I myself am amazed that you are persuaded, because he wants to do it head-over-heels (ⲛⲥⲁϫⲟ), so that you will perform the service of the church, and this is a hard burden at the judgement. If you (sg.) are persuaded, then you (pl.) must bring Pine and he can bring her outside to me.
>
> Greet for me warmly our brother Pfiham. Our brother Theognos will tell you everything. He will speak to you about the girl and ... let me (?) […] the matter, so that we may attain life eternal.[15]

The exact translation and the proposed citations from previous letters are difficult and this passage raises more questions than it answers. Very exceptional is the reference to the

---

[14] E. J. Epp, "The Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri: 'Not without Honour except in Their Hometown'?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123, no. 1 (2004): 49; C. Kotsifou, "'Being Unable to Come to You and Lament and Weep with You'. Grief and Condolence Letters on Papyrus," in *Unveiling Emotions. Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World*, ed. A. Chaniotis (Wiesbaden: Frans Steiner Verlag, 2012), 389-411. It is difficult to assess the emotional grief of individuals in antiquity, as seen in the debate on the interpretation of epitaphs for deceased children in the Roman Empire.

[15] ϯⲛⲟⲩ ϭⲉ ϯⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲙⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲁ[ⲥⲁⲛ] ⲙⲛⲉⲣⲧ [ϫⲉ] ⲉ̀ⲱ ⲧ̀ⲉ ⲑⲉ <ⲉ>ⲡⲓ[ϧ]ⲏ ⲁ̀ ⲡ̀ⲕⲟ[ⲩⲓ̈] ⲥ̀ⲱⲧⲏ[ⲉ] ϫⲉ ⲁⲧϥⲥⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲟⲩ [ⲁ]ⲥⲕⲁ ⲥ̀ⲛⲧⲉ ⲛⲱⲉⲣⲉ ⲁϥⲥⲱⲧⲙⲉ ⲛⲁϫⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲥⲣⲉ̈ⲓ ⲛⲉϥ ⲛ̀ϥⲧⲏⲛⲁ̀ⲩ ⲟⲩⲓ̈ⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̀ϩⲛⲧⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲁⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲏⲧⲛ̀ⲉ ⲏ̄ⲛⲓⲱⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲁϫⲉϥ ϯⲛⲁϥⲓ ⲡⲥⲣⲁⲩⲱ ⲛ̀ⲱ̀ⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲉⲣⲉ ⲁϥϫⲟⲥ̀ ⲛⲟⲩⲥⲁⲡ ⲛⲥⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲉ̀ⲁ̀ⲓ̈ϩⲉ ⲁ̀ⲓ̈ⲥⲣⲉⲓ ⲛⲉϥ ϫⲉ ⲕⲛⲁⲡⲱⲉ ⲙⲡⲁ̀ⲱⲧ ⲓ̈ⲱϫⲉ ⲕ̀ⲛⲕ ⲛ̀ϩⲛⲧ ⲧⲁ<ⲣ̄>ⲡⲣⲱⲃ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯ<ⲣ̄>ⲙ̀ⲁ̀ⲓ̈ⲣⲉ ϩⲱⲧ̀ ϫ[ⲉ] ⲕⲡⲱⲉ ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁⲱⲥ ⲁⲉⲥ ⲛⲥⲁϫⲟ ϫⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡⲱⲙⲱⲉ̀ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉⲓⲱⲧⲡ̀ ϫ̀ⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡⲣⲉⲡ ⲓ̈ⲱϫⲉ ⲕⲡⲱⲉ ⲛⲏⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛ ⲡⲓⲛ̀ⲉ ⲛⲛⲏⲧⲥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ· ⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁ̀ⲡ̀ⲛ̀ⲥⲁⲛ ⲡⲓⲣⲁⲛ ⲡⲛⲥⲁⲛ ⲑⲉⲟ̀ⲣⲏⲱⲥ [ⲭ]ⲏ̀ⲁ̀ⲧ̀ⲉⲩⲟ ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲭⲏⲁⲥⲉϫⲉ [ⲛ]ⲏ̀ⲙⲉⲕ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈ ⲁⲩⲱ … ⲧ̀ⲣⲁ̀.ⲧⲓ. […]ⲁ ⲡⲣⲱⲃ ⲉ[ⲧⲁⲓ̈ ϫ]ⲉ ⲉⲛⲁⲡϩ ⲡ̀ⲱⲛϩ ⲛⲱⲁ̀ⲁ̀[ⲛⲏϩⲉ….] P.Kell.Copt. 73.6-24, which constitutes the entire body of the letter (modified translation). One of the main issues with the translation is to determine who is talking and where the direct quotations begin and end.

"service of the church" (ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ). Is this a ritual event in the church? The religious connotation is strong as the decisions are considered a "hard burden at the judgment" (ⲡⲉⲓⲱⲧⲡ ϫⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡϩⲉⲡ), and appear to have resulted in "that we may attain life eternal" (ⲉⲛⲁⲡϩ ⲡ̀ϣⲛϩ ⲛϣⲁ̀ϣ̀ [ⲛⲏϩⲉ….]). What exactly was this service and how would this have affected the religious status and fate of those involved?

According to the editors of this letter, Pegosh wrote about two orphaned girls in the oasis, whose uncle had suggested Pegosh as guardian. However, Pegosh himself is still young, he is called "the young man," and therefore the head of the household has to be "persuaded." Pshai, a relative in the oasis, is approached to inform Pegosh about the current situation and the decision-making process.[16] This interpretation is not impossible, but the explicit religious language of "service for the church" or attaining "life eternal" suggests that there was more in play. Another reading that could be suggested might be to regard "the boy" (ⲡ̀ⲕⲟ[ϋⲓ]) as the uncle, who asked someone to send the girls to him so he could care for them "like a daughter."[17] The decision is contested, either because it is done head-over-heels (ⲛⲥⲁϫ̀ⲟ), or, in an alternative reading of ⲉⲡⲓⲇⲏ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁϣ ⲁⲉⲥ ⲛⲥⲁϫ̀ⲟ ϫⲉ ⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ̀ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ, because the uncle wants to train her as an ecclesiastical scribe (in the Christian church or the Manichaean church?): "Well, he wants to make her a 'great scribe,' (saying): 'you will perform the service of the church.'"[18] In this interpretation, she is a gift to the church (see 1 Keph. 80, cited in Chapter 4). The advantage of this religious interpretation is that it would explain the explicit religious language about life eternal. On the other hand, this reading is at best speculative because the phrase "service of the church" (ⲡϣⲙϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ) in Pegosh's letter is not identical with the *Kephalaia* expression "the work of the catechumens" (ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧⲏⲛⲧⲁⲕⲏϫⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ). The pronouns, moreover, are bewildering and cause uncertainty about the translation and context of the letter. What is visible, despite the uncertainty, is the impact a sudden departure could have on these families in the oasis, not only in terms of emotional or practical considerations, but also in terms of explicit religious problems that had to be discussed with the head of the household and other relatives. Although the performed rituals and the heavy burden of either judgment or life eternal may have been more directly related to the upbringing and allocation of the orphans, it follows directly from the death of a female community member.

So far we have seen how death was far from strange to the world of the papyri. Many other documents could be cited that refer to the emotional impact of sudden death and the practical arrangements of burials. Returning to the letter of Matthaios, we now know that some of his fellow Manichaeans in the village considered death to be an important moment with ritual consequences as well as great emotional intensity. Some of them were even willing to pay the freight for the transport of the body to the oasis (as in the case of Joubei).

---

[16] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 84-5.

[17] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 87.

[18] I am grateful to Renate Dekker and Jennifer Cromwell for discussing this passage with me. Part of the argument hinges on the reading of ⲛⲥⲁϫ̀ⲟ or ⲛⲥⲁϫ̀ⲟ. Crum, *CD*, 384a gives "great scribe" or "village official" as translations, but the editors note as alternative "officially."

Matthaios's report on the death of his great mother was part of his correspondence with his mother. For some time, he worked besides The Teacher in the Nile valley, but in contrast to his brother Piene, Matthaios seems to have followed a different path later on in life. In this specific letter, Matthaios writes from Antinoou and reports about the death of a woman in the community:

> Thus, I have been here in Antinoou since the day when the Teacher came south; and I have been unable to find a way to go L…., nor to visit my father, because they are mourning in the city for the blessed soul of my great mother. We are remembering her very much. And I was in distress that she died when we were not with her, and that she died without finding the brotherhood gathered around her. Do not neglect to write to us about your health.[19]

The remainder of the letter mostly consists of greetings. The death and commemoration of this woman is not brought up again. Who was this "great mother"? What was "the brotherhood" and what sort of practices were common when someone died within the Manichaean community?

As discussed earlier, "brother" could be a polite designator for friends, colleagues, coreligionists, and real kin. "Brotherhood" (ⲧⲏⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ̣) conveyed a more explicit meaning. In several letters, it was employed as a virtuous attribute on which proper behavior was built. Real and fictive kinship ties did not only suggest an emotional connection or sense of connectivity, but was the vehicle of expectations about certain responsibilities for the next of kin. To remind someone of their brotherhood was to emphasize a common bond, which included supposedly supportive action. Apart from the ethical dimension of kinship terminology, the brotherhood in Matthaios's letter clearly refers to a collective agent. In the remains of Mani's *Epistles* found in Kellis, brotherhood is used as a designation for the elect (P.Kell.Copt. 53, 72.01 and 54.61, see Chapter 5). From Matthaios's own words, it appears that the brotherhood was located outside Kellis. Matthaios wrote from Antinoou and he had been unable to find a way to go to his father or to a place with an illegible name.[20] In another letter, his father Makarios wrote to Maria that "some brothers have come from Alexandria recently."[21] Since Piene is recorded to have gone with the Teacher (P.Kell.Copt. 20 and 25), it seems reasonable to locate the brothers with Piene and the Teacher in Alexandria and to believe that they were continuously traveling the country. In sum, the traveling elect

---

[19] ϯⲛ̄ⲛⲓⲏⲁ ϭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲧⲓⲛⲟⲟⲩ ϫ̣ⲛ̄ ⲫ[ⲟⲟⲩ] ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ ⲡⲥⲁϩ ⲉⲓ ⲁⲣⲏⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲱϭⲛ̄ ⲑⲉ ⲁⲃⲱⲕ ⲁϧ̣.[..] ⲟ̣ⲩϧ̣ⲉ ⲁ̣ϭⲙⲡⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁ̈ⲱⲧ’ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ϫⲉ ⲥ̣ⲉ̣ϩ̄ⲱⲕⲧⲓⲣⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲉⲧ̣ⲃⲉ ⲧ̣ϒⲩⲭⲏ̣ [ⲁ]ⲛ̣ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϭ ⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥ̣ϩ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁ̈ⲓϩ̄ⲗⲩⲡⲏ ϧⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲥⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛϩⲁⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲱ ϫⲉ ⲁⲥⲛⲟⲩ ⲁ̄ⲡⲥϭⲛ̄ ⲧⲛⲏ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ̣ ⲉⲥⲥⲁⲩϩ ⲁϫⲱⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣ̄ⲣⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ ⲁⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟⲩϫⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ. P.Kell.Copt. 25. 48-56.

[20] The Teacher left Matthaios in Antinoou (P.Kell.Copt. 25.42). The other place probably started with an L, as indicated in Dubois' translation, but he restrains from giving an identification. Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 235.

[21] ⲁ ϩ̄ⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲣⲁⲕ̣ⲁ̣ⲧⲉ ϯⲛⲟⲩ P.Kell.Copt. 24.23-24.

probably constituted the brotherhood, which could not be gathered around this woman before her death.[22]

Who was his "great mother" (ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϩ)? Presumably, the phrase refers to something more than a biological grandmother.[23] Jessica Kristionat sees strong similarities between the formulaic expression "the blessed soul of my great mother" (ⲧ̣ⲯⲩⲭⲏ̣ [ⲁ]ⲛ̣ ⲙ̣̀ⲙ̣ⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲙⲟ ⲛⲁϩ) in Matthaios's letter and the secondary doxology in the Psalmbook, praising "the soul of the blessed Maria" (ⲙ̄ⲛⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ). Initially, this second doxology has been taken to refer to Egyptian Manichaean martyrs, but they are more likely to have been catechumens who financed the production of these psalms.[24] Their names were included at the end of the psalms because of their pious contributions as donors, or because their names were read during commemorations after death. The latter interpretation is supported by one of the unpublished psalms, where the doxology includes an additional designator of praise to "all the souls that have laid off the body of death."[25] The departure of rich catechumens, especially if they had a long history of support for the Manichaean community, could well have resulted in a special status that asked for specific commemoration rituals, fostering an imagined community that included the deceased. If we can extrapolate from this comparison with the Psalmbook, I would suggest that Matthaios's "great mother" was a wealthy catechumen whose departure deserved special attention because of her financial or material support to the community.

What could have been Matthaios's expectation about the brotherhood's actions? How and why would they have gathered around his great mother? Would they have had a meal with prayer and singing? Would they have expected the deceased to be dressed in a specific garment, or would they have dressed the body in new clothes to signify the changing status

---

[22] For Gardner, "brotherhood" designates the elect only. Dubois includes the catechumens besides the elect. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 51; Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 235.

[23] Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 103. Dubois translated "grand-mère," a grandmother in the biological sense. Dubois, "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios," 230; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 193 "probably 'great' mother means 'grandmother', rather than 'famous'." I would consider the adjective great a form of praise, just like *ama* in one of the other letters.

[24] Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, xx, n4; Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*, 28-31; Kristionat, *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen*, 103; Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 56; S. G. Richter, *Exegetisch-Literarkritische Untersuchungen von Herakleidespsalmen des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmenbuches* (Altenberge Oros Verlag, 1994), 13-17. Both Wurst and Richter re-interpret the ⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲉ in 2 PsB. 157.13 and 2 PsB. 173.12 as another personal name, cf. 1 PsB. facsimile page 294 as ⲧⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲙⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲙ̣̀ⲣ̣ⲓ̣̀ⲁ̣. Contra Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 97.

[25] ⲙ̄ⲯⲩⲭⲁⲩⲉ ⲧⲏ[ⲣ]ⲟ[ⲩ] ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲩⲃⲁϕⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙⲟⲩ. Psalm 129 from 1 PsB. 180 at the facsilime edition, cited in Wurst, *Das Bemafest*, 56n9. I see the donation-hypothesis strengthened by the colophon of 2 PsB. 113 in which the first hand adds the lines "remember me, my beloved, I pray you remember me," and a second hand, "remember me my beloved, I." Cited and discussed in P. Nagel, "Der ursprüngliche Titel der manichäischen 'Jesuspsalmen'," in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Preißler and H. Seiwert (Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994), 210; Richter, *Exegetisch-Literarkritische Untersuchungen*, 16-17. Iris Colditz has come up with a similar explanation for donor names in Middle-Iranian Manichaean hymns. I. Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors' in Middle Iranian Manichaean Texts," in *Manichaeism East and West*, ed. S. N. C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 64-5.

of her body and soul?[26] Although Matthaios's letter remains silent on these specificities, there are a few passages in the Coptic Manichaean texts that may begin to answer these questions, shedding light on the impact of Manichaeanness in situations pertaining to death, burial, and commemoration.

8.3 Songs and Prayers for the Deceased

Two chapters in the *Kephalaia* deal with the question concerning the rest that is brought by the prayers of the elect for the deceased. In 1 Keph. 115 (270.25–280.19), one of the catechumens asks whether their prayer and rituals positively contributed to the deceased's journey. Mani answers and explains the power of the prayers of the elect, who can intercede on behalf of the dead just as the Mother of Life prayed on behalf of the First Man (1 Keph 115, 274.22–29). As heirs of cosmological history, the Manichaean elect and catechumens can pray for the salvation of the deceased. Their ritual actions, moreover, are not limited to prayer alone but are combined with almsgiving by family members:

> Who had left his body (i.e., died), they … him, as he had … alms on his behalf and a remembrance for his brother; whether his father or his mother or his son or else his daughter or his relative who shall leave his body. He has made alms for his … from him. He did not lack his hope… but he enacted for him a remembrance … …. of the church.[27]

Relatives could be freed and given rest through almsgiving and "remembrance." When a household member expressed "his love (ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ) toward him and he performed a remembrance in the church on his behalf," this will be counted to his benefit and his soul will be released.[28] Moreover, the text equated the performance of "a remembrance" (ⲛ̄ⲟⲩϩ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ) with the redemption from a cycle of "thousands of afflictions and tens of thousands of transmigrations."[29] This redemption from the cycle of transmigration indicates that the rituals were performed for catechumens and not primarily for the sake of the elect, as they were believed to be saved in a single lifetime, while catechumens would enter in a cycle of transmigrations that may eventually lead them to salvation (1 Keph. 90, 91 and 92).

Apart from the two paths of elect and catechumens, Manichaeans believed that in exceptional situations a perfect catechumen may be saved "in a single body" without having to be reborn (1 Keph. 91). This perfect catechumen's deeds will be purified during the

---

[26] On the garments which Mandaeans were expected to wear in their final hours, see E. S. Drower, *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 212-3. Egyptian funerary clothing will be discussed below.

[27] [.]ⲉ ⲉⲧⲁ̀ϥⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲁⲩ…ⲧϥ̄ ⲉⲁϥ..[.]ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩϩ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲁⲡⲉϥⲥ[ⲁⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ] ⲡⲉϥⲓ̈ⲱⲧ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲧⲉϥⲙⲉⲉⲩ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲉϥϣ[ⲏ]ⲣⲉ [ⲙ]ⲙⲁⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ [ⲧⲉϥ]ϣⲉⲉⲣⲉ ⲏ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲩⲛⲅⲉⲛⲏⲥ [ⲉⲧ]ⲉ [ϣⲁ]ϥⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲁϥϩ̄ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ ϩⲁ [ⲡⲉϥ ……..]ⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ ϩⲱϥ ⲙⲡⲉϥϣⲁⲁⲧ ⲧⲉϥϩⲉⲗ[ⲡⲓⲥ …..]..ϥ ⲁ̀ⲗⲗⲁ ⲁϥⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲉϥ ⲛⲟⲩϩ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ ⲉ.ⲁ[….] ⲛⲧⲉ̀ⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ 1 Keph. 115, 277.20-27. Where possible I cite Funk's improved readings, which are only accessible to me through Richter's *Die Aufstiegspsalmen des Herakleides.*

[28] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲁ̀ⲅⲁⲡⲏ ϣⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲛ̄ϥϩ̄ⲟⲩϩ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ…1 Keph. 115, 279.15-16. With Pedersen, I take *agape* here to represent a convergence of the virtue of love, a meal, and almsgiving. Pedersen, "Holy Meals," 1284.

[29] The entire passage reads: ⲉ[…]ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲁⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩϩ̄ⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲙⲙ[ⲁ]ⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩ̄ⲛ̄ ϣⲟ ⲛⲟⲗϯⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ϩⲛⲧⲃⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲅⲅⲓⲥⲙ[ⲟ]ⲥ 1 Keph. 115, 280.12-14.

ascending journey of his soul in a similar way as the Living Soul in the food of the elect is cleansed. A final cleansing is, however, only necessary for about one-fifth of his sins, since the remaining four-fifths were absolved through his service to the church, his faith, and his gnosis. This path of salvation was the same for catechumens who entered into transmigration, according to the *Kephalaia*, but it would take them longer since they would not be purified in a "single place" (ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲧⲟⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲧ 1 Keph. 92.24). The purification they experience in transmigration was considered to be the education that leads them on the right way (1 Keph. 99). The prayers and alms of relatives helped the soul in this process and shortened the cycle of transmigration, giving "rest" (ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ) to the deceased, who is said to be entangled in affliction (1 Keph. 115). These gifts, prayers, and psalms are therefore the most probable subject of the ritual activity of the brotherhood, as referred to in Matthaios's letter.

A second chapter in the *Kephalaia* supplements what we know about the ritual actions that could be undertaken on earth to support the ascent of the soul. It describes prayers (ϣⲗⲏⲗ), almsgiving (ⲧⲏⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ), love gifts (ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ), offerings (ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ), and making remembrance (ⲣ̄ⲡⲏⲉⲟⲩⲉ). Despite the multiplicity of terms, the actions described in 1 Keph. 144 represent the development of a death ritual that was performed in memory of the deceased.[30] Proper alms had power and were perceived as giving life to "the soul of their limbs which will leave their body."[31] The power to enliven the souls was released by the *prosphora*, which consisted of the gifts given for the benefit of the deceased's soul that was in its process of transmigration after death.[32] For this purpose, catechumens and elect worked together, as the catechumen brought their pure alms forward and put it on the table and the elect consumed the food:

> (At) the moment, when they will take it into their image (ϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ), they will pray in its power and they will sing psalms, and they will say the things that are hidden and the wisdom of God, and they will pray for mercy and they will ask for power in their holy prayer to God, in order that it will become a helper to him on account of whose name they made it. A power will be sent out from the God of Truth, and it will come and help him, on whose account they make this offering (ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ).[33]

---

[30] S. G. Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen des Herakleides* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1997), 67-9. Augustine also alludes to the existence of death rituals, but never informs us about the details. In *Mor. Man.* 17.55, he mentions that the prayers and songs of the elect were beneficial for the souls.

[31] The entire sentence is Ⲭⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲉⲉⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲱⲛϩ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲧⲟ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣ⲧⲛⲧⲛϩⲟ ⲁⲛ ⲛⲛϯⲩⲭⲁⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲡ̄ⲙⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉⲧ[ⲛⲁ]ⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱⲙⲁ 1 Keph. 144, 348.9-11 (Funk translates "damit ihr ihn veranstaltet und durch ihn lebendig werdet und auch die Seelen eurer Glieder, die ihren Körper verlassen werden, lebendig macht").

[32] S. G. Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999), 535. He states "diese Opferfeier, mit dem Ziel einer aufsteigenden Seele zu helfen, können wir als manichäische Seelenmesse bezeichnen."

[33] ⲡⲏⲉⲩ ⲉⲧⲉϣⲁⲩϫⲓⲧ̄ⲥ ⲁϩ̣ⲟ[ⲩⲛ] ⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲟⲩϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲉϣⲁⲩϣⲗⲏⲗ ϩⲛ ⲧⲉⲥⲃⲁⲙ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲣϯⲁⲗ̣ⲉ̣ ⲛ̣ⲥ̣ⲉ̣ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲟ ⲙⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲧϩⲏⲡ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲡⲏⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥ̣ⲉ̣[ⲧ]ϣⲃ̄ϩ̄ ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲁⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲃⲁⲙ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲩϣⲗⲏ̣ⲗ̣ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲁ̣ⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲏⲟⲩⲧⲉ ϫⲉⲥⲛⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲃⲱⲛⲑⲟⲥ ⲙⲡ̣ⲓ̣ⲉ̣ⲓ̣ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲉⲓⲧ̄ⲥ̄ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲉⲛ ϣⲁⲩⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲃⲁⲙ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲁⲧⲏ̄ ⲡⲏⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲧⲏⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲥ̄ⲣ̄ⲃⲟⲛⲑⲓ ⲁⲡⲉ̣ⲓ̣ ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ϣⲁⲩⲉⲓⲣⲉ ϩⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲛ̀ⲧ̀ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲫⲟⲣⲁ 1 Keph. 144, 347 2-9 (my translation, I thank Renate Dekker for discussing this passage with me).

Prayer, almsgiving, reading, or preaching from the "secrets and wisdom of God" were thus combined with psalm singing and together contributed to a great power that would help the soul of the deceased. What exactly went on during these gatherings is beyond the scope of the catechumen's question and is therefore not discussed in this passage. The participation of elect and catechumens is, I would suggest, also visible in Matthaios's letter. On the one hand, he mentions the "brotherhood" that was not gathered around her, while one line earlier he expressed his distress about her death "when we were not with her" (ⲁⲥⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛϩⲁⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ P.Kell.Copt. 25.48–55). The first person plural does not indicate Matthaios's position among the elect, but the absence of fellow catechumens. Both groups, elect and catechumens, played a role in the liturgy of death rituals and their absence was considered problematic.

Some of the psalms that were unearthed in Medinet Madi and Kellis have been related to the ritual context of death and commemoration. Siegfried Richter has pointed out that the Psalms of Herakleides and the Ascension Psalms (previously known as the Psalms of Jesus but now reconsidered as ϯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲓ ⲁⲛⲁⲗⲏϯⲉⲱⲥ[34]) were sung from the perspective of the soul and describe the afflictions and threats of the journey.[35] They shed light on the various steps in the ascent of the soul.[36] Interestingly, these psalms never seem to cover the entire journey of ascent, but Richter has identified where and how the various psalms engage with the different stages of the ascent of the soul. At the end of Herakleides Psalm 284 (2 PsB. 106.27–107.30), for example, the singer asks for the three gifts: the garland of the gods, an unfading palm, and the robe (of glory).[37] These victory gifts are well known from Manichaean sources all over the ancient world (for the Coptic material: 1 Keph. 36.9–21, 41.11–25, Hom. 6.21–23, 2 PsB. 22.11–21, etc.) and they were incorporated in the first stage of the soul's ascent, to be sung in the Herakleides Psalms at several points (Herakleides Psalms 277, 280, 281, 282, 284, 285).[38]

There is ample evidence to show that the Manichaeans of Kellis were familiar with elements from these commemoration rituals, as well as these psalms. The Coptic hymn—or prayer—found on a wooden board from House 3 (T.Kell.Copt. 2, A5) plays a critical role in this respect.[39] Richter has argued convincingly that this song includes all steps in the ascension process.[40] Written in the first person singular, it reflects the experience of the soul

[34] Nagel, "Der ursprüngliche Titel," 215.

[35] Villey also locates two Psalms of the Wanderers in this context: 2 PsB. 154-155.15 and 167.23-168.19 Villey, *Psaumes des errants*, 33, 299-304 and 379-83. The content of the songs is indeed strongly related to the other psalms, although it is difficult to relate them to the stages identified by Richter. See also the Parthian hymns in M. Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 8-15.

[36] Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 529-40; Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen;* Richter, *Exegetisch-Literarkritische Untersuchungen* and the edition of the Herakleides psalmen in the CFM.

[37] 2 PsB. 107.20-25, see discussion in Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 182-3.

[38] Outside the Coptic Manichaean sources, see al-Nadim, *Fihrist*, cited and discussed in Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 39-40; R. van den Broek, "Manichaean Elements in an Early Version of the Virgin Mary's Assumption," in *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovation in Antiquity*, ed. A. Houtman, A. F. de Jong, and M. Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 293-316. The passages of the Herakleides Psalmen pertaining to the first phase in which these three gifts were given are listed in Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 78-80.

[39] Gardner, *KLT1*, 13-15, and 25-30.

[40] Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 43 and Tabelle 1.

that was united with the image of its counterpart and received its garment, the crown, the palm, and victory, before it was taken to the Judge and traveled upward into the Rest:

> I will pray to the Third Ambassador. He sent unto me Jesus the Splendour, the apostle of light, the redeemer of souls. He entrusted me to the Light Mind, the Virgin of Light. The spirit of truth, our Lord Manichaios, he gave to me his knowledge. He made me strong in his faith. He has fulfilled me in his commandments. The image of my counterpart came unto me, with her three angels. She gave to me the garment and the crown and the palm and the victory. He took me to the judge without any shame; for what he entrusted to me I have perfected. I washed in the Pillar.[41] I was perfected in the Perfect Man. They gave me my first mind in the living atmosphere. I rose up to the ship of living water; unto the father, the First Man. He gave me his image, his blessing, and his love. I rose up to the ship of living fire; unto the Third Ambassador, the Apostle of Light, the good Father. They ferried me up to the land of light, to the first righteous one and the Beloved of the Lights. I came to rest in the kingdom of the household (?); for the Father of the Lights has revealed to me his image.[42]

Identified as an "eschatological prayer" by the editors, this hymn (?) may have derived from the devotional context of the death rituals described in the *Kephalaia*. It connects the genre of Ascension Psalms to the domestic context of Kellis. It has, however, a number of exceptional features that suggest that it was more than a simple hymn or prayer.

First, A5 is exceptional for its exhaustive nature.[43] The hymn lists seven stages in the ascension from the point of death: the identification with the supernatural double (or twin)

---

[41] G. Wurst, "Initiationsriten im Manichaismus " in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism. Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity I*, ed. D. Hellholm, et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 148. The Manicheans spiritualized the Christian practice of baptism into an "eschatologischen Taufe" which contributed to the forgiveness of sins. For the interpretation of the celestial baptism and the way these textual references were related to ritual practice, see the critique of Richter on Mirecki. While Mirecki posits a cultic "baptismal" celebration as the ritual background of Psalm 278 and connects this with the Gospel of Thomas, Richter emphasizes the postmortem perspective of the Soul. He has shown convincingly that the motives shared by both texts were more generally known and are therefore not directly depending on each other. Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 140ff; P. A. Mirecki, "Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37," in *Manichaeica Selecta I*, ed. A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen (Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991), 243-62.

[42] The text was written on a relatively small section of the board, but I'll present a continuous text and translation: ⲁ̣ⲉ̣ⲓⲛⲉⲧⲱⲃϩ ⲙ̅ⲡⲛⲁϩⲙⲁⲛⲧ ⲙ̅ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃⲉⲩⲧⲏⲥ ⲁⲩⲧ̅ⲛ̅ⲁⲩ ⲙ̅ⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̅ⲓ̅ⲥ̅ ⲡⲡ̅ⲣ̅ⲉⲓⲉ ⲡⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲙ̅ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲡⲣⲉϥⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ϯⲩⲭⲁⲟⲩⲉ ⲁϥ[ⲧⲉⲉ]ⲧ ⲁⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲙ̅ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̅ⲟⲩⲁ̣ⲉ̣ⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲡⲁⲣⲑⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲙ̅ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲡⲡ̅ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ ⲛ̅ⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲏⲉ ⲡ̅ϫ̅ⲁⲓⲥ ⲡⲛⲁⲛⲓϫⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲁϥϯ ⲛⲏⲉⲓ ⲙ̅ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲁϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϩ̅ⲙ̅ ⲡⲉϥⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲁϥϫⲱⲕ ⲙ̅ⲛⲁⲉⲓ ϩ̅ⲙ̅ ⲛⲉϥⲉⲛⲧⲟⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲁ ⲟⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲙ̅ⲡⲁⲥⲁⲉⲓϣ ⲉⲓ ϣⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ ⲡⲉⲥϣⲁⲛⲧ ⲛ̅ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲥϯ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲛ̅ϯϩ̅ⲃ̅ⲥⲱ ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ ⲡⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ ⲡⲃⲁⲉ ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ ⲡϭⲣⲟ ⲁϥϫⲓⲧ ⲁⲣⲉⲧϥ ⲙ̅ⲡⲉ ⲕⲣⲓⲧⲏⲥ ⲁϫⲛ̅ ⲗⲁⲟⲩⲉ ⲛ̅ϣⲓⲡⲉ ϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧ ⲁⲉⲓϫⲱⲕ ⲙⲛⲁϥ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲉⲓϫⲱⲕⲛ̅ ϩ̅ⲙ̅ ⲡⲥⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲩϫⲁⲕⲧ ϩ̅ⲙ̅ ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧϫⲛⲕ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲩϯ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲛ̅ⲧϥϩⲛⲕⲱⲛ ⲡϥⲥⲙⲁⲛⲁ ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ ⲧⲉϥⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲁⲉⲓⲧⲁⲉⲓⲗⲉ ⲁⲡϫⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̅ⲧⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ ϣⲁ ⲡⲛⲁϩϣⲁⲛⲧ ⲙ̅ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃⲉⲩⲧⲏⲥ ⲡⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲙ̅ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲡⲱⲧ ⲛⲁⲅⲁⲑⲟⲥ ϩ̅ⲁⲩϫⲓ ⲛⲉⲓⲟⲣⲉ ⲙⲛⲁⲉⲓ ⲁϩⲣⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲧϫⲱⲣⲁ ⲙ̅ⲡⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲣⲉⲧϥ ⲙ̅ⲡⲁⲣⲭⲓⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ ⲡⲛⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ϩ̅ⲁⲉⲓⲛ̅ⲧⲁⲛ ⲙ̅ⲛⲁⲉⲓ ϩ̅ⲙ̅ ⲧⲏⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ ⲙ̅ⲡⲉⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ϩ̅ⲁ ⲡⲱⲧ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲟⲩⲁⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲟⲩⲱⲛϩ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̅ⲧⲉϥϩⲛⲕⲱⲛ. The translation is found in Gardner, *KLT1*, 14-15. An earlier translation was included in Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," 30-59.

[43] Compare the list in Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 532-3; Discussed further in C. Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule: Darstellung und Kritik ihres Bildes vom gnostischen Erlösermythus*

and the aid of three angels (1); the judge (2); the Pillar and the Perfect Man (3); the ship of the living water (the moon) and the First Man (4); the ship of the living fire (the sun) and the Third Ambassador (5); the land of Light and the Beloved of the Lights (6); and finally the Rest and the Father of the Lights (7). Other descriptions of this journey in the Manichaean tradition parallel these stages, as Richter has shown, but none is as exhaustive as this short text.[44]

A second observation has led to a direct challenge of the identification of its ritual setting. Julia Iwersen has suggested that this text was part of an ecstatic ritual of ascent that was performed for the initiation of new members of the elect during the Bema festival, rather than belonging to a commemoration ritual. Building on previous interpretations by Puech and scholars of gnosticism, she argues for a shared religious practice in which initiation processes were "intertwined with death-like experiences."[45] Indeed, a wide range of gnostic and hermetic texts combined claims of visionary ascent with supernatural revelation—both also featured in other Christian ascetic traditions.[46] The Manichaean elect, she argues, experienced a similar revelation and election during an initiation ritual. Her emphasis on traditional Egyptian and gnostic visionary ascent rituals is stimulating, but the connection to T.Kell.Copt. 2 A5 is not in the least convincing. She observes that the text seems to announce a prayer in the first lines: "I will pray to the Third Ambassador." Thereafter, the text continues in the perfect tense: "He sent unto me Jesus the Splendour, the apostle of light, the redeemer of souls." This indicates that A5 was "an account rather than a prayer in itself," as it "seems to be a sort of preparation for an individual or communal prayer by giving a description of what a community member has experienced."[47] In contrast to the Herakleides Psalms, A5 does not contain hymn-like features like a doxology, or prayers of intercession. Therefore, she concludes, it is fundamentally different from the Psalms of Herakleides that Richter connected to the "Seelenmesse."[48] Rather than understanding A5 in relation to death rituals, Iwersen revives Puech's interpretation of the five lessons in 1 Keph. 9 as one set of initiation rituals for the elect that culminated in a visionary ascent, of which A5 is a witness.[49]

(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961), 104; Broek, "Manichaean Elements," 293-316. Similar themes, however, feature in Egyptian Christianity, see van der Vliet, "Literature, Liturgy, Magic: A Dynamic Continuum," 563.

[44] Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 43 Tabelle 1.

[45] J. Iwersen, "A Manichaean Ritual of Ascent? A Discussion of T. Kell.Copt. 2 A5 in the Light of Other Coptic Gnostic Materials," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 232. A similar argument was presented by Widengren, more than fifty years ago, in which he reconstructed a baptismal ritual at the deathbed, connecting it with other gnostic "bride-chamber" rituals. G. Widengren, *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism: (King and Saviour II): Studies in Manichaean, Mandaean, and Syrian-Gnostic Religion* (Uppsala: Lundequist, 1946), 104-22, in particular page 104-107 on the Coptic psalms.

[46] Fowler, "The Ascent of the Soul and the Pachomians."

[47] Iwersen, "A Manichaean Ritual of Ascent?," 232.

[48] Iwersen, "A Manichaean Ritual of Ascent?," 232. A5 does not correspond to the themes identified by Richter in the Herakleides Psalmen, see Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 71-74.

[49] Puech, "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles," 359ff. Among the many possible parallels, one could think of the Valentinian rituals studied in N. Denzey Lewis, "Apolytrosis as Ritual and Sacrament: Determining a Ritual

Iwersen's critique of the initial interpretation of A5 is attractive, even though I fail to see the connection between the five lessons of 1 Keph. 9 and the stages identified in T.Kell.Copt. 2, A5.[50] Instead of relocating it to the category of visionary ascent and initiation rituals, I propose a more mundane alternative. Hymn (?) A5 belongs an earlier phase before the development of a systematized Manichaean theology and cosmology. Its seven stages clearly correspond to other attempts in Manichaean sources to define and describe the journey of the soul. None of these descriptions or lists correspond entirely to the seven stages in this text, even though Richter is correct in pointing out the striking overlap. One passage that he could not include is 1 Keph. 176, of which the critical edition has not yet been published. This chapter lists two versions of five transitions that take place after death. Although they contain the same elements, these lists do not correspond one-on-one with Richter's reconstruction, or with the seven stages in A5. The fivefold structure in 1 Keph. 176, however, shows that the systematization continued, presumably to replace a more flexible presentation of various narratives about what was about to happen after you "left the body."[51] A5 may have presented this narrative in a brief, descriptive manner, but its material context suggests that it functioned either as a reading, a prayer, or a hymn in a wider liturgical setting with other songs pertaining to death and commemoration (see Table 15 below).

In lockstep with Richter, I wonder whether a commemoration ritual with songs and alms gifts on behalf of the departed is what Matthaios referred to when he wrote about the "mourning in the city" (ⲥ̣ⲉ̣ϣⲱⲕⲧⲓⲣⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ). His statement that "we are remembering her very much" corresponds with one of the technical terms used in the *Kephalaia* (to make remembrance, ϣⲡⲙⲉⲟⲩⲉ) for the totality of almsgiving, prayer, and singing. In line with the observations in the previous chapter, these rituals and songs had a performative character. As such, these songs were not merely didactical devices, reminding the Manichaeans of the stages of ascent, but they were meant to assist the soul in its journey upwards. These actions are performed in someone's name after his or her departure. Matthaios's distress, on the other hand, is caused by the absence of the brotherhood at the moment of departure. Could there have been two rituals, only one of which at the crucial moment when the soul left the body?

The answer is affirmative, and the new Kellis finds provide additional support for differentiating between two ritualized moments. The Ascension Psalms suggest that there was a specific ritual that took place at the crucial moment when the soul left the body. Frequently, these songs emphasize the "hour of need" (ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛⲁⲅⲕⲏ), the moment of

---

Context for Death in Second-Century Marcosian Valentinianism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17, no. 4 (2009): 525-61; E. Evans, "Ritual in the Second Book of Jeu," in *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature*, ed. A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw, and J. D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 156; D. Burns, *Apocalypse of the Alien God. Platonism and the Exile of Sethian Gnosticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 134-8 where the comparison is made with a range of ancient visionary ascent manuals.

[50] Iwersen explains the lack of similarity away by stressing the complex diversity of the Manichaean mythology. Iwersen, "A Manichaean Ritual of Ascent?," 236.

[51] The Coptic text is not yet published, but see the translation in Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction*, 212-17.

departure.[52] The most prominent example of the way these psalms articulate the agony of dying is the passage: "I cry unto thee in the hour of the going forth from the body."[53] In contrast to the Psalms of Herakleides, which were associated with the commemoration ritual, these Ascension Psalms only relate to the first stage of the journey, in which the soul meets its heavenly twin with the help of the angels.[54] A further difference between these two groups of psalms is the elaborate attention paid to almsgiving and descriptions of ethically correct behavior, clearly indicating that the Ascension Psalms were performed by catechumens.[55] Mostly, these songs use the first-person singular voice to describe the journey of the soul, as in hymn (?) A5 from Kellis.[56] Together, these features point to the existence of two ritualized moments pertaining to a Manichaean death: the commemoration rituals of 1 Keph. 115 and 144, and the death ritual(s) performed at the deathbed.

The Kellis texts help to flesh out the content and setting of the various Manichaean death rituals, as the wooden board with hymn (?) A5 also contains abbreviated versions of five or six psalms. In Chapter 9, I will suggest that this remarkable composition was made for a liturgical setting. It contains the prayers and songs of the readers or chanters during a specific liturgical gathering (see Table 15 on the content of this wooden tablet). The various texts in this compilation (specifically, texts A2 and A4) relate to the ritual setting at the deathbed. Text A4 gives the first line of each verse, instead of the full text, but includes passages with speech directed toward the soul that mention victory, a crown, and a diadem of the Light. Text A2 treats the same topic. It corresponds to one of the unpublished psalms from the first part of the Psalmbook, which addresses Christ "the savior of souls" (п[рєчс]ωтє ⲛ̅ⲛϯⲩ[ϫⲁ]ⲩє). Where legible, the content of these abbreviated psalms either relate to the fate of the soul or directly address the soul. The thematic coherence of the texts on this wooden board indicates that it was used in a liturgical setting, presumably at the side of the deathbed.

---

[52] 2 PsB. 55.24; 57.25, 61.23 and 65.29.

[53] ϯϣϣ ⲟⲩⲃⲛⲕ ϩⲛ̅ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲛ̅ⲧϭⲓⲛⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲙⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ 2 PbB. 66.19-20.

[54] Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 106; Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 538. Note that Richter only includes the 3Her. Psalms in the death-ritual, not the 4Her. Psalms in another section of the Psalmbook. See the introduction in the CFM.

[55] Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 106; Cf. Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*, 12.

[56] Richter considers expressions of great need and actuality combined with the "Ich-stil" to designate the hour of death, even though a similar style in the first person singular is employed when the entire community prays in the name of the departed. Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 120 and 05ff; Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 538-9 indicating the difference between two groups of psalms. Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife," 153 also suggests that these rituals protected the soul during the dread moment of departure from the body. Richter interprets the differentiation between an "Ich-stil" and a "Du-stil" in the various 3Her psalms as indications of the continuation of the narrative of the liturgy, since he considers these psalms to belong to one ritual event. Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 90-94.

Text on T.Kell.Copt. 2	Content
A1	Abbreviated Psalm (to Jesus)
A2	Abbreviated Psalm (to Christ). Parallel with Psalm 68 from 1 PsB. [57]
A3	Abbreviated Psalm (to the Soul?)
A4	Abbreviated Psalm (to the Soul?). Could be a parallel with Psalm 57 from 1 PsB. [58]
B1	Scribbles under the two columns with psalms. Doxologies? Mostly scrubbed away.
Backside **A5**	Commemoration hymn (single column)
B2	Abbreviated Psalm
C1	Illegible scribbles on the side (laterally).

Table 15: Texts and content of the wooden board T.Kell.Copt. 2.

Apart from the abbreviated psalms on the wooden board, two other psalm fragments correspond to Ascension Psalms in the Medinet Madi Psalmbook. Psalm 261 (T.Kell.Copt. 6, side a of another wooden board) addresses Christ with a request for salvation: "Save me, O blessed Christ, the savior of the holy souls, I will pass up into the heavens and leave this body upon the earth."[59] The soul continues to describe his or her correct behavior on earth, knowledge of the way of the holy ones, and their wisdom, which will lead the singer(s) up into the world of the Luminaries.[60] Likewise, Psalm 246 (P.Kell.Copt. 1, side a) addresses Jesus as a kinsman and Light who acted as a guide for the soul on its journey through the Darkness (2 PsB. 246, 54.7,11). After enduring the challenges of the journey, the soul arrives and is allowed to enter into the kingdom and receive its glorious crown (P.Kell.Copt. 1.8–14). As all these songs were found in the same house as Matthaios's letter, they connect his considerations about proper ritual action in the face of death with the regional and transregional practices known from a wider Manichaean tradition.[61]

Unfortunately, none of the letter writers inform us in more detail about the ritual expectations surrounding death. A few glimpses into their lives and situations of grief have to be combined with liturgical material. My interpretation of these texts leads me to believe that there must have been multiple settings for death rituals, one related to the commemoration (with almsgiving, prayer, and songs, as described in the *Kephalaia*), another more directly to the setting at the deathbed. Further comparative study will have to determine how common these rituals were in Manichaean communities all over the ancient

[57] See edition and comparison in Gardner, *KLT1*, 18-24.

[58] Gardner, *KLT1*, 17.

[59] ⲥⲱⲧⲉ] ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲓ ⲡ̅ⲭ̅ⲣ̅ⲥ̅ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲡⲣⲉϥⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ϯⲩⲭ[ⲁⲩ]ⲉ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ϯⲛⲁⲡⲱⲛⲉ ⲁϩⲣⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲛⲓⲡⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲕⲱ ⲁ̅ϫ̅ⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲁϩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲱⲛⲁ 2 PsB. 261, 75.11-12. The Kellis texts, unfortunately, only starts with fragments of the following lines and does not contain a version of this passage.

[60] See the short analysis in Richter, "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse," 438.

[61] Similar practices in eastern Manichaean sources Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 57-59; Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*, 1-6; C. Colpe, "Die 'Himmelreise der Seele': Ausserhalb und Innerhalb der Gnosis," in *Le origini dello gnosticismo*, ed. U. Bianchi (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 81-98.

world. For the Kellis context, however, it is clear that death and rituals pertaining to death and the survival of the soul were considered to be of great importance. Within such marked moments in life, some Kellites saw themselves primarily as Manichaean catechumens. They "offered a hymn and a prayer to the light giver of the heights" and presumably believed to have received absolution because of their almsgiving, knowledge, and hymns.[62] In this sense, Matthaios was not alone in his concern for the ritual actions performed for the deceased. His family and neighbors must have sung the Manichaean psalms, prayed the prayers, and maybe even contributed financially to the production of liturgical texts for these ritualized settings.

8.4 Cosmological Salvation and Individual Eschatology

A specific alternative interpretation of the Kellis letters has led Peter Brown, in several recent publications, to connect the Manichaeans of Kellis with earlier Christian traditions pertaining to death. He argues that we encounter a type of Christianity in Kellis in which alms for the dead remained important, while other Christian leaders had started to reject these practices. The Manichaean letters from Kellis are crucial evidence in this, breaking through the silence of other sources, informing us about the expectations surrounding death rituals in Christian communities.[63]

To make this claim, Brown compares the Manichaean texts from Kellis with second-century graffiti on the walls of the *triclinium* of San Sebastiano in Rome. These graffiti express the hope for a peaceful afterlife, celebrated with a *refrigerium* meal for the departed. Some of the texts even express the idea that the dead could hear the living and help them out.[64] By comparing the Manichaean document from Kellis with these second-century graffiti, he makes a compelling argument for shared questions about the place of beloved deceased in "the geography of the other world."[65] Although I agree with many of his interpretations, I do not think that "we find the same rituals, if with slightly different names…" in Kellis or the *Kephalaia* chapters.[66] The problem that Brown fails to address, probably because it would take him away from his main argument about the development of Christian thought, is twofold: on the one hand, the frustratingly inconsistent use of these terminologies in the *Kephalaia* and the Kellis document, and on the other hand, the dual nature of Manichaean eschatological teaching. Taking these two issues into account will result in a more precise evaluation of the similarities and differences of Christian and Manichaean perceptions of the afterlife.

Beginning with the latter point, Manichaean doctrine about the afterlife was less concerned with the survival of the soul of individuals than the liberation of the Living Soul.

---

[62] ⲁϥϯ ⲟⲩϩⲩⲙⲛⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ ⲟⲩⲁⲗⲏⲗ [ⲙⲡⲫ]ⲱⲥⲧⲏⲣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓϫⲓⲥⲉ 1 Keph. 91, 233.27-28.

[63] Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife," 156, while on page 51 he describes the rituals as pre-existing rituals of the Christians communities which have been, as it were, "manichaeized." And he claims to discuss "a Christian ritual in a Manichaean text."

[64] Brown, *Ransom of the Soul*, 38.

[65] P. Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 55; Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife," 145-58.

[66] Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 49-50.

The Coptic Manichaean texts reveal a tension between two types of eschatology: individual eschatology and impersonal, collective eschatology. Matthaios's grief and the painstaking question about the efficacy of prayer for the dead in 1 Keph. 115 attest to hope for individuals, but Manichaean doctrinal texts mainly treat eschatology as an impersonal, cosmological event. Usually, these texts do not consider the fate of individual souls as awaiting better times in a happy place, nor do they elaborate on the possibility that the dead would intervene on behalf of the living.[67] When the fate of the soul is discussed in Manichaean texts, the main focus is on the cosmological liberation of the Living Soul, to such an extent that one scholar could claim that "there is no individual salvation in Manichaeism."[68] This attitude is different from the Christian traditions Brown found in the *triclinium* of San Sebastiano. Whatever similarities there are between Manichaean and Christian notions about almsgiving for the dead, the key distinction lies in the ambiguous status of individual eschatology in Manichaeism.

The omnipresence of cosmological eschatology in Manichaean texts does not mean that more personal and individual eschatology is entirely absent. Mary Boyce discerned two divergent attitudes toward the fate of the soul in Middle Persian and Parthian Manichaean texts. The souls are either treated as "ethical entities, conscious of the existence they have just left and of their moral achievements within it" or as "passive members of the exiled light."[69] The same holds true for other passages with Manichaean teaching, as Gardner and Lieu point out: "[I]ndividual and cosmic eschatology are interwoven in Mani's teaching, for each soul's own tragedy and victory are but a microcosm of the history of the universal Soul and its liberation from matter."[70] The individual side of the equation is stressed in the Coptic Ascension Psalms. Despite traveling upwards to merge with the collective Light, the soul is still considered as connected to individual virtues and misbehavior. Likewise, the two *Kephalaia* chapters discussed above seem to give answers to questions about individual eschatology. They convey a pastoral message for family and community members who have lost a relative. Other Coptic Manichaean texts elaborate on the expected judgment, during which Jesus will separate the sheep from the goat (Hom. 35, cf. 2 PsB. 154.8–12).[71] Somehow, individual responsibility was retained until this very moment of eschatological judgment.

The same ambiguity about the merger of the individual soul with the collective Living Soul is visible at the end of time. After the Great War and the separation of Light and

---

[67] Contra Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 36-40. On Augustine's struggle with this element of Manichaean thought after the death of a close friend, see BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 91-95.

[68] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 233 where he considers the Manichaean theological system.

[69] Boyce, *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*, 12.

[70] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 20. On individual and collective eschatology, see also Heuser, "The Manichaean Myth According to Coptic Sources," 42-89; W. Sundermann, "Eschatology II. Manichean Eschatology." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: January 19, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/eschatology-ii (accessed 03 January 2017); Ries, *L'église gnostique de mani*, 219-33, 235-43. J. D. BeDuhn, "The Metabolism of Salvation: Manichaean Concepts of Human Physiology," in *The Light and the Darkness*, ed. P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 32-33.

[71] Heuser, "The Manichaean Myth According to Coptic Sources," 84-5; M. Hutter, "Mt 25:31-46 in der Deutung Manis," *Novum Testamentum* 33, no. 3 (1991): 276-82.

Darkness, the Father will reveal himself and all Light will merge with him.[72] The sermon on the Great War describes how "all the Light will submerge into him," after which the Light will also "leave it again in glory."[73] This suggests that the merging is not complete and the Light (or Light beings) still have some sort of independence from the Father, just as in the period before the fall. Nils Arne Pedersen connects this to the Manichaean desire to "preserve a semi-independence" of the soul.[74] So despite the belief that the soul will merge with all the Light, there remains a second hope for a temporal and earthly salvation in which individuality is not lost. Earlier in the sermon, this dual eschatological hope became visible in the description of the peaceable kingdom on earth after the Great War.[75] On the one hand, Manichaeans believed in redemption into a timeless, ineffable abundance of Light, but on the other hand, hope was directed toward the perfect community on earth, as the sermon states, allowing "the female elect to sleep and arise in the house of queens and the noble ladies' bed."[76]

This hope, characterized by two divergent eschatologies, shows the marked difference between Manichaean notions about the afterlife and the Christian graffiti on the walls of the *triclinium* of San Sebastiano. The notion of the dead as mediators who could pray for the living on earth, as developed by Christians in the Western world, was not shared with the Manichaean "geography of the other world," which was primarily focused on the collective liberation of the Living Soul.[77] Brown's comparison is therefore limited at best. It is difference between the two systems that makes comparisons worthwhile. The Manichaean dead could benefit from earthly rituals, but the idea of receiving support *from* the departed never found an equivalent in Manichaean practice.[78]

---

[72] See the discussion between Pedersen and Gardner on whether the collective eschatology corresponds to the individual eschatology. Gardner suggests that the souls after death rise up to the New Aeon, while the Father of Greatness remains concealed until the end of times when all is unveiled. I. Gardner, "Mani, Augustine and the Vision of God," in *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, ed. J. van Oort (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 73-86; Contra N. A. Pedersen, "The Veil and Revelation of the Father of Greatness," in *In Search of Truth: Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism: Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, ed. J. A. van den Berg, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 229-34.

[73] ⲡⲟ[ⲩⲁⲓⲛⲉ ⲧ]ⲏ̣ⲣϥ ⲛ̀ⲁⲱⲛⲥ ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲁⲣⲁϥ and ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲉⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̀ϩⲏⲧϥ̄ ⲁⲛ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲉⲁⲩ Hom. 41.15-16 and 17.

[74] Pedersen, *Studies*, 396-7.

[75] Pedersen, *Studies*, 268; Cf. Koenen, "Manichaean Apocalypticism," 300-1.

[76] ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲏ ⲛⲁⲛ̀ⲕⲁⲧⲉ ⲛ̀ⲥ̣ⲉⲧⲱⲛⲉ· ϩⲛ̄ [ⲡⲏ̈] ⲛ̣ⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲣⲱ ⲛ̄ⲛ ⲛ̄ⲏⲁⲧⲣⲱⲛⲁ Hom. 24.9-10. Pedersen, *Studies*, 268-9; Hom. 32 expresses similarly despair over those of the relatives who have passed away before the great war. It seems to suggest that those on earth are not aware of whether their souls have gone "to the good, of to the evil" (line 10-11).

[77] Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 55 for "geography of the other world." Recently has been argued on the basis of a 13th -century Chinese painting that salvation for catechumens was possible, since the paintings "also gradually seem to become very personal statements for the hope of individual redemption of historical elect and lay figures depicted for example on banners after death." J. Ebert, "Individualisation of Redemption in a Manichaean Painting from Ningbo," in *Mani in Dublin*, ed. S. G. Richter, C. Horton, and K. Ohlhafer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 155.

[78] Presumably because the Manichaean doctrine of transmigration made it improbable that any communication could take place after the soul had left its body. BeDuhn, "The Nature of the Manichaean Soul," 47.

The second problem is Peter Brown's assessment of the Kellis document as scattered with references to the care for the dead. With a firm twist, Brown equates the *agape* with the "making of memory" and almsgiving (*prosphora*), which he identifies as "the Manichaean equivalent of the Eucharist."[79] With such easy identifications, the care for the dead is everywhere. In his opinion, the Manichaean documents from Kellis "show how important these rituals were in the day-to-day life of Manichaeans," as their letters were "scattered with references to the *agape* offered for the souls of the dead."[80] As we have seen, the *agape* indeed features in both the KAB and the personal letters, but Brown's equation of these terms simply cannot be correct in this context. The afterlife or the ascent of the soul was not always subject of discussion. For example, the exposé on almsgiving in 1 Keph. 87 is related to the contribution made by catechumens to the liberation of the Living Soul, rather than about alms for the dead.[81] It is most probable that these rituals were related, as the Light that was liberated through the ritual consumption of food ascended together with the souls after death, but the ritual context on earth was different. Brown's equation of the *agape* with the Latin *refrigerium*, the meal held at the cemetery to celebrate the state of rest of the departed, is also far from evident.[82] In fact, nowhere in the descriptions of the death and burial of Joubei is the *agape* even mentioned. When *agape* is referred to in the letters and business accounts from Kellis, it is distributed to living people or even requested as a personal gift: "[T]he lentils and lupin seeds: make them as an *agape* for me."[83] Clearly the recipients of this *agape* were still alive (see Chapter 6). Finally, "remembrance" is mentioned twice in letters of the elect in passages that cannot have signified death rituals (P.Kell.Copt. 31.22–29 and 32.24–28). Rather than equating them with commemorative death rituals, they stem from the world of the living: "I write, giving you the remembrance that you … for the matter is fine, until I come up."[84]

In short, although Brown is correct to highlight the commonality between various types of alms offerings for the dead, which was deemed "very great and honored among people" according to the *Kephalaia*, it was not as omnipresent in the Kellis documents as he suggests.[85] Matthaios's grief, the short references to the death of Joubei, the stylized Coptic hymn (?) for the ascension of the soul, and the various psalms are fragmentary remains of

---

[79] Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 49-51. *Prosphora*, however, entailed both gifts at the deathbed as gifts during the celebration of the Eucharist in this period. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church*, 111-2, 202.

[80] Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 52; Brown, "Alms and the Afterlife," 153.

[81] BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 194-97.

[82] Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, 50.

[83] ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲓⲛ ⲛⲓ̅ ⲛⲧⲁⲣⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲁⲣⲓⲟⲩ ⲙ̅ⲕⲁⲕⲓⲛ ϩⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ P.Kell.Copt. 47.10.

[84] ϯⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲉⲓϯ ⲛⲉ ⲙ̅ⲡ̅ⲣ̅ⲡⲛⲉⲩⲉ ϫⲉ ⲉⲣⲉ … ϩⲁϫⲉ ⲁⲛⲁⲩ ϫⲉ ⲡϩⲱⲃ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ ⲱⲁϯⲉⲓ ⲁϩⲣⲏⲓ̈ P.Kell.Copt. 32.24-28. In the later Coptic tradition, people would read the name(s) from tombstones, "in remembrance," during communal commemoration rituals. As in the Manichaean tradition, these rituals were considered to positively affect future salvation. J. van der Vliet, "'What Is Man?': The Nubian Tradition of Coptic Funerary Inscriptions," in *Nubian Voices. Studies in Christian Nubian Culture*, ed. A. Lajtar and J. van der Vliet (Warsaw: Raphael Taubenschlag Foundation, 2011), 195. It is, however, clear that this is not the context for these two letters of the elect.

[85] [ⲉ]ⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲟⲩⲛⲁϩ ⲧⲟⲛⲱ ⲡⲉ ⲥⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲧ ⲛⲁϩϩ̅ⲣ̅ⲛ̅ ⲛ̅ⲣ̅[ⲱⲛ]ⲉ 1 Keph. 115, 271.12.

the impact death made on society and the Manichaean community. They attest to a life in which death was less exceptional or distant than in contemporary society.[86]

8.4.1 Excurse: Manichaean Grief

Before engaging with the archaeological remains of funerals in Kellis, a brief excurse on Manichaean admonitions against grief is necessary. It has been claimed that Manichaeans knew no lament for the dead, but rejected these lamentations because the soul was considered to be free after its departure from the body: death was a joyful event![87] The most noteworthy text in this respect is a Middle Persian fragment from a parable in which a female catechumen is told not to mourn over the corpse of her son, as this will kill her spiritual son.[88] In the Coptic sources, mourning is explicitly forbidden, but the community is called on to focus on the redemptive element of death. In the psalms, the singer urges the community: "[L]et no man weep for me, neither my brothers nor them that begot me" and reminded them that "cause for weeping left I not here: therefore, my fathers, do not weep for me."[89] Celebration is called for instead of mourning: "[L]et all my kin make festival, because I have received without doubt the true promises of the Paraclete."[90] The exhortation not to weep is found repeatedly, but rather than conveying a general interdiction against mourning over the dead, it situates weeping and grief in the earthly reality left behind by the soul.

The expressions of grief in the Kellis letters, therefore, present an additional dimension rather than a direct violation of group norms pertaining to mourning. While some of the authors may have believed that the soul was heading to a better place, grief and lament still characterized their emotional and social situation. Mourning was not a private affair. Emotional expressions of grief and lamentation are visible in other Manichaean

---

[86] Based on the bioarchaeological analysis of the Kellis 2 interments, Molto has suggested a life expectancy of 16.7 years at birth, while 34.4 percent of the children did not survive the first year. The life expectancy at 19 years old was between 16.9 (males) and 23.3 (females) years. Such figures are lower than established calculations based on the census returns of Roman Egypt, which point to a life expectancy at birth in the low twenties and female life expectancy at 10 between 34.5 and 37.5 years. Molto, "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview," 243. Cf. Bagnall and Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt*. The latter is criticized exactly at the issue of using census returns for estimating mortality rates in villages. W. Scheidel, *Death on the Nile: Disease and the Demography of Roman Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 172-8. For a summary and recent literature see W. Scheidel, "Age and Health," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 305-16.

[87] Pedersen, *Studies*, 201. I do agree with his reading of the grief and weeping in the sermon on the Great War, which is not a lament for the dead, but a reflection of the pain and anxiety related to the persecution.

[88] This story is told in Middle Persian fragment M45, the parable on the female Hearer Xybr'. Published in W. Sundermann, *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und parabeltexte der Manichäer* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973), 89-90. Translation in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 190-1. For more fragments of the same parable and a full discussion, see I. Colditz, "Another Fragment of the "Parable of the Female Hearer Xybr'"?," in *Studia Philologica Iranica. Gherardo Gnoli Memorial Volume*, ed. E. Morano, E. Provasi, and A. V. Rossi (Roma: Scienze E Lettere, 2017), 63-77.

[89] ⲙ[ⲡ]ⲱⲣⲧⲉ ⲗⲁⲩⲉ ⲣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲩϫⲡⲟ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲓ 2 PsB. 75.19-20, translation adapted. ⲗⲁⲓϭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲓⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲕⲱ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲛⲁ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲉⲓ ⲛⲁⲓⲁⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲱⲣ ⲁⲣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ 2 PsB. 84.28-29.

[90] ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ⲡⲁⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣϥ̄ ⲣ̄ϥⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲓ̈ϫⲓ ⲁϫϥ̄ⲛⲏⲧ ⲥⲛⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϥⲡⲱⲡ ⲙ̄ⲛⲏⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ 2 PsB. 102.28-30. Similar statements are found in 2 PsB. 62.25, 65.15-17, 75.19-20, 84.27-29, 88.16-18, 93.29-30, cf. 82.21-23.

sources, like the lament over Mani's death or the funeral hymns of important historical figures.[91] These liturgical or hagiographical passages included lament, even though, theologically speaking, grief and weeping became connected to the suffering of those who did not know Mani's message. The Middle Persian parable, likewise, has to be read in a Zoroastrian environment in which lamentations hampered the soul in the afterlife.[92] Its message is that instead of weeping, catechumens should engage in almsgiving to positively influence the fate of the soul. The soul should be mourned before death, while the forgiveness of sins is still possible. Adding to this interpretation, I would suggest that mourning was presented as ineffective. It cannot aid the departed, while almsgiving on his or her behalf could positively affect the fate of the soul.[93]

8.5 Burial practices and Material Culture

How would Manichaeans have buried their dead? The textual record does not offer clues on the practice of burial among Manichaeans. Without such guidance, the only available option is to look for patterns in the material record.[94] Despite extensive (bio)archaeological research

---

[91] These passages are cited in Colditz, "Another Fragment," 71. She concludes that "from this it becomes clear that there cannot have existed a general interdiction of mourning the dead in Manichaeism." Pedersen suggests that this lament is over those who do not wish to repent and therefore deserve punishment, or belongs to penitential weeping before absolution. He discusses Baumstark's hypothesis that the Bema festival included weeping over Mani's death (Hom. 28.21-30, 71.21-23, 2 PsB. 44.29-30), to conclude that a certain type of lamentation may very well have belonged to the Manichaean practice. Pedersen, *Studies*, 206-10.

[92] See the explanation and Zoroastrian sources cited in Colditz, "Another Fragment," 71-73.

[93] This would also be my interpretation of one of the two other hagiographical texts that Colditz cites. The female catechumen in M4576/R/i/3-14 (in Parthian) is told to stop mourning and instead she seems to have engaged in "charity" and she "made great [donations of alm]s." See Colditz, "Another Fragment," 73n39. For the evaluation of uncontrolled grief, see T. S. de Bruyn, "Philosophical Counsel Versus Customary Lament in Fourth-Century Christian Responses to Death," in *Rhetoric and Reality in Early Christianities*, ed. W. Braun (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 161-86.

[94] There is some evidence related to Manichaean burials. The famous Bassa-inscription published by Cumont is, for example, always regarded as a funerary inscription, primarily because of its find location. M. Scopello, *Femme, Gnose et Manichéisme* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 293-315. A Manichaean interpretation of the Tikves-funeral stelae from the same region has to be rejected. N. Proeva, "Sur l'iconographie des stèles funéraires du »type Tikveš« en macédoine à l'epoque romaine / Ikonografija nadgrobnih stela Tikveškog tipa." In *Funerary Sculpture of the Western Illyricum and Neighbouring Regions of the Roman Empire*, ed. N. Cambi and G. Koch (Split: Knjizevni Krug, 2013), 679-708. On the eastern side of the tradition, we learn from the notes of a Confucian official that they ritually undressed their dead and buried them naked within a cloth sack. Whether this actually describes Manichaeans, or rather presents a local Sogdian perspective on Zoroastrian rituals is unclear. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 270-85, specifically the translation on page 278. A full examination of Manichaean death-rituals and burial is much needed. From the Roman Empire, one of the Theodosian laws (C.Th. 16.5.7.3, 381 CE) forbade Manichaeans to establish their "sepulchres of their funeral mysteries" in towns and cities or to disguise themselves under the name of other sects (*ne.. consueta feralium mysterioruum sepulcra constituant*). This is taken by Huebner as indication that religious groups used grave inscriptions as billboards to promote their virtues. S. R. Huebner, *Der Klerus in der Gesellschaft des spätantiken Kleinasiens* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 2005), 202. She does not, however, reflect on the attribution to the Manichaeans specifically. Instead, I think the law might actually

in the cemeteries and tombs of Kellis, there is no evidence for specifically Manichaean burials. Drawing on existing research on Christian identifications and funerary customs, I will argue that Christians and Manichaeans rarely expressed their religious group-identification in the tangible, material aspects of burials.

8.5.1 Early Egyptian Christianity and Changing Funerary Patterns

In Chapter 3, I briefly reflected on the relation between the material remains of burials and religious identifications. Gillian Bowen has argued for a strong correlation between burial patterns and religious identifications: "pagans" in the West Cemetery and Christians in the East Cemetery. In the West Cemetery, the bodies were mostly wrapped in shrouds and placed on beds in low grave chambers, while the East Cemetery knew only east–west oriented pit graves without decorations or grave gifts. These patterns are striking, but are they related to religious communities? Some archaeologists of late antique Egypt have interpreted the shift toward east–west interment theologically, as the result of the Early Christian belief that the dead will rise to face the returning Christ in the East.[95] The increasing dominance of east–west oriented burials would thus reflect the Christianization of Egypt. However, at the outset of this chapter I already noted that this correlation between mortuary practices and religious identification is not universally accepted. Historians, archaeologists, and modern anthropologists have all argued against a direct and representational correlation.[96] The following sections will, therefore, briefly sketch Bowen's position, followed by a discussion of some of its weak points.

The scholarly consensus, on which Bowen draws, is that the Christian notion of bodily resurrection must have led to inhumation and a specific type of care for the deceased body. One scholar briefly summarized:

> [T]he universal and totalizing claim that Christianity exercised on the life of the believers was not compatible with leaving death, burial and the commemoration of the dead simply to the families and professional undertakers. The holy Christian texts demanded intervention in this sphere.[97]

Bowen connects the textual sources on Christian attitudes toward death with the patterns in the two cemeteries. She states that:

---

employ heresiological repertoire, using "feralis" metaphorically as deadly and "sepulcra" for heresy. G. Bartelink, "Repression von Häretikern und anderen religiösen Gruppierungen im späteren Altertum, in der Sprache wiederspiegelt," in *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, ed. A. C. Geljon and R. Roukema (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 192.

[95] Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials," 369. She builds on the typology of D. Watts, *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain* (London: Routledge, 1991), 57.

[96] The historian Ian Morris, for example rejects "direct and linguistic interpretations" of archaeological patterns in Greek and Roman burial patterns. I. Morris, *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 17. See also the skeptical approach to grave goods in N. Denzey Lewis, "Roses and Violets for the Ancestors: Gifts to the Dead and Ancient Roman Forms of Social Exchange," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. M. L. Satlow (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 122-136.

[97] Volp, *Tod und Ritual in den christlichen Gemeinden der Antike*, 270 (English summary).

> Burial practice throughout the cemetery, as illustrated by the excavated graves, was uniform. The bodies were placed directly onto the floor of the pit with the head on the west and with one exception they were single interments. The corpse was wrapped in a linen shroud that was secured with woven linen ties wound in a crisscross or lateral fashion and placed directly into the pit in a supine position; the hands were to the sides, or over the pelvic region … Burial goods were minimal: one string of beads, a reused glass vessel, the occasional ceramic bowl with red painted ticks on the rim, and sprays of rosemary and myrtle. Infant burials were dispersed amongst those of the adult population … Such burial practices equate with the Christian tradition and, consequently, those interred have been identified as belonging to the Christian community at Kellis.[98]

The patterns observed by Bowen are indeed striking, but they hardly correlate with the rise of Christianity. The problematic dating of the Kellis cemeteries, as well as some of their characteristic burial patterns, point toward a less clear-cut, single-issue interpretation.[99]

A fundamental argument against a neat division between Christian burial practices (in the East Cemetery) and traditional Egyptian burials (in the West Cemetery) is tied into the difficult dating of the temporal time span of these two cemeteries. The West Cemetery is dated roughly between the first and third century CE, although there is some evidence for the Ptolemaic period.[100] The radiocarbon dating of twenty-one burials from the East Cemetery has resulted in a more complex picture. The calibrated period ranges from the start of the first century to 600 CE, with a 98.8 percent probability of falling within the range of 48–436 CE.[101] These dates are at odds with the archaeological dating based on pottery and nomenclature that suggest a much shorter time range, from the end of the third to the end of the fourth century. The bioarchaeologists conclude that the "mortuary pattern at K2 predates the Christian period."[102] For Gillian Bowen, the long period cannot be correct, as Christian burials (i.e., those with an east–west orientation) cannot be expected before 220 CE. In her opinion, even this early third-century date is improbable and too early for the observed burial patterns.[103] In result, Bowen rejects the outcome of the radiocarbon dating and favors a

---

[98] Bowen, "Some Observations," 168.

[99] Although I focus on Bowen's argumentation, similar statements have been made by other archaeologists. The bioarchaeological team also stated that "conversion to Christianity at Kellis resulted in a shift in burial customs from that found in the pagan tombs of Kellis 1 to the traditional Christian burials found in Kellis 2." J. D. Stewart, J. E. Molto, and P. J. Reimer, "The Chronology of Kellis 2: The Interpretative Significance of Radiocarbon Dating of Human Remains," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 373.

[100] Hope, "The Kellis 1 Cemetery," 331.

[101] Stewart, Molto, and Reimer, "The Chronology of Kellis 2," 377. I thank E. Molto for discussing these findings with me and for showing me part of his unpublished work on this topic. In particular, I draw on the paper presented by E. Molto, P. Reimer, J. D. Stewart and L. Williams, "The dating of the Kellis 2 Cemetery: An ongoing conundrum," Annual Canadian Association for Physical Anthropology (London Ontario 2004).

[102] Molto, "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview," 239-55.

[103] Bowen, "Some Observations," 168.

date from the mid-third century to fourth century CE. Her interpretation is supported by the ceramics from the East Cemetery, which correspond to the type of pottery found in the fourth-century houses and the Large East Church.[104] Radiocarbon dating, moreover, came up with widely diverging dates for two child burials from the same grave (roughly 260 years apart).[105] Despite this anomaly, we cannot disavow the majority of the radiocarbon dates. The so-called "Christian" burial customs were already in use far before Christianity could have had an impact on the local burial customs, as eleven tombs are datable with a 95.4 percent probability before the middle of the third century, and four of them even before its third decade. The West Cemetery and the East Cemetery were both in use during the second and third century. The change toward funerary customs that favored an east–west orientation of the body and little to no grave gifts was a gradual process that was not solely related to the rise of Christianity, but to a wider array of factors (not excluding Christian group practices altogether).[106]

The gradual change to east–west oriented interments is visible in other cemeteries in the oases, but, as in Kellis, this never fully corresponded to the rise of Christianity.[107] At el-Deir (Kharga Oasis), east–west oriented interments were found in close proximity to those with a north–west, south–east orientation.[108] At Fag el-Gamous, previously thought to support the thesis of a strong Christian differentiation, radiocarbon dating has shown the coexistence of various types of burial orientations for over two hundred years. The archaeological team now suggests that the change in orientation was not "instantaneous or wholesale," but that multiple conventions and traditions intermingled without "segregation based on the underlying cultural and religious beliefs associated with burial orientation."[109]

---

[104] Bowen, "Some Observations," 168; Bowen, "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials," 368-9.

[105] Bowen explains the radiocarbon date as affected by the plant-derived material in the resin coating applied to the body. Cited in Stewart, Molto, and Reimer, "The Chronology of Kellis 2," 377. On this coating, see J. Maurer, T. Möhring, and J. Rullkötter, "Plant Lipids and Fossil Hydrocarbons in Embalming Material of Roman Period Mummies from the Dakhleh Oasis, Western Desert, Egypt," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 29 (2002): 761.

[106] As David Frankfurter concludes, "we can say that – to whatever degree they arose in connection with other Christian practices – they would have served the transformation of the soul, the family's investment in that transformation, and perhaps some community investment in the distinction of mortuary practices." Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 179.

[107] Bowen, "Some Observations," 169.

[108] Dunand concludes there was no general orientation plan during Late Antiquity. Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 171. This is visible in the Christian necropolis of el-Deir (Kharga Oasis) in which East-West orientated interments are found in close proximity with North-West and South-East interments. Coudert notes that the two sections of the cemetery may have dated to different periods. Coudert, "The Christian Necropolis of El-Deir," 454.

[109] P. R. Evans, D. M. Whitchurch, and K. Muhlestein, "Rethinking Burial Dates at a Graeco-Roman Cemetery: Fag el-Gamous, Fayoum, Egypt," *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 2 (2015): 213. Moreover, Raven has pointed to the longstanding cosmological orientations in Egyptian funerary and temple architecture. M. J. Raven, "Egyptian Concepts on the Orientation of the Human Body," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 91 (2005): 37-53; Cf. B. Gessler-Löhr, "Mummies and Mummification," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 675, differences in treatment

Furthermore, there is some fourth-century evidence for the burial of Christians and non-Christians in the same tomb,[110] for the use of traditional amulets in head-west burials, as well as other grave goods.[111]

Together, this suggests that there is more to the changing burial patterns than simply a strong correlation with a religious identification. Future archaeological studies will have to look into this in more depth. For now, it is enough to follow Alanna Nobbs's observation about the "diverse and decentralized attitude to funerary representation" of this period, which "speaks to the difficulty of perceiving a highly distinct and uniform attitude to death across Christian communities in Egypt."[112] Bringing this back to the possibility of discerning Manichaeanness, we have to conclude that it is highly unlikely that we will ever detect Manichaeans among the Kellis tombs. The following section will argue that the absence of specific evidence for Manichaean burials is not the result of their negative religious evaluation of the material body, but rather stems from a general pattern in the Kellis funerary practices in which religious group-identifications are mostly invisible.

8.5.2 Invisible Manichaean Burials: Following Local Customs

Manichaeans believed the soul had to escape from the material world of the body. Extensive burials and a full traditional treatment of the body seem, therefore, implausible at best. At the same time, this belief did not always result in a negative evaluation of the physical body. A positive evaluation of bodily health is evident in the Kellis letters.[113] Theologically, Manichaeans considered the body empty after the soul had left it (1 Keph 53, 130.24–29). There is, however, no evidence on how this affected their treatment of the corpse.[114] Some

---

are "an indication of social stratification." Other examples are given in F. Dunand and R. Lichtenberg, *Mummies and Death in Egypt* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 129.

[110] M. J. Johnson, "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices of the Fourth Century: Shared Tombs?," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1997): 37-59.

[111] J. Rowland, "The Ptolemaic-Roman Cemetery at the Quesna Archaeological Area," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 94 (2008): 88-89.

[112] A. M. Nobbs, "The Koimeterion of P. Charite 40 - Christian Burial Practices in a Papyrological Context," in *Kalathos: Studies in Honour of Asher Ovadiah*, ed. S. Mucznik (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Department of Art History, 2006), 81. She considers the references to *koimeterion* in P.Charite 40 and P.Neph 12 and 36 as firmly in the Christian community. See on this term for "grave" also J. Kramer, "Was bedeutet Koimeterion in den Papyri?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 80 (1990): 269-72; E. Rebillard, "Koimetérion et Coemeterium: tombe, tombe sainte, nécropole," *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* 105, no. 2 (1993): 975-1001. Françoise Dunand stresses the conflicting evidence. On the one hand, there are textual sources that convey a desire to differ from traditional burial customs, while on the other hand the archaeological material shows both continuity and innovation in the treatment of the body. Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 163-84.

[113] N. J. Baker-Brian, "'Putrid Boils and Sores, and Burning Wounds in the Body': The Valorisation of Health and Illness in Late Antique Manichaeism," *Harvard Theological Review* 109, no. 3 (2016): 422-46.

[114] "Just like a body: When the soul shall come forth from it no energy shall be found in it, nor anything steady at all, because the soul that was in it leaves and has come forth. For it, the energy, does everything [...]." 1 Keph. 53, 130.24-29. See also 1 Keph. 33 when the soul and its limbs leave the body, limb by limb. Richter, *Die Aufstiegspsalmen*, 48. J. Ries seems to believe that the body was considered a worthless piece of Darkness, after all the Light ascended, to be left alone without any treatment. Ries, *L'église gnostique de*

Chinese texts state that Manichaeans ritually undressed their dead and buried them naked within a cloth sack, a practice that has been interpreted in light of the Manichaean rejection of the body.[115] Is it possible that Manichaean burials are invisible in the Kellis record because of a religious disregard for the body? I contend it is not. Rather than directly relating the absence of visible indicators of Manichaean burials with a postulated religious group norm, I consider it more likely that Kellites with a Manichaean affiliation acted on the basis of their village identification. They shared in the burial customs of their neighbors, without explicitly marking the graves of their family members in religious terms.

It is hard to imagine Kellites rejecting all types of treatment or burial. One of the reasons for the continuation of burial practices contradicting some explicit beliefs is the expectation of the social *umwelt*. It must have been socially unthinkable in an Egyptian village society in which family bonds and responsibilities continued after death. Children had the responsibility to provide a decent funeral for their parents, as condition for their inheritance.[116] Just like Manichaeism, Egyptian Christianity contained contradictory traditions about burial and the treatment of the body. On the one hand, there was a negative theological evaluation of postmortem treatment of the body, presumably out of fear for a veneration of the body and the rise of the cult of the saints.[117] According to Françoise Dunand, Christian texts describing proper burial customs are "often distorted (to my mind) by a clear desire to differ from 'pagan' customs, if not indeed to contrast with them."[118] On the other hand, there are more than enough indicators that mummification was still practiced by Christians, as for example visible in the instruction by bishop Abraham of Hermontis who wanted to be buried "according the customs of the land."[119] Consequently,

---

Mani, 226. This may have been implied in Ibn al-Nadim's description of Manichaean customs, but it is not made explicit. "That discarded body remains behind, and the sun, the moon, and the luminous deities strain out from it those species which are water, fire, and air. (The product of this filtration) ascends to the sun and becomes divine. The rest of the body, which is all Darkness, is cast down to Jahannam" (Fihrist) cited from Reeves, *Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism*, 217; Discussed at G. Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Manichaïsmus* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1862), 339-47.

[115] Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 270-285, specifically page 278 with a translation. The Chinese author, however, may have described the Zoroastrian rituals of the Sogdians. Whether these "vegetarian demon worshipers" should be considered Manichaeans is not undisputed.

[116] M. Krause, "Das weiterleben ägyptischer Vorstellungen und Brauchen im koptischen Totenwesen," in *Das römisch-byzantinische Ägypten: Akten des internationalen symposions 26.-30. Sept. 1978 in Trier*, ed. G. Grimm, H. Heinen, and E. Winter (Mainz am Rhein: Phillip von Zabern, 1983), 87; M. Krause, "Das Totenwesen der Kopten," in *Tod am Nil: Tod und Totenkult im antiken Ägypten*, ed. H. Froschauer, C. Gastgeber, and H. Harrauer (Wien: Phoibos Verlag, 2003), 34-5.

[117] Examples cited in Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 177.

[118] Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 168. The Coptic martyr acts, on the other hand, appear to draw heavily on traditional Egyptian conceptualizations of the afterlife. G. Fischhaber, *Mumifizierung im koptischen Ägypten: Eine Untersuchung zur Körperlichkeit im 1. Jahrtausend n. Chr.* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997), 258. Similar observations about the "totenklagen" in the Coptic material which continued although prohibited. Krause, "Das Totenwesen der Kopten," 33-44.

[119] P.Lond. I 77.57-9, cited in Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 174.

the normative theological texts had few direct connections with the village reality of everyday practice.

In spite of this rhetorical nature of much of our textual evidence, there is ample archaeological evidence for the lack of postmortem treatment of the body—also at Kellis. Quite a number of excavated bodies were found without a trace of artificial mummification. Some were spontaneously mummified because of the temperature, while others were skeletonized under less favorable environmental factors (presumably they died during the winter months).[120] All of the bodies examined by Aufderheide and his team derived from the West Cemetery, which makes it unlikely that the lack of elaborate treatment corresponded to the religious convictions of Christians and Manichaeans. The trend toward less bodily treatment was already visible in these second- or third-century interments. Rather than relating it to the impact of religious group norms, (bio)archaeologists have suggested that absence of treatment was the result of either a low social status or lacking financial means.[121]

A second option would be to look for Manichaeans among the additional late interments in the mud brick tombs north and south of the village. Some of the additional burials in these monumental tombs derived from the fourth century. They were set up according to an east–west orientation, following the local customs at the time rather than those of the previous generations in the same tombs. These additional interments probably belonged to families who continued to bury their dead in the family tombs, even though their religious affiliation had changed. This religious position was, for once, indicated by a gypsum sealing with an image of the *crux ansata*.[122] No indication of Manichaean identifications was found.

The third and most likely option is therefore that Manichaeans buried their dead in the simple graves in the East Cemetery, and that most of their dead had only received superficial postmortem treatment or mummification. The general trend in Late Antiquity appears to have been a modification of previous traditions. Most analyzed bodies were less elaborately mummified, some only wrapped in several layers of shrouds with salt and berries, or myrtle and rosemary, to conserve them. These alternative treatments have been studied extensively in Kellis. Some of these bodies were dressed in old garments, but it is most probable that specific burial shrouds were made and sold widely in late antique Egypt.[123] By the fourth century, almost all the inhabitants of Kellis must have buried their relatives in the East Cemetery or one of the large family tombs. Apart from the *crux ansata* in one of the North Tombs, no religious symbols have been found to mark the religious

---

[120] Aufderheide et al., "Mummification Practices at Kellis," 66, type 1 and 2 mummies.

[121] Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 171. The consensus is now that the embalming process was not so much declining as it was deteriorating in standards. Gessler-Löhr, "Mummies and Mummification," 664-83; M. A. Stadler, "Funerary Religion: The Final Phase of an Egyptian Tradition," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 383-97; F. Dunand and C. Zivie-Coche, *Gods and Men in Egypt, 3000 BCE-395 CE* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 327.

[122] Bowen, "Some Observations," 178; Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 264.

[123] On the use of shrouds with salt and berries, see Dunand, "Between Tradition and Innovation," 171-3.

affiliation of the departed or their family. The absence of marked Manichaeanness therefore fits in with the wider funerary patterns.

Specifically religious significance has been argued to exist for the burials in and next to the West Church. Gillian Bowen has suggested that the West Church functioned as a cemetery church in connection to the buildings to the south and the West Tombs to the northeast corner of enclosure 4. She states that the graves were added as "a conscious act by the Christian community of Kellis to define and isolate a sacred space."[124] The West Tombs themselves stemmed from an earlier period, but some of the interments must have been from the late third, early fourth century. They lacked traditional grave gifts and had an east–west orientation, and have therefore been taken as Christian burials.[125] Outside this mausoleum, several other interments were built against the wall of the tomb (D/7 cemetery) with similar orientation. A connection with the Manichaeans has been proposed, primarily because of the paucity of burial style, but other explanations may be more plausible. The graves may have been set apart for a specific family.[126]

The inside of the church contained two east–west oriented graves in front of the apse, one containing the body of a man and the other an infant of about six months old. They were presumably buried there after the erection of the church, as they line up with the bema platform. The presence of these graves leads Bowen to interpret the elaborate seven-room structure south of the church building as a gathering place and kitchen for funerary rituals. The two-room structure on the north also contained a hearth and traces of a bench and domestic fourth-century ceramics.[127] The minor finds from these rooms—coins, ostraka, eggshells, and donkey hooves—do not contribute to further identification of the context, but these mud-brick rooms could have incorporated the facilities for funerary meals, with benches and a hearth.[128] The combination of these facilities with the close proximity of graves and church led Bowen to suggest that the church was not simply a cemetery church, but a *martyrium*.[129] Christians, Manichaeans, or others may have gathered here for commemorative meals.

Other evidence for mortuary churches in the oases abounds. Nicola Aravecchia's discussion of these churches, in particular the church at Ain el-Gedida, shows how substantial the contribution of the oasis can be for the study of Early Christian church buildings. Most exciting in the identification of Amheida's church is this funerary aspect of

---

[124] Bowen, "Some Observations," 177.

[125] Some questions, however, remain, as funerary assemblage included several features otherwise attested in the latest interments of the Group 2 tombs in the West Cemetery. Hope and McKenzie, "Interim Report on the West Tombs," 56-61; Birrell, "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab," 33-4.

[126] In the West-Church this is supported by a rare genetic trait identified in three bodies. Bowen, "Some Observations," 177. See further J. E. Molto et al., "Late Roman Period Human Skeletal Remains from Area D/6 and D/7 and North Tomb 1 at Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 362; Molto, "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2," 239-55.

[127] Bowen, "Some Observations," 177. Two-room mud-brick structure in Hope, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," 252.

[128] Bowen, "Some Observations," 177; Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, no.253-68.

[129] Bowen, "Some Observations," 176.

the building. Five human interments, without funerary goods and with all heads placed to the west, were discovered within the church complex. Similar interments inside and close to church buildings are seen at Deir Abu Matta and the West Church at Kellis.[130] The church at Amheida surpassed these other buildings by the attestation of a funerary crypt, which could only be entered through the sacristy of the Church. Three sealed tombs were found in this vaulted subterranean room, bringing the total number of burials in the church to eight. While more funerary churches with crypts are known, this is the earliest datable crypt in Egypt.[131] Considering this discovery and the subsequent bioarchaeological research, some suggestions have been made about the social positions of the individuals buried in the church. Few of these individuals fitted the stereotype of clergy. The six-month-old infant in Kellis and the teenage girl found close to the bema in the Amheida church do not fit our expectations. Nor would one expect a male body with typical military injuries to be buried inside the church.[132] Instead of to the clergy, these interments may have belonged to elite donors who paid for burials in the subterranean crypt or within the church itself. Again, I find no evidence that suggests that any of these individuals belonged to a specifically Manichaean community. Despite the abundance of material evidence, it is impossible to connect this material to the textual world of the personal letters and doctrinal tractates of Manichaeans.

8.6 Conclusions

By exploring traces of burial practices and death rituals in psalms and documentary letters, we have gained an impression of the role that death and the journey of the soul played in the lives of ancient Kellites. While we are informed of death, burial, and even ritual commemoration in the papyri, there are no traces of Manichaeanness in the material record of the cemeteries and tombs at Kellis. Presumably, Manichaeans buried their dead with simple or no postmortem treatment in the pit graves of the East Cemetery, but direct evidence is absent. It is, therefore, probably best to avoid "single-issue questions of identity."[133] Instead of following institutionally mediated options of religious behavior, the individuals and families in Kellis worked with the locally available repertoires and expectations regarding death and burial.

Undisputed evidence for Manichaean commemoration rituals has been found in Kellis. The songs relate to the various stages in the ascent of the soul through the heavens into the world of Light. The fact that Matthaios explicitly related his grief for his great mother to the absence of the elect most likely indicates a fully developed set of rituals, both during the last hours and after a longer period of mourning. The psalms and hymns found in

---

[130] G. E. Bowen, "The Church of Deir Abu Metta and a Christian Cemetery in Dakhleh Oasis: A Brief Report," *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 19 (2008): 7-16.

[131] Bagnall et al., *An Oasis City*, 128-30.

[132] N. Aravecchia et al., "The Church at Amheida (Ancient Trimithis) in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt. A Bioarchaeological Perspective on an Early Christian Mortuary Complex," *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* 9 (2015): 21-43.

[133] On "single-issue questions of identity" in archaeology, see L. Meskell, "Archaeologies of Identity," in *Archaeological Theory Today*, ed. I. Hodder (Malden: Polity, 2001), 187.

Kellis contain enough information to establish a strong link with the Herakleides Psalms and the rituals elucidated in the two *Kephalaia* chapters on almsgiving "for those who have left the body." In line with the conclusions of the previous chapter, commemoration constituted one of the communal gatherings of Manichaeans, marked with great emotional intensity. The songs and rituals stressed the connection between their earthly lives and the cosmological fate of the soul after death. As such, this event would have created a sense of groupness, fostering an imagined community beyond death and between all those present: elect and catechumens.

Chapter 9. Ision's Books: Scribal Culture and Manichaean Texts

> Study your psalms, whether Greek or Coptic, every day … Write a little from time to time, more and more. Write a daily example, for I need you to write books here (Makarios to his son).[1]
>
> Send a well-proportioned and nicely executed ten-page notebook for your brother Ision. For he has become a user of Greek and a Syriac reader (Apa Lysimachos to Theognostos).[2]

9.1. Introduction

Books and the art of book writing are generally considered core features of the Manichaean tradition. It positioned Manichaeans at the heart of the "scriptural revolution" of late antique religion, in which text and sacred books began to dominate the transmission of religious wisdom, as well as daily ritual practice.[3] The common trend in late antique religious movements, or "secondary religion," to transmit cosmological wisdom in written texts and codex-style books, is perfectly exemplified in Manichaeism. The *Kephalaia* emphasizes Mani's personal involvement in committing his teachings to writing.[4] In their hagiographical accounts, Manichaeans stressed the role of books. The earliest history of the religion in the Roman Empire, for example, was remembered as built on the scribes and books that Mani sent to his missionaries:

> They went to the Roman Empire and saw many doctrinal disputes with the religions. Many Elect and Hearers were chosen. Patig was there for one year. Then he returned and appeared before the apostle. Hereafter the lord sent three scribes, the Gospel and two other writings to Adda. He gave the order: "Do not take it further, but stay there like a merchant who collects a treasure."[5]

---

[1] ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣[ⲉⲕ]ϯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩ <ⲛⲓⲏ>… ⲥ̣ϩ ϩⲛ̄ⲕ[ⲟⲩⲓ ϩ]ⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲡ ⲥⲁⲡ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲛ̄ϩⲟ[ⲩⲟ] ⲥ̣ϩ̄ ⲟⲩⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲙⲏⲙⲉ ϫⲉ ϯⲣ̄ϫⲣ̣ⲓ[ⲁ ⲙⲏ]ⲁⲕ ⲁⲥϩ̄ ϩⲛ̄ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲡⲏⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 19.13-14 and 17-18. See below on this passage and the translation.

[2] Πινακίδιον εὔμετρον καὶ ἀστῖον δέκα πτυχῶν πέμψον τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου Ἰσίωνι. Ἑλληνιστὴς γὰρ γέγονεν καὶ ἀναγνώστης συρ̣ι̣α̣τ̣τικός P.Kell.Gr. 67.17-21, translation in Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 224 on the Syriac address containing the name of Lysimachos.

[3] Stroumsa, *The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity*. J. C. Reeves, "Manichaeans as *Ahl Al-Kitab.* A Study in Manichaean Scripturalism," in *Light against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, ed. A. Lange, et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 249-65.

[4] Discussed below and in G. G. Stroumsa, "The Scriptural Movement of Late Antiquity and Christian Monasticism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16, no. 1 (2008): 61-77; G. G. Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 36-42.

[5] M2 translated by Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*, 21. Reproduced in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 21a.

In a similar fragment of Manichaean hagiography, the apostle to the East, Mar Ammo, could only convince the spirit Bagard, who guarded the frontier, to let him enter the kingdom after reciting from *The Treasure of Life*, as Mani had instructed him in a vision.[6] In both stories, texts—and more specifically the books of Mani—were more than just vehicles of information. They represented and contained the power of the Apostle of Light. The Psalmbook conveys the same message. It presents Mani's books as the medicine and antidotes of the "great physician" (ⲡⲛⲁϩ ⲛⲥⲉⲓ̈ⲛⲉ):

> He has the antidote that is good for every affection. There are two and twenty compounds in his antidote: His Great Gospel, the good tidings of all them that are of the Light. His waterpot is the Thesaurus, the Treasure of Life. In it there is hot water: there is some cold water also mixed with it. His soft sponge that wipes away bruises is the Pragmateia. His knife for cutting is the Book of Mysteries. His excellent swabs are the Book of Giants. The medicine chest of every cure is the Book of his Letters.[7]

Mani's books were considered powerful: they contained Mani's own power, with the capacity to bring life and healing. In this respect, Manichaean texts were a central feature, closely tied to the founder and therefore to the wisdom and power of the cosmos.[8]

The scribal activities attested in the Kellis material have been interpreted against this background as part of an overarching missionary strategy. Soon after the discovery of the village and its texts, Samuel Lieu suggested that Kellis "must have had the service of a scriptorium for the copying of their texts."[9] Other scholars, likewise, stressed the missionary background of some of these texts. Hans-Martin Schenke, for example, has considered Kellis "*das* Zentrum oder *ein* Zentrum der Übersetzung von Syrisch geschriebenen Büchern des Mani."[10] None of these observations are entirely wrong, but I will show that the published texts from Kellis do not explicitly relate books to proselytizing or mission, nor is there any evidence for late antique scriptoria that resemble the stereotypical medieval writing conditions.[11] Instead, it may be more plausible to consider book writing as a religious

---

[6] Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire*, 219-20; Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 71-72.

[77] ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥ ⲧⲁⲛⲧⲓⲇⲟⲧⲟⲥ ⲉϣⲁⲥ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲁⲡⲁⲑⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ ϫⲟⲩⲧⲥⲛⲁⲩⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛⲓⲅⲛⲁ ϣⲟⲟⲡ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϥⲁⲛⲓⲇⲟⲧⲟⲥ ⲡⲉϥⲛⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲉⲩⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲡϣⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩϥⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲡⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲧⲉϥⲗⲁⲕⲁⲛⲏ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲟⲛⲥⲁⲩⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉϩⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲡⲱⲛϩ̄ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ ⲛⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̄. ⲛⲟⲩ ⲛⲕ̄ⲃⲃⲉ ⲁⲛ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲧⲏⲧ ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲥ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲡⲟⲅⲅⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϭⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲱⲧ ⲡⲗⲏⲅⲏ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲡⲣⲁⲅⲙⲁⲧⲓⲁ ⲡϥ̀ⲕⲛⲁⲇⲓⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱϫⲉ ⲡⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲙⲩⲥⲧⲏⲣⲓⲟⲛ ⲛⲉϥⲱⲗ ⲉⲧⲛ̀ⲁⲛ̀ⲟⲟⲩ ⲡⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϭⲁⲗⲁϣⲓⲣⲉ ⲡⲛⲁⲣⲑⲏϫ̀ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁϩⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲡⲉ ⲡϫⲱⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̀ⲉϥⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗⲁⲩⲉ 2 PsB. 46.19-30. Wurst translated ⲡⲛⲁⲣⲑⲏϫ̀ "der Kasten," "The medicine chest of every cure is the book of his Letters." The section is followed by a fragmentary passage, probably including other Manichaean books.

[8] K. Hopkins, "Conquest by Book," in *Literacy in the Roman World*, ed. M. Beard, et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991), 133-58. This central feature was already discussed at length before the watershed discoveries of the twentieth century. P. Alfaric, *Les écritures manichéennes* (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1918).

[9] Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 95.

[10] Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner," 222-3 (his italics).

[11] One might add, before the fifth century. K. Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters. Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 83-96 for the second and third century. I see no real indication in the Kellis letters for a different type of textual reproduction than these private scribal networks. Evidence for Pachomian scriptoria is from after the fourth century, see Palladius, *Lausiac History* 32.12 and John Cassian, *Institutes* 4.12; C. Kotsifou, "Books and Book Production in

practice for local and regional communities, without immediately seeking the connection to missionary practices.[12]

This chapter will examine the literary as well as the documentary papyri to show that Kellis was a booklovers' place. We have already encountered a neighbor capable of producing high-quality wooden tablets and codices (in Chapter 3), but we will also get a glimpse of several young scribes in training, among whom at least one was involved in copying Manichaean texts. Apart from a more historical, factual inventory of evidence for book production in section 9.2, the full spectrum of (semi)literary documents found in the vicinity of Houses 1–3, 4, and 5 will be highlighted in section 9.3 to illustrate local reading practices. As some of this material is strongly connected to the Manichaean textual tradition, the following section will consider how the production of text functioned as a ritual practice for Manichaean catechumens, especially in light of the Manichaean claim that Mani wrote all his wisdom himself. Together, these sections illustrate the unmistakable Manichaean character of the community. A Manichaean character, however, which adapted and connected to the manifold local concerns and circumstances of village life.

9.2 Book Production in Papyrus Letters

The personal letters from Kellis contain numerous references to books and the production of books, some of which have been already introduced in Chapter 4. Most noteworthy is the instruction sent to Matthaios, who is trained as a scribe:

> Study your psalms, whether Greek or Coptic, every day (?) … Do not abandon your vow. Here the *Judgement of Peter* is with you.[13] Do the *Apostolos*, or else master the *Great Prayers* and the Greek *Psalms*. Here too the *Sayings* are with you, study them! Here are the *Prostrations*. Write a little from time to time, more and more. Write a daily example, for I need you to write books here.[14]

---

the Monastic Communities of Byzantine Egypt," in *The Early Christian Book*, ed. W. E. Klingshirn and L. Safran (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 48-66.

[12] E. Iricinschi, "'A Thousand Books Will Be Saved': Manichaean Writings and Religious Propaganda in the Roman Empire," in *Jewish and Christian Scripture as Artifact and Canon*, ed. C. A. Evans and D. Zacharias (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2009), 269; E. Iricinschi, "*Tam pretiosi codices vestri.* Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books in Augustine's Anti-Manichaean Writings," in *Revelation, Literature and Community in Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Townsend and M. Vidas (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 158. The juxtaposition with missionary practices is my emphasis, although strongly related to Iricinschi's argument.

[13] With Schenke I wonder whether we should translate ⲉⲓⲥ… ϩⲁⲧⲛⲕ freely with "attached you'll find …," even though in line 84, Matthaios is to bring the Judgment of Peter (to Makarios?). Schenke, "Rezension zu Iain Gardner," 223.

[14] ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲩ[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲏ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲛⲏⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩ <ⲛⲓⲏ> ⲉⲣⲉ ⲧ̄ⲥⲣⲁϩ[…]ⲓ̣ ⲙⲡ̄ⲣ̄ⲕⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ ⲉⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲧ̄ⲕⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ ϩⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲛⲕ ⲉ[ⲣⲓ ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ ⲛ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲛ ⲁⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲗ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲯ̣ⲁ̣[ⲗ]ⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̣[ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛ]ⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲛⲁ ⲁⲛ ϩⲁⲧⲛⲕ ⲁⲣⲓ ⲙ[ⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲕⲗⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲥ̣ϩ̣ ϩⲙ̄ⲕ[ⲟⲩⲓ ϩ]ⲛ̄ ϩⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲡ ⲥⲁⲡ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ ⲛ̄ϩⲟ[ⲩⲟ] ⲥ̣ϩ̣ ⲟⲩⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲧ̄ⲣ̄ⲭⲣ̣ⲓ̣[ⲁ ⲙⲏ]ⲁⲕ ⲁⲥϩ̣ ϩⲛ̄ϫⲱⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲏⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 19.13-19. The emendation in line 14, <ⲛⲓⲏ>, is questionable. It seems more likely to read the following as a relative clause, maybe "ϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲡ̣ⲥϭⲣⲁϩ[ⲧ ..]ⲡ." The same noun (ϭⲣⲁϩⲧ) is used in line 5. The passage remains difficult, but I thank Jacques van der Vliet for his insightful comments.

Likewise, his younger brother, who was traveling with The Teacher, learned how to read in every church (P.Kell.Copt. 25.46). Various other letters mention books by their title, or contain guidance on where and when to send them, either to the Nile valley or back to Kellis. Makarios's admonition to Matthaios continues with detailed instructions: "[I]f my mother Kouria will give the great *(Book of) Epistles*, bring it with you. If not, bring the small one, with the *Prayer-book* and the *Judgement of Peter*."[15] Another letter, perhaps addressed to Pamour III, contains similar demands: "(About) this book that Lamon has: let the *Acts* be copied (?) from it. (As for) the *Gospel*: Let them bring it to me from father Pabo."[16] This latter example already indicates that there was a wider network of scribes beyond the Makarios family alone, even though their letters are pivotal to our reconstruction.

Other instances of scribal activity have already been noted in Chapter 3, with the description of a spell in a letter by Ouales (P.Kell.Copt. 35). The letter describes the choice for this particular spell as an alternative to the one that was requested, since the original spell was written on a small piece of papyrus and was lost. Other texts, moreover, were requested, but Ouales struggled to make the deadline: "Do not make it in big script, for they say that the papyrus has run out. Yet, it [MB: the ⲧⲉⲧⲣⲁⲥ?] is a useful text, and if you do write them, I for my part will find your recompense."[17] This exchange shows that the recipient and author were part of a network of scribes, who wrote ritual texts to each other on request. At least some of these scribes had a Manichaean affiliation, shown in the reference to "our Lord Paraclete" (ⲛⲉⲕⲙ̄ⲡ̄ϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 35.26–27). In this context, it is important to bear in mind that books in Late Antiquity were published informally, through social networks. Authors usually sent their works to friends and patrons, who disseminated copies through a circle of literate elite benefactors.[18] The references to texts and scribal activity in the Kellis letters are therefore not primarily friendly reminders among family, nor do they attest to a monastic scriptorium. Instead, they belonged to the standard procedure of circulating and publishing books.

---

[15] ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲙⲟ ϭⲟⲩⲣⲓⲁ ⲛⲁϯ ⲡⲛⲁϩ ⲛⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲓⲟⲛ] ⲉⲛⲓϥ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲕ ⲉϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲉⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲛ ⲁ̣ⲛ̣ⲓ ⲡ̣ⲕⲟⲩⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ ⲧⲕⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 19.81-84.

[16] ⲡ̣ⲓϫⲱⲙ ⲉⲧⲛⲧⲟⲧϥ̄ ⲛⲗⲁⲙⲱⲛ ⲧⲁⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲡⲣⲁϫ̈ⲉⲓⲥ ϩⲣⲓϥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲅ’ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲣⲟⲩⲛ̣̄ⲧϥ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲧϥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓⲱⲧ vac ⲡ̣ⲁⲃⲟ (modified translation) P.Kell.Copt. 120.2-7, Pekos to Pamour (III?). See linguistic notes at Shisha-Halevy, "Review Article of: Gardner," 275.

[17] ⲛ̄ⲡⲱⲣ ⲁ̈ⲓⲉⲧϥ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ ϫⲉ ⲡⲁϫⲉⲩ ϫⲉ ⲁ ⲛⲭⲁⲣⲧⲏⲥ ⲟⲩⲱ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲟⲩⲥϩⲉⲓ ⲉϥⲣⲫⲉⲩ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲉⲕⲥⲁϩⲟⲩ ϯⲛⲁϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲕⲱⲓⲃⲉ ϩⲱⲧ P.Kell.Copt. 35.44-46 (modified translation). The translation and interpretation of the first section is difficult. The editors offer as alternative: "Do not make it a long letter, because they say that the papyrus has run out; but (just) a useful letter." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 228. Other complains about the availability of papyrus are included in P.Kell.Copt. 78 and 79, while P.Kell.Copt. 39 refers to writing letters on scraps of papyrus.

[18] K. Haines-Eitzen, "The Social History of Early Christian Scribes," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 484-5; W. A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 179-92; N. Denzey Lewis and J. A. Blount, "Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 2 (2014): 416-19; Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 184-232.

Fortunately, several personal letters reveal more about the process of book writing. The most illustrative are Makarios's instructions to Matthaios (cited above), who is clearly being trained to do scribal work. His training began in the oasis, where he copied various books, after which he traveled to the Nile valley and worked with both his father and Apa Lysimachos. Makarios indicates that he needs him to write books in the Nile valley, but the further family correspondence does not reveal whether Matthaios continued with this type of work. The author of P.Kell.Copt. 33 combines a request for the production of a mat with several questions about book writing. He asked whether "the little one completed the *gospel*" and mentions "read the *epaggeliai*."[19] Despite their fragmentary state, these phrases seem to refer to the practice of book writing by people like Matthaios (would he have been a "little one"?). In P.Kell.Copt. 34, the author wishes to know (?) "the hour when your son has finished writing the book."[20] Both instances show how these authors participated in a reading network and actually ordered books to be written.

Several book titles, or texts, have been mentioned already in the cited passages. Table 16 lists all the titles that feature in the Kellis letters. The ten items on this list include Manichaean books, but also a wider array of Christian, Classical, and apocryphal literature. The first two items on the list, however, have been interpreted incorrectly as allusions to Manichaean texts. Rather than relating the "prostrations" (ⲛ̄ⲕⲗⲓⲥⲓⲥ) to the daily prostrations, and the "sayings" (ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲏⲁ) to a collection of Manichaean homilies, it is more likely that they referred to grammatical education. Matthaios is called on to study the conjugations of verbs (ῥῆμα) and "inflections" (κλίσις) in this letter, rather than to engage more deeply with Manichaean texts.[21]

Text or Book	Reference
"Prostrations" (?)	P.Kell.Copt. 19.17 (ⲛ̄ⲕⲗⲓⲥⲓⲥ).
"Sayings" (?)	P.Kell.Copt. 19.17 (ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲏⲁ).
The vow(s) (?)	P.Kell.Copt. 19.15 (ⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ, presumably a practice, a vow) and P.Kell.Copt. 33.7 (..ϣϣ ⲛ̣ⲉⲡⲁⲅ'ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ, "read the *epaggeliai* (pl.)").
The Judgment of Peter	P.Kell.Copt. 19.15 and .84 (ⲧ̄ⲕⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ).
Apostolos	P.Kell.Copt. 19.15 **(**[ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ**)** and P.Kell.Copt. 127.21 (ⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲟⲥ]).
The Acts	P.Kell.Copt. 120.4 (ⲡⲣⲁ̀ⲝⲉⲓⲥ).
The Gospel	P.Kell.Copt. 120.5 **(**ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ**)** and P.Kell.Copt. 98.21[22] and P.Kell.Copt. 33.4 (ϫⲱⲕ [ⲡⲉⲩ̀ⲁ]ⲅ'ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ, reconstructed).
The *Epistles*	P.Kell.Copt. 19. 82–83 (ⲡⲛⲁ⸗ ⲛⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲓⲟⲛ]) and P.Kell.Copt. 120.14 (ϯⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲩⲁⲥⲗⲏ, diminutive?).
Psalms	P.Kell.Copt. 19.14 (ⲛ̄ⲛ[ⲉⲕ]ϣⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ) and .16 (ⲛ̄ϣⲁ[ⲗ]ⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ[ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲏ]ⲓⲛ, "the Greek

[19] ⲁ ⲡⲕⲟⲩ̈ϊ ϫⲱⲕ [ⲡⲉⲩ̀ⲁ]ⲅ'ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ and ⲧ̣ϣϣ ⲛ̣ⲉⲡⲁⲅ'ⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ· P.Kell.Copt. 33.3-4 and 7-8.

[20] […ⲧⲟ]ⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲡⲕϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲟⲩⲱ ⲉϥⲥ̀ϩⲉ̈ⲓ ⲛ̄ⲡⲓϫⲱⲛ̣ⲉ̣ P.Kell.Copt. 34.22-23.

[21] Cribiore's suggestion is noted in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 163. See also the alternative "study your verbs and inflexions" in Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 256n26. I see therefore no reason to speculate about whether these sayings could have been related to Kephalaia-style texts with sayings of Mani (see below on T.Kell.Copt. 1).

[22] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 187.

	Psalms").
The *Prayers*	P.Kell.Copt. 19.16 (ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ ⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ, "the great prayers") and .84 (ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲙ). In P.Kell.Copt. 66.7–8 (ⲧⲉⲩⲭⲏ) it seems to be an expression ("the request of Pebo").

Table 16: List of book titles in the Kellis letters.

The *Judgment of Peter* cannot but have been a religious text. It has been identified with several apocryphal books because of their attribution to Peter: the *Acts of Peter*, a *Revelation of Peter*, and even the *Apocalypse of Peter* in the Nag Hammadi Library. Unfortunately, we do not have a text called the *Judgment of Peter*. The most plausible identification, thus far, can be found in the fourth-century Christian author Rufinus, who spoke of *Peter's Judgment* as an alternative title for a text called the *Two Ways*.[23] The content of the *Two Ways*, which we primarily know in its incarnation as the first chapters of the *Didache*, would resonate with the ascetic stance of Manichaeans, as well with their dualistic world view. It does not seem too farfetched to find a boy in the Egyptian desert copying a version of this Ancient Christian text.

A similar connection can be made for the *Acts*, as it could have referred to one of the other apocryphal books from the Christian tradition, like the apocryphal *Acts of the Apostles*. If this is the case, the *Acts of John* would be an option, as one of the Greek papyri from Kellis contains a text with strong affiliations to the *Acts of John* (P.Kell.Gr 97). Could one of the Manichaean scribes at House 3 have worked on a Manichaean redaction or transmission of this text?[24] The simplicity of the reference to ⲡⲣⲁϫⲉⲓⲥ without any further designator, however, seems to suggest that a Manichaean book of acts was meant, for which no additional apostle name was required. The lost *Acts* codex from the Medinet Madi collection (P15997) is a plausible candidate, as the few transmitted and legible pages in the 1960s contained reports about the early history of the Manichaean church.[25]

The case of the *Apostolos* is one of the few instances in which we have also found the document that they were referring to. There can be almost no doubt that Makarios's suggestion to his son to copy "the *Apostolos*" ([ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 19.15–16) referred to the letters of Paul. As we will see in the next section, fragments of the New Testament letter(s) to the Hebrews and the Romans have been found. The name "Apostolos," moreover,

[23] The *Two Ways* is the text of which a version is integrated in the *Didache*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Doctrina Apostolorum*. Of course, one could wonder whether the Judaizing tendencies of some of these texts would have been present in the *Two* Ways, and how this would have related to the anti-Jewish stance of the Manichaeans. The identification of *Peter's Judgment* and the *Two Ways* is also made by Jerome and Optatus. R. E. Aldridge, "Peter and the "Two Ways,"" *Vigiliae Christianae* 53, no. 3 (1999): 233-64. Alternatively, the Kellis reference has been interpreted as the apocalypse of Peter, J. D. Dubois, "Sur la notion d'apocryphe en milieu manichée," in *Apocryphité: histoire d'un concept transversal aux religions du livre*, ed. S. C. Mimouni (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 150-51.

[24] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 256.

[25] The content and the history of the codex is discussed in Robinson, *The Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi*, 225-47.

is the common name for the works of Paul in the Greek and Coptic orthodox tradition, and it is cited as such in a fragment from Oxyrhynchus.[26]

More difficult to identify are "the vow(s)" (ⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲁ). In both passages, the phrase might relate to an actual vow or promise, although in P.Kell.Copt. 33, this word is preceded by a form of the verb to read, which suggests it was an otherwise unknown text.[27]

The remaining four book titles refer to well-known Manichaean texts. *The Gospel*, the *Epistles*, the *Psalms*, and *The Great Prayers* suggest that these people not only read Greek literature (like the Isocrates codex) and biblical or apocryphal texts (like the letters of Paul) but copied Manichaean canonical texts as well. This may not seem remarkable at first glance, but it is surprising for two reasons. First, because it is sometimes thought that the Manichaean canon was not accessible to catechumens (see section 9.4.2) and second, because of the sheer absence of canonical texts from the extant material remains. I am convinced, however, that the Manichaeans of Kellis may have had access to at least three or four of the books listed as canonical. At the same time, we should note that the notion of a "canon" as an inner core of authoritative books attributed to Mani carries modern connotations. Manichaean texts frequently list texts that carried authority because they were written by Mani himself (but see 9.4.1). These lists contain some variation, but a fairly consistent selection is commonly included in Manichaean Heptateuch.[28] The *Kephalaia*, for example, lists the *Great Gospel*, the *Treasury of Life*, the *Treatise* (*pragmateia*)[29], one of the *Mysteries*, the *Writings about Parthians*, the *Epistles*, the *Psalms*, and the *Prayers* (1 Keph. 5.23–26). Among the texts found in Kellis is at least one codex with several epistles of Mani, which makes it most probable that Matthaios worked on a copy of these important texts. Once, the texts are introduced as the "great *Epistles*" (ⲡⲛⲁϩ ⲛⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗ[ⲓⲟⲛ], P.Kell.Copt. 19. 82–83), and a second reference appears to use a diminutive form (ϯⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗⲁⲥⲗⲏ, P.Kell.Copt. 120.14).[30] In the former letter, Matthaios is also told to practice his writing on the "psalms, whether Greek or Coptic" (ⲛ̄ⲛ[ⲉⲕ]ⲯⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ, P.Kell.Copt. 19.14), and later on the "Greek Psalms" (ⲛ̄ⲯⲁ[ⲗ]ⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ[ⲟⲩⲓⲁⲛ]ⲓⲛ, P.Kell.Copt. 19.16). These songs may have been the

[26] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 163. In Oxyrhynchus, a fragment with Rom. 1: 1-7 (P.Oxy. II 209) has ."π[...]ση ἀπόστολος" on the verso.

[27] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 219.

[28] For a systematical interpretation, see Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 67. The various lists differ. Compare the following with the list in the introduction of the *Kephalaia*: The *Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Pragmateia*, the *Book of the Mysteries*, the *Book on the Giants*, the *Epistles*, the *Psalms* and the *Prayers*, his *Image* (Hom. 25.2-5). *The Living Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, the *Pragmateia*, the *Book of Mysteries*, the *Writing of the Giants* (last three listed as one single gift), the *Epistles* (1 Keph 148, 355.4-25). The *Great Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life* (*Thesaurus*), *Pragmateia*, *Book of Mysteries, Book of Giants, Book of his letters* (2 PsB. 46.21-31, on page 47 it includes the two *Psalms and his Prayers*). M. Krause, "Die Aussagen von Sarakoton-Psalm 2 (Man. Ps. Book 139,52-140,17) über die heiligen Schrifter der Manichäer," in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Preißler and H. Seiwert (Marburg: Diagonal-Verlsag, 1994), 136-41. On the diversity within the canon, see also Lim, "Unity and Diversity," 245.

[29] Tardieu has suggested to translate *pragmateia* with "legends." Tardieu, *Manichaeism*, 41-42. cf. Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 81-83.

[30] Gardner considers the possibility of reading ⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗⲏ ⲉⲧ(ⲧ)ⲁϣ̄ⲉ, "the letter that is sealed," but considers this "most unlikely." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 256.

psalms found among the liturgical texts from Kellis or the original "two psalms" written by Mani (2 PsB. 47.3). The same two options exist for the "the great prayers" (ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ ⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ, P.Kell.Copt. 19.16 and ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲛ 19.83), although the adjective seems to set this text apart as one of the *Prayers* written by Mani (2 PsB. 47.4). A final ambiguous case is the "prayer" (ⲧⲉⲩⲭⲏ, P.Kell.Copt. 66.7–8) associated with Pebo. Rather than a text, this may have been an expression meaning something like "the request of Pebo."[31] Makarios's letter to Matthaios, urging him to master the "great prayers" (ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩ ⲛ̄ϣⲗⲏⲗ, P.Kell.Copt. 19.16, again in line 84, "prayer(s)" ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲱⲛ), is a more likely candidate to refer to Mani's book of prayers. Indeed, the presence of a Greek version of the daily Manichaean prayers (known as the *Prayer of the Emanations*, see Chapter 7.5.2) may suggest that these Kellites had access to earlier authoritative Manichaean traditions. If these prayers go back to a third-century version, they may have been part of the canonical *Prayers* associated with Mani.[32]

In sum, the casual references to book titles in the personal letters add to the impression of Kellites as booklovers. In particular, the letters by some of the Manichaeans contain references to books that are known from the Manichaean tradition. This brings us to the accessibility of the Manichaean texts. Could catechumens have had access to Manichaean books from the canon in order to copy them? Would Matthaios have worked with texts like the *Living Gospel*? Before considering these questions, we will see that the physical documents from the site reveal more about the broad scope of the reading (and writing!) practices in the village.

9.3 Local Reading Practices

What do we learn about the Kellites in the Roman period houses if we would just look at their reading practices? Is there something their bookshelves can tell us about the variety of their religious choices? No one has, thus far, studied these households from this angle. Mostly, the presence of various types of literature has been interpreted within the well-known scriptural nature of Manichaeism. In other words, the new documentary texts seem to confirm previous reconstructions. But is that really what we see? My focus is different and follows new approaches in the study of the texts from Nag Hammadi. Research on these documents has recently turned to a synchronic analysis, examining them as meaningful utterances read within one historical context. Instead of reconstructing hypothetical origins, this approach starts with the reader. It presupposes that texts are only copied when they fulfill a specific function in everyday life and the liturgy. Without such use, the act of copying or buying a text was simply too expensive.[33] This does not mean that the reader would have agreed with all aspects of the texts, but we can be sure that it reflected at least

---

[31] Compare with P.Kell.Copt. 56.18, the miniature codex with the amulet against a snake bite (P.Kell.Copt. 56), which contains a number of empty pages which ends with the title (?) ⲧ̣ⲉⲙ̣ⲣⲟⲥⲉⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲁ̄ⲃ[…..], "the prayer of Ab(raham?)," while the ⲉⲩⲭⲏ is received *from* Pebo in P.Kell.Copt. 66. ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ̣ⲩⲭⲏ ⲁ̣[ⲃⲁⲗ] ϩ̣ⲓⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲁ̣ⲥⲁⲛ [ⲡ]ⲉⲃⲟ P.Kell.Copt. 66.7-8. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT*2, 55.

[32] Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 257.

[33] I. S. Gilhus, "Contextualizing the Present, Manipulating the Past: Codex II from Nag Hammadi and the Challenge of Circumventing Canonicity," in *Canon and Canonicity: The Formation and Use of Scripture*, ed. E. Thomassen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010), 96.

something of their interests. They spent time and resources on the production of the texts, or they paid someone else to do it for them, so their content must have appealed to them.[34] In contrast to the unprovenanced Nag Hammadi documents, the find location of the Manichaean texts from Kellis enables an in-context analysis of the literary papyri among documentary material.[35] We are thus in the fortunate position to relate the reading and writing conditions of the previous section to the manuscripts and textual fragments found at the same site.

9.3.1 On the Bookshelves

Now, what did Kellites read? Apart from the book titles mentioned in the documentary letters, there are several papyri, codices, and wooden tablets that have been published as so-called "literary texts."[36] The division of the Kellis texts into literary and documentary texts is arbitrary, as some of the personal letters show indications of an epistolary style closely related to Manichaean scriptures (see Chapters 4 and 5). We have to remind ourselves that these personal letters and literary texts were found together, among the debris of the fourth-century houses. Although we cannot prove with certainty that the Kellites copied these texts, I will take for granted that they were read by some members of the community. The corresponding terminology and self-designators in the letters of Makarios, Pamour III, and their relatives shows their familiarity with these Manichaean texts.

Table 17 lists the texts found in the vicinity of Houses 1–3, some on fragments of papyrus, others on wooden boards. Some of these texts may have been directly related to Manichaean ritual practices, while others had an administrative function or belonged to an entirely different repertoire, such as the wooden codex containing three orations of Isocrates. What can these documents tell us about local reading practices?

---

[34] Similar argument made for NHC in H. Lundhaug, "The Nag Hammadi Codices in the Complex World of 4th- and 5th-Cent. Egypt," in *Beyond Conflicts. Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, ed. L. Arcari (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 344; Contra Lieu, "Self-Identity of the Manichaeans," 227, the Kellites read Paul's *Letter to the Romans*, but this does not make them Christians. On the cost of book manufacturing, see R. S. Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 50-69.

[35] As Willy Clarysse pointed out, the connection between literary and documentary papyri is often very superficial and accidental, even when they are found together. W. Clarysse, "Literary Papyri in Documentary "Archives," in *Egypt and the Hellenistic World*, ed. E. van 't Dack, P. van Dessel, and W. van Gucht (Leuven: Peeters, 1983), 47. An excellent example of a contextual analysis of a New Testament fragment, in the archive of an otherwise unmarked flax-merchant, is found in Luijendijk, "A New Testament Papyrus and Its Owner," 569-90. The analysis of a psalm fragment from Karanis likewise draws on prosopographical information and archaeology. G. Schwendner, "A Fragmentary Psalter from Karanis and Its Context," in *Jewish and Christian Scripture as Artifact and Canon*, ed. C. A. Evans and D. Zacharias (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 117-36.

[36] Mostly published in KLT1 and KLT2. See Appendix 2 for a full list of documents and publications.

Document	Description
T.Kell.Copt. 1	Doctrinal text (*Kephalaia* type?) probably brief catechism.
P.Kell.Copt. 5	Fragment. Astrological? *Kephalaia*?
P.Kell.Copt. 8	Doctrinal text (shares terminology with *Kephalaia*).
P.Kell.Copt. 9	Hebrews 12:4–13.
P.Kell.Gr. 97 A1	Apocryphal compilation based on material from *Acts of John.*
P.Kell.Copt. 6.	Romans 2:6–29.
P.Kell.Gr. 93	An invocation (?) with a part of Sethian literature (?).
P.Kell.Copt. 53	Canonical (?) *Epistle(s)* of Mani.
P.Kell.Copt. 54	Canonical (?) scripture, *Epistle(s)* of Mani (?).
P.Kell.Gr. 95	Isocrates codex, including *Ad Demonicum, Ad Nicoclem*, and a large part of the *Nicocles* (on wooden tablets).

Table 17: List of literary texts, excluding the liturgical Manichaean texts (Psalms and Prayers).

The texts from Table 17 can be divided into three broad categories: (1) Manichaean texts; (2) biblical or apocryphal texts; and (3) Classical texts. The last category of Classical texts stands out. There is no apparent reason to connect the Isocrates codex with Manichaeans, apart from its find location in House 2. The codex contains three orations attributed to Isocrates, a fourth-century BCE Athenian rhetor whose orations belonged to the curriculum of Classical rhetorical education. Presumably, it was owned and copied by a local schoolmaster, as a fragment of Demosthenes's *De Corona* has also been found.[37] The schoolmaster added simple explanations of words in the margins of the page, explaining the difficult words to his students or elaborating on specific phrases.[38] The educational setting is also reflected in other texts, some of which were written on similar wooden boards. Among these were texts with fragments of the work of Homer and a parody of Homer.[39] The scattered material remains—several pens, ostraka, and fragments from inscribed boards—make clear that a teacher once used one of the shrines in the temple area to teach Classical literature and rhetoric.[40] A copy of Demosthenes's oration on the crown (*De Corona*, TM642081) was also found in the temple area, which suggests that the orations of Isocrates may have belonged to the same school, but they were found in House 2.

One explanation for this find location, by Jean Daniel Dubois, suggests a relation with Ammonios the schoolteacher. Ammonios's son wrote a letter to the *logistes* (P.Kell.Gr. 69), which has been found in House 3.[41] Prosopographical connections with either Pamour I (P.Kell.Gr. 31, dated in 306 CE) or Philammon I (P.Kell.Gr. 65) bring this schoolteacher closer to the Manichaeans. Dubois takes this a step further by suggesting that if Ammonios is to be

[37] K. A. Worp and A. Rijksbaron, eds., *The Kellis Isocrates Codex: (P. Kell. III Gr.95)* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997), 30-31; K. A. Worp, "A New Demosthenes Fragment from Kellis." *Symbolae Osloenses* 89, no. 1 (2015): 148-55.

[38] Worp and Rijksbaron, *The Kellis Isocrates Codex*, 28-29, 56-7.

[39] Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 232.

[40] Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis," 232.

[41] Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis," 23-24. I agree with his rejection of the interpretation of the teacher as a member of the Manichaean hierarchy, but disagree with his suggestion that P.Kell.Gr. 69 alludes to almsgiving.

identified with Ammon, in the Coptic letters, he could have belonged to the immediate circle of acquaintances of Makarios (P.Kell.Copt. 21, 22, and 37). Even without this last identification, the connections between neighbors are real enough.[42] A Coptic writing exercise (P.Kell.Copt. 10) and a school exercise (P.Kell.Gr. 90) have been found at Houses 1 and 3, both on reused wooden boards. The material evidence for carpentry in House 2, moreover, suggests that one of the neighbors was responsible for the production of the wooden tablets of the Isocrates codex (see Chapter 3). How would these neighbors have interacted with the Manichaeans? Would Manichaean scribes have received their education solely within their Manichaean network or is it more probable that they were also taught at a local school, like the one found in Trimithis?[43] Makarios's letter to Matthaios suggests that Matthaios had to practice his handwriting in absence of his father, either with another teacher, or on his own. The comparative material on third- and fourth-century Christian education suggests that Classical education was still the norm for a long time, before it was supplemented with group-specific educational practices.[44] Matthaios and other Kellites may therefore have been educated locally, before continuing their education with specific Christian or Manichaean texts.

The second subset of texts found in Kellis consists of biblical and apocryphal texts. The presence of biblical fragments is hardly a surprise, as Manichaeans extensively used Christian texts in their own works. The *Kephalaia*, the *Cologne Mani Codex*, the Psalmbook, and the *Homilies* all include citations of Christian books, as well as allusions to the books of

---

[42] Dubois's interpretations, however, cannot be followed in all details. Father Ammonios cannot be identified with the Ammonios in the generation of Makarios (who was active in the 350s CE), if the son Petechon was active in at the beginnings of the fourth century (306 CE). If we identify the Ammon in the Coptic letters with the father figure Ammonios the teacher in P.Kell.Gr. 69, we will have to place him in the second half of the fourth century. In that case, the prosopographical relation between Petechon and the Pamour family in the early fourth century cannot be identified with the son Petechon in P.Kell.Gr. 69. Contra Dubois, "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis," 23; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 21.

[43] Cribiore, Davoli, and Ratzan, "A Teacher's Dipinto from Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis)," 179-91.

[44] There exists a number of Greek didactical texts with a traditional religious background that have been used for educational purposes in a Christian setting. Monks used Homer to practice their writing and various composite schoolbooks contained both Christian and traditional texts. S. Bucking, "Christian Educational Texts from Egypt: A Preliminary Inventory," in *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin 1995*, ed. B. Kramer (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1997), 132-38. Frankfurter, likewise, points to a shared repertoire in which the Christian texts stood next to traditional religious texts. Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 189-97. More on Christian education in M. R. Hauge and A. W. Pitt, eds., *Ancient Education and Early Christianity* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016). Despite the challenge, traditional religious literature was widely used by Christians. K. O. Sandnes, *The Challenge of Homer: School, Pagan Poets and Early Christianity* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2009). Blumell states that "it is probably not until the fifth or more likely the sixth century that actual "Christian schools" first began to arise." Blumell, *Lettered Christians*, 194: Cf. J. H. F. Dijkstra, "A World Full of the Word: The Biblical Learning of Dioscorus," in *Learned Antiquity: Scholarship and Society in the Near-East, the Greco-Roman World, and the Early Medieval West*, ed. A. A. MacDonald, M. W. Twomey, and G. J. Reinink (Leuven: Brepols, 2003), 135-46.

the Septuagint.[45] This engagement with Christian texts is visible in the letter to Eirene (P.Kell.Copt. 32), in which the author played with several allusions to the gospel of Matthew. The intertextual relation with New Testament texts probably started with Mani's self-understanding as the "Apostle of Jesus Christ," a phrase that is clearly modeled after the Pauline letters in the New Testament.[46] Paul is listed in the genealogy of Apostles of Light in the *Kephalaia* (1 Keph. 1 11.26–14.1) as one of the last of the righteous before the corruption of the original message of Light.

The fragment of the *Letter to the Romans* found at Kellis contains a section with Pauline polemic against the Jews and the Jewish law, a message that would have struck a chord with Manichaean readers.[47] Its find location in room 6 of House 3, right beside several Manichaean documents (Mani's *Epistles* for example), points to a Manichaean readership. As the linguistic variations fall outside those labeled as "L" (see Chapter 5), this Pauline fragment may have derived from outside the oasis or was copied from a Sahidic model.[48]

Another biblical fragment is a piece of (the *Letter to the) Hebrews*. This is harder to place in a Manichaean context, although the letter was usually ascribed to Paul in antiquity. It contains significant variants in the text and the language is more closely related to the L-variations.[49] The papyrus does not resemble a normal codex leaf, according to the editor, which may suggest it was part of an exercise instead of a full codex.[50] The passage itself contains an admonition, not dissimilar to the letter Matthaios received, to be strong and endure hardship because this is how God trains his children. His divine discipline and chastisement is to be embraced for it will bring healing (Hebr. 12: 4–13). The presence of these two letters attributed to Paul explains Makarios's suggestion to his son to copy "the *Apostolos*" ([ⲡⲁⲡ]ⲟⲥⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲗⲟⲥ P.Kell.Copt. 19.15–16).[51]

A third and fourth manuscript fragment are labeled apocryphal for convenience's sake, but share the Ancient Christian literary traditions. One piece shows affiliations to the themes and topics of the *Acts of John* (P.Kell.Gr. 97), while the other has been labeled a Sethian invocation (P.Kell.Gr. 93). The former, found in House 3, was thought to be an independent, earlier edition of the Eucharistic prayers, which later on became part of the *Acts*

---

[45] The CMC for example, quotes from Gal. 1:1, 11-12 and 2 Cor. 12:1-5 directly (CMC 60-62). Citations and allusions to the Hebrew Bible/Septuagint are discussed in Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition.* I do, however, wonder to what extent these passages would have connoted Jewishness instead of Christianness.

[46] This is cited in the *Epistula fundamenti*, Augustine, *Fund.*, 6; in the CMC 66.4-5; and in a Middle Persian version of the opening of the Living Gospel and the Seal letter as "Mani, the apostle of Jesus Aryāmān." Sundermann, "Christianity V. Christ in Manicheism." Whether or not these texts actually convey Mani's own self-understanding is less relevant here than their shared claim that he did so.

[47] Gardner, *KLT1*, 90.

[48] Gardner, *KLT1*, 81.

[49] Gardner, *KLT1*, 100.

[50] Gardner, *KLT1*, 100.

[51] Paul is also cited in one of the abbreviated psalms: "listen also to Paul" which is followed by the first word of a new line "the proclaimer." This must have meant simply "Paul, the evangelist." ϩⲱⲧⲙ ϩⲱϥ ⲉⲡⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲡⲣⲉϥⲧⲁϣⲉⲁⲉⲓϣ T.Kell.Copt. 2, text A2 36-37.

of John.[52] More recently, this view has been contested, as some of the liturgical formulas seem to be more developed in this version of the text, in which most narrative elements have been eliminated. A Manichaean editor could have developed certain formulas and slightly adjusted the narrative, but the fragments do not really contain significant Manichaean interpolations, apart from mentioning the "holy church."[53] The apparent familiarity with the traditions behind the *Acts of John* confirms earlier observations about the Manichaean tradition. According to their Christian opponents, Manichaeans cited the apocryphal *Acts of the Apostles* extensively. Augustine claimed that they "read the apocryphal scriptures, which they call the most uncorrupted."[54] In contrast to these polemical claims, authentic Manichaean texts rarely cite the apocryphal acts. The main exceptions are three Coptic psalms (2 PsB. 141.1–143.32, 179.13–181.12 and 192.5–193.3). These psalms belong to the Psalms of the Wanderers (*Psalmoi Sarakoton*) and the Psalms of Herakleides, which were both sung antiphonally during the liturgy, in the presence of the catechumens. Gábor Kósa therefore concludes that

> it seems that while Manichaean elects were using "pure Manichaean" material among themselves, auditors were offered some mixture, a sort of consciously constructed syncretism. Thus there is a certain degree of probability that the AAA [MB: Apocryphal *Acts of the Apostles*] figures were consciously inserted into these hymns in order to make certain concepts, which were important for the Manichaean community (endurance, vigilance, virginity), more attractive for the auditors who might have had a (not necessarily distant) Christian past.[55]

If Kósa is correct and the apocrypha were read to propagate Manichaean values for the outside world, the fragment found at Kellis would provide evidence for one of the intermediate steps during which this material was edited for Manichaean purposes.[56] Kósa is

---

[52] Gardner, *KLT2*, 96-97; cf. G. Jenkins, "Papyrus 1 from Kellis. A Greek Text with Affinities to the Acts of John," in *The Apocryphal Acts of John*, ed. J. N. Bremmer (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1995), 197-230.

[53] P. J. Lalleman, *The Acts of John* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 8n16. Specifically, the phrase "in the holy church and in the holy…" seems to have been added. O. Zwierlein, "Die Datierung der Acta Iohannis und der Papyrus Kellis Gr. Fragm. A.I," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 174 (2010): 62-84.

[54] Augustine, *Adim.* XVII.2, cited in Kosa, "The Protagonist-Catalogues," 114. According to Kevin Coyle's summary, Manichaeans treasured the apocryphal acts because of "the importance they ascribed to the apostle figure, to the ideal of asceticism (especially continence), to the fortitude of the Acts' protagonists in the face of suffering, to some liturgical themes, or to the notes of partnership with a heavenly companion, and of missionary endeavour." Coyle, "The Gospel of Thomas in Manichaeism," 125-26, including extensive references to secondary literature which should be consulted.

[55] Kosa, "The Protagonist-Catalogues," 113.

[56] I think, however, that there is not enough evidence to conclude that Manichaean elect concealed parts of their beliefs, even though they may have strategically presented certain elements first (see below). Secrecy and concealment is, however, a topic that deserves further study. There are two streams of interpretation. One tradition points to the missionary strategies of the Manichaeans and suggests there was no actual concealment, only knowledge-differentiation between elect and catechumens. The second tradition leans on the accusations of Christian polemicists and suggests that concealment was part of the missionary strategy. Stroumsa, *Hidden Wisdom*, 6; A. F. de Jong, "Secrecy I: Antiquity," in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western*

spot on with his analysis of the purpose of the exemplary figures in the Coptic Manichaean psalms. Following Peter Nagel, he points out that the psalms contain a different account of John's death and include other elements of Aristobula and Drusiane's suffering that are absent from the *Acts of John*.[57] The textual traditions behind the Acts of John were thus adapted and changed to support a Manichaean discourse of suffering and persecution.[58]

The so-called Sethian invocation from Kellis (P.Kell.Gr. 93), on a small piece of papyrus, may not have been Sethian, nor an invocation. It is associated with "Sethian" literature on the basis of the word *autogenes* (αὐτογένους, line 10), which is central to gnostic literature conventionally brought together under the label of "Sethianism." The connection is, however, fragile, because of the fragmentary nature of the piece.[59] This is unfortunate, because at least two scholars have recently explored the possibility of a Manichaean influence, or transmission, of some of the documents from Nag Hammadi.[60] P.Kell.Gr. 93 looks like a piece of a literary papyrus text, but it is too small to draw firm conclusions about the content of this text, let alone the engagement of Manichaeans with certain types of gnostic literature.

The third subset of text fragments is directly related to Manichaeism. The fragments of the psalms and prayers have been discussed in Chapter 7, so I will focus on the doctrinal texts. These so-called "doctrinal" Manichaean texts confirm our earlier observations about psalm fragments: the Manichaeans in Kellis not only produced manuscripts in order to send them to the Nile valley (see below), but kept them for internal usage as well.

Among these texts are fragments of multiple epistles of Mani (P.Kell.Copt. 53 and maybe 54), some of which could be identified with the "enemy letter" and the "letter of the ten words," or the "sickness letter," known from the list in the *Fihrist*.[61] It is noteworthy that these letters do not share the systematic character of the *Kephalaia*, but are "pastoral rather than catechetical."[62] The pastoral tone, however, is not entirely devoid of conflict, as a rather lengthy section deals with people who seek to discredit individual Manichaeans before Mani. These accusations were "proclaimed in envy," according to the letter, and those who

---

Esotericism, ed. W. Hanegraaff, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1052b; Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9; Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof*, 198.

[57] Kosa, "The Protagonist-Catalogues," 112-3; Nagel, "Die apokryphen Apostelakten," 168.

[58] A similar argument could be made about the commemoration of Drusiana's death (Acts of John, 72 and 85) and Manichaean commemoration rituals, as observed by A. Böhlig, "Neue Kephalaia des Mani," in *Mysterion und Wahrheit: gesammelte Beiträge zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte*, ed. A. Böhlig (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 259. On the other hand, it would be more surprising if these similarities were entirely absent. For the Manichaean discourse of suffering, see Brand, "In the Footsteps of the Apostles of Light."

[59] Gardner, *KLT1*, 142.

[60] T. Pettipiece, "Towards a Manichaean Reading of the Nag Hammadi Codices," *Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies* 3-4 (2012): 43-54. R. Falkenberg, "What Has Nag Hammadi to Do with Medinet Madi? The Case of Eugnostos and Manichaeism," in *The Nag Hammadi Codices and Late Antique Egypt*, ed. H. Lundhaug and L. Jenott (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 261-86.

[61] Reconstructions in Gardner, *KLT2*, 74-75 and 75-77.

[62] Gardner, *KLT2*, 13.

uttered them "did neither read it nor pronounce it… nor did they write these letters."[63] An earlier section of the letter employed the metaphor of an athlete, a priest, and a farmer to remind the readers to endure the foolishness of their brothers, to serve them, and to bring their fruits to their master (P.Kell.Copt. 53, 49.1425). These sections work well within a Manichaean context of almsgiving and the possibility of tensions between elect and catechumens within the community.

Since we are still awaiting the publication of a collection of Mani's *Epistles* from Medinet Madi, the discovery of these letters in Kellis will further enhance our knowledge of Mani's style of writing and the role of these *Epistles* in the development of the Manichaean tradition.[64] The presence of these texts indicates the strength of their connections to the worldwide Manichaean tradition. Just like the *Prayer of the Emanations* (the daily prayers, see section 7.5.2), these texts show how these Kellites were connected to a transregional Manichaean tradition far beyond the Egyptian regional sphere.

In this regard, it is interesting to note the presence of another letter (P.Kell.Copt. 54) that resembles Mani's *Epistles*.[65] Although the editors consider this letter not one of the official letters of Mani, its theme connects closely to the "letter of Abā, love," mentioned in the *Fihrist*, or the *Kephalaia* chapter "concerning love."[66] If this letter is indeed a reworking of a similar theme on the basis of either texts like the *Kephalaia* or the letters of Mani, it provides us with an interesting secondary development in the production of Manichaean books. There are several known apocryphal letters of Mani, all of which stem from polemical situations in which theological opponents were associated with Manichaeism or Mani was presented as a supporter of a specific theological development.[67] As Baker-Brian concludes: "[T]he effort that went into producing epistolary forgeries bearing Mani's name is a clear indication of the formidable reputation that Mani had established for himself as one of the most prolific letter writers in Late Antiquity."[68] P.Kell.Copt. 54, however, lacked the same polemical content. Rather, it starts with a previously unknown logion of "the saviour"—presumably Jesus—concerning love and eternal redemption.

In terms of secondary developments, it may therefore be more interesting to focus on the short doctrinal text on a small wooden board measuring 74 by 55 mm (T.Kell.Copt. 1). This miniature document contains a highly structured exposé on the nature of "the father." Gardner considers it a "brief catechism" that played a role in the didactic practices of

---

[63] ⲛ̈ⲧⲁⲩⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲩ [ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩ]ⲫⲑⲟⲛⲟⲥ and ⲉ̣[ⲙ]ⲡ̣ⲟⲩⲁ̣[ϣ]ⲥ̀ ⲉⲙⲡⲟⲩⲧⲉ[ⲩⲁⲥ….] ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ ⲉ̣[ⲙ]ⲡⲟⲩⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ ⲛ̈ⲉⲡⲓ[ⲥⲧⲟⲗⲁⲩⲉ] P.Kell.Copt. 53, 62.13-14 and 2-3.

[64] Gardner, " Archaeology of Manichaean Identity," 147-58.

[65] Gardner, *KLT2*, 85.

[66] Gardner, *KLT2*, 85. Fihrist, translation in B. Dodge, ed. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 799.

[67] Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 90. The fifth-century letters are discussed in Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia*, 109-12. The letter to Menoch is discussed in Harrison and BeDuhn, "The Authenticity and Doctrine of (Ps.?) Mani's Letter to Menoch," 128-72. The letter of Mani to Mar Ammo, among an eastern schismatic Manichaean movement is translated in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 259-60. Discussed in M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 50.

[68] Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism*, 90.

Manichaeans.[69] Documents like these would "ensure that doctrinal unity which is so evident across the Manichaean world. It is probable that Mani himself initiated the use of memory aids in his teaching. In particular, the use of numerical sequences and structures seems to be embedded in the most fundamental strata of Manichaean doctrine."[70] A plausible interpretation is to locate T.Kell.Copt. 1 in the composition process of the *Kephalaia*. The organization of the *Kephalaia of the Teacher* and the *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani* suggests that independent lectures, homilies, and narratives were combined and systematized into one compilation. T.Kell.Copt. 1 dates back to the period before the extant copy of the *Kephalaia* (the manuscript is from the early fifth century), but adheres to the fivefold scheme that is so characteristic for the *Kephalaia of the Teacher*. The father in this instance is not the Father of Greatness, but the Third Ambassador, one of the beings from the third emanation, whose work is also central in several *Kephalaia* chapters (including 1 Keph. 20, 34, 46, 55, and 66). The same is true for P.Kell.Copt. 8, a poorly preserved text on a single codex leaf, which resembles the theme of 1 Keph. 159.[71] P.Kell.Copt. 5 may have derived from a similar compilation, but is too fragmentary to identify. Such short summaries with organized sections of Mani's lectures may have been "proto-*Kephalaia*" that were reworked into the longer variant(s) of the *Kephalaia* as found at Medinet Madi.[72]

Besides locating these texts in the development of the Manichaean tradition, Gardner stresses the missionary nature of these textual products. They show the "evangelical technique of the Manichaean community," which would only gradually introduce Manichaean elements that were less similar to Christianity. In fact, he states "catechumens would then be slowly drawn into the community and gradually introduced to the higher knowledge of Mani's revelation."[73] In another publication, Gardner and Lieu suggest that the Kellis letters show little interest in the Manichaean cosmology, while the other Kellis texts show "how carefully the hierarchy attempted to draw adherents further into the church and the knowledge of truth."[74] Curiously, T.Kell.Copt. 1 and P.Kell.Copt. 8 seem to indicate the exact opposite: they show that knowledge of the cosmological system was available, even though it played less of a role in the personal letters. The illegible lines on the backside of T.Kell.Copt. 1, moreover, suggest that the text was used in the context of the other school exercises, maybe even for boys like Matthaios. [75] As we will see in section 9.4, catechumens

---

[69] Gardner, *KLT1*, 2. Note the allusion to Phil. 2:7, discussed in Pedersen et al., *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition*, 11.

[70] Gardner, *KLT1*, 4.

[71] Gardner, *KLT1*, 96-7, where Gardner also points to a parallel in a Parthian text. The Parthian text is translated in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 230-1, text E. The publication of Funk's edition of 1 Keph. 159 has not brought to light more similarities, but confirms Gardner's analysis that "they are not the same; but they do share certain terminology."

[72] Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction*, 12.

[73] Both citations are from Gardner, *KLT1*, 4.

[74] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9. Here they also explain that they see the *Kephalaia* as a "handbook for the elect."

[75] Many of the psalm-fragments have been interepted as part of scribal exercises as well. Gardner, *KLT2*, 6.

were involved in scribal activities, which means that at least some of these Kellites had a more profound knowledge of Manichaean doctrine than Gardner and Lieu held possible.

In sum, although this initial description of the various types of documents is only a preliminary overview, it gives an impression of the textuality and literacy of the Manichaean community in Kellis. The texts they read were not limited to biblical or Manichaean scriptures, but derived from a broader range of thematically related texts.

9.3.2 The Syriac Connection

Another set of documents that has not yet received the full attention it deserves consists of the documents with Syriac writing. Table 18 lists all the documents found in Kellis that have (traces of) Syriac writing. Mostly, this is fragmentary material: a faint line of Syriac above the first line of a Coptic document (P.Kell.Copt. 57) or traces on the back of a writing exercise (P.Kell.Copt. 10). Nowhere it suggests that Syriac was central to the textual practices of Kellis. The most noteworthy fragments are two bilingual word lists or exercises in which Syriac phrases are matched with a Coptic equivalent (T.Kell.Syr/Copt. 1 and 2).

Document	Location and description
P.Kell.Syr. 2	(Structure D/8), extremely fragmentary.
P.Kell.Copt. 10	(House 1) traces on the back of a writing exercise with Coptic alphabet.
P.Kell.Copt. 57	(House 3) reused text with traces of Syriac above the first line.
T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 1 and 2	(House 3) Wordlists or writing exercise (?) with doctrinal phrases.
P.Kell.Syr. 1	(House 3) Multiple fragments.
P.Kell.Syr./Gr. 1	(House 3) Single codex leaf, Greek and Syriac on parchment.
P.Kell.Gr. 67	(House 3) Syriac address.

Table 18: List of document with Syriac writing.

The presence of Syriac writing in Kellis suggests a connection to Syria and Mesopotamia, the traditional Manichaean homeland. It is significant that some other Syriac texts from Egypt also appear to have had Manichaean content.[76] This linguistic connection between the Egyptian desert and Mesopotamia was, however, not a movement from an organized religious center to a more peripheral region, but one from Kellis toward a historical narrative. The Syriac fragments from the village are not the Manichaean books that missionaries like Adda brought with them to the Roman Empire, but represent the opposite movement of Egyptian scribes attempting to learn Syriac. This is visible in the two bilingual wooden boards (T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 1 and 2). Majella Franzmann has shown that in both cases, the Syriac was written first and the Coptic added thereafter, probably as a translation exercise.[77] A variety of handwriting is visible, so multiple people may have worked on these

[76] But see the careful considerations of Pedersen with regard to these fragments. Although he considers them Manichaean, most of these fragments contain too little text to offer more than a "tentative" interpretation. Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac,* 187-244.

[77] M. Franzmann, "The Syriac-Coptic Bilinguals from Ismant Al-Kharab," in *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della richerca*, ed. L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 117. The edition of the Syriac texts in the first volume of the Coptic Documentary Texts should be consulted, as it replaces the edition in

tablets. The translations contain a number of mistakes in which the Coptic scribe was either sloppy or otherwise failed in his translation. From these mistakes, Franzmann concludes that the community was not "truly bilingual" in Syriac and Coptic.[78] Instead of Syriac writers attempting to translate their work into the local language, these documents attest to the process of Coptic writers attempting to learn Syriac.

Figure 16: Syrca/Coptic bilingual glossary T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 2. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope).

The documentary letters mention two individuals with Syriac skills. Brother Ision was a Manichaean lector known to Apa Lysimachos (P.Kell.Gr.67), who noted that Ision had become a "user of Greek and a Syriac reader."[79] The fact that Lysimachos signed his own name in Syriac on the back of the letter indicates that he was also able to read and write in

the first volume of Literary Texts. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 344-64. On the use of the Syriac language and the so-called "Manichaean script," see Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 3-4, 113-20, 132-37. Page 26-7 lists the Kellis finds, which are excluded from their study.

[78] Franzmann, "The Syriac-Coptic Bilinguals from Ismant Al-Kharab," 120.

[79] Ἑλληνιστὴς γὰρ γέγονεν καὶ ἀναγνώστης συρ̣ι̣α̣ṭτικός P.Kell.Gr. 67.20-21, translation in Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 224 on the Syriac address containing the name of Lysimachos. Cf. G. Ioannidou, "A Note on συναγτικός," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 118 (1997): 162.

Syriac. Hence, at least one of the elect was able to write the language.[80] Would he have taught Syriac to local scribes when he visited the oasis?

Several school exercises have been found in the village. P.Kell.Copt. 10, found in House 1, stands out because it contains an exercise with the Egyptian letters of the Coptic alphabet, while other exercises among the temple debris were Greek only.[81] Ammonios the schoolteacher from House 3 may have worked with some of these exercises, but the traces of Syriac writing on the back of P.Kell.Copt. 10 point to Manichaeans. This Manichaean nature is most evident in the bilingual word lists of P.Kell.Syr./Copt. 1 and 2, which contain expressions and phrases known from Manichaean scripture.[82] These wooden tablets were produced locally, with coarse Coptic handwriting, different from the translators who may have worked with Greek-Syriac bilingual texts (P.Kell.Syr./Gr.1, which may have derived from elsewhere in Egypt). The reused wooden tablet P.Kell.Copt. 57 points in the same direction, as traces of Syriac were preserved above the first line, but the tablet was reused for new purposes.

The awareness in Kellis of Syriac traditions behind Manichaean texts does not necessarily mean that the authors were involved in a scribal mission, as most of the translation work was done in an earlier stage, either at the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century, when Manichaeans first entered Egypt.[83]

In relation to these Syriac documents, we should consider the relation with Ision the reader. The initial translation of the postscript to this letter by Apa Lysimachos was: "Send a well-proportioned and nicely executed ten-page notebook for your brother Ision. For he has become a user of Greek and a comprehensive reader."[84] The last two words were reinterpreted by Gardner as "Syriac reader" (ἀναγνώστης ϣⲩⲣⲓⲁ̣ⲧⲓⲕός instead of the initial reading ἀναγνώστης συναγτικός). The adjective Syriac (ϣⲩⲣⲓⲁ̣ⲧⲓⲕός) indicates that Ision was not only the lector in a Manichaean church, but also the lector for specific Syriac texts. Gardner suggests that here we have evidence that "the community in their first century in Egypt found real value in maintaining Syriac usage in church, and one can well imagine that certain central texts such as (e.g.) Mani's *Living Gospel* or *Letter of the Seal* might have first

[80] Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 224. In contrast to W. B. Oerter, I do not think this means that Syriac was a living language in Kellis. Oerter, "Bedeutung der Manichaica aus Kellis," 110.

[81] These include the ostraka 153-8, published in Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*, 134-37. Only ostrakon 158 is from House 4, but this may have been a calculation with a mistake instead of a school exercise. Other school texts have been published in Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis." On miniature codices, see H. Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church. A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 235-6; C. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 12.

[82] Pedersen also points to parallels between phrases in the other Syriac Manichaean texts from Egypt and the bilingual word-lists from Kellis. Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 197-8, 204-5, and 236.

[83] Gardner, *KLT1*, vii; Franzmann, "The Syriac-Coptic Bilinguals," 121-22. Johnson argues that Greek should not be underrepresented in this reconstruction. S. F. Johnson, "Introduction: The Social Presence of Greek in Eastern Christianity, 200-1200 CE," in *Languages and Cultures of Eastern Christianity: Greek*, ed. S. F. Johnson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 37-40.

[84] Πινακίδιον εὔμετρον καὶ ἀστῖον δέκα πτυχῶν πέμψον τῷ ἀδελφῷσου ᾽Ισίωνι. ᾽Ελληνιστὴς γὰρ γέγονεν καὶ ἀναγνώστης συναγτικός P.Kell.Gr. 67.17-21, the Greek is cited from Worp's edition.

been read in Syriac before receiving a vernacular translation and exposition."[85] Unfortunately, there is no evidence for the use of Syriac in Manichaean liturgical settings in the fourth century, which would allow for cross-cultural comparison. The suggestion that Syriac continued for a while as the liturgical language of Manichaeans is fascinating, as it stands in contrast to the claims in the *Kephalaia* that Manichaeism was a vernacular movement (1 Keph. 151).[86] Pedersen tentatively suggests that some of the Syriac fragments from Egypt (the so-called "Berlin fragments") contain Mani's own work, as the transmitted phrases have parallels in special expressions only known from texts directly attributed to Mani.[87] If this is true, we may have a priceless clue in the Kellis texts about the role of Syriac in the Manichaean liturgy. Could it be possible that some of the readings in Manichaean gatherings were read in Syriac by specially trained readers? If so, it would have stood out as an exceptional practice. A reading in an unfamiliar language tapped into a specific Manichaean groupness that was not encountered elsewhere in the village. It would have been quite an experience for most of the audience, but more profoundly, it would have set this type of writing apart from the other liturgical documents they used.

The use of Syriac is highly marked, more than the use of Coptic (see Chapter 5). This cannot have been anything other than a specific Manichaean trait, connecting the community in the desert with their Mesopotamian heritage. Even though these documents were written by Coptic scribes attempting to master Syriac, this choice was highly group-specific and is, in fact, almost unprecedented in the papyri.[88]

9.3.3 Materiality: The Use of the Codex and Wooden Tablets

Traditionally, the rise of the codex is associated with Christianity. Christians seem to have played a pioneering role, even though they were not the only ones embracing this innovation.[89] Manichaeans participated in this transition and used codices for various types of texts. This may have been due to practical reasons: the codex was cheaper to produce (both sides of the page could be used for writing), easier to manipulate (as there was no need to unroll it), portable, and allowed for a relative freedom to quote specific passages and

---

[85] Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 227. This reconstruction is accepted in Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 12. Earlier discussions of the phrase ἀναγνώστης are included in A. Jördens, "Buchbesprechung Worp, Greek Papyri from Kellis I," *Münstersche Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte* 17, no. 1 (1998): 130; Ioannidou, "A Note on συναγτικός," 162.

[86] It has been suggested that the emphasis on the use of Syriac gave way, with the growing diffusion of the religion, to the practice of translation, now formulated as a fundamental principle and attributed to Mani. Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 11.

[87] Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 204-10.

[88] The exception being, of course, the Syriac Manichaean fragments from Oxyrhynchus. Published in Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees*. Discussed in Blumell and Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus*, 337-40.

[89] G. G. Stroumsa, "Early Christianity: A Religion of the Book?," in *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World*, ed. M. Finkelberg and G. G. Stroumsa (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 153-73; Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt*, 70-90 is rather sceptical about the innovative role of Christians. See also R. Lane Fox, "Literacy and Power in Early Christianity," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. A. K. Bowman and G. Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 126-48.

move from text to text.[90] The technology and materiality of Christian and Manichaean books, thus, facilitated another type of religious practice. Many of the Kellis texts, therefore, were written in codex style, either on papyrus or on wood. Some of these specific factors made Manichaeism, just like Christianity, a "religion of the paperback," rather than a religion of the book.[91]

Noteworthy, also, are the miniature codices (smaller than 76 mm in height and width), which would have been even cheaper, easier to hide, convenient for transportation, but more difficult to produce.[92] The most well-known example is the Greek biography of Mani (CMC), which measures 45 mm by 35 mm and contains 192 pages: the smallest known manuscript from antiquity. Just like other miniature codices, it may have been made for private reading sessions with a rather small group, as the size would prevent any liturgical reading in a larger assembly.[93] Miniature codices from Kellis mostly include school exercises, amulets, and Manichaean texts. T.Kell.Copt. 1 is a small wooden tablet (74x54 mm) with a short doctrinal statement. P.Kell.Gr. 91 (42x57 mm) and 92 (46x74 mm, both on papyrus) have been interpreted as amulets because of their small size, but were probably Manichaean hymns of praise (just as P.Kell.Gr.94, which is slightly larger, 82x50 mm on wood). The documents do not show any trace of wear that would suggest they were carried as amulets.[94] Rather, I would suggest that they were either used as scribal exercises or belonged to the small codices that were read or sung in small group settings.

Another material aspect stands out: wood was frequently used for Manichaean texts. Appendix 3 lists at least thirty-seven documents written on wood. Some of these wooden objects were clearly cheap material that was easily available (P. Gascou 83), while others were tablets of a higher quality or even full wooden codices. The latter category includes the Isocrates codex (nine boards with text on both sides), the KAB (eight boards with text on both sides), and four miniature wooden codices with school exercises from the temple area (TM 91945, 48–50). Two other codices deserve special attention, as they contained Manichaean psalms. T.Kell.Copt. 2 consisted of five boards. Four boards were scrubbed clean to be used again and bound together with a fifth board, which still contained text. With the construction of the new codex, new additional holes were drilled and the top of the inscribed board was cut off.[95] The text consisted of about five or six Manichaean psalms and a commemoration hymn. These were found bound together with T.Kell.Copt. 3, which

---

[90] Stroumsa, "The Scriptural Movement of Late Antiquity and Christian Monasticism," 66.

[91] Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice*, 43. He aptly compares the massive use of television, radio and video equipment by evangelical Americans.

[92] Choat has categorized 57 Coptic miniature codices, of which 35 "sacred texts," "prayers" and "liturgy." Luijendijk adds another 9 with divinatory texts. Luijendijk, *Forbidden Oracles?*, 51-56.

[93] Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 235. The CMC shows no trace of typical amulet texts, which could be rather small. Other divinatory miniature codices were used in intimate gatherings at shrines or at home. Luijendijk, *Forbidden Oracles?*, 53 and 84-91 on church regulations concerning divination.

[94] Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian*, 232.

[95] Gardner, *KLT1*, 8-9 highlights that the text was thus originally part of another codex. J. L. Sharpe, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: The Kellis Codices," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XVII, no. 4 (1987): 192-97 only discusses the KAB and Isocrates codex.

consisted of seven boards cleaned for reuse. In both cases, it is most probable that Manichaean texts were part of another original and were scrubbed off for the reuse of the boards when they were bound in the new codex.[96] This may have been done after the Manichaeans disposed of the wooden boards or as part of a novel attempt to bring together an anthology of Manichaean psalms.

There were more documents written on wood, apart from those mentioned above, so the choice for this material needs to be explained.[97] Why was wood used for liturgical texts? Wood was mostly used for working copies, teachers' models, or business accounts, and sometimes for amulets and horoscopes. With a few exceptions, it was never used for personal letters that had to be carried by travelers.[98] The choice for this material was not only determined by the price (that papyrus could be expensive at times is visible in the complaints of P.Kell.Copt. 39.20, 78, and 79), but was also related to the function of the document in a liturgical setting. Unlike papyrus, a wooden tablet could be brought to gatherings and held steady without the risk of damaging it. It could be held up for multiple people to read (although the size of the handwriting seems to speak against this) or pinned on the wall for close reading or studying purposes.[99]

The liturgical function is most visible in the single legible page of T.Kell.Copt. 2, containing abbreviated psalms that could have helped the singers during the performance. Instead of providing the reader with the full texts of the psalms, only the first couple of words of each new verse line are given.[100] The lines break off, sometimes even in the middle

---

[96] Note that these wooden boards were not covered in a coating of wax, as earlier wooden tablets or notebooks. R. Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 153-4.

[97] Other Manichaean texts on wood include: T.Kell.Copt. 1 (a doctrinal text about the Father), T.Kell.Copt. 4, 5, 6, 7 (psalms), T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 1 and 2 (bilingual glossary).

[98] The exceptions are SB 24 15919, P.Kell.Copt. 42, 57 and 83. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 9. Cf. K. A. Worp, "A New Survey of Greek, Coptic, Demotic and Latin Tabulae Preserved from Classical Antiquity Version 1.0," *Trismegistos Online Publications* TOP 6 (2012). A large set of inscribed wooden boards have been found over the last years at Vindolanda (UK), the majority written before 102 CE. A. Sarri, *Material Aspects of Letter Writing in the Graeco-Roman World: C. 500 BC – C. AD 300* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 79-84. On the use of wood for amulets, see Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian*, 46-7; A. Delattre and K. A. Worp, "Trois tablettes de bois du musée de Leyde," *Chronique d'Egypte* 87, no. 2 (2012): 379-82. Generally, wood was more expensive than papyrus or ostraka. Wood had, however, several advantages which made it more useful for teachers' models: it could be passed around without extreme care, it could be displayed in a classroom or used for close range copying by students. R. Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 125.

[99] Despite the coarse hand of some of the texts on the tablets, I see no reason to consider all of these texts as part of scribal education. T.Kell.Copt. 1 has a pen exercise on the back. The glossaries had an educational function and one section of T.Kell.Copt. 2 contains sections written in a coarse hand. Gardner, *KLT1*, 9, 13. E. A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004), 91-2 treats recitation from tablets as an allegedly powerful symbolic action.

[100] The collection of various psalms in one anthology is not unprecedented, see the edition of M315 in I. Colditz, "Hymnen an Šād-Ohrmezd. Ein Beitrag zur frühen Geschichte der Dinawariya in Transoxanien,"

of a word, even though the sentence has hardly begun. I concur with Gardner that it functioned as an aid for the memory of those performing the psalm in a congregational setting[101] The text would have helped the singers to remember the beginning of each line correctly. It has a parallel in other wooden boards with similar anthologies of Greek or Coptic psalms and prayers from the sixth century. Such books of hours (sometimes called *horologion*) contained the psalms and prayers of the liturgy for official readers and singers.[102] The abbreviated psalms of T.Kell.Copt. 2 were not randomly added to the wooden board, but belonged to the performative setting of a communal gathering. Specifically, some of the psalms and prayers were devoted to the commemoration of the departed (see Chapter 8 with Table 15 presenting the content of this wooden codex).

9.4 Scribal Activity and Ritual Practice

Scribal activity and book production was of pivotal importance to Manichaeans. They consistently associated their religious community with the set of books associated with Mani, and attributed them with special powers. Outsiders also associated Mani with his books, as for example the Christian heresiological text known as the *Acta Archelai* described Mani polemically as carrying a "Babylonian book under his left arm."[103] Augustine, likewise, recalled how the Manichaeans of his youth had "many and huge books" as "dishes" in which they "served up the sun and the moon."[104] These Christian perceptions of Manichaean books are important because they concur with the Manichaean emphasis on books. They do not, however, always give us detailed information about the way and manner in which these books were used. While it seems logical to accept the hagiographical claims in which books were powerful missionary tools, we have to recognize that this is not evident in the Kellis letters. Scribal activity plays an important and marked role in Kellis, but it is never explicitly associated with mission or proselytizing. Instead, the Manichaeans of Kellis produced books also as a ritual practice.[105] These Manichaean texts functioned primarily as paraenetic texts for insiders, rather than having a protreptic function for outsiders. It involved catechumens in an act of worship, more than a strategic missionary production process in which informative texts were copied.[106] To appreciate this fully, we have to consider the internal

---

Altorientalische Forschungen 19, no. 2 (1992): 330-33. I have not found other parallels, in particular because in T.Kell.Copt. 2, text A2 provides only the beginning of every second complete line. Gardner, *KLT1*, 19.

[101] Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," 37. The alternative interpretation, cited on page 52, is that they were used in a scribal excercise.

[102] Worp's survey of wooden tablets includes other liturgical compositions, for example, P.488 Yale (sixth century CE), which starts with a prayer and continues with several psalms and a doxology. H. Quecke, "Erhebet euch, Kinder des Lichtes!," *Le Muséon* 76 (1963): 27-45. In general on the Coptic daily liturgical prayers, see G. W. Woolfenden, *Daily Liturgical Prayer. Origins and Theology* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 171-84.

[103] Hegemonius, *AA,* 14.2-3; Iricinschi, "Manichaean Writings and Religious Propaganda," 266-67.

[104] Augustine, *Conf.* III 6.10, cited and discussed in van Oort, "Augustine and the Books of the Manichaeans," 188-99.

[105] Iricinschi, "Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books," 158.

[106] The difficult distinction between protreptic and paraenetic texts is discussed in A. Kotzé, "Protreptic, Paraenetic and Augustine's *Confessions*," in *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism.*

paradox of Manichaean scribal activity, as on the one hand Manichaeans proclaimed Mani's superiority because he wrote his scriptures himself, while on the other hand his disciples were urged to record his wisdom in books.

9.4.1 Working on Mani's Books?

In the introduction of the *Kephalaia*, Mani is praised for his books. His religion is superior because of the failure of Jesus, Buddha, and Zoroaster to write their wisdom in books (1 Keph. 6.20–26, 7.23–26, 7.35–8.7). Their message was adulterated and as a result the people were led astray. In fact, the author states: "[T]heir church will pass away from the world; therefore they did not write."[107] The failure of the previous Apostles of Light is also included in the list of ten reasons for the superiority of the Manichaean church: "[M]y brethren who came prior to me: they did not write their wisdom in books the way that I, I have written it."[108] The ultimate paradox is that the *Kephalaia* itself was not written by Mani but consisted of a series of questions and answers and lectures attributed to Mani. These texts were collected by his disciples, according to Timothy Pettipiece, to fill the gaps in the theology of the Manichaean canon. This is visible in the introduction of the *Kephalaia of the Teacher*, where it starts with instructions on how to handle Mani's wisdom:

> [T]he world has not permitted me to write down… to me all of it; and if you, my children and my disciples, write all my wisdom… the questions that you have asked me …. And the explanations that I have made clear to you from time to time; the homilies, the lessons, that I have proclaimed with the teachers to the leaders, together with the elect and the catechumens; and the ones that I have uttered to free men and free women…. All of them that I have proclaimed from time to time! They are not written. You must remember them and write them; gather them in different places; because much is the wisdom that I have uttered to you.[109]

After discussing the failure of the previous Apostles of Light and the adulteration of their message, the text continues:

> To you, that the wisdom and the interpretation ……. From time to time, which I did not write… and you write after me, so that … it leads you not astray! For you yourselves know the great wisdom I have uttered in city after city, in each land separately. What I have written in books, no human mouth will suffice to write.

Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty, ed. J. A. van den Berg, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 3-23. As Derek Krueger has observed for the entire Byzantine period, "ascetic practice and the making of texts were parallel enterprises." D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness. The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 195.

[107] ⲧⲟⲩⲉⲕⲕⲗ[ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲩⲓⲛⲉ ⲁⲃ]ⲁⲗ ϩⲙ ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ [ⲡⲉ]ⲓ̈ ⲙⲡⲟⲩⲥϩⲉ[ⲓ̈] 1 Keph. 8.9-10 (modified translation).

[108] ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ϣⲁⲣⲡ ⲁⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̄[ⲡⲟⲩⲥϩⲉⲓ̈] ⲧⲟⲩⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲁⲛϫⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧϩⲉ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲥ̀ⲁϩⲥ̀ 1 Keph. 151 371.26-28.

[109] ⲛ̄ⲡⲉ ⲡⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ϯⲛ̣ⲁ̣ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲁⲧⲁⲥϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲡ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ[..]ⲁ̣ .. ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲩⲉ ⲛⲏⲓ̈ ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣϥ ⲕⲁⲛ ⲛⲧⲱⲧⲛ ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ϣⲏ̣ⲣ[ⲉ ⲙⲛ ⲛⲁⲛⲁⲑⲏ]ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ ϩⲉⲓ̈ ⲧⲁⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲧⲏⲣ[ⲥ] .... ⲉⲧⲏⲥ̀ .. [.....] . ⲛ̣ϣ̣ⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲛⲧ [ⲁⲣⲁⲩ .....] ⲙ̣ⲛ̣ ⲛϩⲉⲣⲙⲏⲛⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ϩⲉⲣⲙⲏⲛⲉ̣[ⲩⲉ ⲙⲛⲁⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲟⲩ ⲁⲓ]ϣ ⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ϣ ⲛϩⲟⲛⲓⲗⲓⲁ ⲛⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲓⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲛⲥⲁ̣[ϩ ⲁ]ⲛⲁⲣⲭⲏⲅⲟⲥ ⲁϩⲁⲛ ⲡ̄ⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ ⲛⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉ̣[ⲛⲟⲥ ⲙⲛ] ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲓⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲩ ⲛⲉⲗⲉⲩⲑⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ ⲛⲉⲗⲉⲩⲑⲉⲣⲁ̣ ⲙ̣[.....].ⲛ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲟⲩⲁⲓ̈ϣ ⲥ[ⲉ]ⲥⲏ[ϩ ⲉⲛ ⲛⲧ]ⲱⲧⲛ ⲣ̄ⲡⲟⲩⲙⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁϩⲟ[ⲩ ⲥⲁ]ϫϩⲟⲩ ⲁϩⲟⲩ[ⲛ ⲕⲁⲧ]ⲁ ⲛⲁ ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲛⲁϣⲉ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁ[ⲓ̈ⲧ]ⲉ̣ⲟⲩⲁⲥ̀ [ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲛⲉ] 1 Keph. 6.16-27.

> Nevertheless, according to your capacity, and even as you may find strength; remember! And write a little something from the great wisdom that you have heard from me. When you write down and are amazed by them … enlighten greatly; and they shall give benefit and make free … of the truth.[110]

Clearly, this passage legitimated the paradoxical existence of the *Kephalaia*, which was written by Mani's disciples, while it distinguished Mani from previous Apostles of Light by the alleged fact that he wrote his own scriptures.[111] Wolf-Peter Funk, moreover, identified two other passages that mirror this paradoxical call to put into writing what Mani had not written himself. At the end of the Dublin *Kephalaia*, a fragmentary passage reads: "[T]hings which I have not written" and "you shall write it down."[112] Similarly, the compiler of the collection justifies his work with the words:

> This commandment which He has given [.. .]. So I have written down these *Kephalaia* [. ..] and the interpretations that the Apostle uttered occasionally, at the particular places in the particular countries, so that [...] and it be known [. . .] in His Church. Now, then, His [. ..] do not let them .. . and say ... (etc., longer lacuna) . . . what I have heard . . . what I have written in . .. this book (?) ….[113]

If this reconstruction by Funk is correct, the entire double volume of the *Kephalaia* starts and ends with the call to write Mani's wisdom.[114]

The result was an ideology of Manichaean authorship in which Mani was the (intellectual) author, while others physically wrote his message down.[115] The forthcoming pages of the Dublin *Kephalaia* attest to the presence of scribes supporting Mani's literary ventures (2 Keph. 333 is entitled "This chapter tells about the Apostle: how he causes the scribes to write letters, sending them to different places"). From Augustine and some of the eastern Manichaean texts, we know that scribal activity worked as a personal ascetic practice,

---

[110] ⲁⲧⲟⲧⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲑⲉ[ⲣⲏⲛⲏⲓⲁ? …. .. ⲕⲁⲧⲁ] ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓ̈ϣ ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓ̈ϣ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲥⲁϩⲉ̄.. [……..]. ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛⲥⲁϩⲉ̄ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲓ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥ̣..[.....] ⲛⲉⲥⲣⲓⲗⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲧⲟⲧⲏⲛⲉ ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲏ ⲧ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲥ̣ⲁ̣[ⲩⲛⲉ?] ϩⲱⲧⲏⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲱⲥ ⲉⲧ[ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲧⲉⲟⲩⲁⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ] ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ϫⲱⲣⲁ ϫⲱⲣⲁ ϫⲱⲣⲓⲥ ⲡⲉⲧ[ⲁ̈ⲓ̈ⲥⲁϩϥ] ⲁϫⲱⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲡⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲁⲣⲱϣⲉ ⲁⲥⲁϩ[ϥ] ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲛⲧⲱⲧⲛ̄ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉⲧⲛϫⲓⲛ ⲛⲛ ⲧϩⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ[ⲛ]ⲁϩ [ⲛ]ϭⲁⲛ ⲁⲣⲓⲡⲏⲉⲩⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ̈ ⲟⲩⲕⲟⲩ̈ⲓ̈ ⲛⲗⲁⲩⲉ ϩⲛ [ⲧⲥⲟ]ⲫⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲧⲛⲉⲥ ⲛⲧⲟⲟⲧ̣ ⲉ[ϣⲁⲛⲧⲉ] ⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲁϩⲟⲩ ⲛ[ⲧⲉⲧⲛ]ⲣ̄ϣⲡⲏⲣⲉ ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ[..]….ⲉ... ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲟⲛⲱ ⲛⲥⲉϯϩⲏⲩ ⲛⲥⲉ̄ⲣⲣⲏ̄ϩ̣ⲉ̣..... ⲛⲧⲉ ⲧⲏⲛⲉ 1 Keph. 8.33-9.10. As is clear from the transcription, Gardner's translation is built on a rather fragmentary text. I have removed some of the brackets in the translation for readability.

[111] W. P. Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean Kephalaia," in *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 152.

[112] 2 Keph. 429.12 and 430.4 (?), Unpublished. Cited and translated in Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean Kephalaia," 153.

[113] 2 Keph. 447.2-7 (?), unpublished, with Coptic text transcribed and translated in Funk, "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean Kephalaia," 153-4.

[114] Keith Hopkins already stated that the missionary argument stressing Mani's authorship cannot be accepted in full. In fact, to do so with be a historian's "sin." K. Hopkins, *A World Full of Gods: Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 269-70.

[115] A similar dual attitude toward authorship is visible in the references to Mani's pictures. Some passages claim that Mani painted them, but others make clear that he had them painted and was only the intellectual author. Gulácsi, *Mani's Pictures*, 53.

aimed at the transformation of the self. The Chinese *Traité* mentions how zealous Manichaeans would chant hymns in their rituals, but also "transcribe what they have chanted, and then repeat it in their thoughts; in this way there is never a moment wasted."[116] These moments of intense association with Manichaean texts could help to "fill their heads with Manichaean thoughts," as Jason BeDuhn explained.[117] Instead of being primarily aimed at conveying information, this type of writing provided for "private, individualized spiritual development," which brought the "disjointed and conflicted thought of the individual" into alignment with "true Manichaean selfhood by a process of entextualising the self."[118] I would suggest that this was true also for Ision and Matthaios. Indeed, one of the long literary letters from Kellis (maybe one of Mani's *Epistles,* or an imitation) urged the community to "devote yourself to what is written."[119]

The dual dimension of Manichaean authorship consisted of a profound authorial anonymity, in which authors are merely transmitters or writer-witnesses to Mani's original and final revelation, as well as the identification of some writers with their titular rank instead of personal name.[120] The latter strategy is visible in the letter of the Teacher, who is only known through his title (P.Kell.Copt. 61), while in sections of the CMC the authors are named as witnesses to Mani's revelation. In both instances, writers did not report on their own authority, but the authorial agency was exclusively ascribed to Mani.[121] Mani's role as author stressed finality, as the completeness of the revelation had arrived through his words. In the introduction to the *Kephalaia*, his books are "the measure of all wisdom. Everything that has occurred, and that will occur, is written in them."[122] The guideline for additional teaching and writings, set out in this introductory passage, is that they should be in line with Mani's three great lessons: "[E]very writer, if he reveals these three great lessons: that one is the writer of truth. Also, every teacher, if he gives instruction and proclaims these three lessons, is the teacher of truth."[123] The three great lessons probably represent the three times and the two principles, which provided the framework in which Manichaean authorship could develop after Mani.[124]

---

[116] Traité, XXIX 260-263 translation in Lieu and Mikkelsen, *Tractatus Manichaicus Sinicus*, 69. In a Middle Persian parable, the gifts of a rich man to the king are compared to, and identified with, sacred books. M47, translation given in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 190. Discussed in Colditz, "On the Names of 'donors'," 59.

[117] BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting," 268.

[118] BeDuhn, "The Domestic Setting," 269 and 270; Cf. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness. The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East*.

[119] ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲉⲭⲉ ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲏ̄ ⲉⲧⲃ[ⲉ ⲡⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲥⲛϩ P.Kell.Copt. 54. 16-17.

[120] Baker-Brian, *Study of Augustine's Contra Adimantum*, 148-59.

[121] Pedersen, *Studies*, 399-400 on Koustaios transmitting the teachings of Mani.

[122] .. ⲛⲧⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲡϣⲓ ⲛ̣ⲧ̣ⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲉⲩϥϣ[ⲱⲡⲉ] ⲙ̣̄ⲛ̄ ⲡ[ⲉ]ⲧⲛⲁϣ[ⲱⲡ]ⲉ ⲥⲛϩ ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ 1 Keph. 5.27-28.

[123] ⲣ̣ⲣ̣ⲁ̣[ⲫⲉⲩⲥ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲉⲩϭⲱ]ⲗⲡ ⲁⲃ[ⲁ]ⲗ ϩⲁ ⲡϣⲁⲙⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϭ ⲛⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲏⲛⲉ[ⲩ ⲡⲉ …….. ⲥ]ⲁϩ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲁⲛ ⲉⲩϯⲥⲃⲱ ⲉⲩⲧⲁϣⲉⲁ̈ϣ ϩⲁ ⲡ̣̈ϣ[ⲁⲙⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϫⲉ ⲡⲉ] ⲡ̣ⲥⲁϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲏⲉ 1 Keph. 5.29-33 (the reconstructed text is not given in Böhlig/Polotsky, nor in Gardner's translation).

[124] The Chinese Compendium of the doctrines and styles includes a category of teachings attributed to Mani, but written by his disciples. This "tradition," according to Haloun and Henning, is "as genuine and false as the Muslimic 'tradition': it may reflect the prophet's views with perfect accuracy, or it may distort

The office of reader (ἀναγνώστης) or lector was held in high esteem. Readers are praised in both Greek and Coptic Manichaean sources. In the *Homilies*' description of the postwar situation, thousands of books will be saved and there will be a textual community gathered around Manichaean scripture and its reader.[125] This sermon (Hom. 23–30) continues to sketch a utopia in which the followers of Mani will "once again recover their memory and study in the books of the wisdom."[126] New generations of catechumens will arise and find the "writings written and they will find the books adorned."[127] Their communal life will be filled with psalm singing and their houses "will be like schools."[128] One of the most striking elements in this utopian textual community is that catechumens are portrayed as being deeply involved in the reading and writing of sacred books. In this future, even the little girls will be found "being taught to write and singing psalms and reading."[129] We have seen how some of this was actually put into practice, as the Kellis letters make clear that The Teacher taught Piene to read (and write?) Latin and he "made him read in every church."[130]

Scribes, readers, illustrators, and those who financed the production of books were praised for their accomplishment. According to the *Homilies*, their names are to be publicly proclaimed, as the community will praise "the name of the scribe who wrote it and also the name of he who put the punctuation marks in it."[131] Thousands will come to visit the reader, in each and every city, for they rejoice in the writing of books (Hom. 30.27–30). It is no exaggeration to say that scribes and readers were highly regarded!

In direct connection to the status of the reader and scribes, Manichaean texts conveyed the religious merit of the donation of books, or donations for the purpose of book writing. In the extant sections of the *Book of Giants*, scribal activity is listed in a section with parables about proper behavior. It compares the "Hearer that copies a book" to a sick man who gave his life (?) for the sake of the community.[132] Similarly, in one of the colophons of a

---

his meaning completely." G. Haloun and W. Henning, "The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light," *Asia Major, Third Series* 3 (1952): 211. They thought the introduction of the *Kephalaia* was simply a late invention to legitimize the production of new Manichaean books.

[125] Iricinschi, "Manichaean Writings and Religious Propaganda," 270 with references to Homilies 25.1-19 and 30.27-31.7. "Readers" in the Catholic church belonged to the minor orders and were responsible for the sacred books of the community. They read scripture out loud during gatherings. On the reader in Ancient Christianity, see D. Nässelqvist, *Public Reading in Early Christianity: Lectors, Manuscripts, and Sound in the Oral Delivery of John 1-4* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 63-118, pages 10-16 on the office in the first two centuries CE. The status of the reader changed into an important moral role in the third century. Early Christian lectors became church officials, teachers, chosen from the confessors, instead of simply literate slaves. Wipszycka, "Les ordres mineurs," 181-215. On the literacy of these officials, see M. Choat and R. Yuen-Collingridge, "A Church with No Books and a Reader Who Cannot Write. The Strange Case of P.Oxy. 33.2673," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 46 (2009): 109-38.

[126] ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲩϩⲟⲩ ⲁⲡⲟⲩ̄ⲣ̄ⲡⲛⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲥ[ⲁⲡ ⲛ̄]ⲥⲉⲛⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ ϩⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϫⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ Hom. 23.1-2.

[127] ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲉⲓ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϭⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲩⲥⲏ[ϩ ⲛⲥ]ⲉϭⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϫⲙⲉ ⲉⲩⲕⲟⲥⲙⲉ Hom. 28.10-11 (modified translation).

[128] ⲥⲉⲛⲁ̄ ⲟⲉ [ⲛ̄ⲛⲓ]ⲁⲛⲥⲛ̣ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ Hom. 30.31-32.

[129] ⲉ[ⲩϫⲓ]ⲥⲃⲱ ⲁⲥϩⲉ̈ⲓ̈ ⲉⲩⲣ̄ϯⲁⲗⲉ ⲉⲩⲱϣ Hom. 31.7. Iricinschi, "Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books," 158-59.

[130] ⲉⲩⲧⲣⲉⲩϣϣ ⲕⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ ⲉ̣ⲕ̣ⲕ̣ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲥ̣ⲓⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 25.46 (modified translation).

[131] ⲡⲣⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲡⲡⲅⲣⲁⲫⲉⲩⲥ̀ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲥⲁϩⲩ. [ⲙ̄ⲡ ⲡⲣⲉⲛ] ⲁ̣ⲛ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲁⲩⲥⲧⲓϫⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲩ Hom. 25.18-19.

[132] The passage is translated by Henning as "The Hearer that copies a book, is like unto a sick man that

Turkic Manichaean text, a Hearer expresses his desire to be remembered for his reciting and copying of texts.[133] The copying of these texts was perceived as easing the illness of ignorance, countering the decline of the world. As Andrea Piras states: "[W]riting and copying is a good therapy to cure the individual and the community"; it works as a medicine through which "the human condition of illness is counteracted by the act of writing (with zeal, accuracy, precision)."[134] Both scribes and donors were therefore praised. Their names were mentioned at the end of several Parthian and Middle Persian Manichean hymns, where they appear without further introduction or frame.[135] In several documents, the intended space at the end of the hymn was left blank, flanked by punctuation marks and ready to be filled with a donor name. Since these names were not restricted to catechumens, but included names of elect, these passages may have included all those involved in the production process. According to Iris Colditz, their names would be recited and remembered in the context of funeral ceremonies.[136] The names in the Coptic Psalmbook, as discussed in Chapter 8, may have had a similar function, namely to include the names of donors in the recitation and remember them as part of the imagined community.

9.4.2 Access to Books

The participation of Manichaean catechumens (or Hearers) in book writing has led to raised eyebrows. A substantial number of scholars believe that access to Manichaean teaching and books was restricted, or even that their books were concealed from outsiders. A strong argument in favor of this reconstruction is Secundinus's accusation that Augustine "never knew the secret, hidden teachings," which may have been preached during separate cultic gatherings for the elect.[137] Augustine's status of catechumen might have restricted his access

---

gave his . . . to a . . . man." W. Henning, "The Book of the Giants," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11, no. 1 (1943): 59 lines 230-33. In this paragraph, I follow the interpretation and reading of A. Piras, "The Writing Hearer. A Suggested Restoration of M 101d," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team "Turfanforschung" (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 525-34.

[133] Cited and translated in Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 375.

[134] Piras, "The Writing Hearer. A Suggested Restoration of M 101d," 530. I cannot agree with Claudia Leurini that Hearers were banned from copying texts. Her reading of this passage equates copying a book with being sick, not taking into account the entire parable. Leurini, *The Manichaean Church*, 82-85, in particular the last page.

[135] Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors', " 56-67. The majority of the names appears in hymns, with a few exceptions in prose texts or texts whose character cannot be determined. Earlier work by Sundermann includes W. Sundermann, "Namen von Göttern, Dämonen und Menschen in iranischen Versionen des manichäischen Mythos," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 6 (1979): 95-133; W. Sundermann, "Iranische Personennamen der Manichäer," *Die Sprache* 36, no. 2 (1994): 244-70.

[136] Colditz rightly points to the paradox of high-ranking elect donating money for the purpose of book-writing, while they were supposed to live in voluntary poverty. The association with funerary rituals is made on the basis of a name with the additional phrase "should be remembered." Colditz, "On the Names of 'Donors'," 62-5, citation from page 64.

[137] The first text is a letter from Secundinus to Augustine (*Epistula ad Augustinum*, CSEL 25/2 p. 895.17-19) where the former coreligionist accused him of never being a true Manichaean because Augustine "never knew the secret, hidden teachings (potuisse arcana incognita secreta cognoscere)." Augustine himself

to Manichaean books. He himself, however, reports that he could not find any trace of a hidden esoteric meaning behind the interpretations of Mani. As Manichaeism was a missionary religion with the aim of disseminating Mani's message, I consider it highly unlikely that esoteric teaching existed among the elect.[138] Most Manichaean texts about secrets and supernatural mysteries praise Mani for his role of enlightener and revealer. Mani is the giver of revelations, the one who has instructed them in all the secrets (1 Keph. 95. 144.15). In the Manichaean daily prayers, they praise Christ, who came forth from the outer aeons and "without concealment interpreted his wisdom and the secret mysteries to people on earth."[139] In the letter from Kellis that may belong to the Mani's *Epistles*, the author states: "[L]ook, you have seen everything by an eye revelation. You do not lack anything from the mysteries of the wisdom of God," whereafter he describes the way he transferred this knowledge: "[F]urthermore, all these other mysteries and the wisdom that I have revealed to you, I am adapting and adjusting for you in various particular forms for the sake of love; so that you will possess it and its fruits be truly apparent to me."[140] Even though Mani was

---

however does not refer to concealed knowledge as the difference between elect and catechumens, as he explains the difference to to Petilian as a distinction in regiments: "the name of catechumen is not bestowed among them upon persons to denote that they are at some future time to be baptized, but that this name is given to such as are also called Hearers, on the supposition that they cannot observe what are considered the higher and greater commandments which are observed by those whom they think to distinguish and honor by the name of Elect." (*Contra litteras Petiliani* 3.17.20) cited and discussed in J. D. BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, Volume 2: Making a "Catholic" Self, 388–401 C.E* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 312. In my understanding of the letter of Secundinus, the author attributes Augustine's misunderstanding to his ethnic background (Africa!) and states, immediately after the accusation of not knowing the secret teachings, that Augustine attacked Hannibal and Mithridates "under the name of Manichaeus." See translation in Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 37, where they also point to the Africanness of Hannibal, who was a considered a traditional archenemy of Rome, just as Mithridates. The second texts is Augustine in debate with Fortunatus in 392 where he states that he does not know whether the Elect had separate cultic gatherings, and if they gathered to receive the Eucharist, as he has heard, these times were concealed from him. Augustine, *For.* 3, cited in J. K. Coyle, "Saint Augustine's Manichaean Legacy," in *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, ed. J. K. Coyle (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 318.

[138] BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 71, see also 82, 105. Augustine's testimony on this issue is, of course, deeply colored by his rejection of the Manichaean religion, as he portrays his younger self as looking for rationalist accounts and philosophical wisdom behind the mythological veil. Stroumsa concluded: "the whole community knows the ipsissima verba of Mani, and yet we have no evidence of any esoteric traditions among the elect." Stroumsa, *Hidden Wisdom*, 6. Cf. van Oort, "The Young Augustine's Knowledge," 454; Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof*, 204; De Jong, "Secrecy I: Antiquity," 1052b; Jonas states: "Mani indeed, alone among the gnostic system-builders, intended to found, no a select group of initiates, but a new universal religion: and so his doctrine, unlike the teaching of all other Gnostics with the exception of Marcion, has nothing esoteric about it." And "Mani's work was not to penetrate the secret aspects of a given revelation and to establish a minority of higher initiation within an existing church…" H. Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 206.

[139] ἀπαρακαλύπτως ἐξηγησάμενον αὐτοῦ τὴν σοφίαν καὶ τὰ ἀπόρρητα μυστήρια τοῖς ἐπὶ γῆς ἀν(θρώπ)οις P.Kell.Gr.98.40-42.

[140] ⲉⲓⲥ ϩⲱ[ⲃ ⲛⲓⲏ[ⲁ̣ⲧⲉⲧ̣ⲛ̣ⲛ̣ⲱ̣ ⲁϩⲁⲩ [ϩ̅ⲛ̅ ⲟ]ⲩϭⲱⲗⲡ ⲁⲃ[ⲁⲗ ⲛ̅]ⲃⲉⲗ. ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̅ⲱ̣ⲁⲁ̣ⲧ̣ [ⲛ̅ⲗ]ⲁⲩⲉ ⲉⲛ ⲁ̣ⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛ̅ [ⲛ̅]ⲙⲩⲥⲧⲏ̣ⲣ̣ⲓⲟⲛ ⲛ̣̅ⲧ̣[ⲥⲟ]ⲫⲓⲁ ⲛ̅ⲧⲉ ⲡⲙⲟⲩⲧⲉ. and ⲛⲓⲕⲉ̣[ⲙⲩ]ⲥ̣ⲧⲏⲣⲓ̣[ⲛ] ⲁ̣ⲛ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ. ⲙⲛ̅ ⲧⲥⲟⲫⲓⲁ ⲛ̅[ⲧⲁⲓ̈]ϭⲁⲗⲡ[ⲥ ⲁⲣ]ⲱⲧⲛ̅. ⲉⲉⲓⲡⲱⲛⲉ ⲛ̅ⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲥ̣ [ⲉⲉⲓⲱⲓ]ⲃⲉ ⲛ̅ⲙ[ⲁⲥ]

acclaimed as the revealer of secrets, there may have been various gradations or phases in the revelation that may have contributed to a certain level of knowledge differentiation.[141] As we have seen, one of the most recent introductions into Manichaeism in the Roman world moves against this reconstruction, and suggests—on the basis of the lack of cosmological details in the Kellis papyri—that Manichaean knowledge was "carefully graded and tailored to the needs of its audience," with the experience of lay catechumens was inherently different from the "higher echelons of the elect."[142] Without delving too deeply into all accusations of Manichaean concealment, the issue in Kellis revolves around the question of whether Matthaios worked on canonical Manichaean books.[143]

As the previous examination has made clear, there is some reason to doubt Matthaios's involvement in the Manichaean canon—by which I mean the books listed in the *Kephalaia* and other Manichaean texts as part of Mani's own writings. Also thematically, there seems to have been a difference between the prevalent devotional material from Kellis and the cosmological and theological works found at Medinet Madi.[144] At Kellis, most of the

---

ⲛ̣ⲏⲧⲛ̄. ϩⲛ̄ ϩⲓⲛⲥⲛⲁⲧ ⲥⲛⲁ[ⲧ ⲁⲛ ⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲃⲏⲧ[ⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧ]ⲁ̣ⲅⲁⲡⲉ. ϫⲉⲣⲉⲧⲛⲁ̄ⲫⲟ̄ⲣ̣ⲉ̣ [ⲛ̄]ⲙ̣ⲁ̣ⲥ̣. ⲛ̄ⲥⲟⲩⲱⲛϩ ⲛⲏⲏ̈ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ. ⲛ̄ϫ̣ⲓ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣[ⲥ]ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ. ϩⲛ̄ⲛ̣ ⲟⲩⲏⲏⲉ P.Kell.Copt. 54.8-11 and 24-30.

[141] Despite such praise, the *Kephalaia* sets out to show that not all knowledge is revealed, not even to the Manichaean elect. Some mysteries about future events, fate, and medicine are still veiled and should remain hidden. They are kept back primarily for the archons, supernatural beings of Darkness and ignorance who would thwart the designs of the kingdom of Light (Keph 147, 350-355). N. A. Pedersen, "The Term Mysterion in Coptic-Manichaean Texts," in *Mystery and Secrecy in the Nag Hammadi Collection and Other Ancient Literature: Ideas and Practises*, ed. Ch. H. Bull, L. I. Lied, and J. D. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 141-2. Primarily because of the risk of misuse for money or individual gain (divination, magic?) but also to prevent the archons from delaying future events. I have no problems with the idea that specific types of texts, such as parables, were used for outsiders or for the edification of catechumens. I. Colditz, "Manichäische Parabeln - didaktische Literatur für Hörer?," in *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, ed. Team Turfanforschung (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 85-102.

[142] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 9, they state: "For the lay faithful in the Roman Empire it was a kind of superior Christianity, and the metaphysical details that attract the attention of scholars (and the higher echelons of the elect) had little profile. In the personal letters of the believers at Kellis there appears to be scarce knowledge or interest in the many gods and demons, and the intricacies of cosmology." Other statement about secrecy is found in Chadwick: "but this myth belonged to the secrets of the cosmos which were first disclosed to those who penetrated far into the mysteries of the society. Augustine expressly records that the missionaries never started by revealing the Manichee cosmogony to those whom they had targeted for recruitment." Chadwick, "The Attractions of Mani," 217. On page 221, Chadwick concludes that the myth was kept on the background until "the person being recruited was already captured."

[143] On secrecy and Manichaeans, see also G. G. Stroumsa, "Monachisme et marranisme chez les manichéens d'Egypte," *Numen* 29, no. 2 (1982): 184-201; Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans," 159-70. On accusations of secrecy and concealment, see Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof*, 204. This heresiological strategy is discussed in Berzon, *Classifying Christians*, 177.

[144] I would not go as far as Gardner, who has suggested that the Kellis version of Manichaeism had a limited role for the cosmological world of Manichaean deities and was "more matter-of-fact," like a "kind of higher and more effective Christianity." Gardner, *KLT1*, ix-x; Echoed in T. Pettipiece, "Rhetorica Manichaica: A Rhetorical Analysis of Kephalaia Chapter 38: "On the Light Mind and the Apostles and the Saints" (Ke

papyri and wooden tablets contained liturgical texts; no copy of the *Living Gospel*, the *Treasure of Life*, or the *Book of Giants* has been discovered among the textual fragments. The exceptions are liturgical in nature: Mani's *Epistles* and the daily prayers may very well belong to the core of the Manichaean textual tradition, going back to the first generations in Mesopotamia, but they are of a different character.

This is, however, not the same as affirming previous assumptions about the restricted role and knowledge of catechumens. On the contrary, what this brings to light is the unarticulated definition of a canon. Despite the prominent lists of Mani's books, the Kellis evidence shows that the scribal activity of Manichaeans was much wider. Matthaios might have had access to the *Living Gospel*, but the documentary references to "the gospel" are hardly sufficient evidence. Likewise, the book of *The Great Prayers* and the "Greek *Psalms*" may have referred to canonical books, but could just as easily have referred to other psalms and prayers. Moreover, he did not own any of these books personally. Instead, several community members had to send them over for him to work on. In particular the role of mother Kouria, whom I have tentatively identified as his aunt (see Chapter 4), is striking: a woman identified as keeper of Manichaean books (P.Kell.Copt. 19).[145] The letters make clear that other members of the family also owned or circulated Manichaean books (for example in P.Kell.Copt. 20 and 120). Apparently, these catechumens had access to a large number of Manichaean texts, including books that may have had a canonical status.[146]

9.5 Conclusions

Scribal activity mattered to Manichaeans. Not only did they have an explicit and elaborate theory about the value of Mani's authorship, but also they actually produced large numbers of books and may have been involved in the transmission of other religious literature. While intuitively, the attention has always been directed toward questions about the origin of these books and the religious roots of Manichaeism, I have proposed to consider the usage of books in daily practice.

The examination of all passages in the Kellis papyri brings to the fore a broad range of texts and books. Mostly, book titles mentioned in the letters are difficult to identify, but in combination with the manuscripts found on the site, it is possible to discern biblical books, Christian apocrypha, Classical literature, and Manichaean texts. Although there was no trace of canonical books like the *Living Gospel* or the *Treasure of Life,* some of these texts may have belonged to the so-called "Manichaean canon." The identifications are tentative, with the exception of a Coptic version of Mani's *Epistles* that has been positively identified. Speculation about the reasons for the absence of other canonical works has, erroneously in

---

89.19-102.12)," in *Coptica - Gnostica - Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. P. H. Poirier and L. Painchaud (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 740.

[145] Franzmann, "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis," suggests that perhaps Kouria supported the child throughout his training.

[146] Contra Leurini, Contra Leurini, *Hymns in Honour*,25-26. Robin Lane Fox refers to the circulation of Nepos' book on the millennium, which circulated among the villages of the Arsinoite nome, to the great displeasure of the bishop Dionysius. Eusebius, *HE*, 7.24.6; Lane Fox, "Literacy and Power in Early Christianity," 145.

my opinion, led to the idea that catechumens were excluded from higher forms of esoteric knowledge. The Kellis documents show, in fact, that catechumens played a very active role in the scribal traditions of the Manichaean community. Matthaios was involved with members of the elect, but his scribal activities are not directly associated with the Teacher. While Piene is traveling with the Teacher, Matthaios was trained as a scribe in the oasis. Rather than understanding this training, and book production in general, as part of missionary activities, we should understand it as part of his ritualized practice. With Iricinschi and BeDuhn, I think that it served as a spiritual exercise focused on the formation of a self-identity instead of as the (re)production of information. Just like in other fourth-century "secondary religions," Manichaean rituals focused on self-improvement, by which listeners, readers, and writers allowed their minds to be shaped by the power of the books.[147] This perceived power is stressed in their hagiographical stories, in which books had "an iconic, almost totemic, status" because they were the tangible record of supernatural revelation.[148]

With this background in mind, we have to return to the interpretation of the doctrinal flip card (T.Kell.Copt. 1). This miniature wooden board has been seen as a flip card to teach the complex details of the Manichaean doctrine. Gardner suggests that "it would seem that in their evangelical mission the elect presented the faith as that of the true church, and as the fulfilment of Jesus's teaching. Catechumens would then be slowly drawn into the community and gradually introduced to the higher knowledge of Mani's revelation."[149] Even though it is only natural to assume a certain level of knowledge differentiation, this flip card mentioning the Third Ambassador shows that the Manichaeans in the village had knowledge of the same doctrinal system as laid out in the *Kephalaia* and other Manichaean texts, including in this text alone the Third Ambassador, the Father of Greatness, and the twelve aeons of the Father.[150] Doctrinal and cosmological knowledge was clearly available in Kellis, even though it may not have characterized most of the liturgical documents. This snapshot of history shows connectedness and similarities with Manichaeism as attested in other regions. The use of Syriac writing in Kellis is another indication of the transregional connections or the awareness of a Manichaean tradition and history outside the Egyptian-Roman world. It was not a question of Syrian missionaries proselytizing in a new area, translating their work into Coptic, but rather of Coptic scribes extending their focus from Greek and Coptic to Syriac. The tentative evidence for the use of Syriac during church gatherings is, moreover, highly remarkable. If Ision was indeed a church lector appointed for specific readings in Syriac, this would have stood out as an extraordinary group-specific practice beyond anything performed or experienced by other fourth-century Kellites.

The scribal culture as well as the texts written and read by these Kellites has shed light on several instances of high Manichaeanness, while they also showed a wider context with Classical and biblical texts. This combination of situations of activated and deactivated

---

[147] Iricinschi, "Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books," 175.

[148] Reeves, "Manichaeans as *Ahl Al-Kitab.* A Study in Manichaean Scripturalism," 251.

[149] Gardner, *KLT1*, 4.

[150] Contra Gardner, *KLT1*, 4.

Manichaeanness is characteristic of the situation in Kellis and will therefore be further explored and theorized in Part III.

Part III.
Conclusions

Chapter 10. Manichaeans and Everyday Groupness

> [Augustine] was a rhetorician, a teacher, a family man, and an amateur astrologer. His bookshelf was lined with volumes of Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, Aristotle, and pseudo-Pythagoras. He also read a little Mani, and took initiation as a Manichaean auditor (Jason BeDuhn).[1]

The last six chapters have brought to the fore several fundamental elements of everyday life in Kellis: family relations, work, death, language use, gift-giving, reading, communal gathering, singing and praying. These practices could be examined up close because of the great body of documents, as well as the connections between personal letters and liturgical texts. They have been examined for traces of Manichaeanness, which I defined as instances of collective solidarity with the imagined Manichaean community. By asking where and when a Manichaean group affiliation mattered, I identified situations in which religion affected everyday life, as well as those instances in which it hardly mattered at all. In result, the foregoing chapters have sketched a wide array of quotidian practices in a specific microhistorical context that demonstrate the untidiness of religion in everyday life.

This chapter will summarize the impact of Manichaeism on four basic categories of everyday action: talking, choosing, performing, and consuming Manichaeanness. As these findings suggest that Manichaeanness was only infrequently activated, the second section will explore the tension between the characterization of Manichaeism as a "secondary" or "utopian" religion and the observed intermittence of Manichaeanness.

10.1 Untidy History: Manichaeanness in Everyday Life

Drawing all the threads together, I will summarize my observations in the four categories of action used by Fox and Miller-Idriss to address the role of nationhood in everyday life experience (see Chapter 2). Following their lead, I will describe the everyday activation, or experience, of Manichaeanness in talking, choosing, performing, and consuming. Together, these sections will show the invaluable corrective nature of the Kellis sources. They challenge prevailing assumptions about Manichaean groups and capture the nuance and complexity of religious groupness in daily life.[2]

Previous studies, mostly published before all Coptic documentary texts were published, have frequently interpreted the Kellis finds within existing reconstructions of Manichaeism, using the new finds to reinforce existing conceptualizations rather than to challenge them. I have pointed out that the Manichaeans of Kellis have frequently been described as sectarian and persecuted, but also as engaged in mission work and claiming a

---

[1] BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1*, 287.

[2] The section title alludes to A. E. Franklin, "Untidy History: Reassessing Communal Boundaries in Light of the Cairo Geniza Documents," in *Age of Transition: Byzantine Culture in the Islamic World, ed.* H. C. Evans (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 54-69.

Christian identity.[3] Most notably, Peter Brown has repeatedly stressed the "intense solidarity" and "spiritual friendship" that would have characterized the Manichaeans of Kellis.[4] Such strong religious interpretations are not without merit, as they corroborate the observation that Manichaeans were among the first to think about themselves and others as distinct communities defined by their religion (as for example set out in their list of ten advantages of the Manichaean church). My examination of all the published Kellis documents, however, has raised serious questions about the validity of these strong religious interpretations. In particular, I have stressed the risk of embracing the "groupism" that is articulated in elite theological sources. These elite perspectives gave rise to the prevailing notion of Late Antiquity as a predominantly religiously defined era in which individuals either belonged to well-defined religious groups, or were involved in the identity formation of nascent religious communities. The everyday letters and business accounts examined in this dissertation only infrequently corroborated this assumption. Although many passages in the Kellis letters can be harmonized with some of the previous interpretations based on religious groupism, I have pleaded for a minimalist interpretation. Rather than thinking about the Manichaeans as a persecuted sect with strong in-group bonds, we have seen how infrequently religon defined everyday life as visible in the papyri.

The result is twofold. On the one hand, I have exposed the weak factual basis of some—in my eyes rather tentative—historical interpretations of the local Manichaean community in Kellis. These interpretations included the looming threat of religious persecution, the mandatory presence of the elect and the daily ritual meal, as well as the existence of a Manichaean monastery in the oasis. On the other hand, I have shown that the observed multiple cross-affiliations or identifications of the individuals in our corpus do not render religious identifications insignificant. Rather, I have highlighted both situations in with Manichaeanness was extremely visible and relevant and occasions in which it remained latent, inactivated, or invisible. I believe that the dynamic between these two modes of religion in everyday life is of fundamental importance to the study of lived ancient religion. I will therefore return to this intermittence of religion in everyday life in the second part of this chapter, after having sketched exactly where and when Manichaeanness mattered in Kellis.

10.1.1 Talking Manichaeanness: Politeness Strategies and Funding the Elect

The duration and impact of the experience of solidarity with the Manichaean group, what I have called Manichaeanness, varied. It could arise as an occasional event or become a long-lasting affiliation. Whether occasional or dominant, this experience was constructed and maintained discursively through talking and writing. Previous studies have highlighted how religious authorities constructed religious social imaginaries in their theological or polemical accounts. What has received less attention is how routine talk in everyday interaction contributed to the awareness of such social imaginaries in more mundane situations.

---

[3] Gardner, Alcock, Funk, *CDT1,* 72-82.

[4] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle,* 159.

I have argued that the authors of the Kellis letters framed situations in their choice of words, formulas, and self-designators. They marked them as group-specific religious events. In doing so, they reappropriated elements from Manichaean texts and theology. They could talk Manichaeanness by approaching their recipients as "children of the living race" or "daughters of the Light Mind." The most explicit examples of phrases that carried Manichaean connotations came from the fundraising letters of the elect (P.Kell.Copt 31 and 32 stand out), who needed the support of catechumens to live their ascetic lives and fulfill their role in the process of liberating the Living Soul. Additionally, a Manichaean repertoire was employed by other authors as a politeness strategy, stressing a common bond in the introduction of their letters. The primary goal of most ancient letters was not to convey information, but rather to maintain existing social relations and foster new ones. Religiously marked politeness strategies played a large role in defining relations and nourishing group bonds. Specific words, phrases, and self-designators were therefore employed in the introduction of the letter to present the relationship in a favourable light and according to the author's wishes. Sometimes, this meant incorporating Manichaean formulas, while other situations drew on more conventional repertoires. Modern historians and papyrologists can, therefore, at times detect ancient religious affiliations based on the use of specific phrases and formulas. This has been a blessing for a historical perspective from below, but I have stressed the need to study the language use and linguistic choices primarily as performative actions in specific situations, rather than to use them as one-on-one criteria for establishing religious backgrounds. This is particularly relevant for the large set of marked phrases that were shared by Manichaeans, Christians, and others; the dual usage of words and formulas that were perceived as powerful by people of various ways of life. The prayer formulas, studied in Chapter 4, are a case in point, as their terminology is not exclusively Manichaean. In contrast to the interpretation offered by David Martinez, however, I think that ultimately the closest parallels to these tripartite prayer formulas in the Kellis letters are found in the fragments of Mani's *Epistles*. Ancient letter recipients familiar with this Manichaean epistolary style would have noticed the similarities, but others may have thought of alternative (i.e., Christian) liturgical parallels, or simply admired it for its display of learned literary skills.

The personal letters displayed different levels of activated Manichaeanness. It was not always necessary to approach the recipients as "children of the living race." Many of the Kellis letters simply greet the recipients with kinship terminology, or simple designators related to the household or neighborhood. In fact, the previous chapters have sketched a modest picture of daily life, in which Manichaeanness was only occasionally salient as one of the membership categories in a wider array of options. The majority of the identifications show that the Kellites who wrote the papyrus letters did not envision, or represented, themselves as belonging to a secluded, closed-off, or persecuted religious group. Despite occasionally strong religious language, there is no trace of major interreligious group conflicts, nor of any internal tension between religious identifications and the non-Manichaean social obligations and expectations. With some exceptions, the Manichaeans of

Kellis seem to have identified themselves with the village and with their family first, before religious self-designators came into play.

Two situations stand out from this pattern, in which Manichaean group-identification was not only salient, but was made visible in words: fundraising and singing. The fundraising letters of the elect have been mentioned already, as they played a major role in my reconstruction of the Manichaean community at Kellis. These letters contain the most explicit repertoire, including elaborate Manichaean self-designators. Rhetorically, they situated author and recipients in a narrative reality in which alms were frequently given for the sake of releasing the Living Soul. Elect reminded the local community of catechumens of their role in the cosmological battle between Light and Darkness, even though they themselves worked at a distance. I have stressed how the geographical circumstances of the Egyptian desert fundamentally defined the relation between catechumens and elect. In contrast to previous reconstructions, as well as in contrast to the normative theological framework, I have claimed that daily interaction between elect and catechumens was mostly impossible. The elect mainly traveled in the Nile valley and although they may have visited the oasis, the everyday distance between the two classes of the Manichaean community was primarily overcome by travelers carrying letters.

Singing was the second situation in which Manichaeanness was activated in talk—or rather speech acts. The vacuum left by the absence of the elect seems to have been filled with regular gatherings for catechumens, who came together to sing psalms, pray, and listen to scripture readings. The details on the liturgy and frequency of these communal gatherings are sparse. It is tempting to fill the gaps by comparing them to Christian gatherings in the same period, or Manichaean liturgies from other regions. I have avoided this gap-filling strategy by focusing on the extant manuscripts of the psalms and the prayers, as well as by tracing minor papyrological vignettes, like Ision's role as lector and Piene's training to read in every church. Chapter 7 has suggested that these communal gatherings contributed to the formation of a discrete Manichaean group identity and style through certain performative aspects (see below) and the verbal reiteration of the Manichaean cosmological and theological narrative. Participation in these gatherings, as well as the performative function of ritual meals, singing, and the commemoration of the dead, constituted social situations in which Manichaean doctrine mattered to individual Kellites.

Besides these two instances in which the Manichaean church and world view were the topic of conversation, there are passages in which Manichaeanness is hinted at, or implied, in the choice of words. This unintentional use of Manichaean repertoire resembles what Fox and Miller-Idriss have called talking *with* nationhood, in which the nation is not the object of talk but rather a disposition that shines through.[5] In a similar vein, the Kellis letters sometimes contain a repertoire of phrases and formulas that connote Manichaeanness, even

[5] "[T]he nation not as the object of talk but rather as an unselfconscious disposition about the national order of things that intermittently informs talk. The nation in this sense is a way of seeing, doing, talking and being that posits and sometimes enacts the unproblematic and naturalizing partition of the world into discrete ethnocultural units." Fox and Miller-Idris, "Everyday Nationhood," 540, citing Brubaker (their italics).

though it is not always explicit or exclusive. It is, of course, difficult to determine, after sixteen hundred years, which terminology would have carried what religious connotations. What we can say, despite the difficulties involved, is that there is ample evidence for phrases in personal letters that were common in Manichaean scripture(s) and unattested or uncommon in the surviving corpus of Greek and Coptic papyrus letters, such as the allusion to the "Father, the God of truth" in the letter cited in the introduction. In Chapters 4 and 5, I have treated this repertoire less as a deliberate marker of a distinct religious identity and more as an in-group language that followed from the socialization in a group style. Presumably, the authors and scribes copied elements from the style of the letters of the elect, from Mani's *Epistles*, and the speech patterns they picked up during the liturgy. As a result, readers familiar with this group style would pick up on the groupness carried in the linguistic variation or in the choice of Coptic as a literary language. I am less certain about the direct correlation of these elements with the activation of Manichaeanness. Rather, I suggest that the recipients would have picked up a sense of commonality and connectedness that included identifications with the family, village, and a religious community.

Talking Manichaeanness could strengthen group bonds and contribute to the notion of a coherent Manichaean group. In turn, this groupness led to the possibility of institutionally mediated choices, like burials or alms gifts.

10.1.2 Choosing Manichaeanness: Almsgiving and Burial Customs

Demarcated religious groups in Late Antiquity were not only a matter of talk. Imagined religious communities were real for people in their day-to-day life. They had a profound impact on everyday actions, and not only as repertoires to draw on when writing a letter. I have sketched several situations in which the religious group was implied in the decisions of Kellites, but I have also noted the frequent absence of any institutionally mediated choices. Most remarkable was the limited (but not nonexistent) impact on giving and burial customs.

Giving was an institutionally mediated choice. Manichaean theological texts presented a full ideology of giving in which these social interactions were strongly related to the salvation of the cosmos. Many features from this ideology are attested in the Kellis papyri: the division in catechumens and elect is visible and there are clearly letters with requests for alms. It is therefore not unlikely that some Kellites donated food or other commodities for specifically Manichaean reasons. Since these interactions and transactions blended and intersected with other behavioral expectations, it is not easy to discern the motivation behind gifts. My skeptical reading of some of the previously identified instances of Manichaean almsgiving in the papyri has led to the suggestion that gift exchange in Kellis was less defined by the normative framework (as presented in the *Kephalaia*) and more by the social and geographical circumstances of the village. In this multilayered world, religious ideas and practices were not pregiven constructs acted out or put to use in an alternative domain of everyday life, without conscious reflection, but they belonged to the sphere of daily interactions between individuals.[6] The interaction between various socializations and

[6] Modern lived religion studies have highlighted individual variation and the situational nature of religious talk. On the relative absence of explicit religious identification and discussion, see C. Bender, *Heaven's*

social roles also suggests that it is not likely that the Manichaeans constituted an exclusive community. Against the interpretation of Majella Franzmann, I have argued that it is most likely that the Manichaeans of Kellis continued most of their interactions with their (non-Manichaean) family and neighbors on the basis of their shared village identification. Even though the religious group norms may have led to an exclusive stance, as for example suggested by Augustine, the impact of the other social factors must have led to a continuation of gifts beyond the community's boundaries. It appears, moreover, that catechumens also gave to other catechumens, a type of gift exchange that is hardly discussed in their own religious writings (with the possible exception of 1 Keph. 77). While none of these interactions and gifts directly contradict the institutionally mediated choices or expectations, they attest to a full spectrum of social actions, in religiously motivated gifts had a rather limited place.

Death ritual is the second cluster of actions where the impact of Manichaeanness on individual choices was examined. It included rituals surrounding the deathbed, burial, and commemoration. Manichaeans had elaborate ideas about what happened to the soul after death, just like many of their contemporaries in fourth- and fifth-century Egypt. This is visible in the Kellis papyri, which include a short hymn (or prayer) listing the seven stages of the postmortem journey of the soul. These stages have also been found in various Manichaean psalms, studied by Siegfried Richter. My exploration of the Kellis Psalms has shown that some of these songs were also known in the village. I have followed Richter's identification of this ritual setting as a commemorative event. The Manichaeans supported the ascent of the soul through the performance of commemorative rituals, including singing songs and giving alms. Additionally, I have argued for the existence of another ritual moment at the deathbed, during the precious moment that the soul left the body. Although there is less information available about this ritual practice, the grief expressed in one of the Kellis letters points to the importance of the ritualization of these last moments on earth. Matthaios's grief about the absence of the elect, as well as the entire community of catechumens, at the moment of departure shows that Manichaeannes was sky-high in these instances. Choosing Manichaeanness meant embracing the efficacy of the songs and prayers of the elect as potent powers, capable of affecting the afterlife of the soul.

The activation of Manichaeanness in dealing with death is, however, but one side of the story. What the sources fail to tell us is what Manichaeans thought about burial. Without textual indications of what Manichaean burials looked like, it is impossible to identify Manichaean tombs or interments. Despite some suggestions by archaeologists about the poverty of graves, the orientation of the body, and the absence of burial goods, the archaeological remains of tombs and cemeteries at Kellis remain silent on this issue. Either the specific religious practices left no trace, or Manichaeans followed local customs without religiously marked and tangible variations. With our current set of textual and material

---

Kitchen. Living Religion at God's Love We Deliver (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 140ff. Methodological reflections on the translation from observations of action in one situation to another situation, see D. Trouille and I. Tavory, "Shadowing: Warrrants for Intersituational Variation in Ethnography," *Sociological Methods & Research* (2016): 1-27.

evidence, it is impossible to locate and identify Manichaean graves. I have argued that it is most probable that they followed local burial customs. There is no reason for speculative connections with late Chinese sources on putative Manichaean funeral rituals. In the specific circumstances of the Dakhleh Oasis, Manichaeans participated in the common burial practices that they shared with most of their neighbors, with a relatively poor treatment of the body and a simple grave without tangible religious elements in the material culture or orientation. Whether these decisions were made deliberately, based on specific theological ideas about the value of the body, cannot be determined with certainty, especially since it is unknown what Manichaeans would have said or done at the site of the tomb. With the current state of our sources, choosing Manichaeanness in burial customs remains invisible.

10.1.3 Performing Manichaeanness: Communal Gatherings and Psalm Singing

A close affiliation with the Manichaean group was performed at various occasions: in regular communal gatherings, in the daily prayers, and in offering hospitality to the elect. The performance of these actions involved a redefinition of the communal identity in light of Manichaean notions about voluntary poverty, reciprocal obligations, and the salvation of Light. Manichaean psalms and prayers not only narrated the Manichaean cosmology, thus reiterating important ideas, but were also performed during intense moments of groupness. These songs were sung in unison or antiphonally, presumably accompanied by ritual gestures and acclamations like "Yes and Amen" (1 Keph. 122). The combination of bodily experience, singing, and the perceived efficacy of these acclamations contributed to the activation of Manichaeanness and the socialization of the self within the community. The same holds true for the daily prayers. By prostrating themselves thirty times during the three sets of daily prayers, catechumens acted on their self-identification as Manichaeans, presumably even within communal settings.

I have argued that the participation in these gatherings and the bodily experience of taking part in the singing, praying, and prostrating affected groupness. There are, however, also three reasons for a limited impact of these gatherings. In the first place, it is unclear how regularly these gatherings took place and how many people participated in them. Second, we do not know to what extent all participants understood what was going on. In particular, the use of Syriac could have hampered the audience's understanding of the liturgy. Comparative studies of Ancient Christian preachers and their audiences suggest that it would be a mistake to consider the audience as eager pupils who would adjust their behavior in response to what was being said.[7] The geographical situation of the oasis, third, led to a lifestyle in which traveling was of fundamental importance, which meant that people like Makarios and Pamour could not frequently attend the communal gatherings in Kellis. Nonattendance, rather than attendance, may have been the norm.

Other opportunities for the performance of Manichaean group identity were connected with the hospitality for the elect and communal traveling. Hospitality may have played a role in the Kellis community, but is never explicitly expressed in the material.

[7] Sandwell, *Religious Identity*, 16. See section 7.5.3 above on the pedagogical and didactical function of psalms during the liturgy.

Traveling with members of the elect, on the other hand, is visible. Some of these journeys had specifically religious functions. Piene traveled with the Teacher to learn to read in every church. He may even have been trained as one of the new members of the elect. Matthaios's journeys with Apa Lysimachos and Philammon's association with the elect appear to have been less religiously motivated. They may have traveled together, taken care of the elect, shared in songs, meals, or confession, but at the same time they conducted business at the various markets in the Nile valley. I have stressed that there is no explicit trace of any missionary activity. The postulated connection between mission and the production of books is therefore entirely dictated by hagiographical naratives and reports about the Manichaean tradition. It is never explicitly found in the Kellis letters, even though there are numerous references to scribal activity and the circulation of Manichaean books.

Rather than directly informing us about the missionary practices of Manichaeans in Egypt, the passages concerning the production of texts have been read as revealing that Manichaean catechumens in Kellis were involved in the reproduction of texts that may have belonged to the inner core of books attributed to Mani (*The Gospel*, Mani's *Epistles*, and perhaps the *Psalms and Prayers*). The scribal activity associated with these texts, accordingly, knew moments of intense Manichaeanness when the scribe stepped into the Manichaean authorial tradition to participate in the recounting of Mani's wisdom. Two specific literary situations indexed Manichaeanness. The first situation was the public reading of Manichaean texts by the ecclesiastical reader or lector, which was a major event. Especially remarkable is that one of the Kellis letters suggests that the local community was in touch with a lector who read texts in Syriac. I have listed the various fragments of documents in Kellis that included Syriac writing and concluded that the public performance of reading a Syriac text in a communal gathering would have been a very marked and explicit moment connoting the imagined Manichaean community and its roots in third-century Syria and Mesopotamia. The second situation comprised the production of Manichaean texts and its ritualization through scribal practice. I have suggested that this may have included memorization and chanting, making it in itself a performance of a marked Manichaean groupness.

10.1.4 Consuming Manichaeanness: Reading and Copying Texts

In many respects, the Kellis letters have shown the absence of sharp demarcations between a Manichaean group and the outside world. There is hardly any evidence for the consumption of religiously marked products: there is, for example, no trace of specifically Manichaean art or architecture. Economic interactions crossed religious categories, and consumption habits based on the material culture of the houses in Kellis show no visible distinctions from other houses. If Manichaeanness affected what ancient Kellites bought, or ate, it remains invisible in our sources.

The only instance in which we could possibly detect the expression of religious difference through consumption habits is in the local reading habits. We do not know who was responsible for the production of the documents found in Houses 1–5, but the correlation between the wood used for some of the inscribed wooden boards and the acacia wood found among the carpenter tools in House 2 suggests that they were probably locally produced. I have suggested to approach these documents, as well as the papyrological

passages pertaining to scribal activity, as revealing the local reading practices of the Kellites in Houses 1–3. These reading practices conveyed the impression that on the one hand, Manichaean literature was read and copied by these individuals, while on the other hand, they showed that a wider range of texts were read and studied. Some of the documents belonged to Classical literature, such as the work of Homer and the orations of Isocrates. Other texts are best described as biblical or apocryphal texts (the compilation based on the *Acts of John* and the fragments of two NT letters). Likewise, some of the Manichaean letter authors were involved in the production of amulets and spells (mostly without clear indication of the religious background of the client). In many ways, then, the situation at Kellis resembles BeDuhn's characterization of Augustine, cited at the outset of this chapter. Just like Augustine, some of these Kellites read widely, thereby including the consumption of Manichaean texts in a broader spectrum of learning.

The scribal activity performed in Kellis shows that catechumens were deeply involved in the reproduction and study of Manichaean texts. I have argued that Makarios's letters reveal how various Manichaean books could be requested and sent to his son Matthaios for scribal practice. The documents found in Houses 1–3 also include Manichaean texts on papyrus and wood. Many of these are liturgical texts, mostly psalms for communal singing or texts used as examples in writing excersises. Some papyri, on the other hand, contained doctrinal texts, such as Mani's *Epistles* and a doctrinal text resembling the *Kephalaia.* The most remarkable discovery is the wooden board with a Greek version of the daily Manichaean prayers that are also known in Middle Persian and Arabic versions. The presence of these documents points to the long transregional connections of the Manichaean tradition. The Manichaeans of Kellis were able to draw on the liturgical traditions of the Manichaean Psalmbook as well as the religious traditions behind the *Epistles*. In this respect, the documents show the influence of a marked and group-specific religious tradition, in which books played a major role. They show that even at the fringes of the Roman Empire, in the western desert of Egypt, individuals followed the traditions associated with the Apostle of Light.

10.1.5 Summary

This examination of the full corpus of published texts from Kellis has offered an almost mundane image of a Manichaean life *from below*. For most of the letter authors, Manichaeism was one of the affiliations, but it did not pervade everyday life in all aspects.

Rather than providing a full-fledged counternarrative, standing in stark contrast with the institutional regulations of a Manichaean life, this reconstruction of Manichaeanness in everyday life offers a mixture of instances with marked Manichaean language and rituals, and situations without any trace of this repertoire. There is no indication of religious conflict, few hints of boundary maintenance, and little explicit discussion of what went on in religious gatherings. This rather limited role of religious groupness concurs with the observations of Eric Rebillard about the Christians of second-, third- and fourth-century North Africa. Although his corpus of texts required a different type of approach, it has yielded similar conclusions. Christianness, in his analysis, was only intermittently given salience in everyday life, as individuals were also involved in social groups that were not

directly based on Christian texts or institutions. He concludes that "when I looked for contexts in which Christianity was the principle of group formation, I not only found very few, but I also concluded that instances of groupness did not necessarily last."[8] In contrast to the strongly religious portrayal of everyday life engagements in late antique homilies and other prescriptive texts, "religion and religious affiliation were neither the unique nor even the primary principles of action for Christians."[9]

The same dichotomy is visible for Manichaeans. Papyrus letters convey a distinctly different picture from most literary sources. Whereas in literary and historical texts religious situations take a central stage, the role of Manichaeanness in the personal letters from Kellis is occasional at best, often embedded in side references without additional or situational information. In this respect, it may be useful to call to mind Brubaker's warning that if we try "to understand *how* ethnicity matters […] it is important to bear in mind *how little* it mattered to much of everyday experience."[10] My historical enquiry into religion and everyday life resembles Brubaker's analysis of the lived experience of modern ethnicity. Despite the totalizing narrative or views of political and religious leaders, the everyday preoccupations of ordinary people only occasionally show the salience of elite classifications and boundaries. The grand narratives told by political or religious leaders were not without influence, but they cannot be taken as neutral representations of local realities. By focusing, instead, on individuals, I have illustrated where and when they called on these classifications and repertoires, while at the same time they frequently worked with other frames of reference.

As the papyri derive from several generations, these conclusions are in need of quantification. The earliest generation of Manichaeans, presumably those under the patronage of Pausanias (in the 330s and 340s) may have had other experiences than those associated with Makarios and his children (in the 350s and 360s), or those who had to abandon the village in a time of changing environmental and legal conditions (in the 370s and 380s).

My skeptical position concerning groupism has steered this research away from the a priori assumption of a coherent Manichaean tradition with well-demarcated religious groups toward more fluid and situational models of religious identification and behavior. It has revealed that our reconstruction of Late Antiquity as the cradle of "secondary" religion, with its autonomous religious groups, is a rather limited—or selective—image of what went on in the lives and minds of these people. On the one hand, these secondary religious communities are the primary key to understanding late antique Egyptian society, but on the other hand, they are optical illusions, evoked by religious leaders and their textual resources. Underneath the discursive construction of religious groupness existed a variety of individual choices, the intermittence of religious identifications, and the wider array of religious group styles and repertoires that could be called on to bring structure to everyday experiences. In result, this study has shown gaps in the so-called "religious bias" of the study of late antique

[8] Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 93.
[9] Rebillard, *Christians and their Many Identities*, 93.
[10] Brubaker et al., *Everyday Ethnicity*, 206.

Egypt, as if the period and region were more defined by monasticism, Christological controversies, and theological developments, than other parts of the ancient world.[11]

What we need to capture, therefore, is the "sociological untidiness" of ancient religious communities: the local diversity and individual agency at the level of the everyday practices.[12] Much of everyday life was devoid of group-specific religious inflections, but it could be highly salient in certain situations. Against previous interpretations of the Manichaeans at Kellis as a "sectarian," "exclusive," and "persecuted" community, I have stressed that talking, choosing, performing, and consuming Manichaeanness had its place, but simply not as the primary mode of all individual action. Kellites were Kellites, even when they praised Mani on Mondays and prostrated themselves while facing the sun and the moon.

10.2 The Late Antique Transformation of Religion

The second aim of this dissertation was to locate and contextualize the transformation(s) of "religion" in a specific historical context. In Chapter 2, I characterized this large-scale transformation as one from a world in which religion was embedded within preexisting social formations to one in which competing religious groups became organized as discrete social units. This latter type is frequently called "secondary" or "utopian" religion, as the organizational differentiation was closely tied to a changing world view. Rather than preserving the status quo, these new group-specific religions developed universal claims, challenging the social order and emphasizing an exclusive concept of truth. This type of religion is exemplified in Manichaeism. Theological texts such as the *Kephalaia* have shown the explicit conceptualization of the Manichaean church as an autonomous, religiously defined group, claiming superiority over all previous religions because of their universal wisdom and organizational strength.

While Manichaeism generally corresponds to many characterizations of "secondary" or "utopian" religion, the story *on the ground* appears to have been different. The microhistorical analysis of the Kellis letters has shown that the authors only intermittently associated with others in Manichaean terms, as well as with the transregional Manichaean tradition. On the one hand, their religion was no longer coterminous with their village or ethnic identity; it was a marked choice against the long village tradition of venerating Tutu. On the other hand, this local community was not crystalized into a coherent and well-demarcated religious group with explicit labels for insiders and outsiders. Building on Lahire's theoretical work, I have suggested that the regular interactions with neighbors, their business ventures, or legal appeals almost never asked for the activation of religious dispositions. Rather than accepting the totalizing vision of religious groupism, I have highlighted the infrequency and situatedness of religious identifications or group norms. As this conclusion seems to be at odds with the common message conveyed in studies of "secondary religion" and the tendency to focus on processes of religious-identity formation

[11] See the complaints in A. Papaconstantinou, "Egypt," In *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. S. F. Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 197.

[12] Peter Brown has emphasized the "sociological untidiness of the Christian communities of around 400 AD." Brown, "From Civic Euergetism to Christian Giving," 29.

in Late Antiquity, the following sections will explore three—potentially related—explanations of this paradoxical situation.

10.2.1 Conflict Model: Lived Religion as Resistance

The first and easiest explanation is to place lived religious practice in a binary opposition with institutional, textual, or elite religion. Some of the studies after the quotidian turn have followed this route by highlighting the manifold instances in which individual practices deviated from institutional norms and models. This has been a necessary redirection of focus, to remind us that the words of religious leaders cannot be taken to represent their entire community. Rather than finding theologically matching practices and ideas, these studies have focused on deviant voices that illustrate the diversity and complexity within religious traditions. Frequently, these deviant voices has been interpreted as a type of resistance against the dominant frame: the voice of single individuals against the current of a powerful institution.[13] The downside of this conflict model is the way it equates lived religious practice with deviance or resistance (see also Chapter 2), while concealing how frequently lived religious practices follow and absorb religious group norms, or how little religious leaders sometimes knew of the so-called elite religious traditions. Rather than following this conflict model, the various chapters of Part II have tried to keep lived religion and institutional group norms together. In doing so, I have complicated the prevailing accounts of Manichaeism, highlighting situations in which religion was highly salient, as well as those instances in which it was invisible or absent. This version of a lived-religion approach, quite consciously called "everyday groupness," is more than a revival of the binary opposition between the "great tradition" and the "little tradition." Rather than juxtaposing religion and everyday life in a binary opposition, they belong together in a dialectical relationship, as everyday life is more than a site of "disruption" or resistance. It also includes instances in which institutional models are drawn on extensively.[14] This approach has allowed me to highlight where Manichaeism in Kellis was different from previous reconstructions based on theological and liturgical texts, as well as where it showed the remarkable salience of Manichaeanness. The conflict model is aimed at explaining the individual appropriation of religious ideas and practices in new and local situations, while we need an interpretative framework that can *also* incorporate the striking continuity

[13] Thomas Tweed has illustrated this with his description of a lady of Cuban descent who appropriated the site of the shrine of Our Lady of Charity of Cobre at Miami to perform Santería rituals, resisting normative Catholic interpretations of this shrine. T. Tweed, *Our Lady of the Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 45-49.

[14] Some studies of everyday Islam have been accused of treating religion as a set of abstract rules that are lived out differently in the realm of the everyday life, as if religion and the everyday stand in a binary opposition. N. Fadil and M. Fernando, "Rediscovering the 'everyday' Muslim. Notes on an Anthropological Divide," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 5, no. 2 (2015): 59-88. At pages 69-70, they accuse Samuli Schielke and others of treating everyday practices as "moments of disruption, of *not conforming* to religious norms." This characterization of Schielke, in my view, does not do justice to his attempt to rethink the relation between everyday morality and everyday Islam.

between the Greek version of the daily Manichaean prayers at Kellis and the tenth-century Arabic version reported by Ibn al-Nadim.

10.2.2 The Nature of the Sources

A second potential explanation for some of the patterns in the evidence for local Manichaeanness is the specific documentary nature of the sources. What if Manichaeanness was not highly visible in the Kellis letters because letters are not the proper place for religious bickering? What if Manichaeanness was only intermittently visible because of the documentary nature of the sources? As people say: the absence of evidence is not evidence for absence. Historical information may have disappeared during the abandonment of the village and its subsequent long history of preservation and deterioration. Information regarding religious persecution or regular conflict with Christians could have been lost, destroyed by postdeposition processes, or never recorded in such a way that it could survive the test of times. As shared information between the author and the recipients, it may not have been necessary to identify the religious affilations of social others, or discuss initiation rituals that set them apart from other villages. Would the documentary nature of these sources not explain the marked difference with the reconstructions of Manichaeism in hagiographical and theological texts?

Earlier papyrological studies have likewise observed how "ecclesiastical writers spill much ink on inner church conflicts and heresiological disputes in this period. But however large the tears such doctrinal disputes created in the intellectual and social fabric of community, they leave few, if any, traces in documentary papyri."[15] AnneMarie Luijendijk concludes that papyrological evidence for the Ancient Christians of Oxhyrynchus is skewed toward clergy in similar ways as the literary record, since it is only in relation to the nascent institutional church that religiously marked language and titles tend to be used.[16] Many issues remain invisible without this explicit connection to clergy and an institutional church. In a village like Kellis, people must have known about most practices of their neighbors, especially if this included getting up at night to pray toward the moon, or extensive scribal activities. With this background knowledge in mind, there may have been no reason for authors to make explicit statements about religious affiliation, ritual, or conflict, except for the few instances in which religious groupness was discussed specifically.

This explanation for the intermittence of religiously marked language and information in personal letters can be extended with Swidler's research into the way modern Americans employ multiple, often contradictory, cultural repertoires. She observed that many of her interlocutors did not offer coherent systems of meaning, but rather a "kaleidoscope of common sense" or "a swirling pattern of shifting justifications."[17] This incoherence of narratives does not bother them, as by keeping their options open, they can

---

[15] Luijendijk, "On and Beyond Duty," 104; Cf. Blumell, *Lettered Christians*, 154-5.

[16] A. Luijendijk, "The Dynamics of Religious Identity at Oxyrhynchus," paper read during the Leiden University conference "Late Antique Religion in Practice: Religious Identification in Late Antique Papyri" (November 2017). I also owe the emphasis on nosy neighbors to her paper. An edited volume based on this conference will be edited by Eline Scheerlinck and me.

[17] Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 182.

strive to limit the uncertainty of social interactions. Just like modern Americans, who can switch between modes of representation, identifications, and different types of logic or narrative when the situation requires alternative approaches, ancient Kellites used "strategies of network diversification" in their letters. Rather than thinking about themselves and others in strictly religious terms, the authors employed a variety of identifications, leading to the typical situation of multiple layered social interactions. They could easily switch between the various frames of reference in their letters, either in relation to the topics discussed or the aim of a section of the letter. Introductory formulas frequently employed phrases and formulas with marked religious language, while the final greeting sections were often limited to a repertoire related to the social network of family and village relations. When read together, these sections of the letter constituted a social strategy of network diversification, addressing the recipients (and bystanders) on multiple levels at the same time. Where the letters of the elect could potentially fail entirely if the recipients did not accept the religious framing as "daughters of the holy church," most everyday letters must have succeeded in their purposes because they kept multiple cultural meanings on tap. The requested support may have been sent because of the distant kinship relation, the shared village identification, or the affiliation to the Manichaean church. Appealing to more than one frame of reference enabled the letter authors to make the most out of the situation.

10.2.3 The Integrated and Segregated Mode of Everyday Religion

The previous two explanations for the intermittence of Manichaeanness in everyday life can be developed in more depth with Swidler's theoretical framework of culture in action. What if the absence or presence of Manichaean terminology points to sociopsychological patterns rather than only to epistolary conventions? Swidler's notion of "settled life" can be used to explain the relatively infrequence of explicit Manichaeanness. In periods of settled life, Swidler states, culture reinforces social action through habitual acts and common sense. For most behavioral choices, individuals simply know from experience how to proceed.[18] Rather than deliberately chosing a course of action, people follow established cultural patterns. Following her lead, we can discern two modes of everyday religious practice: the integrated and segregated mode.

The integrated and segregated mode derive from Swidler's observations on the marked difference between some of her interlocuters with regard to the way they used cultural repertoires in their daily lives. Even though all of them draw on the same cultural repertoire (she examined the way modern Americans talk about love), some fully integrated culture into their personal experience, while others seemed to keep them segregated. The segregated mode became visible when the interlocuters used elements from a cultural repertoire as "policy statements": abstract cultural formulas as substitute for personal experiences. In this mode of cultural integration, the repertoire is highly regarded, but almost as a separate domain, only marginally affecting everyday actions and choices. It is a detached but elaborate philosophy that is not engaged in the transformation of the self, but

[18] Swidler, "Culture in Action," 281.

primarily used to defend or express a stable orientation to the world.[19] Other interlocuters worked with a fully integrated mode of culture and everyday life, in which the conventional cultural repertoire was inserted into personal experiences and actively reworked into their understanding of life.[20]

Religious repertoires can be fully integrated in everyday life experiences, as well as kept more segregated from the majority of life's events. The integrated mode is part of unsettled life and requires extensive cultural work by all those involved, especially when the cultural distance between the local situation and the religious or cultural repertoire is substantial, as was the case for some of the Manichaeans in the Egyptian desert. The time and effort involved in this process means that it was primarily the elect who could have developed this integrated mode. The strict Manichaean regulations, moreover, made it imperative for them to reflect on their lifestyle and their daily interactions with others. Most catechumens, on the other hand, were expected to follow less strict ascetic rules. Even when they harmed the Living Soul, something that must have been inevitable to stay alive, they would receive forgiveness in their weekly confession rituals. These confession rituals may have spurred a more reflexive stance, but this is not frequently visible in the letters. For some of the authors, Manichaeism with its group norms was one of their affiliations, not necessarily the highest overarching identification that defined all other behavioral choices. The image that emerges from the Kellis letters is one of settled life, in which there is no urgent need to make religious affiliations explicit.

The segregated mode of religion has frequently been associated with religious behavior in modernity, but the shift toward autonomous religious groups is exactly what facilitated the conceptual segregation of group-specific practices and most everyday behavior. This has also been observed in Isabella Sandwell's comparative study of John Chrysostom, Libanius, and their respective audiences. She highlights the tension between Chrysostom's totalizing ideals and the more flexible attitude of most of his audience, who disagreed with him on the extent to which religion should permeate their lives. Instead, Sandwell argues, it is most likely that these individuals saw their religious affiliation as something that could be kept in a personal or family domain, sometimes even separate from the demands of other aspects of life.[21] Religious groupness was "something that had the minimum impact on how they lived their social lives and [they] would on different occasions position themselves within different forms of social organization *as it suited them*."[22] Rather than thinking about competing groups or conflicting, crosscutting social identities, Mairs's notion of "separation identities" may be closer to the mark, designating how infrequently the identification as Manichaeans affected their affiliation with the village or the family. Lahire's theoretical framework of multiple identifications, matching dispositions with the needs of situations, offers a fruitful perspective on the intermittence of these identifications in

[19] Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 53-55.

[20] Swidler, *Talk of Love*, 55-7.

[21] I. Sandwell, "John Chrysostom's Audiences and his Accusations of Religious Laxity," In *Religious Diversity in Late Antiquity*, ed. D. M. Gwynn and S. Bangert (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 540.

[22] Sandwell, *Religious Identity*, 242.

everyday life. Manichaeanness was occasionally salient, but frequently part of settled life in which explicit and distinctive religious behavior was not necessary. Sandwell explains her observations about settled life in Bourdieuan terms. Religious behavior derived from the embodied dispositions that have been turned into a second nature.[23] Bodily routines and mundane practices belonging to the almost boring repetition of everyday life are thus considered field-specific presuppositions that "go without saying," or belong to a "practical sense," or "feel for the game" that enables individuals to recognize situations and anticipate successful responses within various social environments and events.[24]

Finally, what would have happened to the Manichaeans when they had to abandon Kellis and move to Aphrodite or other places of the Nile valley? There is, unfortunately, no trace of them in the papyri from the beginning of the fifth century, but we can be sure that they needed new structures and rhythms to adapt to novel social environnements. In light of the aforementioned theoretical suggestions, as well as the legal developments of the end of the fourth century, I see three plausible options. Some may have left their Manichaean identification, especially when it became more dangerous for them to perform Manichaeanness and adhere to its group norms. Others may have integrated their religion more fully into their everyday lifestyle, either by working more closely with the Manichaean elect, or by embracing a more detailed social imaginary in which the large cosmological narrative became connected to the situation on the gound. Manichaeanness may have been transformed, from an intermittently salient identification belonging to a cluster of social identifications in the oasis to a more well-defined, totalizing, or highly integrated religious group style that came to define more aspects of daily life. One could even imagine that the compilation of the *Kephalaia* in its final form as found in the Medinet Madi collection stemmed from this end of the fourth-, beginning of the fifth-century movement toward a more explicit conceptualization of the Manichaean group identity. The identification of historical and contemporary religious groups with the forces of Darkness in the Medinet Madi documents corroborates this more explicit conceptualization of Manichaeism in contrast to religious others (1 Keph. 38, and 59 and 122, see also Hom. 15.24–18.26). Future studies will have to examine to what extent these antagonistic conceptualizations went back to pre-fifth century texts and traditions. Unfortunately, little is known about this postulated Manichaeization of everyday life, but parallels are visible in the slow process of Christianization in Egypt.

A final strategy of latter-day Manichaeans was one that kept bishops up at night: crypto-Manichaeism. Some Manichaean ascetics during the fifth century decided to conceal their religious affiliation to avoid persecution. They presented themselves as proper Christian ascetics, living in cenobitic monasteries, while secretly devoting themselves to the teachings of Mani. This latter type of Manichaeism is the zenith of unsettled life, which required a constant vigilance to uphold both repertoires, even when the various obligations

[23] P. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 66-79; H. Kupari, "Lifelong Minority Religion: Routines and Reflexivity: A Bourdieuan Perspective on the Habitus of Elderly Finnish Orthodox Christian Women," *Religion* 46, no. 2 (2016): 145.

[24] Kupari, *Lifelong Religion as Habitus*, 23; Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 66.

and schemes of expectations led to daily conflict and concealment. The problematic plurality of investments in this setting could not be solved in the same way as the flexible negotiation of roles and identifications in Kellis.[25] Other studies will have to take up the complex relation between imagined threats in narratives of crypto-Manichaeism and real historical processes of secrecy and concealment.[26] The unsettled nature of intentional concealment, however, stands in stark contrast with the intermittence of Manichaeanness in everyday life in Kellis. While stories of crypto-Manichaeism need an explicit, marked, and well-defined religious identity, the Kellis letters convey the impression of settled life, with few conflicts between religious actions and expectations, and the common and communal way of life in a fourth-century Egyptian village.

[25] Lahire, "Habitus," 353-4.

[26] Matsangou, "Real and Imagined Manichaeans."

Bibliography

Adam, A., ed. *Texte zum Manichäismus*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969.

Adams, C. "'There and Back Again': Getting around in Roman Egypt." In *Travel and Geography in Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Adams and R. Laurence, 138-66. London: Routledge, 2001.

———. *Land Transport in Roman Egypt: A Study of Economics and Administration in a Roman Province*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Adams, E. *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016.

Albrecht, J., C. Degelmann, V. Gasparini, R. Gordon, M. Patzelt, G. Petridou, R. Raja, *et al.* "Religion in the Making: The Lived Ancient Religion Approach." *Religion* 48, no. 2 (2018): 1-26.

Alcock, A. "The Agape." *Vigiliae Christianae* 54, no. 2 (2000): 208-9.

Alcock, A., and I. Gardner. "The Coptic Economic Texts from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)." In *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit*, edited by S. Emmel, M. Krause, S. G. Richter and S. Schaten, 231-40. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999.

Aldridge, R. E. "Peter and the "Two Ways." *Vigiliae Christianae* 53, no. 3 (1999): 233-64.

Alfaric, P. *Les écritures manichéennes*. Paris: Emile Nourry, 1918.

Alikin, V. A. *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Allberry, C. R. C. "Das manichäische Bema-Fest." *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 37, no. 1 (1938): 2-10.

———, ed. *A Manichaean Psalm-Book. Part II*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938.

Alston, R. "Houses and Households in Roman Egypt." In *Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and Beyond*, edited by A. Wallace-Hadrill and R. Laurence, 25-39. Portsmouth: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1997.

———. "Searching for the Romano-Egyptian Family." In *The Roman Family in the Empire: Rome, Italy, and Beyond*, edited by M. George, 129-57. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Ammerman, N. "Introduction: Observing Religious Modern Lives." In *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*, edited by N. Ammerman, 3-18. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 1991.

Aravecchia, N. *Christians of the Western Desert in Late Antiquity: The Fourth-Century Church Complex of Ain El-Gedida, Upper Egypt*. University of Minnesota Ph.D. dissertation: University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, 2009.

Aravecchia, N., T. L. Dupras, D. Dzierzbicka, and L. Williams. "The Church at Amheida (Ancient Trimithis) in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt. A Bioarchaeological Perspective on an Early Christian Mortuary Complex." *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* 9 (2015): 21-43.

Arnold-Döben, L. R. V. *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus*. Bonn: Religionswissenschaftliches Seminar der Universität Bonn, in Kommission bei Brill, Köln, 1978.

Arnold, D. *Temples of the Last Pharaohs*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Arzt-Grabner, P. ""Brothers" and "Sisters" in Documentary Papyri and in Early Christianity." *Revista Biblica* 50 (2002): 185-204.

———. "Why Did Early Christ Groups Still Attend Idol Meals? Answers from Papyrus Invitations." *Early Christianity* 7 (2016): 508-29.

Ashmore, R. D., K. Deaux, and T. McLaughlin-Volpe. "An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality." *Psychological Bulletin* 130, no. 1 (2004): 80-114.

Asmussen, J. P. *Xuāstvānīft: Studies in Manichaeism*. Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1965.

———. *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings*. Delmar: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975.

Assmann, J. *The Price of Monotheism*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Ast, R., and R. S. Bagnall. "New Evidence for the Roman Garrison of Trimithis." *Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 30 (2015): 1-4.

Aufderheide, A. C., L. L. Cartmell, M. Zlonis, and P. Sheldrick. "Mummification Practices at Kellis Site in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 31 (2004): 63-77.

Aufderheide, A. C., M. Zlonis, L. L. Cartmell, and M. R. Zimmerman. "Human Mummification Practices at Ismant el-Kharab." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 85 (1999): 197-210.

Aune, D. "'Magic' in Early Christianity and Its Ancient Mediterranean Context: A Survey of Some Recent Scholarship." *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 24 (2007): 229-94.

Badone, E., ed. *Religious Orthodoxy & Popular Faith in European Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Bagnall, R. S. "Models and Evidence in the Study of Religion in Late Roman Egypt." In *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, edited by J. Hahn, S. Emmel and U. Gotter, 23-41. Leiden: Brill.

———. *Egypt in Late Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

———. *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History*. London: Routledge, 1995.

———. *The Kellis Agricultural Account Book*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.

———. "The Camp at Hibis." In *Essays and Texts in Honor of J. David Thomas*, edited by T. Gagos and R. S. Bagnall, 3-10. Oakville: The American Society of Papyrologists, 2001.

———. "Linguistic Change and Religious Change: Thinking About the Temples in the Fayoum in the Roman Period." In *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis*, edited by G. Gabra, 11-19. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2005.

———. "SB 6.9025, Cotton, and the Economy of the Small Oasis." *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 45 (2008): 21-30.

———. *Early Christian Books in Egypt*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

———. *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

———. *Eine Wüstenstadt. Leben und Kultur in einer ägyptischen Oase im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013.

Bagnall, R. S., N. Aravecchia, R. Cribiore, P. Davoli, O. E. Kaper, and S. McFadden, eds. *An Oasis City*. New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University Press, 2015.

Bagnall, R. S., and R. Cribiore. *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt. 300 BC-AD 800*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2006.

Bagnall, R. S., and B. W. Frier. *The Demography of Roman Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Bagnall, R. S., and G. Ruffini. *Amheida I. Ostraka from Trimithis, Volume 1*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

———. *Ostraka from Trimithis Volume 1: Texts from the 2004-2007 Seasons*. New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World and New York University Press, 2012.

Bagnall, R. S., and K. A. Worp. "ΤΕΤΡΑΧΡΥΣΟΝ." *Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 15 (2000): 3-6.

Bagnall, R. S., and K. A. Worp. "Two 4th Century Accounts from Kellis." In *Papyri in Honorem Johannis Bingen Octogenarii*, edited by H. Melaerts., 495-509. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.

Bagnall, R. S., K. A. Worp, and C. A. Hope. "Family Papers from Second-Century A.D. Kellis." *Chronique d'Égypte* 86 (2011): 228-53.

Bailey, L. K. *The Religious Worlds of the Laity in Late Antique Gaul*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016.

Baker-Brian, N. *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire. A Study of Augustine's Contra Adimantum*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009.

———. "Between Testimony and Rumour: Strategies of Invective in Augustine's *De Moribus Manichaeorum*." In *Purpose of Rhetoric in Late Antiquity*, edited by A. J. Q. Puertas, 31-53. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

———. "'Putrid Boils and Sores, and Burning Wounds in the Body': The Valorisation of Health and Illness in Late Antique Manichaeism." *Harvard Theological Review* 109, no. 3 (2016): 422-46.

———. "Mass and Elite in Late Antique Religion: The Case of Manichaeism." In *Mass and Elite in the Greek and Roman Worlds: From Sparta to Late Antiquity*, edited by R. Evans, 165-84. London: Routledge, 2017.

———. "A New Religion? The Emergence of Manichaeism in Late Antiquity." In *A Companion to Religion in Late Antiquity*, edited by J. Lössl and N. J. Baker-Brian, 319-43. Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2018.

Baker-Brian, N. J. *Manichaeism. An Ancient Faith Rediscovered*. London: T&T Clark, 2011.

Baker, W., and D. Bowie. "Religious Affiliation as a Correlate of Linguistic Behavior." *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 15, no. 2 (2010): 1-10.

Bartelink, G. "Repression von Häretikern und anderen religiösen Gruppierungen im späteren Altertum, in der Sprache wiederspiegelt." In *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, edited by A. C. Geljon and R. Roukema, 185-97. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Barton, C. A., and D. Boyarin. *Imagine No Religion. How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016.

Barton, T. *Ancient Astrology*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Beard, M., J. North, and S. Price. *Religions of Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Beck, R. "The Anabibazontes in the Manichaean *Kephalaia*." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 69 (1987): 193-96.

BeDuhn, J. D. "Magical Bowls and Manichaeans." In *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, edited by M. Meyer and P. A. Mirecki, 419-34. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

———. "Eucharist or Yasna? Antecedents of the Manichaean Food Ritual." In *Studia Manichaica IV*, edited by R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann and P. Zieme, 14-36. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000.

———. *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual*. London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.

———. "The Metabolism of Salvation: Manichaean Concepts of Human Physiology." In *The Light and the Darkness*, edited by P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn, 5-37. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

———. "The Cantillated Manichaean Meal Hymns of the Turfan Collection." In *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, edited by D. Durkin-Meisterernst, S. C. Raschmann, J. Wilkens, M. Yaldiz and P. Zieme, 30-36. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004.

———. "The Near Eastern Connections of Manichaeans Confessionary Practice." *Proceedings of the ARAM Eighteenth International Conference: The Manichaeans* 16, no. 2 (2004): 161-77.

———. "The Leap of the Soul." In *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della ricerca*, edited by A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo, 9-26. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

———. "The Domestic Setting of Manichaean Cultic Associations in Roman Late Antiquity." *Archive für Religionsgeschichte* 10 (2008): 259-71.

———. "The Manichaean Jesus." In *Alternative Christs*, edited by O. Hammer, 51-70. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

———. *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373-388 C.E.* . Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

———. "Digesting the Sacrifices: Ritual Internalization in Jewish, Hindu, and Manichaean Traditions." In *Religion and Identity in South Asia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Patrick Olivelle*, edited by S. Lindquist, 301-19. London: Anthem, 2011.

———. *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, Volume 2: Making a 'Catholic' Self, 388–401 C.E.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

———. "The Manichaean Weekly Confession Ritual." In *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature*, edited by A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw and J. D. Turner, 271-99. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

———. "Mani and the Crystallization of the Concept of 'Religion' in Third Century Iran." In *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, edited by I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn and P. Dilley, 247-75. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

———. "Parallels between Coptic and Iranian *Kephalaia*: Goundesh and the King of Touran." In *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, edited by I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn and P. Dilley, 52-74. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

———. "Am I a Christian? The Individual at the Manichaean-Christian Interface." In *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity*, edited by J. Rüpke and E. Rebillard, 31-53. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015.

———. "The Nature of the Manichaean Soul." In *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, edited by Team Turfanforschung, 39-50. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017.

BeDuhn, J. D., and G. Hodgins. "The Date of the Manichaean Codices from Medinet Madi, and Its Significance." In *Manichaeism East and West*, edited by S. N. C. Lieu, 10-28. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Beek, M. v. "Beyond Identity Fetishism: "Communal" Conflict in Ladakh and the Limits of Autonomy." *Cultural Anthropology* 15, no. 4 (2001): 525-69.

Bell, C. *Ritual. Perspectives and Dimensions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Bender, C. *Heaven's Kitchen: Living Religion at God's Love We Deliver*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Benkato, A. "Sogdian Letter Fragments in Manichaean Script." *Studia Iranica* 45 (2016): 197-220.

Bergamasco, M. "P.Kell.G. 19.A, Appendix." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 121 (1998): 193-96.

Berger, P. L., and T. Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books, 1967.

Bermejo-Rubio, F. "Further Remarks on the Manichaean Nature of ΕΥΧΗ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΒΟΛΩΝ (P.Kell.Gr. 98)." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 168 (2009): 221-38.

———. "'I Worship and Glorify': Manichaean Liturgy and Piety in Kellis' Prayer of the Emanations." In *Practicing Gnosis*, edited by A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw and J. D. Turner, 249-70. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

———. "Primal Man, Son of God: From Explicit to Implicit Christian Elements in Manichaeism." In *Mani in Dublin*, edited by S. G. Richter, C. Horton and K. Ohlhafer, 34-46. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Berzon, T. S. *Classifying Christians: Ethnography, Heresiology, and the Limits of Knowledge in Late Antiquity*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2016.

Beskow, P. "The Theodosian Laws against Manichaeism." In *Manichaean Studies. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism*, edited by P. Bryder, 1-11. Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988.

Beyer, P. "Globalization and Glocalization." In *The Sage Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, edited by J. A. Beckford and J. Demerat, 98-117. London: SAGE, 2007.

Birrell, M. "Excavations in the Cemeteries of Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and A. J. Mills, 29-41. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

Blanchard, M. J. "Sarabaitae and Remnuoth. Coptic Considerations." In *The World of Early Egyptian Christianity*, edited by J. E. Goehring and J. A. Timbie, 49-60. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007.

Blumell, L. H. *Lettered Christians*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

———. "The Message and the Medium: Some Observations on Epistolary Communication in Late Antiquity." *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 10 (2014): 24-67.

———. "A New Jewish Epitaph Commemorating Care for Orphans." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 47, no. 3 (2016): 310-29.

Blumell, L. H., and T. A. Wayment. *Christian Oxyrhynchus: Texts, Documents, and Sources*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2015.

Böhlig, A. "Neue *Kephalaia* des Mani." In *Mysterion und Wahrheit: gesammelte Beiträge zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte*, edited by A. Böhlig, 252-66. Leiden: Brill, 1968.

———. "Ja und Amen in manichäischer deutung." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 58 (1985): 59-70.

———. "Zum Selbstverständnis des Manichäismus." In *A Green Leaf. Papers in Honour of Professor Jes P. Asmussen*, edited by W. Sundermann, J. Duchesne-Guillemin and F. Vahman, 317-38. Leiden: Brill, 1988.

———. "Neue Initiativen zur erschließung der koptisch-manichäischen Bibliothek von Medinet Madi." *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 80, no. 3 (1989): 240-62.

———. "Zur Facsimileausgabe der Dubliner Manichaica." In *Studia Manichaica. II. Internationaler Kongreß Zum Manichäismus*, edited by G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit, 63-75. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992.

Boin, D. "Hellenistic 'Judaism' and the Social Origins of the 'Pagan-Christian' Debate." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 22, no. 2 (2014): 167-96.

Boozer, A. L. "Frontiers and Borderlands in Imperial Perspectives: Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier." *American Journal of Archaeology* 117 (2013): 275-92.

———. "Urban Change at Late Roman Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt)." In *Egypt in the First Millennium AD: Perspectives from New Fieldwork*, edited by E. O'Connell, 23-42. Leuven: Peeters, 2014.

———. *Amheida II: A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis / Amheida House B2*. New York: The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World and New York University Press, 2015.

———. "Woven Material." In *A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis / Amheida House B2*, edited by A. L. Boozer, 397-404. New York: New York University Press / Ancient World Digital Library, 2015.

———. "Towards an Archaeology of Household Relationships in Roman Egypt." In *Mediterranean Families in Antiquity: Households, Extended Families, and Domestic Space*, edited by S. R. Huebner and G. Nathan, 174-203. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017.

Boud'hors, A. "Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VIIe-VIIIe siècles)." In *"Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...": Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistique, romaine et byzantine*, edited by A. Delattre and P. Heilporn, 149-61. Bruxelles: Association Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 2008.

———. "SBKopt. III 1314 reconsidéré: une autre attestation des 'solitaires'?" *Journal of Coptic studies* 14 (2012): 27-32.

———. "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 2." *Journal of Coptic studies* 18 (2016): 197-201.

Bourdieu, P. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

———. *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990

Boustan, R., and J. E. Sanzo. "Christian Magicians, Jewish Magical Idioms, and the Shared Magical Culture of Late Antiquity." *Harvard Theological Review* 110, no. 1 (2017): 217-40.

Bowen, G. E. "The Fourth-Century Churches at Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons* edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 65-85. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

———. "Texts and Textiles: A Study of the Textile Industry at Ancient Kellis." *Artefact* 24 (2002): 18-28.

———. "Early Christian Burial Practices at Kellis, Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." *Artefact* 26, no. 1 (2003): 77-88.

———. "The Small East Church at Ismant el-Kharab." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 153-65. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

———. "Some Observations on Christian Burial Practices at Kellis." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 167-82. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

———. "The Church of Deir Abu Metta and a Christian Cemetery in Dakhleh Oasis: A Brief Report." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 19 (2008): 7-16.

———. "The Spread of Christianity in Egypt: Archaeological Evidence from Dakhleh and Kharga Oases." In *Egyptian Culture and Society: Studies in Honour of Naguib Kanawati*, edited by A. Woods, A. McFarlane and S. Binder, 15-29. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010.

———. "Child, Infant and Foetal Burials of the Late Roman Period at Ismant el-Kharab Ancient Kellis, Dakhleh Oasis." In *L'enfant et la mort dans l'Antiquite II*, edited by M.D. Nenna, 351-72. Alexandria: Centre d'Etudes Alexandrines, 2012.

———. "The Church of Dayr Abu Matta and Its Associated Structures: An Overview of Four Seasons of Excavation." In *Oasis Papers 6*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 429-50. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012.

———. "Coins as Tools for Dating the Foundation of the Large East Church at Kellis: Problems and a Possible Solution." In *Oasis Papers 6*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 417-28. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012.

———. "The Crux Ansata in Early Christian Iconography: Evidence from Dakhleh and Kharga Oases." In *Le myrte et la rose. Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, edited by G. Tallet and C. Zivie-Coche, 291-303. Montpellier: CENIM, 2014.

———. "The Environment Within: The Archaeological Context of the Texts from House 3 at Kellis in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis." In *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, edited by A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope and B. E. Parr, 231-41. Leuven: Peeters, 2015.

———. "Christianity at Mut Al-Kharab (Ancient Mothis), Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." In *The Cultural Manifestations of Religious Experience. Studies in Honour of Boyo G. Ockinga*, edited by C. Di Biase-Dyson and L. Donovan, 241-48. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2017.

Bowen, G. E., W. Dolling, C. A. Hope, and P. Kucera. "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2007): 21-52.

Bowes, K. "Personal Devotions and Private Chapels." In *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity,* edited by V. Burrus, 188-210. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Bowes, K. *Private Worship, Public Values and Religious Change in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Boyarin, D. *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

Boyce, M. *The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian*. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.

———. *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*. Leiden: Brill, 1975.

Brakke, D. "Care for the Poor, Fear of Poverty, and Love of Money: Evagrius Ponticus on the Monk's Economic Vulnerability." In *Wealth and Poverty in the Early Church and Society*, edited by S. R. Holman, 76-87. Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic.

———. "Self-Differentiation among Christan Groups: The Gnostics and Their Opponents." In *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, edited by M. M. Mitchell and F. M. Young, 245-60. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

———. *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

———. *The Gnostics. Myth, Ritual and Diversity in Early Christianity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Brakke, D., and A. T. Crislip, eds. *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great: Community, Theology, and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Brand, M. "Religious Diversity in the Egyptian Desert: New Findings from the Dakhleh Oasis." *Entangled Religions* 4 (2017): 17-39.

———. "Speech Patterns as Indicators of Religious Identities: The Manichaean Community in Late Antique Egypt." In *Sinews of Empire: Networks in the Roman near East and Beyond*, edited by H. F. Teigen and E. Heldaas Seland, 105-19. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2017.

———. "In the Footsteps of the Apostles of Light: Persecution and the Manichaean Discourse of Suffering." In *Heirs of Roman Persecution: Studies on a Christian and Para-Christian Discourse in Late Antiquity* edited by E. Fournier and W. Mayer. London: Routledge, Forthcoming.

———. " 'You Being for Us Helpers, and Worthy Patrons...' (P.Kell.Copt 32). Manichaean Gift-Exchange in the Village of Kellis." In *Women in Occidental and Oriental Manichaeism: Proceedings*

of the International Conference Held at Paris Sorbonne, Paris, June 27-28, 2014, edited by M. Franzmann and M. Scopello. Leiden: Brill, Forthcoming.

Bridge, E. J. "A Difficult (?) Request to 'Beloved Father' Diogenes." *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 10 (2012): 164-69.

Brock, S. P. "Poetry and Hymnography (3): Syriac." In *The Oxford Handbook to Early Christianity*, edited by S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter, 657-71. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Brown, P. *Augustine of Hippo*. London: Faber & Faber, 1967. Reprinted in 2000 (Berkeley: University of California Press) with a new epilogue.

———. "The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire." *Journal of Roman Studies* 59, no. 1 (1969): 92-103.

———. *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

———. "The Study of Elites in Late Antiquity." *Arethusa* 33, no. 3 (2000): 321-46.

———. *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*. London: University Press of New England, 2002.

———. "Alms and the Afterlife. A Manichaean View of an Early Christian Practice." In *East & West: Papers in Ancient History Presented to Glen W. Bowersock*, edited by T.C. Brennan and H.I. Flower, 145-58. London: Harvard University Press, 2008.

———. *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

———. "From Civic Euergetism to Christian Giving." In *Religiöser Alltag in der Spätantike*, edited by P. Eich and E. Faber, 23-30. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013.

———. *The Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015.

———. *Treasure in Heaven: The Holy Poor in Early Christianity*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016.

———. "Wealth, Work and the Holy Poor: Early Christian Monasticism between Syria and Egypt." *Irish Theological Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (2016): 233-45.

———. "Rome: Sex & Freedom." *The New York Review of Books*, Dec. 19, 2013.

Brown, P., and C. Fraser. "Speech as a Marker of Situation." In *Social Markers in Speech*, edited by K. R. Scherer and H. Giles, 33-62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

Brubaker, R. "Ethnicity without Groups." *Archives européennes de sociologie* 43, no. 2 (2002): 163-89.

Brubaker, R., M. Feischmidt, J. Fox, and L. Grancea. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvian Town*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Brunner, C. J. "Liturgical Chant and Hymnody among the Manicheans of Central Asia." *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 130 (1980): 342-68.

Bruyn, T. S. d. "Philosophical Counsel Versus Customary Lament in Fourth-Century Christian Responses to Death." In *Rhetoric and Reality in Early Christianities*, edited by W. Braun, 161-86. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005.

———. "P. Ryl. III.471: A Baptismal Anointing Formula Used as an Amulet." *Journal of Theological Studies* 57, no. 1 (2006): 94-109.

———. *Making Amulets Christian: Artefacts, Scribes, and Contexts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Bryder, P. "Transmission, Translation, Transformation. Problems Concerning the Spread of Manichaeism from One Culture to Another." In *Studia Manichaica II*, edited by G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit, 334-41. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992.

———. "The Zebra as a Chameleon. Manichaean Missionary Technique." In *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by H. Preißler and H. Seiwert, 49-54. Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994.

Buc, P. *The Dangers of Ritual*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

———. "The Monster and the Critics: A Ritual Reply." *Early Medieval Europe* 15, no. 4 (2007): 441-52.

Bucking, S. "Christian Educational Texts from Egypt: A Preliminary Inventory." In *Akten Des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin 1995*, edited by B. Kramer, 132-38. Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1997.

Buckley, J. J. "Tools and Tasks: Elchasaite and Manichaean Purification Rituals." *The Journal of Religion* 66, no. 4 (1986): 399-411.

Buell, D. K. *Why This New Race*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

Burkitt, F. C. *The Religion of the Manichees*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925.

Burns, D. *Apocalypse of the Alien God. Platonism and the Exile of Sethian Gnosticism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

Burns, J. P., R. M. Jensen, and G. W. Clarke. *Christianity in Roman Africa: The Development of Its Practices and Beliefs*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2014.

Burrus, V., and R. Lyman. "Shifting the Focus of History." In *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, edited by V. Burrus, 1-26. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Cameron, A. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

Campany, R. F. "On the Very Idea of Religions (in the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)." *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287-319.

———. "Religious Repertoires and Contestation: A Case Study Based on Buddhist Miracle Tales." *History of Religions* 52, no. 2 (2012): 99-141.

———. "'Religious' as a Category: A Comparative Case Study." *Numen* 65, no. 4 (2018): 333-76.

Caner, D. *Wandering, Begging Monks. Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Canetti, L. "Christian Gift and Gift Exchange from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages." In *Gift-Giving and the 'Embedded' Economy in the Ancient World*, edited by F. Carlá and M. Giori, 337-51. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, 2014.

Chadwick, H. "The Attractions of Mani." In *Pleroma: salus carnis: homenaje a Antonio Orbe S.J.*, edited by E. Romero-Pose, 203-22. Santiago de Compostela: Publicaciones Compostellanum, 1990.

Chalcraft, D. J., ed. *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*. London: Acumen Publishing, 2007.

Chapman, R. "Death, Burial, and Social Representation." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, edited by L. Nilsson Stutz and S. Tarlow, 47-57. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Chavannes, E., and P. Pelliot. "Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine (2)." *Journal Asiatique* (1913): 99-199, 261-394.

Choat, M. "The Development and Usage of Terms for 'Monk' in Late Antique Egypt." *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 45 (2002): 5-23.

———. "Philological and Historical Approaches to the Search for the 'Third Type' of Egyptian Monk." In *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium*, edited by M. Immerzeel and J. van der Vliet, 857-65. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.

———. *Belief and Cult in Fourth-Century Papyri*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2006.

———. "Epistolary Formulae in Early Coptic Letters." In *Actes du huitième congrès international d'études coptes*, edited by N. Bosson and A. Boud'hors, 667-78. Leuven: Peeters, 2007.

———. "Language and Culture in Late Antique Egypt." In *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, edited by P. Rousseau, 342-56. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

———. "Early Coptic Epistolography." In *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, edited by A. Papaconstantinou, 153-78. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.

———. "Narratives of Monastic Genealogy in Coptic Inscriptions." *Religion in the Roman Empire* 1, no. 3 (2015): 403-30.

———. "Review of Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis, Volume 2, by Iain Gardner, Anthony Alcock, Wolf-Peter Funk." *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2016.07.24 (2016).

Choat, M., J. H. F. Dijkstra, C. Haas, and W. Tabbernee. "The World of the Nile." In *Early Christianity in Contexts. An Exploration Accross Cultures and Continents*, edited by W. Tabbernee, 181-222. Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2016.

Choat, M., and R. Yuen-Collingridge. "A Church with No Books and a Reader Who Cannot Write. The Strange Case of P.Oxy. 33.2673." *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 46 (2009): 109-38.

Christian, W. A. *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Churcher, C. S. "Faunal Remains from Kellis." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 105-13. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Churcher, C. S., and A. J. Mills. *Reports from the Survey of the Dakhleh Oasis: 1977–1987*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

Clackson, S. J. *Coptic and Greek Texts Relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo*. Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 2000.

———. "Coptic or Greek? Bilingualism in the Papyri." In *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, edited by A. Papaconstantinou, 73-104. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.

Clark, E. A. *History, Theory, Text. Historians and the Linguistic Turn*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Clarysse, W. "Literary Papyri in Documentary "Archives." In *Egypt and the Hellenistic World*, edited by E. van 't Dack, P van Dessel and W. van Gucht, 43-61. Leuven: Peeters, 1983.

———. "Emotions in Greek Private Papyrus Letters." *Ancient Society* 47 (2017): 63-86.

Cohen, A. P. *Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Routledge, 1993.

Cohen, S. "Schism and the Polemic of Heresy: Manichaeism and the Representation of Papal Authority in the *Liber Pontificalis*." *Journal of Late Antiquity* 8, no. 1 (2015): 195-230.

Cohen, S. J. D. "'Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not': How Do You Know a Jew in Antiquity When You See One?" In *Diasporas in Antiquity*, edited by S. J. D. Cohen and E. S. Frerichs, 1-45. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.

Colditz, I. "Hymnen an Šād-Ohrmezd. Ein Beitrag zur frühen Geschichte der Dinawariya in Transoxanien." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 19, no. 2 (1992): 322-41.

———. *Zur Sozialterminologie der iranischen Manichäer*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000.

———. "Manichaean Time-Management: Layman between Religious and Secular Duties." In *New Light on Manichaeism*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn, 73-100. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "The Abstract of a Religion Or: What Is Manichaeism?" In *Mani in Dublin*, edited by S. G. Richter, C. Horton and K. Ohlhafer, 47-70. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

———. "Another Fragment of the "Parable of the Female Hearer Xybr'"?" In *Studia Philologica Iranica. Gherardo Gnoli Memorial Volume*, edited by E. Morano, E. Provasi and A. V. Rossi, 63-77. Roma: Scienze E Lettere, 2017.

———. "Manichäische Parabeln - Didaktische Literatur für Hörer?" In *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, edited by Team Turfanforschung, 85-102. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017.

———. "On the Names of 'Donors' in Middle Iranian Manichaean Texts." In *Manichaeism East and West*, edited by S. N. C. Lieu, 56-67. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Collar, A. *Religious Networks in the Roman Empire: The Spread of New Ideas.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Colpe, C. *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule: Darstellung und Kritik ihres Bildes vom gnostischen Erlösermythus*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961.

———. "Die 'Himmelreise der Seele': Ausserhalb und Innerhalb der Gnosis." In *Le origini dello Gnosticismo*, edited by U. Bianchi, 81-98. Leiden: Brill, 1967.

Comaroff, J. "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution." In *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, edited by E. N. Wilmsen and P. McAllister, 162-83. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Coombs, C. E., A. L. Woodhead, and J. S. Church. "Report on the Characterization of Three Fabric Samples from Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995*

to 1998–1999 Field Seasons, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 115-19. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Cosgrove, C. H. "Clement of Alexandria and Early Christian Music." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14, no. 3 (2006): 255-82.

Coudert, M. "The Christian Necropolis of El-Deir in the North of Kharga Oasis." In *Oasis Papers 6*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 451-58. Oxford, 2013.

Coyle, J. K. "Prolegomena to a Study of Women in Manichaeism." In *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, edited by P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn, 79-92. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

———. "Foreign and Insane: Labelling Manichaeism in the Roman Empire." In *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, edited by J. K. Coyle, 3-24. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "Good Tree, Bad Tree: The Matthean/Lukan Paradigm in Manichaeism and Its Opponents." In *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, edited by J. K. Coyle, 65-88. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "The Gospel of Thomas in Manichaeism." In *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, edited by J. K. Coyle, 123-38. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "Hands and Imposition of Hands in Manichaeism." In *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, edited by J. K. Coyle, 89-99. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "Saint Augustine's Manichaean Legacy." In *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, edited by J. K. Coyle, 307-28. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "What Did Augustine Know About Manichaeism When He Wrote His Two Treatises De Moribus?" In *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, edited by J. K. Coyle, 251-63. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Cribiore, R. *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.

———. *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Cribiore, R., and P. Davoli. "New Literary Texts from Amheida, Ancient Trimithis (Dakhla Oasis, Egypt)." *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 187 (2013): 1-14.

Cribiore, R., P. Davoli, and D. M. Ratzan. "A Teacher's Dipinto from Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis)." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 21 (2008): 179-91.

Crook, Z. A. "Fictive Giftship and Fictive Friendship in Greco-Roman Society." In *The Gift in Antiquity*, edited by M. L. Satlow, 61-77. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

Crum, W. E., ed. *Coptic Manuscripts Brought from the Fayyum by W.M. Flinders Petrie*. London: Nutt, 1893.

Daniel, R. W. "P.Mich. VI 423-424 without Magic." *Zeitschrift fuïr Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 200 (2016): 389-97.

Daris, S. *Il lessico latino nel greco d'Egitto*. 2 ed. Barcelona: Institut de Teologia Fonamental, Seminari de Papirologia, 1991.

Davidsen, M. A. *The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu: A Study of Fiction-Based Religion*. Leiden: Unpublished PhD dissertation, 2014.

Davies, J. G. *Death, Burial and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity*. London: Routledge, 1999.

Davis, S. J. *Coptic Christology in Practice: Incarnation and Divine Participation in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

———. "Shenoute in Scetis: New Archaeological Evidence for the Cult of a Monastic Saint in Early Medieval Wādī al-Naṭrūn." *Coptica* 14 (2014): 1-19.

Davoli, P. "Classical Influences on the Domestic Architecture of the Graeco-Roman Fayyum Sites." In *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, edited by A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope and B. E. Parr, 173-84. Leuven: Peeters, 2015.

De Blois, F. "The Manichaean Daily Prayers." In *Studia Manichaica IV*, edited by R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann and P. Zieme, 49-54. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000.

De Certeau, M. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

De Jong, A. F. *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature*. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

———. "Sub Specie Maiestatis: Reflections on Sasanian Court Rituals." In *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, edited by M. Stausberg, 345-65. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
———. "Secrecy I: Antiquity." In *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*, edited by W. Hanegraaff, A. Faivre, R. van den Broek and J.P. Brach, 1050a-54a. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
———. "A Quodam Persa Exstiterunt: Re-Orienting Manichaean Origins." In *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovations in Antiquity*, edited by A. Houtman, A. F. de Jong and M. Misset-van de Weg, 81-106. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
———. "The *Cologne Mani Codex* and the Life of Zarathushtra." In *Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. Religious Dynamics in a Sasanian Context*, edited by G. Herman, 129-47. Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2014.
———. "Waar het vuur niet dooft: Joodse en Christelijke gemeenschappen in het Sasanidenrijk." *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 70, no. 3 (2016): 175-85.
De Stoop, E. *Essai sur la diffusion du manichéisme dans l'empire romain.* Gand: Van Goethem, 1909.
Decret, F. *L'Afrique manichéenne: IVe-Ve siècles.* Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1978.
Deeg, M., and I. Gardner. "Indian Influence on Mani Reconsidered: The Case of Jainism." *International Journal of Jaina Studies* 4-6 (2011): 158-86.
Dekker, R. *Episcopal Networks and Authority in Late Antique Egypt: Bishops of the Theban Region at Work*. Leuven: Peeters, 2018.
Delattre, A. "Éléments de l'identification en Égypte (IVe-VIIe siècles)." In *Identifiers and Identification Methods in the Ancient World*, edited by M. Depauw and S. Coussement, 153-62. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.
Delattre, A., and K. A. Worp. "Trois tablettes de bois du musée de Leyde." *Chronique d'Egypte* 87, no. 2 (2012): 361-82.
Denzey Lewis, N. "Apolytrosis as Ritual and Sacrament: Determining a Ritual Context for Death in Second-Century Marcosian Valentinianism." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17, no. 4 (2009): 525-61.
———. *Cosmology and Fate in Gnosticism and Graeco-Roman Antiquity. Under Pitiless Skies*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
———. "Roses and Violets for the Ancestors: Gifts to the Dead and Ancient Roman Forms of Social Exchange." In *The Gift in Antiquity*, edited by M. L. Satlow, 122-36. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.
———. "Popular Christianity and Lived Religion in Late Antique Rome: Seeing Magic in the Catacombs." In *Popular Culture in the Ancient World*, edited by L. Grig, 257-76. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.
Denzey Lewis, N., and J. A. Blount. "Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 2 (2014): 399-419.
Depauw, M., and W. Clarysse. "How Christian Was Fourth Century Egypt? Onomastic Perspectives on Conversion." *Vigiliae Christianae* 67, no. 4 (2013): 407-35.
———. "Christian Onomastics: A Response to Frankfurter." *Vigiliae Christianae* 69, no. 3 (2015): 327-29.
Depuydt, L. ""Wisdom Made a Weapon": On Manichaeism in Egypt." *Chronique d'Egypte* 64 (1993): 301-15.
———. "Coptic and Coptic Literature." In *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, edited by A. B. Lloyd, 732-54. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
Derda, T., and E. Wipszycka. "L'emploi des titres Abba, Apa et Papas dans l'Egypte byzantine." *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 24 (1994): 23-56.
Dickey, E. "Literal and Extended Use of Kinship Terms in Documentary Papyri." *Mnemosyne* 57, no. 2 (2004): 131-76.
———. "Forms of Address and Markers of Status." In *A Companion to the Ancient Greek Language*, edited by E. J. Bakker, 327-37. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
Dickie, M. *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Diefenbach, S. *Römische Erinnerungsräume: Heiligenmemoria und kollektive Identitäten im Rom des 3. bis 5. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007.

Dijkstra, J. H. F. "A World Full of the Word: The Biblical Learning of Dioscorus." In *Learned Antiquity: Scholarship and Society in the Near-East, the Greco-Roman World, and the Early Medieval West*, edited by A. A. MacDonald, M. W. Twomey and G. J. Reinink, 135-46. Leuven: Brepols, 2003.

———. *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298-642 CE)*. Leuven: Peeters, 2008.

———. "Religious Violence in Late Antique Egypt Reconsidered: The Cases of Alexandria, Panopolis and Philae." *Journal of Early Christian History* 5, no. 2 (2015): 24-48.

Dilley, P. "Religious Intercrossing in Late Antique Eurasia: Loss, Corruption, and Canon Formation." *Journal of World History* 24, no. 1 (2013): 25-70.

———. "Mani's Wisdom at the Court of the Persian Kings: The Genre and Context of the Chester Beatty *Kephalaia*." In *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, edited by P. Dilley, J. D. BeDuhn and I. Gardner, 15-51. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Dodge, B., ed. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*. 2 vols. Vol. 2. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970.

Donahue, C. "The Agape of the Hermits of Scete." *Studia Monastica* I (1959): 97-114.

Dosoo, K. *Rituals of Apparition in the Theban Magical Library*. Unpublished PhD dissertation: Macquarie University, Sydney, 2014.

Downs, D. "Redemptive Almsgiving and Economic Stratification in 2 Clement." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 19, no. 4 (2011): 493–517.

Drescher, J. "The Coptic Dictionary: Additions and Corrections." *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 16 (1961-62): 285-88.

Drijvers, H. J. W. "Odes of Solomon and Psalms of Mani." In *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions*, edited by R. van den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren, 117-30. Leiden: Brill, 1981.

Drower, E. S. *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran*. Leiden: Brill, 1962. First published in 1937.

Dubois, J. D. "Sur la notion d'apocryphe en milieu manichéen." In *Apocryphité: histoire d'un concept transversal aux religions du livre, en hommage à Pierre Geoltrain,* edited by S. C. Mimouni, 141-51. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.

———. "L'implantation des manichéens en Égypte." In *Les communautés religieuses dans le monde gréco-romain*, edited by N. Belayche, 279-303. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.

———. "Une lettre manichéenne de Kellis (P. Kell. Copt 18)." In *Early Christian Voices*, edited by D. H. Warren, A. G. Brock and D. W. Pao, 431-38. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

———. "Une lettre du manichéen Matthaios (P. Kell. Copt. 25)." In *Coptica, Gnostica, Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, edited by L. Painchaud and P. H. Poirier, 227-36. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

———. "Les repas manichéens." In *Entre lignes de partage et territoires de passage. Les identités religieuses dans les mondes grec et romain*, edited by N. Belayche and S. C. Mimouni, 105-18. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009.

———. "Vivre dans la communauté manichéenne de Kellis: une lettre de Makarios, le papyrus Kell. Copt. 22." In *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient: hommage à Michel Tardieu* edited by M. A. A. Moezzi, J. D. Dubois, C. Jullien and F. Jullien, 203-10. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009.

———. "Y a-t-il eu des moines manichéens dans le site de Kellis?" In *Monachismes d'Orient, images, échanges, influences,* edited by F. Jullien and M.-J. Pierre, 327-37. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.

———. "Greek and Coptic Documents from Kellis: A Contribution to the History of a Manichaean Community." *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013): 21-28.

Dunand, F. "Between Tradition and Innovation: Egyptian Funerary Practices in Late Antiquity." In *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300-700*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, 163-84. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Dunand, F., and R. Lichtenberg. *Mummies and Death in Egypt*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006.

Dunand, F., and C. Zivie-Coche. *Gods and Men in Egypt, 3000 BCE-395 CE*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Dunderberg, I. "The Eucharist in the Gospels of John, Philip, and Judas." *Early Christianity* 7 (2016): 484-507.

Dunn, M. *Belief and Religion in Barbarian Europe c. 350-700.* London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

Dupras, T. L., and Schwarcz. "Strangers in a Strange Land: Stable Isotope Evidence for Human Migration in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." *Journal of Archaeological Science* 28 (2001): 1199-208.

Dupras, T. L., and M. W. Tocheri. "Reconstructing Infant Weaning Histories at Roman Period Kellis, Egypt Using Stable Isotope Analysis of Dentition." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 134 (2007): 63-74.

Dupras, T. L., S. M. Wheeler, L. Williams, and P. Sheldrick. "Birth in Ancient Egypt: Timing, Trauma, and Triumph? Evidence from the Daklah Oasis." In *Egyptian Bioarchaeology: Humans, Animals and the Environment* edited by S. Ikram, J. Kaiser and R. Walker, 41-53. Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2015.

Durkin-Meisterernst, D., and E. Morano, eds. *Mani's Psalms. Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian Texts in the Turfan Collection*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010.

Duyvendak, J. W., and M. Hurenkamp, eds. *Kiezen voor de kudde: lichte gemeenschappen en de nieuwe meerderheid*. Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 2004.

Ebert, J. "Individualisation of Redemption in a Manichaean Painting from Ningbo." In *Mani in Dublin*, edited by S. G. Richter, C. Horton and K. Ohlhafer, 153-60. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Eccleston, M. A. J. "Metalworking at Kellis: A Preliminary Report." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 143-49. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Eckert, P. *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice: The Linguistic Construction of Identity in Belten High*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

Edwards, M. *Religions of the Constantinian Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Eich, P., and E. Faber, eds. *Religiöser Alltag in der Spätantike*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013.

Eidinow, E. "Networks and Narratives: A Model for Ancient Greek Religion." *Kernos* 24 (2011): 9-38.

Eissa, M. A. "The Use of the Title Apa for the Sender in an Opening Epistolary Formula." *Journal of Coptic Studies* 16 (2014): 115-24.

Eliasoph, N., and P. Lichterman. "Culture in Interaction." *American Journal of Sociology* 108, no. 4 (2003): 735-94.

Elm, S. *'Virgins of God': The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Emmel, S. *Shenoute's Literary Corpus*. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.

———. "The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses to the Production and Transmission of Gnostic (and Other) Traditions." In *Das Thomasevangelium. Entstehung - Rezeption - Theologie*, edited by J. Frey, E. E. Popkes and J. Schröter, 33-49. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.

Epp, E. J. "The Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri: 'Not without Honour except in Their Hometown'? ." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123, no. 1 (2004): 5-55.

Evans, E. "Ritual in the Second Book of Jeu." In *Practicing Gnosis: Ritual, Magic, Theurgy and Liturgy in Nag Hammadi, Manichaean and Other Ancient Literature*, edited by A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw and J. D. Turner, 137-59. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Evans, P. R., D. M. Whitchurch, and K. Muhlestein. "Rethinking Burial Dates at a Graeco-Roman Cemetery: Fag el-Gamous, Fayoum, Egypt." *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 2 (2015): 209-14.

Ewing, K. P. "The Illusion of Wholeness: Culture, Self, and the Experience of Inconsistency." *Ethos* 18, no. 3 (1990): 251-78.

Fadil, N., and M. Fernando, "Rediscovering the 'everyday' Muslim. Notes on an Anthropological Divide." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 5, no. 2 (2015): 59-88.

Fairgrieve, S., and J. E. Molto. "Cribra Orbitalia in Two Temporally Disjunct Population Samples from the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 111, no. 3 (2000): 319-31.

Falkenberg, R. "What Has Nag Hammadi to Do with Medinet Madi? The Case of Eugnostos and Manichaeism." In *The Nag Hammadi Codices and Late Antique Egypt*, edited by H. Lundhaug and L. Jenott, 261-86. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018.

Finn, R. *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice (313–450)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Fitzgerald, T. "A critique of "religion" as a cross-cultural category." *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 9, no. 2 (1997): 91-110.

Fischhaber, G. *Mumifizierung im koptischen Ägypten: Eine Untersuchung zur Körperlichkeit im 1. Jahrtausend n. Chr.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997.

Flood, G. "Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 74, no. 1 (2006): 47-58.

Flügel, G. *Mani, Seine Lehre und seine Schriften: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Manichaïsmus*. Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1862.

Foley, J. M. *How to Read an Oral Poem* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002.

Förster, H. *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den koptischen dokumentarischen Texten* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002.

Fowden, G. "Religious Communities," in *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World*, edited by P. Brown and G.W. Bowersock, 82-106. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.

Fowler, K. A. "The Ascent of the Soul and the Pachomians: Interpreting the Exegesis on the Soul (NHC II,6) within a Fourth-Century Monastic Context." *Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2017): 63-93.

Fox, J., and C. Miller-Idris. "Everyday Nationhood." *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 536-63.

Franklin, A. E. "Untidy History: Reassessing Communal Boundaries in Light of the Cairo Geniza Documents," in *Age of Transition: Byzantine Culture in the Islamic World*, edited by H. C. Evans, 54-69. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015.

Frankfurter, D. "Review of Roger S. Bagnall, Egypt in Late Antiquity. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993." *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 94.03.19 (1994).

———. "Apocalypses Real and Alleged in the Mani Codex." *Numen* 44 (1997): 60-73.

———. *Religion in Roman Egypt*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

———. "Syncretism and the Holy Man in Late Antique Egypt." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 3 (2003): 339-85.

———. "Beyond Magic and Superstition." In *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, edited by V. Burrus, 255-84. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

———. "Fetus Magic and Sorcery Fears in Roman Egypt." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 46 (2006): 37-62.

———. "Comparison and the Study of Religions in Late Antiquity." In *Comparer en histoire des religions antiques*, edited by C. Calame and B. Lincoln, 83-98. Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2012.

———. "The Great, the Little, and the Authoritative Tradition in Magic of the Ancient World." *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 16, no. 1 (2014): 11-30.

———. "Onomastic Statistics and the Christianization of Egypt: A Response to Depauw and Clarysse." *Vigiliae Christianae* 68, no. 3 (2014): 284-89.

———. "Female Figurines in Early Christian Egypt: Reconstructing Lost Practices and Meanings." *Material Religion* 11, no. 2 (2015): 190-223.

———. *Christianizing Egypt. Syncretism and Local Worlds in Late Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017.

Franzmann, M. *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings*. London: T&T Clark, 2003.

———. "The Syriac-Coptic Bilinguals from Ismant Al-Kharab." In *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della richerca*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo, 115-22. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

———. "An 'Heretical' Use of the New Testament: A Manichaean Adaptation of Matt 6:19-20 in P. Kell. Copt 32." In *The New Testament Interpreted*, edited by B.C. Lategan and C. Breytenbach, 153-62. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

———. "Tehat the Weaver: Women's Experience in Manichaeism in Fourth-Century Roman Kellis." *Australian Religion Studies Review* 20, no. 1 (2007): 17-26.

———. "The Treasure of the Manichaean Spiritual Life." In *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, edited by J. A. van den Berg, A. Kotzé, T. Nicklas and M. Scopello, 235-43. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

———. "Augustine and Manichaean Almsgiving: Understanding a Universal Religion with Exclusivist Practices." In *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, edited by J. van Oort, 37-49. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

———. "The Manichaean Women in the Greek and Coptic Letters from Kellis." In *Women in Occidental and Oriental Manichaeism: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at Paris Sorbonne, Paris, June 27-28, 2014*, edited by M. Franzmann and M. Scopello. Leiden: Brill, Forthcoming.

Franzmann, M., I. Gardner, and S. N. C. Lieu. "A Living Mani Cult in the Twenty-First Century." *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 41 (2005): vii-xi.

Frenschkowski, M. "Domestic Religion, Family Life and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles." *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 18-19, no. 1 (2017): 123-55.

Funk, W. P. "The Reconstruction of the Manichaean *Kephalaia*." In *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki, 143-57. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

———. "Noch Einmal zu *Remnuoth*." In *Liber Amicorum Jürgen Horn zum Dank*, edited by A. Giewekemeyer, G. Moers and K. Widmaier, 35-45. Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie der Universität, 2009.

———. "Mani's Account of Other Religions According to the Coptic Synaxeis Codex." In *New Light on Manichaeism*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn, 115-28. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Gagos, T. "A Multicultural Community on the Fringes of the Desert: A Review of the Greek Papyri from Kellis." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12, no. 2 (1999): 752-62.

Gagos, T., and P. van Minnen. *Settling a Dispute: Towards a Legal Anthropology of Late Antique Egypt*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997.

Gamble, H. Y. *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Gardner, G. E. *The Origins of Organized Charity in Rabbinic Judaism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Gardner, I. "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex." *Orientalia* 62, no. 2 (1993): 30-59.

———. "An Abbreviated Version of Medinet Madi Psalm LCVIII Found at Kellis: A/5/53 B (Folio 4, Text A2)." In *The Manichaean Nous*, edited by A. van Tongerloo and J. van Oort, 129-38. Turnhout: Brepols, 1995.

———, ed. *The Kephalaia of the Teacher*. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

———, ed. *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1996.

———. "Personal Letters from the Manichaean Community at Kellis." In *Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo, 77-94. Turnhout: Brepols, 1997.

———. "An Old Coptic Ostracon from Ismant el-Kharab?" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 125 (1999): 195-200.

———. ""He Has Gone to the Monastery...." In *Studia Manichaica IV*, edited by R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann and P. Zieme, 247-57. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000.

———. "The Reconstruction of Mani's Epistles from Three Coptic Codices." In *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki, 93-104. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

———. "Some Comments on Mani and Indian Religions According to the Coptic *Kephalaia*." In *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della richerca*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo, 123-36. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

———. "A Letter from the Teacher: Some Comments on Letter-Writing and the Manichaean Community of IVth Century Egypt." In *Coptica - Gnostica - Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, edited by L. Painchaud and P. H. Poirier, 317-23. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

———, ed. *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 2*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007.

———. "Mani's Letter to Marcellus: Fact and Fiction in the Acta Archelai Revisited." In *Frontiers of Faith: Encounters between Christianity and Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki, 33-58. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

———. "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 159 (2007): 223-28.

———. "Some Comments on Kinship Terms in the Coptic Documentary Papyri from Ismant el-Kharab." In *Oasis Papers 2* edited by M. F. Wiseman, 129-36. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2008.

———. "Towards an Understanding of Mani's Religious Development and the Archaeology of Manichaean Identity." In *Religion and Retributive Logic: Essays in Honour of Professor Garry W. Trompf*, edited by C. M. Cusack and C. H. Hartney, 147-58. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

———. "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis: A New Understanding of the Meaning and Function of the So-Called *Prayer of the Emanations*." In *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, edited by J. A. van den Berg, A. Kotzé, T. Nicklas and M. Scopello, 245-62. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

———. ""With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue": The Recovery of the Text of the Manichaean Daily Prayers." *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4, no. 1 (2011): 79-99.

———. "Coptic Ostraka from Qasr Al-Dakhleh." In *Oasis Papers 6: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of the Dakhleh Oasis Project*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 471-4. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012.

———. "Mani, Augustine and the Vision of God." In *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, edited by J. van Oort, 73-86. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

———. "Once More on Mani's Epistles and Manichaean Letter-Writing." *Journal of Ancient Christianity* 17, no. 2 (2013): 291-314.

———. "Mani's Last Days." In *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*, edited by I. Gardner, J. D. BeDuhn and P. Dilley, 159-208. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

———. "Some Comments on the Remnants of the Codex of Mani's Epistles in Middle Persian as Edited by W. Sundermann." In *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, edited by Team Turfanforschung, 173-80. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017.

———. "*Kephalaia*." In *Encyclopædia Iranica*, edited by E. Yarshater, Forthcoming.

Gardner, I., A. Alcock, and W. P. Funk, eds. *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

———. *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 2*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014.

Gardner, I., J. D. BeDuhn, and P. Dilley, eds. *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

———. *The Chapters of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani.* Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Gardner, I., and S. N. C. Lieu. "From Narmouthis (Medinet Madi) to Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab): Manichaean Documents from Roman Egypt." *Journal of Roman Studies* 86 (1996): 146-69.

———, eds. *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Gardner, I., I. Nobbs, and M. Choat. "P. Harr. 107: Is This Another Greek Manichaean Letter?" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 131 (2000): 118-24.

Gardner, I., and K. A. Worp. "Leaves from a Manichaean Codex." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 139-55.

Gardner, I., and K. A. Worp. "A Most Remarkable Fourth Century Letter in Greek, Recovered from House 4 at Ismant el-Kharab." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 205 (2018): 127-42.

Garnsey, P. and Woolf, G. "Patronage of the Rural Poor in the Roman World." In *Patronage in Ancient Society*, edited by A. Wallace-Hadrill, 152-70. London: Routledge, 1989.

Gessler-Löhr, B. "Mummies and Mummification." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Riggs, 664-83. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Gilchrist, R. "Transforming Medieval Beliefs: The Significance of Bodily Resurrection to Medieval Burial Rituals." In *Ritual Changes and Changing Rituals: Function and Meaning in Ancient Funerary Practices*, edited by M. Prusac and J. R. Brandt, 379-96. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014.

Gilhus, I. S. "Contextualizing the Present, Manipulating the Past: Codex II from Nag Hammadi and the Challenge of Circumventing Canonicity." In *Canon and Canonicity: The Formation and Use of Scripture*, edited by E. Thomassen, 91-108. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010.

Giversen, S. "The Inedited Chester Beatty Mani Texts." In *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. Roselli, 371-80. Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986.

———. "The Manichaean Texts from the Chester Beatty Collection." In *Manichaean Studies*, edited by P. Bryder, 265-72. Lund: Plus Ultra, 1988.

Goehring, J. E. *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert*. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999.

———. "The Origins of Monasticism." In *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert*, 13-38. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999.

———. "The World Engaged: The Social and Economic World of Early Egyptian Monasticism." In *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert*, 39-52. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999.

———. *Politics, Monasticism, and Miracles in Sixth Century Upper Egypt: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Coptic Texts on Abraham of Farshut.* Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016.

Gofas, D. C. "Quelques observations sur un papyrus contenant un contrat de société (PU. G II Appendice I)." In *Studi in onore di Arnaldo Biscardi S.J.*, edited by F. Pastori, 499-505. Milano: Istituto editoriale Cisalpino, 1982.

Goffman, E. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959.

Gordley, M. E. *Teaching through Song in Antiquity: Didactic Hymnody among Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Gordon, R. "Reporting the Marvellous: Private Divination in the Greek Magical Papyri." In *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, edited by H. G. Kippenberg and P. Schäfer, 65-92. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

———. "Shaping the Text: Theory and Practice in Graeco-Egyptian Malign Magic." In *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H. S. Versnel*, edited by H. F. J. Horstmanshoff, H. W. Singor and F. T. van Straten, 69-111. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

———. "Projects, Performance and Charisma: Managing Small Religious Groups in the Roman Empire," in *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, edited by R. L. Gordon, G. Petridou, J. Rüpke, 277-315. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017.

Grabbe, L. L. "When Is a Sect a Sect - or Not? Groups and Movements in the Second Temple Period." In *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*, edited by D. J. Chalcraft, 114-32. London: Acumen Publishing, 2007.

Granovetter, M. S. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360-80.

Grob, E. M. *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010.

Grossmann, P. "Typological Considerations on the Large East Church at Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 153-56. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Gruen, E. S. "Christians as a 'Third Race'. Is Ethnicity at Issue?" In *Christianity in the Second Century*, edited by J. Carleton Paget and J. Lieu, 235-49. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Gulácsi, Z. *Mani's Pictures: The Didactic Images of the Manichaeans from Sasanian Mesopotamia to Uygur Central Asia and Tang-Ming China*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Haines-Eitzen, K. *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
———. "Late Antique Christian Textual Communities." In *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, edited by P. Rousseau, 246-57. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
———. "The Social History of Early Christian Scribes." In *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, edited by B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes, 479-95. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
Hall, D. D., ed. *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
Haloun, G., and W. Henning. "The Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light." *Asia Major, Third Series* 3 (1952): 184-212.
Halterman Finger, R. *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
Hamman, A. G. "De l'agape à la diaconie en Afrique chrétienne." *Theologische Zeitschrift* 42 (1986): 241-21.
Hanegraaff, W. "Reconstructing "Religion" from the Bottom Up." *Numen* 63, no. 5-6 (2016): 576-605.
Härke, H. "The Nature of Burial Data." In *Burial and Society: The Chronological and Social Analysis of Archaeological Burial Data*, edited by C. K. Jensen and K. H. Nielsen, 19-27. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1997.
Harland, P. A. *Dynamics of Identity in the World of the Early Christians*. New York: T & T Clark, 2009.
Harmless, W. *Desert Christians*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
Harrison, G., and J. D. BeDuhn. "The Authenticity and Doctrine of (Ps.?) Mani's Letter to Menoch." In *The Light and the Darkness*, edited by P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn, 128-72. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
Harrison, T. "Review Article: Beyond the Polis? New Approaches to Greek Religion." *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 135 (2015): 165–80.
Harrop, J. H. "A Christian Letter of Commendation." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 48 (1962): 132-40.
Hasitzka, M. *Neue Texte und Dokumentation zum Koptisch-Unterricht*. Vienna: Hollinek, 1990.
Hauge, M. R., and A. W. Pitt, eds. *Ancient Education and Early Christianity*. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016.
Hegedus, T. *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
Hellerman, J. H. *The Ancient Church as Family*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.
Hénaff, M. "Ceremonial Gift-Giving: The Lessons of Anthropology from Mauss and Beyond." In *The Gift in Antiquity*, edited by M. L. Satlow, 12-24. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013.
Henning, W. "Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch." *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin. Phil. Hist. Klasse* 10 (1936): 1-143.
———. "Mani's Last Journey." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10, no. 4 (1942): 941-53.
———. "The Book of the Giants." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11, no. 1 (1943): 52-74.
———. "The Manichaean Fasts." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1945): 146-64.
———. "A Grain of Mustard." *AION-L* (1965): 29-47.
Henrichs, A. "The Cologne Mani Codex Reconsidered." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 83 (1979): 339-67.
———. ""Thou Shalt Not Kill a Tree": Greek, Manichaean and Indian Tales." *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 16 (1979): 85-108.
Henrichs, A., and L. Koenen. "Ein griechischer Mani-Codex (P.Colon. Inv. Nr. 4780)." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 5 (1970): 97-216.
———. "Ein griechischer Mani-Codex (P.Colon. Inv. Nr. 4780) Περὶ τῆς γέννης τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ: Edition der Seiten 72.8-99.9." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 32 (1978): 87-199.

Heuser, M. "The Manichaean Myth According to Coptic Sources." In *Studies in Manichaean Literature and Art*, edited by M. Heuser and H. J. Klimkeit, 3-108. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Hickey, T. *Wine, Wealth, and the State in Late Antique Egypt: The House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012.

Hickson, K. "Excavations in Area C at Ismant el-Kharab in 1996-1997." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 157-66. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Hintze, A. "Treasure in Heaven. A Theme in Comparative Religion." In *Irano-Judaica VI. Studies Relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture Throughout the Ages*, edited by S. Shaked and A. Netzer, 9-36. Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2008.

Holman, S. R. *The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Hoogendijk, F. A. J. "Page of an Oracle Book: Papyrus Kellis 96.150." In *Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Papyrology*, edited by T. Derda, A. Lajtar and J. Urbanik, 595-622. Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements, 2016.

Hope, C. A. "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Report on the 1987 Excavations at Ismant El-Gharab." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 16 (1986): 74-91.

———. "Three Seasons of Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." *Mediterranean Archeology* 1 (1988): 160-78.

———. "The 1991 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 2 (1991): 41-50.

———. "A Brief Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1992-93." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 4 (1993): 17-28.

———. "Isis and Serapis at Kellis: A Brief Note." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 5 (1995): 37-42.

———. "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 156-61.

———. *From the Sands of the Sahara: Ancient Kellis and Its Texts*. Clayton: Monash University, 1998.

———. "Objects from the Temple of Tutu." In *Egyptian Religion: The Last Thousand Years, Part Ii. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur*, edited by W. Clarysse, A. Schoors and H. Willems, 803-58. Leuven: Peeters, 1998.

———. "The Archaeological Context." In *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 1*, edited by I. Gardner, A. Alcock and W. P. Funk, 96-122. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

———. "The Excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in 1998/9: A Brief Report." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 10 (1999): 59-66.

———. "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2001." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 12 (2001): 35-63.

———. "Observations on the Dating of the Occupation at Ismant el-Kharab." In *Oasis Papers 1*, edited by C. A. Marlow and A. J. Mills, 43 - 59. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001.

———. "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 167-208. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002. With an Appendix by G. E. Bowen.

———. "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 207-89. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003. With contributions by O. E. Kaper and H. Whitehouse.

———. "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2005." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 16 (2005): 35-83. With Appendices by H. Whitehouse and A. Warfe.

———. "The Kellis 1 Cemetery: Roman Period Burial Practices in Dakhleh Oasis." In *Le myrte et la rose. Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, edited by G. Tallet and C. Zivie-Coche, 325-48. Montpellier: CENIM, 2014.

———. "The Roman-Period Houses of Kellis in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis." In *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, edited by A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope and B. E. Parr, 199-229. Leuven: Peeters, 2015.

Hope, C. A., and G. E. Bowen, eds. *Kellis: A Roman Period Village in Egypt's Dakhleh Oasis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Forthcoming.

Hope, C. A., G. E. Bowen, W. Dolling, C. Hubschmann, P. Kucera, R. Long, and A. Stevens. "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut El-Kharab in 2006." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2006): 23-67.

Hope, C. A., D. Jones, L. Falvey, J. Petkov, H. Whitehouse, and K. A. Worp. "Report on the 2010 Season of Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab, Dakhleh Oasis." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 21 (2010): 21-54.

Hope, C. A., O. E. Kaper, and G. E. Bowen. "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab – 1992." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 3 (1992): 41-49.

Hope, C. A., O. E. Kaper, G. E. Bowen, and S. F. Patten. "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Ismant el-Kharab 1991-92." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 19 (1989): 1-26.

Hope, C. A., O. E. Kaper, H. Whitehouse, and K. A. Worp. "Excavations at Mut El-Kharab and Ismant el-Kharab in 2001-2." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002): 85-107.

Hope, C. A., and J. McKenzie. "Interim Report on the West Tombs." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and A. J. Mills, 53-68. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

Hope, C. A., and H. Whitehouse. "The Gladiator Jug from Ismant el-Kharab." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 290-310. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

———. "A Painted Residence at Ismant el-Kharab (Kellis) in the Dakhleh Oasis." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 312-28.

Hope, C. A., and K. A. Worp. "Miniature Codices from Kellis." *Mnemosyne* 59, no. 2 (2006): 226-58 .

Hopkins, K. "Conquest by Book." In *Literacy in the Roman World*, edited by M. Beard, A. K. Bowman, M. Corbier, T. J. Cornell, J. L. Franklin, A. Hanson, K. Hopkins and N. Horsfall, 133-58. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991.

———. *A World Full of Gods: Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Roman Empire*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999.

Horden, P. "Household Care and Informal Networks. Comparisons and Continuities from Antiquity to the Present." In *The Locus of Care: Families, Communities, Institutions, and the Provision of Welfare since Antiquity*, edited by P. Horden and R. Smith, 21-45. London: Taylor and Francis, 1997.

Horrell, D. G. "From ἀδελφοί to to οἶκος θεοῦ: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120, no. 2 (2001): 293-311.

Howard, J. S. "Social Psychology of Identities." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 376-93.

Huebner, S. R. *Der Klerus in der Gesellschaft des spätantiken Kleinasiens*. Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 2005.

———. "Household Composition in the Ancient Mediterranean - What Do we Really Know?" In *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, edited by B. Rawson, 73-91. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

———. *The Family in Roman Egypt: A Comparative Approach to Intergenerational Solidarity and Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Hultgård, A. "Ritual Community Meals in Ancient Iranian Religion." In *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, edited by M. Stausberg, 367-88. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

Humfress, C. *Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Hutter, M. "Mt 25:31-46 in der Deutung Manis." *Novum Testamentum* 33, no. 3 (1991): 276-82.

———. "Manichaeism in Iran." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism*, edited by M. Stausberg, Y. S-D. Vevaina and A. Tessmann, 477-90. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

Inbody, J. "Sensing God: Bodily Manifestations and Their Interpretations in Pentecostal Rituals and Everyday Life." *Sociology of Religion* 76, no. 3 (2015): 337-55.

Ioannidou, G. "A Note on συναγτικός." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 118 (1997): 162.
Iricinschi, E. "'A Thousand Books Will Be Saved': Manichaean Writings and Religious Propaganda in the Roman Empire." In *Jewish and Christian Scripture as Artifact and Canon*, edited by C. A. Evans and D. Zacharias, 261-72. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2009.
———. "*Tam pretiosi codices vestri.* Hebrew Scriptures and Persian Books in Augustine's Anti-Manichaean Writings." In *Revelation, Literature and Community in Late Antiquity*, edited by P. Townsend and M. Vidas, 153-76. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
Isbell, W. H. "What We Should Be Studying. The "Imagined Community" and the "Natural Community." In *The Archaeology of Communities: A New World Perspective*, edited by M. Canuto and J. Yaeger, 243-66. London: Routledge, 2000.
Iwersen, J. "A Manichaean Ritual of Ascent? A Discussion of T. Kell.Copt. 2 A5 in the Light of Other Coptic Gnostic Materials." In *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, edited by Team Turfanforschung, 231-40. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017.
Derrida, J. *Given Time 1. Counterfeit Money*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992.
Jackson, R. B. *At Empire's Edge. Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
Jacobsen, A. C. "*Coming out Christian in the Roman World: How the Followers of Jesus Made a Place in Caesar's Empire* by Douglas Boin (Review)." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24, no. 2 (2016): 302-3.
Jenkins, G. "Papyrus 1 from Kellis: A Greek Text with Affinities to the Acts of John (with Appendix)." In *The Apocryphal Acts of John*, edited by J.N. Bremmer, 197-230. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1995.
———. "The Prayer of the Emanations in Greek from Kellis (T.Kellis 22)." *Le Muséon* 108 (1995): 243-63.
Jenkins, R. *Social Identity*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2008.
Jensen, R. M. *Understanding Early Christian Art*. London: Routledge, 2000.
Johnson, M. E. *Prayers of Sarapion of Thmuis: A Literary , Liturgical and Theological Analysis*. Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995.
———. "Worship, Practice and Belief." In *The Early Christian World*, edited by P. F. Esler, 475-502. London: Routledge, 2000.
Johnson, M. J. "Pagan-Christian Burial Practices of the Fourth Century: Shared Tombs?" *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1997): 37-59.
Johnson, S. F. "Introduction: The Social Presence of Greek in Eastern Christianity, 200-1200 CE." In *Languages and Cultures of Eastern Christianity: Greek*, edited by S. F. Johnson, 1-122. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.
Johnson, W. A. *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
Johnston, S. I. "Review: Describing the Undefinable: New Books on Magic and Old Problems of Definition." *History of Religions* 43, no. 1 (2003): 50-54.
Jonas, H. *The Gnostic Religion*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963. First published in 1958.
Jones, C. P. *Between Pagan and Christian*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.
Jördens, A. "Buchbesprechung Worp, Greek Papyri from Kellis I." *Münstersche Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte* 17, no. 1 (1998): 121-32.
———. "Government, Taxation, and Law." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Riggs, 56-67. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
Judge, E. A. "Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?" In *Early Christianity and Classical Culture*, edited by J. T. Fitzgerald, T. H. Olbricht and L. M. White, 501-24. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
———. "The Social Identity of the First Christians: A Question of Method in Religious History." In *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays by E. A. Judge*, edited by D. M. Scholer, 117-35. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008.
———. "The Beginning of Religious History." In *Jerusalem and Athens: Cultural Transformation in Late Antiquity*, edited by A.M. Nobbs, 11-31. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Kaestli, J. D. "L'utilisation des actes apocryphes des apôtres dans le manichéisme." In *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, edited by M. Krause, 107-16. Leiden: Brill, 1977.

Kaper, O. E. "The Astronomical Ceiling of Deir El Haggar in the Dakhleh Oasis." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 81 (1995): 175-95.

———. "Temple Building in the Egyptian Desert During the Roman Period." In *Living on the Fringe*, edited by O. E. Kaper, 139-58. Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 1998.

———. "Review of Frankfurter, Religion in Roman Egypt." *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 58, no. 1-2 (2001): 126-32.

———. "The Decoration of North Tomb 1." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 323-30. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

———. *The Egyptian God Tutu: A Study of the Sphinx-God and Master of Demons with a Corpus of Monuments*. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

———. "The God Tutu at Kellis: On Two Stelae Found at Ismant el-Kharab in 2000." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 311-21. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004.

———. "Galba's Cartouches at Ain Birbiyeh." In *Tradition and Transformation: Egypt under Roman Rule*, edited by K. Lembke, M. Minas-Nerpel and S. Pfeiffer, 181-201. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

———. "Isis in Roman Dakhleh: Goddess of the Village, the Province, and the Country." In *Isis on the Nile. Egyptian Gods in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, edited by L. Bricault and M. J. Versluys, 149-80. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

———. "The Western Oases." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Riggs, 717-35. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Kaper, O. E., and K. A. Worp. "A Bronze Representing Tapsais of Kellis." *Revue d'Egyptologie* 46 (1995): 107-18.

Kaper, O. E., and C. v. Zoest. *Treasures of the Dakhleh Oasis: An Exhibition on the Occasion of the Fifth International Conference of the Dakhleh Oasis Project*. Cairo: The Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo, 2006.

Kehoe, D. P. "Tenancy and Oasis Agriculture on an Egyptian Estate of the 4th C. A.D." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12, no. 2 (1999): 745-51.

Khosroyev, A. "Zu einem manichäischen (?) Gebet." In *Il manicheismo: nuove prospettive della ricerca*, edited by A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo, 203-22. Turnhout: Brepolis, 2005.

———. "Manichäismus: eine Art persisches Christentum? Der Definitionsversuch eines Phänomens." In *Inkulturation des Christentums im Sasanidenreich*, edited by J. Tubach and M. Arafa, 43-53. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2007.

Kim, C. H. *Form and Structure of the Familiar Greek Letter of Recommendation*. Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature for the Seminar on Paul, 1972.

Kindt, J. "Polis Religion - a Critical Appreciation." *Kernos* 22 (2009): 9-34.

———. "Personal Religion: A Productive Category for the Study of Ancient Greek Religion?" *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 135 (2015): 35-50.

King, K. L. *What Is Gnosticism?* Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003.

King, K. L. "Which Early Christianity?" In *The Oxford Handbook to Early Christian Studies*, edited by S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter, 66-84. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

———. "Factions, Variety, Diversity, Multiplicity: Representing Early Christian Differences for the 21st Century." *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 23, no. 3-4 (2011): 216-37.

King, R. "Orientalism and the Modern Myth of "Hinduism." *Numen* 46, no. 2 (1999): 146-85.

Klauck, H.-J. *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006.

Klimkeit, H. J. *Gnosis on the Silk Road. Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.

Kloppenborg, J. S. "Membership Practices in Pauline Christ Groups." *Early Christianity* 4, no. 2 (2013): 183-215.

Knudstad, J. E., and R. A. Frey. "Kellis: The Architectural Survey of the Romano-Byzantine Town at Ismant el-Kharab." In *Reports from the Survey of the Dakhleh Oasis 1977–198*, edited by C.S. Churcher and A. J. Mills, 189-214. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

Koenen, L. "Manichäische Mission und Klöster in Ägypten." In *Das römisch-byzantinische Ägypten: Akten des internationalen Symposions 26.-30. Sept. 1978 in Trier*, edited by G. Grimm, H. Heinen and E. Winter, 93-108. Mainz am Rhein: Phillip von Zabern, 1983.

———. "Manichaean Apocalypticism at the Crossroads of Iranian, Egyptian, Jewish and Christian Thought." In *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. Roselli, 285–332. Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986.

———. "How Dualistic Is Mani's Dualism?" In *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis - Atti 2*, edited by L. Cirillo, 1-34. Cozenza: Marra Editore, 1990.

Koenen, L., and C. Römer, eds. *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex. Über das Werden seines Leibes. Kritische Edition aufgrund der von. A. Henrichs und L. Koenen besorgten Erstedition*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988.

Kosa, G. "The Protagonist-Catalogues of the Apocryphal Acts of Apostles in the Coptic Manichaica — a Re-Assessment of the Evidence." In *From Illahun to Djeme. Papers Presented in Honour of Ulrich Luft*, edited by E. Bechtold, A. Gulyás and A. Hasznos, 107-19. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011.

———. "The Sea of Fire as a Chinese Manichaean Metaphor: Source Materials for Mapping an Unnoticed Image." *Asia Major, Third Series* 24, no. 2 (2011): 1-52.

———. "The Manichaean Attitude to Natural Phenomena as Reflected in the Berlin *Kephalaia*." *Open Theology* 1 (2015): 255-68.

Kotsifou, C. "Books and Book Production in the Monastic Communities of Byzantine Egypt." In *The Early Christian Book*, edited by W.E. Klingshirn and L. Safran, 48-66. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007.

———. "'Being Unable to Come to You and Lament and Weep with You'. Grief and Condolence Letters on Papyrus." In *Unveiling Emotions. Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World*, edited by A. Chaniotis, 389-411. Wiesbaden: Frans Steiner Verlag, 2012.

Kotzé, A. "Protreptic, Paraenetic and Augustine's *Confessions*." In *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, edited by J. A. van den Berg, A. Kotzé, T. Nicklas and M. Scopello, 3-23. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Koziol, G. "The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual Still an Interesting Topic of Historical Study?" *Early Medieval Europe* 11, no. 4 (2002): 367-88.

Kracke, B., R. Roux, and J. Rüpke, eds. *Die Religion des Individuums*. Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2013.

Kraemer, R. S. "Jewish Tuna and Christian Fish: Identifying Religious Affiliation in Epigraphic Sources." *Harvard Theological Review* 84, no. 2 (1991): 141-62.

Kramer, J. "Was bedeutet koimeterion in den Papyri?" *Zeitschrift fuẅr Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 80 (1990): 269-72.

Krause, M. "Das Weiterleben ägyptischer Vorstellungen und Brauchen im koptischen Totenwesen." In *Das römisch-byzantinische Ägypten: Akten des internationalen Symposions 26.-30. Sept. 1978 in Trier*, edited by G. Grimm, H. Heinen and E. Winter, 85-92. Mainz am Rhein: Phillip von Zabern, 1983..

———. "Zum Aufbau des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmen-Buches." In *Manichaica Selecta I: Studies Presented to Professor Julien Ries on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, edited by A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen, 177-90. Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991.

———. "Die Aussagen von Sarakoton-Psalm 2 (Man. Ps. Book 139,52-140,17) über die heiligen Schrifter der Manichäer." In *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift fuẅr Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by H. Preißler and H. Seiwert, 131-41. Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994.

———. "Das Totenwesen der Kopten." In *Tod am Nil: Tod und Totenkult am antiken Ägypten*, edited by H. Froschauer, C. Gastgeber and H. Harrauer, 33-44. Wien: Phoibos Verlag, 2003.

Krawiec, R. *Shenoute and the Women of the White Monastery. Egyptian Monasticism in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Kristionat, J. *Zwischen Selbstverständlichkeit und Schweigen. Die Rolle der Frau im frühen Manichäismus*. Heidelberg: Verlag Antike, 2013.

Kristionat, J., and G. Wurst. "Ein Hymnus auf die Lichtjungfrau." In *Vom Aramäischen zum Alttürkischen: Fragen zur Übersetzung von manichäischen Texten*, edited by J. P. Laut and K. Röhrborn, 187-98. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013.

Krueger, D. *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

———. *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

Kucera, P. "Al-Qasr: The Roman Castrum of Dakhleh Oasis." In *Oasis Papers 6*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 305-16. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012.

Kupari, H. "Lifelong Minority Religion: Routines and Reflexivity: A Bourdieuan Perspective on the Habitus of Elderly Finnish Orthodox Christian Women." *Religion* 46, no. 2 (2016): 141-57.

———. *Lifelong Religion as Habitus: Religious Practice among Displaced Karelian Orthodox Women in Finland*. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

Lahire, B. "From the Habitus to an Individual Heritage of Dispositions. Towards a Sociology at the Level of the Individual." *Poetics* 31 (2003): 329-55.

———. *The Plural Actor*. Cambridge: Polity, 2011.

Lalleman, P. J. *The Acts of John*. Leuven: Peeters, 1998.

Lane Fox, R. *Pagans and Christians*. London: Peguin Books, 1986.

———. "Literacy and Power in Early Christianity." In *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, edited by A. K. Bowman and G. Woolf, 126-48. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Layton, B. *The Canons of Our Fathers: Monastic Rules of Shenoute*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Le Tiec, P. A. "Le temple de Toutou et l'histoire des manichéens à Kellis." *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013): 75-85.

Leonhard, C. "Morning *Salutationes* and the Decline of Sympotic Eucharists in the Third Century." *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 18, no. 3 (2014): 420-42.

———. "Establishing Short-Term Communities in Eucharistic Celebrations of Antiquity." *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 66-86.

Leurini, C. "The Manichaean Church between Earth and Paradise." In *New Light on Manichaeism*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn, 169-79. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. *The Manichaean Church: An Essay Mainly Based on the Central Asiatic Sources*. Roma: Scienze e Lettere ISMEO, 2013.

———. *Hymns in Honour of the Hierarchy and Community, Installation Hymns and Hymns in Honour of Church Leaders and Patrons: Middle Persian and Parthian Hymns in the Berlin Turfan Collection.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Lewis, N. *The Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt*. Firenze: Gonnelli, 1982.

———. "Notationes Legentis." *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 34 (1997): 21-33.

Lichterman, P. "Social Capital or Group Style? Rescuing Tocqueville's Insights on Civic Engagement." *Theory and Society* 35 (2006): 529-63.

———. "Religion in Public Action: From Actors to Settings." *Sociological Theory* 30, no. 1 (2012): 15-36.

Lichterman, P., R. Raja, A. K. Rieger, and J. Rüpke. "Grouping Together in Lived Ancient Religion: Individual Interacting and the Formation of Groups." *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 3-10.

Lietzmann, H. *Mass and the Lord's Supper*. Leiden: Brill, 1979.

Lieu, J. *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996.

———. *Christian Identity in Jewish and Greco-Roman World.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Lieu, S. N. C. "Precept and Practice in Manichaean Monasticism." *Journal of Theological Studies* 32, no. 1 (1981): 153-73.

———. *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*. 2nd edition ed. Tübingen Mohr Siebeck, 1992.

———. *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia and the Roman East*. Leiden: Brill, 1994.

———. *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

———. "The Self-Identity of the Manichaeans in the Roman East." *Mediterranean Archeology* 11 (1998): 205-27.

———. "From Turfan to Dunhuang: Manichaean Cosmogony in Chinese Texts." In *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, edited by D. Durkin-Meisterernst, S. C. Raschmann, J. Wilkens, M. Yaldiz and P. Zieme, 169-75. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004.

———. ""My Church Is Superior..." Mani's Missionary Statement in Coptic and Middle Persian." In *Coptica - Gnostica - Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, edited by P. H. Poirier and L. Painchaud, 519-27. Leuven: Peeters, 2005.

———. "Christianity and Manichaeism." In *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, edited by A. Casiday and F. Norris, 279-95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

———. "Manichaeism." In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, edited by S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter, 221-36. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

———, ed. *Medieval Christian and Manichaean Remains from Quanzhou (Zayton)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2012.

———. "The Diffusion, Persecution and Transformation of Manichaeism in Late Antiquity and Pre-Modern China." In *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond: Papers from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, University of Oxford, 2009-2010*, edited by D. Schwartz, N. McLynn and A. Papaconstantinou, 107-18. Burlington: Ashgate, 2015.

Lieu, S. N. C., and G. B. Mikkelsen, eds. *Tractatus Manichaicus Sinicus: Pars Prima: Text, Translation and Indices*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Lightstone, J. N. *The Commerce of the Sacred*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. First published in 1984.

Lim, R. "Unity and Diversity among Western Manichaeans: A Reconsideration of Mani's *Sancta Ecclesia*." *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 35 (1989): 231-50.

———. *Public Disputation, Power, and Social Order in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

———. "Converting the Un-Christianizable." In *Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Seeing and Believing*, edited by K. Mills and A. Grafton, 84-126. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003.

———. "The Nomen Manichaeorum and Its Uses in Late Antiquity." In *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, edited by E. Iricinschi and H. M. Zellentin, 143-206. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.

Lincoln, B. "Epilogue." In *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*, edited by S. I. Johnston, 657-67. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004.

Livingstone, R. J. "Late Antique Household Textiles from the Village of Kellis in the Dakhleh Oasis." In *Clothing the House: Furnishing Textiles of the 1st Millennium from Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, edited by A. de Moor and C. Fluck, 73-85. Tielt: Lannoo Publishers, 2009.

Löhr, W. "Modelling Second-Century Christian Theology: Christian Theology as *Philosophia*." In *Christianity in the Second Century*, edited by J. Carleton Paget and J. Lieu, 151-68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

López, A. G. *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

Love, E. O. D. *Code-Switching with the Gods: The Bilingual (Old Coptic-Greek) Spells of PGM IV (P. Bibliothèque Nationale Supplément Grec. 574) and Their Linguistic, Religious, and Socio-Cultural Context in Late Roman Egypt*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.

Luhrmann, T. M. *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.

———. "Metakinesis: How God Becomes Intimate in Contemporary U.S. Christianity." *American Anthropologist* 106, no. 3 (2004): 518-28.

———. *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God*. New York: Vintage Books, 2012.

Luijendijk, A. *Greetings in the Lord. Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for Harvard Theological Studies, 2008.

———. "A New Testament Papyrus and Its Owner: P.Oxy. II 209/P10, an Early Christian School Exercise from the Archive of Leonides." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 3 (2010): 569-90.

———. "Sacred Scriptures as Trash: Biblical Papyri from Oxyrhynchus." *Vigiliae Christianae* 64, no. 3 (2010): 217-54.

———. *Forbidden Oracles? The Gospel of the Lots of Mary*. Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

———. "A Gospel Amulet for Joannia (P.Oxy. VIII 1151)." In *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World*, edited by K. B. Stratton and D. S. Kalleres, 418-43. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

———. "On and Beyond Duty: Christian Clergy at Oxyrhynchus (C. 250 - 400)." In *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, edited by R. Gordon, G. Petridou and J. Rüpke, 103-26. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017.

Lundhaug, H. "The Nag Hammadi Codices in the Complex World of 4th- and 5th-Cent. Egypt." In *Beyond Conflicts. Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, edited by L. Arcari, 339-58. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Lundhaug, H., and L. Jenott. *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015.

Luttikhuizen, G. P. "The Baptists of Mani's Youth and the Elchasaites." In *Gnostic Revisions of Genesis Stories and Early Jesus Traditions*, 170-84. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

MacCoull, L. S. B. "Child Donations and Child Saints in Coptic Egypt." *East European Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1979): 409-15.

MacMullen, R. *The Second Church: Popular Christianity AD 200-400*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009.

MacSweeney, N. "Beyond Ethnicity: The Overlooked Diversity of Group Identities." *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 22, no. 1 (2009): 101-26.

Maffesoli, M. *The Time of the Tribes: The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society*. London: Sage Publications, 1996.

Maier, H. O. "Heresy, Households, and the Disciplining of Diversity." In *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History to Christianity*, edited by V. Burrus, 213-33. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Maier, J. "Zum Problem der jüdischen Gemeinden Mesopotamiens im 2. und 3. Jh. n. Chr. im Blick auf den CMC." In *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. Roselli, 37-67. Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986.

Mairs, R. "Intersecting Identities in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt." In *Egypt: Ancient Histories, Modern Archaeologies*, edited by R. J. Dann and K. Exell, 163-92. New York: Cambria Press, 2013.

Malešević, S. "The Chimera of National Identity." *Nations and Nationalism* 17, no. 2 (2011): 272-90.

Malouta, M. "Families, Households and Children." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Riggs, 288-304. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Maravela, A. "Christians Praying in a Graeco-Egyptian Context: Intimations of Christian Identity in Greek Papyrus Prayers." In *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, edited by R. Hvalvik and K. O. Sandnes, 291-323. Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

Marchini, C. "Glass from the 1993 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and A. J. Mills, 75-82. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

Markschies, C. *Gnosis. An Introduction*. London: T&T Clark, 2003.

Marshall, J. *Language Change and Sociolinguistics: Rethinking Social Networks*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Martin, D., and P. Cox Miller, eds. *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies: Gender, Asceticism, and Historiography*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

Martin, L. H. "When Size Matters. Social Formations in the Early Roman Empire." In *"The One Who Sows Bountifully": Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers*, edited by C. J. Hodge, S. Olyan, D. Ullucci and E. Wasserman, 229-241. Providence: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

Martinez, D. G. "The Papyri and Early Christianity." In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, 590-622. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Matsangou, R. "Real and Imagined Manichaeans in Greek Patristic Anti-Manichaica (4th-6th Centuries)." In *Manichaeism East and West*, edited by S. N. C. Lieu, 159-70. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Maurer, J., T. Möhring, and J. Rullkötter. "Plant Lipids and Fossil Hydrocarbons in Embalming Material of Roman Period Mummies from the Dakhleh Oasis, Western Desert, Egypt." *Journal of Archaeological Science* 29 (2002): 751-62.

Mauss, M. *The Gift*. London: Routledge Classics, 2002. First published in 1923-24.

Maxwell, J. "Popular Theology in Late Antiquity." In *Popular Culture in the Ancient World*, edited by L. Grig, 277-95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

McBride, D. "Egyptian Manichaeism." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 18 (1988): 80-98.

McCutcheon, R. T. "The Category "Religion" in Recent Publications: A Critical Survey." *Numen* 42, no. 3 (1995): 284-309.

———. *The Discipline of Religion: Structure, Meaning, Rhetoric*. London: Routledge, 2003.

———. "The Category "Religion" in Recent Publications: Twenty Years Later." *Numen* 62, no. 1 (2015): 119-41.

McFadden, S. "Art on the Edge: The Late Roman Wall Painting of Amheida, Egypt." In *Antike Malerei zwischen Lokalstil und Zeitstil*, edited by N. Zimmermann, 359-70. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014.

McGowan, A. "Naming the Feast: The Agape and the Diversity of Early Christian Meals." *Studia Patristica* 30 (1997): 314-18.

———. *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.

———. "Rethinking Agape and Eucharist in Early North African Christianity." *Studia Liturgica* 34 (2004): 165-76.

McGuckin, J. A. "Poetry and Hymnography (2): The Greek World." In *The Oxford Handbook to Early Christianity*, edited by S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter, 641-56. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

McGuire, M. B. *Lived Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Merkelbach, R. *Mani und sein Religionssystem*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1986.

Meskell, L. "Archaeologies of Identity." In *Archaeological Theory Today*, edited by I. Hodder, 187-213. Malden: Polity, 2001.

Meskell, L., and R. W. Preucel. "Identities." In *Companion to Social Archaeology*, edited by L. Meskell and R. W. Preucel, 121-41. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004.

Meyer, B. "Material Mediations and Religious Practices of World-Making." In *Religion across Media: From Early Antiquity to Late Modernity*, edited by K. Lundby, 1-19. New York: Peter Lang, 2013.

Meyer, E. A. *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Mikkelsen, G. B. "Skillfully Planting the Tree of Light: The Chinese Manichaica, Their Central Asian Counterparts, and Some Observations on the Translation of Manichaeism into Chinese." In *Cultural Encounters: China, Japan and the West*, edited by S. Clausen, R. Starrs and A. Wedell-Wedellsborg, 83-108. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1995.

Mills, A. J. "Research in the Dakhleh Oasis." In *Origin and Early Development of Food-Producing Cultures in North-Eastern Africa*, edited by L. Krzyzaniek and M. Kobusiewicz, 205-10. Poznań: Polish Academy of Sciences, Poznań Branch: Poznań Archaeological Museum, 1984.

Milroy, L., and M. Gordon. *Sociolinguistics. Method and Interpretation*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003.

Milroy, L., and J. Milroy. "Linguistic Change, Social Network and Speaker Innovation." *Journal of Linguistics* 21 (1985): 339-84.

Mirecki, P. A. "Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37." In *Manichaeica Selecta I*, edited by A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen, 243-62. Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991.

———. "Manichaean Literature." In *The Gnostic Bible*, edited by W. Barnstone and M. Meyer, 569-654. Boston: Shambala, 2006.

———. "Manichaeism, Scribal Magic and Papyrus Kellis 35." In *Gnostica et Manichaica: Festschrift für Aloïs van Tongerloo, anläßlich des 60. Geburtstages überreicht von Kollegen, Freunden und Schülern*, edited by L. Cirillo and M. Knuppel, 133-46. Wiesbaden Harrassowitz, 2012.

Mirecki, P. A., I. Gardner, and A. Alcock. "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter." In *Emerging from Darkness*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki, 1-32. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Mische, A., and H. C. White. "Between Conversation and Situation: Public Switching Dynamics across Network Domains." *Social Research* 65, no. 3 (1998): 695-724.

Mitchell, C. W., ed. *S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan*. London: Williams and Norgate, 1912-21.

Mol, E., and M. J. Versluys. "Material Culture and Imagined Communities in the Roman World." In *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*, edited by R. Raja and J. Rüpke, 451-61. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

Molto, J. E. "The Comparative Skeletal Biology and Paleoepidemiology of the People from Ein Tirghi and Kellis, Dakhleh, Egypt." In *Oasis Papers 1*, edited by C. A. Marlow and A. J. Mills, 81-100. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001.

———. "Bio-Archaeological Research of Kellis 2: An Overview." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 239-55. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Molto, J. E., P. Sheldrick, A. Cerroni, and S. Haddow. "Late Roman Period Human Skeletal Remains from Area D/6 and D/7 and North Tomb 1 at Kellis." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 345-63. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

Monson, A. *From the Ptolemies to the Romans. Political and Economic Change in Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Morano, E. "Manichaean Middle Iranian Incantation Texts." In *Turfan Revisited: The First Century of Research into the Arts and Cultures of the Silk Road*, edited by D. Durkin-Meisterernst, S. C. Raschmann, J. Wilkens, M. Yaldiz and P. Zieme, 221-27. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2004.

Morris, E. F. "Insularity and Island Identity in the Oases Bordering Egypt's Great Sand Sea." In *Thebes and Beyond: Studies in Honour of Kent R. Weeks*, edited by Z. Hawass and S. Ikram, 129-44. Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities Press, 2010.

Morris, I. *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Moss, C. R. "The Discourse of Voluntary Martyrdom: Ancient and Modern." *Church History* 81, no. 3 (2012): 531-51.

———. *The Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom*. New York: HarperOne, 2013.

Moss, J. S. "Women in Late Antique Egypt." In *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, edited by S. L. James and S. Dillon, 502-12. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Müller, A. "The Cult in the Cell." *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 18-19, no. 1 (2017): 187-200.

Munson, Z. "When a Funeral Isn't Just a Funeral: The Layered Meaning of Everyday Action." In *Everyday Religion*, edited by N. Ammerman, 121-36. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Muysken, P. "Mixed Codes." In *Handbook of Multilingualism and Multilingual Communication*, edited by P. Auer and L. Wei, 325-40. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 2007.

Nagel, P. "Die apokryphen Apostelakten des 2. und 3. Jahrhunderts in manichäischen Literatur." In *Gnosis und Neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, edited by K. W. Tröger, 149-82. Gütersloh: Mohn, 1973.

———. "Der ursprüngliche Titel der manichäischen 'Jesuspsalmen'." In *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by H. Preißler and H. Seiwert, 209-16. Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994.

Nässelqvist, D. *Public Reading in Early Christianity: Lectors, Manuscripts, and Sound in the Oral Delivery of John 1-4*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Neil, B. "Models of Gift Giving in the Preaching of Leo the Great." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 18, no. 2 (2010): 225-59.

Nevett, L. "Family and the Household, Ancient History and Archeology: A Case Study from Roman Egypt." In *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, edited by B. Rawson, 15-31. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Nobbs, A. M. "The Koimeterion of P. Charite 40 - Christian Burial Practices in a Papyrological Context." In *Kalathos: Studies in Honour of Asher Ovadiah*, edited by S. Mucznik, 77-85. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Department of Art History, 2006.

Nongbri, B. "Dislodging "Embedded" Religion: A Brief Note on a Scholarly Trope." *Numen* 55, no. 4 (2008): 440-60.

———. *Before Religion. A History of a Modern Concept*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

North, J. "The Development of Religious Pluralism." In *The Jews among Pagans and Christians*, edited by J. Lieu, J. North and T. Rajak, 174-93. London: Routledge, 1992.

Oates, J. F. "Sale of a Donkey." *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 25, no. 1-4 (1988): 129-35.

Oates, J. F., and P. van Minnen. "Three Duke University Papyri from Kellis." In *Papyri in Memory of P.J. Sijpesteijn (P.Sijp.)*, edited by A. J. B. Sirks, K. A. Worp and R. S. Bagnall, 54-64. New Haven: American Society of Papyrologists, 2007.

Oerter, W. B. "Zur Bedeutung der Manichaica aus Kellis für Koptologie und Manichäologie. Vorläufige Anmerkungen." In *Religionswissenschaft in Konsequenz. Beiträge im Anschluß an Impulse von Kurt Rudolph*, edited by R. Flasche, F. Heinrich and C. Koch, 97-113. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2000.

Orsi, R. "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion." In *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice*, edited by D. D. Hall, 4-12. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

———. "The "So-Called History" of the Study of Religion." *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 20 (2008): 134-38.

———. *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950*. 3rd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

———. "Afterword: Everyday Religion and the Contemporary World: The Un-Modern, or What Was Supposed to Have Disappeared but Did Not." In *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, edited by S. Schielke and L. Debevec, 146-61. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012.

Ort, L. J. R. *Mani: A Religio-Historical Description of His Personality*. Leiden: Brill, 1967.

Ortner, S. B. B. "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, no. 1 (1984): 126-66.

Osiek, C. *Rich and Poor in the Shepherd of Hermas: An Exegetical-Social Investigation*. Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1983.

———. "*Diakonos* and *Prostatis*: Women's Patronage in Early Christianity." *HTS Theological Studies* 61, no. 1 & 2 (2005): 347-70.

———. "The Self-Defining Praxis of the Developing *Ecclesia*." In *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, edited by M. M. Mitchell and F. M. Young, 274-92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Paetz gen. Schieck, A. "Late Roman Cushions and the Principles of Their Decoration." In *Clothing the House. Furnishing Textiles of the 1st Millennium Ad from Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, edited by A. De Moor and C. Fluck, 115-31. Tielt: Lannoo, 2009.

Panaino, A. "Astrologia e visione della volta celeste nel manicheismo." In *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi: "Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. van Tongerloo, 249-95. Turnhout: Brepols, 1997.

Papaconstantinou, A. "L'agapè des martyrs: P.Oxy. LVI 3864." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 92 (1992): 241-42.

———. "Notes sur les actes de donation d'enfant au monastère thébain de Saint-Phoibammon." *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 32 (2002): 83-105.

———. "Egypt." In *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, edited by S. F. Johnson, 195–223. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Pedersen, N. A. *Studies in the Sermon on the Great War*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1996.

———. "A Manichaean Historical Text." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 119 (1997): 193-201.

———. "Über einen manichäisch-koptischen Hymnus von der Erlösung der Seele (Das *manichäische Psalmenbuch*, Teil 1: Faksimileausgabe Band 3, Tafel 127-128)." In *The Nag Hammadi Texts in the History of Religions. Proceedings of the International Conference at the Royal Academy of Sciences and Letters in Copenhagen, September 19-24, 1995. On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Nag Hammadi Discovery*, edited by S. Giversen, 199-210. Kopenhagen: Historisk-filosofiske Skrifter, 2002.

———. *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God. A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos: The Work's Sources, Aims and Relation to Its Contemporary Theology*. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

———. "The Veil and Revelation of the Father of Greatness." In *In Search of Truth: Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism: Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, edited by J. A. van den Berg, A. Kotzé, T. Nicklas and M. Scopello, 229-34. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

———. "The Term Mysterion in Coptic-Manichaean Texts." In *Mystery and Secrecy in the Nag Hammadi Collection and Other Ancient Literature: Ideas and Practises*, edited by C. H. Bull, L. I. Lied and J. D. Turner, 133-43. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

———. "Die Manichäer in ihrer Umwelt: Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion über die Soziologie der Gnostiker." In *Zugänge zur Gnosis: Akten zur Tagung der patristischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft vom 02.-05.01.2011 in Berlin-Spandau*, edited by J. van Oort and Christoph Markschies, 245-75. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.

———. "Manichaean Self-Designations in the Western Tradition." In *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity*, edited by J. van Oort, 177-96. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

———. "Holy Meals and Eucharist in Manichaean Sources. Their Relation to Christian Traditions." In *The Eucharist – Its Origins and Contexts*, edited by D. Hellholm and D. Sänger, 1267-97. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Pedersen, N. A., R. Falkenberg, J. M. Larsen, and C. Leurini. *The Old Testament in Manichaean Tradition: The Sources in Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, New Persian, and Arabic*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Pedersen, N. A., and J. M. Larsen, eds. *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*. Turnhout: Brepolis, 2013.

Petersen, A. K. "Between Old and New: The Problem of Acculturation Illustrated by the Early Christian Use of the Phoenix Motif." In *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst*, edited by F. G. Martínez and G. P. Luttikhuizen, 147-64. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Pettipiece, T. "A Church to Surpass All Churches: Manichaeism as a Test Case for the Theory of Reception." *Laval théologique et philosophique* 61, no. 2 (2005): 247-60.

———. "Rhetorica Manichaica: A Rhetorical Analysis of *Kephalaia* Chapter 38: "On the Light Mind and the Apostles and the Saints" (Ke 89.19-102.12)." In *Coptica - Gnostica - Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, edited by P. H. Poirier and L. Painchaud, 731-45. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

———. "Separating Light from Darkness: Manichean Use of Biblical Traditions in the *Kephalaia*." In *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity*, edited by L. DiTommaso and L. Turcescu, 419-27. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

———. *Pentadic Redaction in the Manichaean Kephalaia*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

———. "Towards a Manichaean Reading of the Nag Hammadi Codices." *Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies* 3-4 (2012): 43-54.

———. "Mani's Journey to India: Mission or Exile?" In *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, edited by Team Turfanforschung, 503-10. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017.

Piras, A. "The Writing Hearer. A Suggested Restoration of M 101d." In *Zur lichten Heimat: Studien zu Manichäismus, Iranistik und Zentralasienkunde im Gedenken an Werner Sundermann*, edited by Team "Turfanforschung," 525-34. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017.

Platvoet, J. "De wraak van de 'primitieven': godsdienstgeschiedenis van Neanderthaler tot New Age." *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 47, no. 3 (1993): 227-43.

Pleşa, A. "Religious Belief in Burial: Funerary Dress and Practice at the Late Antique and Early Islamic Cemeteries at Matmar and Mostagedda, Egypt (Late Fourth – Early Ninth Century CE)." *Ars Orientalis* 47 (2017): 18-42.

Polyakov, M. "Practice Theories: The Latest Turn in Historiography?" *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 6 (2012): 218-35.

Port, A. I. "History from Below, the History of Everyday Life, and Microhistory." in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, edited by J. Wright, 108-13. Oxford: Elsevier, 2015.

Price, S. *Religions of the Ancient Greeks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Proeva, N. "Sur l'iconographie des stèles funéraires du »type Tikveš« en Macédoine à l'époque romaine / Ikonografija nadgrobnih stela Tikveškog tipa." In *Funerary Sculpture of the Western Illyricum and Neighbouring Regions of the Roman Empire*, edited by N. Cambi and G. Koch, 679-708. Split: Knjizevni Krug, 2013.

Puech, H. C. "Liturgie et pratiques rituelles dans le manichéisme (Collège de France, 1952-1972)." In *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais*. Paris: Flammarion, 1979.

———. *Sur le manichéisme et autres essais*. Paris: Flammarion, 1979.

Putnam, R. D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

Quecke, H. "Erhebet euch, Kinder des Lichtes!." *Le Muséon* 76 (1963): 27-45.

Raja, R., and J. Rüpke, eds. *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*. Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2015.

Raven, M. J. "Egyptian Concepts on the Orientation of the Human Body." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 91 (2005): 37-53.

Rebillard, E. "Koimetérion et Coemeterium: tombe, tombe sainte, nécropole." *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 105, no. 2 (1993): 975-1001.

———. *The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

———. *Christians and their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE*. London: Cornell University Press, 2012.

———. "Religious Sociology. Being Christian in the Time of Augustine." In *A Companion to Augustine*, edited by M. Vessey, 40-53. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

———. "Becoming Christian in Carthage in the Age of Tertullian." In *Conversion and Initiation in Antiquity. Shifting Identities – Creating Change* edited by B. S. Bøgh, 47-58. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014.
———. "Commemorating the Dead in North Africa. Continuity and Change from the Second to the Fifth Century CE." In *Death and Changing Rituals. Function and Meaning in Ancient Funerary Practices*, edited by J. R. Brandt, M. Pusac and H. Roland, 269-86. Oxbow: Oxbow Books, 2014.
———. "Popular Hatred against Christians: The Case of North Africa in the Second and Third Centuries." *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 16, no. 1 (2014): 283–310.
———. "Late Antique Limits of Christianness: North Africa in the Age of Augustine." In *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity*, edited by E. Rebillard and J. Rüpke, 293-317. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2015.
———. "Material Culture and Religious Identity in Late Antiquity." In *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*, edited by R. Raja and J. Rüpke, 427-36. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.
———. "Everyday Christianity in Carthage at the Time of Tertullian." *Religion in the Roman Empire* 2, no. 1 (2016): 91-102.
———. "Expressing Christianness in Carthage in the Second and Third Centuries." *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 119-34.
Rebillard, E., and J. Rüpke, eds. *Group Identity and Religious Individuality in Late Antiquity*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press 2015.
Reck, C. "Some Remarks on the Monday and Bema Hymns of the German Turfan Collection." In *Atti del terzo congresso internazionale di studi "Manicheismo e Oriente cristiano antico,"* edited by A. van Tongerloo and L. Cirillo, 297-303. Turnhout: Brepols, 1997.
———. *Gesegnet sei dieser Tag: Manichäische Festtagshymnen. Edition der Mittelpersischen und Parthischen Sonntags-, Montags- und Bemahymnen*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2004.
———. "A Sogdian Version of Mani's Letter of the Seal." In *New Light on Manichaeism*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn, 225-39. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
Reed, A. Y., and A. H. Becker, eds. *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.
Reeves, J. C. *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992.
———. "Manichaeans as *Ahl Al-Kitab.* A Study in Manichaean Scripturalism." In *Light against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, edited by A. Lange, E. M. Meyers, B. H. Reynolds III and R. Styers, 249-65. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011.
———. *Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism*. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2011.
Reicke, B. *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos in Verbindung mit der altchristlichen Agapenfeier*. Uppsala: Verlag, 1951.
Reintges, C. H. "Code-Mixing Strategies in Coptic Egyptian." *Lingua Aegyptia* 9 (2001): 193-237.
———. "Coptic Egyptian as a Bilingual Language Variety." In *Lenguas en contacto: el testimonio escrito."* edited by P. Bádenas De La Peña and S. Torallas Tovar, 69-86. Madrid: Consejo superiores de investigaciones científicas, 2004.
Remus, H. "The End of "Paganism"?" *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 33, no. 2 (2004): 191-208.
Richter, S. G. *Exegetisch-Literarkritische Untersuchungen von Herakleidespsalmen des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmenbuches*. Altenberge Oros Verlag, 1994.
———. *Die Aufstiegspsalmen des Herakleides*. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1997.
———. "Die manichäische Toten- oder Seelenmesse." In *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit*, 529-40. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999.
———. "Ein manichäischer Sonnenhymnus." In *Studia Manichaica IV*, edited by R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann and P. Zieme, 482-93. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000.

———. "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Panopolitan Region between Lykopolis and Nag Hammadi." In *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt*, edited by G. Gabra and H. N. Takla, 121-29. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008.

Richter, T. S. "What's in a Story? Cultural Narratology and Coptic Child Donation Documents." *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 35 (2005): 237-64.

———. "Coptic Letters." *Asiatische Studien* 62, no. 3 (2008): 739-70.

———. "Greek, Coptic, and the 'Language of the *Hijra'*. Rise and Decline of the Coptic Language in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt." In *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman near East*, edited by H. M. Cotton, R. G. Hoyland, J. J. Price and D. J. Wasserstein, 401-46. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Ries, J. "Une version liturgique copte de l'epistola fundamenti de Mani réfutée par Saint Augustin?" *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972): 341-49.

———. "La fête de bêma dans l'église de Mani." *Revue d'Etudes Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 22, no. 3-4 (1976): 218-33.

———. *L'église gnostique de Mani*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.

Riggs, C. *The Beautiful Burial in Roman Egypt: Art, Identity, and Funerary Religion* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Rives, J. "The Persecution of Christians and Ideas of Community in the Roman Empire." In *Politiche religiose nel mondo antico e tardoantico: poteri e indirizzi, forme del controllo, idee e prassi di tolleranza*, edited by G.A. Cecconi and C. Gabrielli, 199-217. Bari: Edipuglia, 2011.

———. "Religious Choice and Religious Change in Classical and Late Antiquity: Models and Questions." *ARYS: Antigüedad, Religiones y Sociedades* 9 (2011): 265-80.

Roberts, C. *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester. Vol. III*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1938.

———. *Manuscript, Society, and Belief in Early Christian Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Robinson, J. M. *The Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013.

Robinson, T. A. *Who Were the First Christians? Dismantling the Urban Thesis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Rohmann, D. *Christianity, Book-Burning and Censorship in Late Antiquity*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.

Römer, C. "Mani, der neue Urmensch. Eine neue Interpretation der P. 36 des Kolner Mani-Kodex." In *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis: Atti del simposio internazionale*, edited by L. Cirillo and A. Roselli, 333-44. Cosenza: Marra Editore, 1986.

———. "Die manichäische Kirchenorganisation nach dem Kölner Mani-Kodex." In *Studia Manichaica II*, edited by G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit, 181-88. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992.

———. *Manis frühe Missionsreisen nach der Kölner Manibiographie. Tekstkritischer Kommentar und Erlauterung zu P. 121 - P. 192 des Kölner Mani Kodex*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994.

———. "Manichaean Letter." In *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, edited by P. Parson, J. Rea, D. Obbink and N. Gonis, 194-96. London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 2009.

———. "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Papyri." In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, 623-43. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Römer, C., R. W. Daniel, and K. A. Worp. "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung bei Kranken in P.Barc. 155.19 - 156.5 und P.Kellis I 88." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 119 (1997): 128-31.

Römer, C., and N. Gonis. "Ein Lobgesang an den Vater der Grosse in P.Kellis II 94." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 120 (1998): 299-300.

Ross, A., and B. Stern. "A Preliminary Report on the Analysis of Organic Materials from Ismant el-Kharab." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 365-71. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

Rossi, C. "Controlling the Borders of the Empire: The Distribution of Late-Roman 'Forts' in the Kharga Oasis." In *Oasis Papers 6*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 331-36. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013.

Rousseau, P. *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

Rouwhorst, G. "The Reading of Scripture in Early Christian Liturgy." In *What Athens Has to Do with Jerusalem: Essays on Classical, Jewish, and Early Christian Art and Archaeology in Honor of Gideon Foerster*, edited by L. C. Rutgers, 305-31. Leuven: Peeters, 2002.

Rowland, J. "The Ptolemaic-Roman Cemetery at the Quesna Archaeological Area." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 94 (2008): 69-93.

Rowlandson, J., ed. *Women & Society in Greek & Roman Egypt. A Sourcebook*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

———. "Administration and Law: Graeco-Roman." In *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, edited by A. B. Lloyd, 237-54. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Ruffini, G. R. *Social Networks in Byzantine Egypt.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

———, "Transport and Trade in Trimithis. The Texts from Area 1." In *A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis / Amheida House B2*, edited by A. L. Boozer. New York: New York University Press / Ancient World Digital Library, 2015.

Rüpke, J. *Die Religion der Rõner: Eine Einfuhrung*. Mu̇nchen: Beck, 2001.

———, "Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning 'Cults' and 'Polis Religion'." *Mythos* 5 (2011): 191-203.

———, ed. *The Individual and the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

———, ed. *The Individual in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

———. "Individualization and Individuation as Concepts of Historical Research." In *The Individual and the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, edited by J. Rüpke, 3-38. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

———. "Individuals and Networks." In *Panthée: Religious Transformations in the Graeco-Roman Empire*, edited by L. Bricault and C. Bonnet, 261-77. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

———. *Religion. Antiquity and Its Legacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

———. "Religious Agency, Identity, and Communication: Reflections on History and Theory of Religion." *Religion* 45, no. 3 (2015): 344-66.

———. *On Roman Religion: Lived Religion and the Individual in Ancient Rome*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016.

———. *Religious Deviance in the Roman World: Superstition or Individuality?* English tr. by D. M. B. Richardson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Rüpke, J., and W. Spickermann. "Introduction." In *Reflections on Religious Individuality*, edited by J. Rüpke and W. Spickermann, 1-7. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012.

———, eds. *Reflections on Religious Individuality*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012.

Sala, T. A. "Narrative Options in Manichaean Eschatology." In *Frontiers of Faith: The Christian Encounter with Manichaeism in the Acts of Archelaus,* , edited by J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki, 49-66. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Saller, R. P. "Women, Slaves, and the Economy of the Roman Household." In *Early Christian Families in Context*, edited by D. L. Balch and C. Osiek, 185-204. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

———. "The Roman Family as Productive Unit." In *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, edited by B. Rawson, 116-28. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Salzman, M. R. "From a Classical to a Christian City. Civic Euergetism and Charity in Late Antique Rome." *Studies in Late Antiquity* 1, no. 1 (2017): 65-85.

Sandnes, K. O. *The Challenge of Homer: School, Pagan Poets and Early Christianity*. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2009.

Sandwell, I. *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

———. "John Chrysostom's Audiences and His Accusations of Religious Laxity." In *Religious Diversity in Late Antiquity*, edited by D. M. Gwynn and S. Bangert, 523-42. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Sarri, A. *Material Aspects of Letter Writing in the Graeco-Roman World: C. 500 BC – C. AD 300.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017.

Satlow, M. L., ed. *The Gift in Antiquity*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

Säve-Söderbergh, T. *Studies in the Coptic Manichaean Psalm-Book*. Uppala: AlmQuist & Wiksells Boktryckeri Ab, 1949.

Schaeder, H. H. "Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems." In *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, edited by F. Saxl, 65-157. Leipzig: Teubner, 1927.

Schaten, S. "Koptische Kinderschenkungsurkunden." *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte* 35 (1996): 129-42.

Scheid, J. "Community and Community. Reflections on Some Ambiguities Based on the Thiasoi of Roman Egypt." In *The Religious History of the Roman Empire*, edited by J. North and S. Price, 366-82. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

———. *The Gods, the State, and the Individual: Reflections on Civic Religion in Rome*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

Scheidel, W. *Death on the Nile: Disease and the Demography of Roman Egypt*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

———. "The Demographic Background." In *Growing up Fatherless in Antiquity*, edited by S. R. Huebner and D. M. Ratzan, 31-40. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

———. "Age and Health." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Riggs, 305-16. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Scheitle, C. P., and K. D. Dougherty. "The Sociology of Religious Organizations." *Sociology Compass* 2, no. 3 (2008): 981-99.

Schenke, G. "The Healing Shrines of St. Phoibammon: Evidence of Cult Activity in Coptic Legal Documents." *Journal of Ancient Christianity* 20, no. 3 (2016): 496-523.

Schenke, H. M. "Rezension zu Iain Gardner: Kellis Literary Texts; Iain Gardner/Anthony Alcock/Wolf-Peter Funk (Ed.): Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis." *Enchoria* 27 (2001): 221-30.

Schielke, S., and L. Debevec. "Introduction." In *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, edited by S. Schielke and L. Debevec, 1-16. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012.

Schilbrack, K. "Religions: Are There Any." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78, no. 4 (2010): 1112-38.

———. "A Realist Social Ontology of Religion." *Religion* 47, no. 2 (2017): 161-78.

Schipper, H. G. "Melothesia: A Chapter of Manichaean Astrology in the West." In *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, edited by J. van Oort, 195-204. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Schmidt, C., and H. J. Polotsky. "Ein Mani-Fund in Ägypten." In *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 4-90. Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, in Kommission bei W. de Gruyter, 1933.

Schroeder, C. T. *Monastic Bodies: Discipline and Salvation in Shenoute of Atripe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.

———. "Children and Egyptian Monasticism." In *Children in Late Ancient Christianity*, edited by C. B. Horn and R. R. Phenix, 317-38. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Schwartz, B. "The Social Psychology of the Gift." *American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 1 (1967): 1-11.

Schweitzer, A. "Les parures de cartonnage des momies d'une nécropole d'Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 269-76. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002.

Schwendner, G. "A Fragmentary Psalter from Karanis and Its Context." In *Jewish and Christian Scripture as Artifact and Canon*, edited by C.A. Evans and D. Zacharias, 117-36. London: T & T Clark, 2009.

Scopello, M. *Femme, Gnose et Manichéisme*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Seccombe, D. P. "Was There Organized Charity in Jerusalem before the Christians?" *Journal of Theological Studies* 29, no. 1 (1978): 140-43.

Segelberg, E. "Syncretism at Work: On the Origin of Some Coptic Manichaean Psalms." In *Religious Syncretism in Antiquity: Essays in Conversation with Geo Widengren*, edited by B. A. Pearson, 191-203. Missoula: Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion and the Institute of Religious Studies, 1975.

Sessa, K. *Daily Life in Late Antiquity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Sewell, W. H. "The Concept(s) of Culture." In *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, edited by V. E. Bonnell and L. Hunt, 35-61. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Shaked, S. ""Peace Be Upon You, Exalted Angels": On Hekhalot, Liturgy and Incantation Bowls." *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 2 (1995): 197-219.

Shapira, D. "Manichaios, *Jywndg Gryw* and Other Manichaean Terms and Titles." In *Irano-Judaica IV*, edited by S. Shaked and A. Netzer, 122-50. Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 1999.

Sharot, S. *A Comparative Sociology of World Religions. Virtuosos, Priests, and Popular Religion*. New York: New York University Press, 2001.

Sharpe, J. L. "Dakhleh Oasis Project: The Kellis Codices." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XVII, no. 4 (1987): 192-97.

———. "The Dakhleh Tablets and Some Codicological Considerations." In *Les tablettes à écrire de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne*, edited by E. Lalou, 127-48. Turnhout: Brepols, 1992.

Sherman, R. "The Catechetical Function of Reformed Hymnody." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 55, no. 1 (2002): 79-99.

Shimin, G. "Notes on an Ancient Uighur Official Decree Issued to a Manichaean Monastery." *Central Asiatic Journal* 35 (1991): 209-23.

Shisha-Halevy, A. "Review Article of: Gardner, Iain; Alcock, Anthony; Funk, Wolf-Peter: Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis Volume 2." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 106 (2016): 269-76.

Silber, I. F. "Beyond Purity and Danger: Gift-Giving in the Monotheistic Religions." In *Gifts and Interests*, edited by A. Vandevelde, 115-32. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.

———. "Echoes of Sacrifice? Repertoires of Giving in the Great Religions." In *Sacrifice in Religious Experience*, edited by A. I. Baumgarten, 291-312. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

———. "Neither Mauss, nor Veyne: Peter Brown's Interpretive Path to the Gift." In *The Gift in Antiquity*, edited by M. L. Satlow, 202-220. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

Sitzler, S. "Identity: The Indigent and the Wealthy in the Homilies of John Chrysostom." *Vigiliae Christianae* 63, no. 5 (2009): 468-79.

Skjærvø, O. "The Manichean Polemical Hymns in M 28 I." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 9 (1995): 239-55.

Smagina, E. "Some Words with Unknown Meaning in Coptic Manichaean Texts." *Enchoria* 17 (1990): 115-22.

Smith, G. S. "A Manichaean Hymn at Oxyrhynchus: A Reevaluation of P.Oxy 2074." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24, no. 1 (2016): 81-97.

Smith, J. K. A. "Secular Liturgies and the Prospects for a 'Postsecular' Sociology of Religion." In *The Post-Secular in Question. Religion in Contemporary Society*, edited by P. Gorski, D. Kyuman Kim, J. Torpey and J. van Antwerpen, 159-84. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

Smith, J. Z. "Native Cults in the Hellenistic Period." *History of Religions* 11, no. 2 (1971): 236-49.

———. "Map Is Not Territory." In *Map Is Not Territory*, 289-309. Leiden: Brill, 1978.

———. "The Devil in Mr. Jones." In *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*, 102-34. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

———. *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.

———. *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990.

———. "A Matter of Class: Taxonomies of Religion." *Harvard Theological Review* 89 (1996): 387-403.

———. *Relating Religion. Essays in the Study of Religion*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Smith, M. "Aspects of Preservation and Transmission of Indigenous Religious Traditions in Akhimim and Its Environs During the Graeco-Roman Period." In *Perspectives on Panopolis: An Egyptian Town from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest*, edited by A. Egberts, B. P. Muhs and J. van der Vliet, 233-47. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

Smith, W. C. *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind*. Reprint. ed. ed. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1991. First published in 1963.

Snyder, J. A. *Language and Identity in Ancient Narratives*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

Somers, M. R. "The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach." *Theory and Society* 23 (1994): 605-49.

Spiegel, G. M. "Introduction." In *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, edited by G. M. Spiegel, 1-31. London: Routledge, 2008.

Spinks, B. D. "The Integrity of the Anaphora of Sarapion of Thmuis and Liturgical Methodology." *Journal of Theological Studies* 49, no. 1 (1998): 136-44.

Stadler, M. A. "Funerary Religion: The Final Phase of an Egyptian Tradition." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, edited by C. Riggs, 383-97. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Stang, C. M. *Our Divine Double*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.

Stark, R. *Cities of God. The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

Stark, R., and W. S. Bainbridge. *The Future of Religion*. Berkeley: University of Californian Press, 1985.

———. *A Theory of Religion*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987.

Stark, R., and R. Finke. *Acts of Faith*. Berkely: University of California Press, 2000.

Stegemann, V. "Zu Kapitel 69 der *Kephalaia* des Mani." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37 (1938): 214-23.

Stern, K. B. *Inscribing Devotion and Death: Archaeological Evidence for Jewish Populations of North Africa*. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Stevens, A. "Terracottas from Ismant el-Kharab." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 277–95. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2000.

Stewart, J. D., J. E. Molto, and P. J. Reimer. "The Chronology of Kellis 2: The Interpretative Significance of Radiocarbon Dating of Human Remains." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 373-78. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.

Stolcke, V. "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rethorics of Exclusion in Europe." *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 1-24.

Stowers, S. K. *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986.

———. "The Religion of Plant and Animal Offerings Versus the Religion of Meanings, Essences, and Textual Mysteries." In *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice*, edited by J. W. Knust and Z. Varhelyi, 35-56. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Stratton, K. B. "Identity." In *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Mediterranean Religions*, edited by B. S. Spaeth, 220-51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Strawbridge, J. R. "Early Christian Epigraphy, Evil, and the Apotropaic Function of Romans 8.31." *Vigiliae Christianae* 71 (2017): 315-29.

Stringer, M. D. *Contemporary Western Ethnography and the Definition of Religion*. London: Continuum, 2008.

Stroumsa, G. G. "Aspects de l'eschatologie manichéenne." *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 198, no. 2 (1981): 163-81.

———. "Monachisme et marranisme chez les Manichéens d'Egypte." *Numen* 29, no. 2 (1982): 184-201.

———. "The Manichaean Challenge to Egyptian Christianity." In *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, edited by B. A. Pearson and J. E. Goehring, 307-19. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

———. *Hidden Wisdom. Esoteric Traditions and the Roots of Christian Mysticism*. Leiden: Brill, 1996.

———. "Isaac De Beausobre Revisited: The Birth of Manichaean Studies." In *Studia Manichaica*, edited by R. E. Emmerick, W. Sundermann and P. Zieme, 601-12. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000.

———. "Early Christianity: A Religion of the Book?" In *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World*, edited by M. Finkelberg and G. G. Stroumsa, 153-73. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
———. "The Scriptural Movement of Late Antiquity and Christian Monasticism." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16, no. 1 (2008): 61-77.
———. *The End of Sacrifice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
———. *The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.
Sullivan, W. F. *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
Sundermann, W. *Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973.
———. "Namen von Göttern, Dämonen und Menschen in iranischen Versionen des manichäischen Mythos." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 6 (1979): 95-133.
———. *Mitteliranische manichaïsche Texte kirchengeschichtlichen Inhalts*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981.
———. "Mani, India and the Manichaean Religion." *South Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (1986): 11-19.
———. "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer I." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13, no. 1 (1986): 40-92.
———. "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer II." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 13, no. 2 (1986): 239-317.
———. "Studien zur kirchengeschichtlichen Literatur der iranischen Manichäer III." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 14, no. 1 (1987): 47-107.
———. "Bema." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last Updated: December 15, 1989, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bema-festival-manicheans (accessed January 10, 2017).
———. "Christianity V. Christ in Manicheism." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: October 18, 2011, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/christianity-v (accessed January 10, 2017).
———. "Iranische *Kephalaia*texte?" In *Studia Manichaica II*, edited by G. Wießner and H. J. Klimkeit, 305-18. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992.
———. "Iranische Personennamen der Manichäer." *Die Sprache* 36, no. 2 (1994): 244-70.
———. "A Manichaean Liturgical Instruction on the Act of Almsgiving." In *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, edited by P. A. Mirecki and J. D. BeDuhn, 200-8. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
———. "Eine re-edition zweier manichäisch-soghdischer Briefe." In *Iranian Languages and Texts from Iran and Turan: Ronald E. Emmerick Memorial Volume*, edited by M. Macuch, M. Maggi and W. Sundermann, 403-21. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007.
———. "Manichaean Literature in Iranian Languages." In *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran*, edited by R. E. Emmerick and M. Macuch, 197-265. London: I.B.Tauris, 2008.
———. "A Manichaean Collection of Letters and a List of Mani's Letters in Middle Persian." In *New Light on Manichaeism*, edited by J. D. BeDuhn, 259-77. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
———. "Manicheism IV. Missionary Activity and Technique." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online,* last updated: July 20, 2009, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/manicheism-iv-missionary-activity-and-technique- (accessed on 27 May 2015).
———. "Eschatology II. Manichean Eschatology." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online,* last updated: January 19, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/eschatology-ii (accessed 03 January 2017).
———. "Festivals II. Manichean." *Encyclopædia Iranica Online*, last updated: January 26, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/festivals-ii (accessed January 10, 2017).
———. "Manichaeism on the Silk Road: Its Rise, Flourishing and Decay." In *Between Rome and China: History, Religion and Material Culture of the Silk Road*, edited by S. N. C. Lieu and G. B. Mikkelsen, 75-90. Turnhout: Brepols, 2016.
Sweeney, L. "Mani's Twin and Plotinus: Questions of "Self"." In *Neoplatonism and Gnosticism*, edited by R. T. Wallis and J. Bregman, 381-424. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.
Swidler, A. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 2 (1986): 273-86.

———. *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
Tardieu, M. *Manichaeism*. Translated by P. A. Mirecki. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008.
Tavory, I. "Interactionism: Meaning and Self as Process." In *Handbook of Contemporary Sociological Theory*, edited by S. Abrutyn, 85-98. Cham: Springer, 2016.
Taylor, C. *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.
———. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007.
Tellbe, M. "Identity and Prayer." In *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, edited by R. Hvalvik and K. O. Sandnes, 13-34. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.
Thanheiser, U. "Roman Agriculture and Gardening in Egypt as Seen from Kellis." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994–1995 to 1998–1999 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 299–310. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002. With contributions by J. Walter and C. A. Hope.
Thomas, J. P. *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1987.
Thurston, H. *Secrets of the Sands. The Revelations of Egypt's Everlasting Oasis*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 2003.
Tocheri, M. W., T. L. Dupras, P. Sheldrick, and J. E. Molto. "Roman Period Fetal Skeletons from the East Cemetery (Kellis 2) of Kellis,Egypt." *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 15 (2005): 326–41.
Trebilco, P. *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
Treu, K. "Christliche Empfehlungs-Schemabriefe Auf Papyrus." In *Zetesis: Album Amicorum door Vrienden en Collega's Aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. É. de Strycker*, edited by E. de Strycker, 629-36. Antwerpen: Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1973.
Trouille, D., and I. Tavory. "Shadowing: Warrrants for Intersituational Variation in Ethnography." *Sociological Methods & Research* (2016): 1-27.
Tubach, J., and M. Zakeri. "Mani's Name." In *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, edited by J. van Oort and O. Wermelinger, 272-86. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
Tweed, T.A. *Our Lady of the Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
———. "After the Quotidian Turn: Interpretive Categories and Scholarly Trajectories in the Study of Religion since the 1960s." *Journal of Religion* 95, no. 3 (2015): 361-85.
Utas, B. "Manistan and Xanaquah." In *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce II*, edited by H.W. Bailey, 655-64. Leiden: Brill, 1985.
Vaage, L. E., ed. *Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006.
van den Berg, J. A. *Biblical Argument in Manichaean Missionary Practice*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
van den Broek, R. "Manichaean Elements in an Early Version of the Virgin Mary's Assumption." In *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovation in Antiquity*, edited by A. Houtman, A. F. de Jong and M. Misset-van de Weg, 293-316. Leiden: Brill, 2008.
van der Horst, P. W. and J. Mansfeld. *An Alexandrian Platonist against Dualism*. Leiden: Brill, 1974.
van der Vliet, J. "Fate, Magic and Astrology in the *Pistis Sophia*, Chaps 15-21." In *The Wisdom of Egypt*, edited by A. Hilhorst and G. H. van Kooten, 519-36. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
———. "Bringing Home the Homeless: Landscape and History in Egyptian Hagiography." *Church History and Religious Culture* 86, no. 1 (2006): 39-55.
———. *Het Koptisch: de taal van de Farao's?* Nijmegen: Radboud University Inaugural Lecture, 2009.
———. "Epigraphy and History in the Theban Region." In *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt: Nag Hammadi - Esna*, edited by G. Gabra and H. N. Takla, 147-55. New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2010.

———. "Literature, Liturgy, Magic: A Dynamic Continuum." In *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectural Trends*, edited by P. Buzi and A. Camplani, 555-74. Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2011.

———. "'What Is Man?': The Nubian Tradition of Coptic Funerary Inscriptions." In *Nubian Voices. Studies in Christian Nubian Culture*, edited by A. Lajtar and J. van der Vliet, 171-224. Warsaw: Raphael Taubenschlag Foundation, 2011.

van Minnen, P. "House-to-House Enquiries: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Roman Karanis." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 100 (1994): 227-51.

———. "The Roots of Egyptian Christianity." *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete.* 40, no. 1 (1994): 71-86.

———. "Saving History? Egyptian Hagiography in Its Space and Time." *Church History and Religious Culture* 86, no. 1 (2006): 57-91.

van Nijf, O. M. *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East*. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

van Oort, J. "The Emergence of Gnostic-Manichaean Christianity as a Case of Religious Identity in the Making." In *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation*, edited by W. Otten, J. Frishman and G. Rouwhorst, 275-88. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

———. "The Paraclete Mani as the Apostle of Jesus Christ and the Origins of a New Church." In *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought*, edited by A. Hilhorst, 139-57. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

———. "The Young Augustine's Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the Confessiones and Some Other Relevant Texts." *Vigiliae Christianae* 62, no. 5 (2008): 441-66.

———. "Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma in Context." *Vigiliae Christianae* 65 (2011): 543-67.

———. "Augustine and the Books of the Manichaeans." In *A Companion to Augustine*, edited by M. Vessey, 188-99. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

van Tongerloo, A. "La structure de la communauté manichéenne dans le Turkestan chinois à la lumière des emprunts moyen-iraniens en ouigour." *Central Asiatic Journal* 26, no. 3/4 (1982): 262-88.

Vandorpe, K. "Archives and Dossiers." In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, 216-55. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Varien, M. D., and J. M. Potter. "The Social Production of Communities. Structure, Agency, and Identity." In *The Social Construction of Communities: Agency, Structure, and Identity in the Prehispanic Southwest*, edited by M. D. Varien and J. M. Potter, 1-18. Lanham: Altamira Press, 2008.

Vecoli, F. "Communautés religieuses dans l'Égypte du IVème siècle: Manichéens et cénobites." *Historia Religionum* 3 (2011): 23-46.

Veilleux, A. *La liturgie dans le cénobitisme pachômien au quatrième siècle*. Roma: Libreria Herder, 1968.

Venit, M. S. *Visualizing the Afterlife in the Tombs of Graeco-Roman Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Vergote, J. "Het Manichaeisme in Egypte." *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch genootschap Ex Oriente Lux* 9 (1944): 77-83.

Verhoogt, A. "Dictating Letters in Greek and Roman Egypt from a Comparative Perspective (Unpublished Working Paper)." (2009).

Versluys, M. J. "Haunting Traditions. The (Material) Presence of Egypt in the Roman World." In *Reinventing 'the Invention of Tradition'? Indigenous Pasts and the Roman Present*, edited by D. Boschung, A.W. Busch and M. J. Versluys, 127-58. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015.

Versnel, H. S. *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion: Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes. Three Studies in Henotheism*. Leiden: Brill, 1990.

———. "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion." *Numen* 38, no. 2 (1991): 177-97.

Villey, A. *Psaumes des errants: écrits manichéens du Fayyūm*. Paris: Cerf, 1994.

Vivian, T. " Monks, Middle Egypt, and Metanoia: The Life of Phib by Papohe the Steward (Translation and Introduction)." *Journal of Early Christian History* 7, no. 4 (1999): 547-71.

Volp, U. *Tod und Ritual in den christlichen Gemeinden der Antike*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

Von Stuckrad, K. *Das Ringen um die Astrologie: Jüdische und christliche Beiträge zum antiken Zeitverständnis.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000.

———. "Jewish and Christian Astrology in Late Antiquity: A New Approach." *Numen* 47, no. 1 (2000): 1-40.

———. "Interreligious Transfers in the Middle Ages: The Case of Astrology." *Journal of Religion in Europe* 1 (2008): 34-59.

Wagner, G. *Les Oasis d'Égypte à l'époque grecque, romaine et byzantine d'après les documents grecs*. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1987.

Wassen, C., and J. Jokiranta. "Groups in Tension: Sectarianism in the Damascus Document and the Community Rule." In *Sectarianism in Early Judaism*, edited by D. J. Chalcraft, 205-45. London: Acumen Publishing, 2007.

Watts, D. *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain*. London: Routledge, 1991.

Weimer, J. B. *Musical Assemblies: How Early Christian Music Functioned as a Rhetorical Topos, a Mechanism of Recruitment, and a Fundamental Marker of an Emerging Christian Identity*. University of Toronto: Unpublished PhD dissertation, 2016.

Wendt, H. *At the Temple Gates: The Religion of Freelance Experts in the Early Roman Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Wheelock, W. T. "The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50, no. 1 (1982): 49-71.

Whitehorne, J. "The Kellis Writing Tablets: Their Manufacture and Use." In *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt: The Proceedings of the Seventeenth Classical Colloquium of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum, Held on 1-4 December 1993*, edited by D. M. Bailey, 240-45. Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1996.

Whitehouse, H. "Roman in Life, Egyptian in Death: The Painted Tomb of Petosiris in the Dakhleh Oasis." In *Living on the Fringe*, edited by O. E. Kaper, 253-70. Leiden: Research School CNWS, Leiden University, 1998.

———. "A Painted Panel of Isis." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1992–1993 and 1993–1994 Field Seasons*, edited by C. A. Hope and A. J. Mills, 95-100. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.

———. "Mosaics and Painting in Graeco-Roman Egypt." In *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, 1008-31. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

———. "Vine and Acanthus: Decorative Themes in the Wall-Paintings of Kellis." In *Oasis Papers 6*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, P. Davoli and C. A. Hope, 381-90. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012.

———. "A House, but Not Exactly a Home? The Painted Residence at Kellis Revisited." In *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, edited by A. A. Di Castro, C. A. Hope and B. E. Parr, 243-54. Leuven: Peeters, 2015.

Whitmarsh, T., ed. *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Roman Greek World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

———. "Atheism as a Group Identity in Ancient Greece." *Religion in the Roman Empire* 3, no. 1 (2017): 50-65.

Widengren, G. *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism (King and Saviour II): Studies in Manichaean, Mandaean, and Syrian-Gnostic Religion.* Uppsala: Lundequist, 1946.

———. *Mani und der Manichäismus*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1961.

Wilfong, T. G. *Women of Jeme*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002.

Williams, J. "Letter Writing, Materiality, and Gifts in Late Antiquity: Some Perspectives on Material Culture." *Journal of Late Antiquity* 7, no. 2 (2014): 351-59.

Williams, M. A. *The Immovable Race*. Leiden: Brill, 1985.

———. *Rethinking "Gnosticism."* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

———. "Did Plotinus "Friends" Still Go to Church? Communal Rituals and Ascent Apocalypses." In *Practicing Gnosis*, edited by A. D. DeConick, G. Shaw and J. T. Turner, 495-522. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Wilson, B. R. *Religious Sects. A Sociological Study*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970.
———. *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
Wipszycka, E. *Les ressources et les activités économiques des églises en Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle*. Bruxelles: Fondation egyptologique Reine elisabeth, 1972.
———. "Le degré d'alphabétisation en Égypte byzantine." *Revue des études augustiniennes* 30 (1984): 279-96.
———. "Donation of Children." *The Coptic Encyclopedia* III (1991): 918-19.
———. "Les ordres mineurs dans l'église d'Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle." *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 23 (1993): 181-215.
———. "Καθολική et les autres épithètes qualifiant le nom Ἐκκλησία: Contribution à l'étude de l'ordre hiérarchique des églises dans l'Égypte byzantine." *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 24 (1994): 180-210.
———. *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive*. Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1996.
———. "The Institutional Church." In *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300-700*, edited by R. S. Bagnall, 331-49. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
———. *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe-VIIIe siècles)*. Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology, 2009.
———. *The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions*. Warsaw: University of Warsaw: Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements, 2015.
Woidich, M. "Neue Daten aus Dakhla: Ismint in Zentral-Dakhla." In *Between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans: Studies on Contemporary Arabic Dialects,* edited by S. Procházka and V. Ritt-Benmimoun, 471-81. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2008.
Woolf, G. "Isis and the Evolution of Religions." In *Power, Politics, and the Cults of Isis: Proceedings of the Vth International Conference of Isis Studies*, edited by L. Bricault and M. J. Versluys, 62-92. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
———. "Only Connect? Network Analysis and Religious Change in the Roman World." *Hélade* 2, no. 2 (2016): 43-58.
———. "Empires, Diasporas and the Emergence of Religions." In *Christianity in the Second Century. Themes and Developments*, edited by J. C. Paget and J. Lieu, 25-38. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
Woolfenden, G. W. *Daily Liturgical Prayer. Origins and Theology*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2004.
Worp, K. A., ed. *Greek Papyri from Kellis I*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995.
———. "A New Wooden Board from the Temple at Kellis." *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete*. 3 (1997): 1014-20.
———. "'Εν συστάσει ἔχειν' = "to Take Care of'." *Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 15 (2000): 189-90.
———. "Short Texts from the Main Temple." In *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons* edited by C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, 333-49. Oxford, 2002.
———. "A Mythological Ostrakon from Kellis." In *Oasis Papers 3*, edited by G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, 379-82. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003.
———. *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004.
———. "A New Survey of Greek, Coptic, Demotic and Latin Tabulae Preserved from Classical Antiquity Version 1.0." *Trismegistos Online Publications* TOP 6 (2012). Published electronically in February 2012.
———. "A New Demosthenes Fragment from Kellis," *Symbolae Osloenses* 89, no. 1 (2015): 148-55.
———. "Christian Personal Names in Documents from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 195 (2015): 193-99.
———. "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis." In *Mélanges Jean Gascou*, edited by J. L. Fournet and A. Papaconstantinou, 435-83. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2016.

———. "Psalm 9.22-26 in a 4th-Century Papyrus from the Western Desert in Egypt." *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no. 3 (2016): 1-6.

Worp, K. A., and T. de Jong. "A Greek Horoscope from 373 A.D." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 106 (1995): 235-40.

———. "More Greek Horoscopes from Kellis (Dakhleh Oasis)." *Zeitschrift fuïr Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 137 (2001): 203-14.

Worp, K. A., and C. A. Hope. "A New Fragment of Homer." *Mnemosyne* 51 (1998): 206-10.

———. "A Greek Account on a Clay Tablet from the Dakhleh Oasis." In *Papyri in Honorem Johannis Bingen Octogenarii*, edited by H. Melaerts, 471-85. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.

Worp, K. A., and A. Rijksbaron, eds. *The Kellis Isocrates Codex: (P. Kell. III Gr.95)*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.

Wurst, G. "Bemapsalm 223: Ein liturgische version der *Epistula Fundamenti*?" In *Manichaica Selecta 1*, edited by A. van Tongerloo and S. Giversen, 391-99. Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies, 1991.

———. *Das Bemafest der Ägyptischen Manichäer*. Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1995.

———. "A Dialogue between the Saviour and the Soul (Manichaean Psalmbook Part I, Psalm No. 136)." *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 35 (1995): 149-60.

———, ed. *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library. Psalm Book. Part II, Fasc. 1. Die Bema-Psalmen*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1996.

———. "Die Bedeutung der manichäischen Sonntagsfeier (manichäisches Psalmenbuch I, 127)." In *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit* edited by S. Emmel, M. Krause, S. G. Richter and S. Schaten, 563-80. Wiesbaden Reichert Verlag, 1999.

———. "Initiationsriten im Manichaismus." In *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism. Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity I*, edited by D. Hellholm, T. Vegge, O. Norderval and C. Hellholm, 145-54. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011.

Xiaohe, M. "Remains of the Religion of Light in Xiapu (霞浦) County, Fujian Province." In *Mani in Dublin*, edited by S. G. Richter, C. Horton and K. Ohlhafer, 228-58. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Yoshida, M. Y. "Manichaean Sogdian Letters Discovered in Bazaklik." *École pratique des hautes études, section des sciences religieuses* 109 (2000): 233-36.

Youtie, H. C. "P.Yale Inv. 177." *Zeitschrift fuïr Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 16 (1975): 259-64.

Zachhuber, J., and A. Torrance, eds. *Individuality in Late Antiquity*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Zakrzewska, E. D. "Masterplots and Martyrs: Narrative Techniques in Bohairic Hagiography." In *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient near East: Literary and Linguistic Approaches*, edited by F. Hagen, J. Johnston, W. Monkhouse, F. Piquette, J. Tait and M. Worthington, 499-523. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

———. "L* as a Secret Language: Social Functions of Early Coptic." In *Christianity and Monasticism in Middle Egypt: Al-Minya and Asyut*, edited by G. Gabra and H. N. Takla, 185-98. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015.

———. "Why Did Egyptians Write Coptic? The Rise of Coptic as a Literary Language." In *Copts in the Egyptian Society before and after the Muslim Conquest: Archaeological, Historical and Applied Studies*, edited by L. Mahmoud and A. Mansour, 211-19. Alexandria: Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2016.

———. ""A Bilingual Language Variety" or "the Language of the Pharaohs"? Coptic from the Perspective of Contact Linguistics." In *Greek Influence on Egyptian-Coptic: Contact-Inducted Change in an Ancient African Language*, edited by P. Dils, E. Grossman, T. S. Richter and W. Schenkel, 115-53. Hamburg: Widmaier Verlag, 2017.

———. "The Bohairic Acts of the Martyrs as a Genre of Religious Discourse." In *Christianity and Monasticism in Northern Egypt*, edited by G. Gabra and H. N. Takla, 223-38. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2017.

Zwierlein, O. "Die Datierung der Acta Iohannis und der Papyrus Kellis Gr. Fragm. A.I." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 174 (2010): 62-84.

Appendix 1. Excavation Reports

The excavations at Ismant el-Kharab have been published systematically in the *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* (BACE), with reports on the field seasons 1986-88, 1991, 1992, 1995/1996, 1997/1997, 1998/1999, 2000, 2001, 2001/2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2010. Summaries have been published in the proceedings of the International Conferences of the Dakhleh Oasis Project.[1] Exceptions to this pattern of publications, listed separately, are the reports on the field seasons 1986, 1987, 1989/1990 and 1991/1992 that were published in the *Journal of the Society of Egyptian Antiquities* (JSEA). See below for a brief overview. Parallel to the official publications, annual reports for the Supreme Council of Antiquities SCA are available for download on the website of the project on their Monash University website.

BACE and JSEA publications

Field report	Main sections of the village treated in the specific report
Hope, C. A., D. Jones, L. Falvey, J. Petkov, H. Whitehouse, K. A. Worp, "Report on the 2010 season of excavations at Ismant el-Kharab, Dakhleh Oasis." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 21 (2010): 21-54.	Area B, the painted villa
Bowen, G. E., W. Dolling, C. A. Hope and P. Kucera, "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 18 (2007): 21-52.	Area B, the painted villa and the dovecote; Area A, nymphaeum
Hope, C. A., G. E. Bowen, W. Dolling, C. Hubschmann, P. Kucera, R. Long and A. Stevens, "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut el-Kharab in 2006." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 17 (2006): 23-67.	Area B, the painted villa and the dovecote
Hope, C. A., (with Appendices by H. Whitehouse and A. Warfe), "Report on the Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut el-Kharab in 2005." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 16 (2005): 35-83.	Area C
Hope, C. A., "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut el-Kharab in 2004." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 15 (2004): 19-49.	North Tombs
Hope, C. A., (with contributions by O. E. Kaper, H. Whitehouse and K. A. Worp), "Excavations at Mut el-	Main Temple complex

[1] C. A. Hope, "Observations on the dating of the occupation at Ismant el-Kharab," in C. A. Marlow and A. J. Mills, eds, *Oasis Papers 1* (Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2001), 43-59; C. A. Hope (with an Appendix by G. E. Bowen), "Excavations in the Settlement of Ismant el-Kharab in 1995-1999," in C. A. Hope and G. E. Bowen, eds, *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 to 1998-1999 Field Seasons* (Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2002), 167-208. C. A. Hope (with contributions by O. E. Kaper and H. Whitehouse), "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab from 2000 to 2002," in G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope, eds, *Oasis Papers 3* (Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2003), 207-289. Moreover, short summaries with full colour pictures are published in *Egyptian Archaeology:* C. A. Hope, "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis." *Egyptian Archaeology* 5 (1994): 17-18; C. A. Hope, "Ismant el-Kharab: An Elite Roman Period Residence." *Egyptian Archaeology* 34 (2009): 20-24.

Kharab and Ismant el-Kharab in 2001-2." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002): 85-107.	
Hope, C. A., "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab and Mut el-Kharab in 2001." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 12 (2001): 35-63.	North Tombs; Area C; East Church; Main Temple complex
Hope, C. A., "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 2000: A Brief Report." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 11 (2000): 49-66.	Main Temple complex (including domestic structure); West Tombs; North Tombs; House 5
Hope, C. A., "The excavation at Ismant el-Kharab in 1998/9: a brief report." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 10 (1999): 59-66.	Area C; section of Area B building; West Tombs
Hope, C. A. and G. E. Bowen, "The Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1995/6 and 1996/7: A Brief Report." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 8 (1997): 49-64.	Large East Church; House 5, Colonnaded Hall (Area B); Area C; Temple complex
Hope, C. A., "The excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1995: a brief report." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 6 (1995) 51-58.	Temple complex, West Tombs, West Church
Hope, C. A., " A brief report on the excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in 1992-93." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 4, 1993, 17-28.	Temenos Main Temple; West Tombs; West Church; House 4
Hope, C. A., O. E. Kaper and G. E. Bowen, "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab– 1992." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 3 (1992): 41-49.	Area A, House 3; Main Temple complex
Hope, C. A., "The 1991 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 2 (1991): 41-50.	Area A, Houses 1-3; Main Temple complex
Hope, C. A., "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 1 (1990): 43-54.	Area A, Houses 1-3
Hope, C. A., O. E. Kaper, G. E. Bowen and S. F. Patten, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Ismant el-Kharab 1991-92." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XIX (1989): 1-26	House 3 (Area A); Main Temple precinct (incl. lists of coins and pottery)
Hope, C. A., "The Dakhleh Oasis Project: Ismant el-Kharab 1988-1990." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XVII (1987): 157-176.	Area A, House 1, 2 and North Building; Area B
Hope, C. A., "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Report on the 1987 Excavations at Ismant el-Gharab." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XVI (1986): 74-91.	House 1, North Building
Hope, C. A., "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Report on the 1986 Excavations at Ismant el-Gharab." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* XV (1985): 114-125.	House 1

Additional reports

Hope, C. A., "Three Seasons of Excavation at Ismant el-Gharab in Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." *Mediterranean Archaeology* 1 (1988): 160-178.

Hope, C. A., "*Ismant el-Kharab* (*Ancient Kellis*) in the Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt." *Mediterranean Archaeology* 8 (1995): 138-143.

Annual reports Monash website

Mills, A. J., "A short report on the field activities of Dakhleh Oasis project during the 2006-2007 season," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/sca-short-report-2006-2007.pdf

R. S. Bagnall, C. S. Churcher, C. A. Hope, M. R. Kleindienst, F. Leemhuis, M. M. McDonald, A. J. Mills, J. E. Molto, J. R. Smith, U. Thanheiser and many other colleagues identified in the text, "Report to the supreme council of antiquities on the 2005-2006 season activities of the Dakhleh Oasis Project," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/dakhleh-report-2005-2006.pdf

Mills, A. J., "Dakhleh Oasis Project report to the Supreme council of Antiquities on the 2004-2005 field season," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/dakhleh-report-2004-2005.pdf

Mills, A. J., with R. S. Bagnall, C. A. Hope, M. R. Kleindienst and F. Leemhuis, "A report on the field activities of the Dakhleh Oasis Project during the 2003-2004 field season," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/dakhleh-report-2003-2004.pdf

Mills, A .J., with C. S. Churcher, C. A. Hope, M. Kobbuseiwicz, F. Leemhuis, M. M. A. McDonald, and J. R. Smith, "The field activities of the Dakhleh Oasis Project during the 2002-2003 field season," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/dakhleh-report-2002-2003.pdf

Mills, A. J., "Report to the supreme council of antiquities on the 2001-2002 field season of the Dakhleh Oasis project," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/dakhleh-report-2001-2002-final.pdf

Mills, A. J. "Report presented to the supreme council of antiquities, Egypt, on the 2000 season of the Dakhleh Oasis project," http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/ancient-cultures/files/2013/04/dakhleh-report-2000.pdf
(All accessed March 2016).

Appendix 2. Outline of Published Documents with their Find Location(s) and Modern Edition(s)

The following list includes all published Kellis documents from the Dakhleh Oasis Project. They are listed with their abbreviation, a short designation of the content, the find location, and their materiality. All descriptions strictly follow the modern editions, except for the cases in which later publications have adjusted the interpretation of the document. The purpose of this list is to provide a short overview and offer directions for those interested in finding the transcriptions and translations in the various editions (indicated in the last column).

Several of the descriptions are ambiguous and are included only to give a first impression. The distinction between personal letters and business letters, for example, is not fixed. I have used "Manichaean letter" twice to indicate exceptional Manichaean vocabulary in personal letters. With regard to the material I have followed the editions, sometimes adding noteworthy features. "Papyrus fragments" are those letters which consist of a larger number of fragments, often from multiple deposits.

The documents are sorted according to language groups rather than following the year of publication. This will make it easier for the reader to trace the cited documents in the main text to the publication without having to familiarize oneself in depth with the editors numbering logic. Who would know, based on the abbreviations, that P.Kell.Copt. 55 is classified as a literary text, therefore published in KLT2, while P.Kell.Copt. 57 is the first of the second volume of documentary texts: CDT2? Two ostraka were published among the documentary texts, while the majority was published separately. Ostraka published in the separate volume by Worp are not included in this list for reasons of comprehensibility and due to their limited connections to the material examined in the main text.[1] Also not included are papyri derived from Kellis outside of the official DOP-excavations[2] or unpublished Kellis texts.[3] A more complete list can be found in Trismegistor Geo, which listed 544 texts from Kellis by April 2018.

Abbreviation	Content	Find Location	Material	Modern Publication
0.Kell.Copt. 1	Personal	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Ostracon	CDT1

[1] Worp, *Greek Ostraka from Kellis*.

[2] There are several in the collection of the Universita Cattolica di Milano, acquired in 1968 (SB 16 12229 and 12754, 24 15903 and 15902?), see K. A. Worp, "'Εν συστάσει ἔχειν' = "to Take Care Of'," *Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 15 (2000): 189-90. Around the same time documents from the oasis were acquired by the university of Genova (P.Genova 1.20 and 21, republished in P.Genova 2 Appendix) and Duke University: SB XX 14293 published in J .F. Oates, "Sale of a Donkey," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 25, no. 1-4 (1988): 129-35. P.Sijp 11a-11e published in J. F. Oates and P. Van Minnen, "Three Duke University Papyri from Kellis," in *Papyri in Memory of P.J. Sijpesteijn (P.Sijp.)*, ed. A.J.B. Sirks, K. A. Worp, and R. S. Bagnall (New Haven: American Society of Papyrologists, 2007), 54-64. See also SB 26 16705-10.

[3] Among these are the texts that are listed, but not edited, in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 306.

	letter			
0.Kell.Copt. 2	Jar stopper	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Ostracon	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 1	Manichaean psalms	House 3, room 6, levels 3 and 4	Single codex leaf	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 2	Manichaean psalms	House 3, room 7, level 2 and room 7a, level 2, and room 8, level 1, and room 6 level 4	Larger and smaller fragments of papyrus codex	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 3	Manichaean devotional text (?)	House 3, room 11, level 2	Fragment of codex leaf	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 4	Faded, unknown	House 4, room 6, level 4	Codex leaf	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 5	Unknown	House 3, room 6, level 2	Fragments from codex	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 6	Romans 2:6-29	House 3, room 6, level 4	Single leaf from codex	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 7	Sayings (?), amulet (?)	House 3, Room 6, level 2	Fragments from rolled papyrus text	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 8	Manichaean (?) cosmological discourse (?)	House 2, room 5, level 3	Single papyrus leaf	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 9	Hebrews 12:4-13	House 3, room 6, level 4	Central strip of single papyrus codex leaf	KLT1
P.Kell.Copt. 10	Writing exercise with trace of Syriac	House 1, room 7, floor	Reused wooden board	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 11	Personal letter	House 2, room 7, deposit 3	Reused papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 12	Personal letter	House 2, room 2, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments	CDT1[4]
P.Kell.Copt. 13	Personal letter	House 2, room 3, deposit 5, 6 and room 4 deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 14	Personal letter	North building, room 5, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 15	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 16	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1

[4] Discussed in Gardner, "Monastery," 247-57.

P.Kell.Copt. 17	Personal letter	Unknown + House 3, room 11, deposit 2 and 5	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 18	Personal letter with business content	House 3, room 10, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 19	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 20	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 21	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 22	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 23	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Small papyrus fragment	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 24	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, various deposits and room 3, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 25	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus (with decoration for the address, in red ink?)	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 26	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 27	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 28	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 29	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 30	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 31	Letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 1 + room 9, deposit 3 and room 10 deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 32	Personal letter	House 3, room 1b, deposit 2	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 33	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 34	Personal letter	House 3, courtyard[5], deposit 3 and room 11, deposit 2	Papyrus	CDT1

[5] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 220 list it as "room 13a2."

P.Kell.Copt. 35	Personal letter and spell	House 3, room 6, deposit 3, 4, 5	Reused papyrus	CDT1[6]
P.Kell.Copt. 36	Personal letter	House 3, room 1b, deposit 2	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 37	Personal letter	House 3, room 2, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 38	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 3	Reused papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 39	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 40	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 41	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Reused papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 42	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Wooden board (two parts)	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 43	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 44	Business account	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 45	Business account	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Reused wooden board	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 46	Business account	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Wooden board	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 47	Business account	House 3, room 3, deposit 3	Wooden board	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 48	Business account	House 3, room 6, deposit 3 and room 1a, deposit 1	Wooden board, on the back of P.Kell.Gr 84 (Greek Horoscope)	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 49	Memorandum	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Scrape of papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 50	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 51	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Fragment papyrus	CDT1
P.Kell.Copt. 52	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Fragment papyrus	CDT1

[6] See also the edition in Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock, "Magical Spell, Manichaean Letter," 1-32; Mirecki, "Scribal Magic," 133-46.

P.Kell.Copt. 53	Mani's *Epistles*	House 3, principally in room 6[7]	80+ fragments from a single codex (eleven leaves)	KLT2
P.Kell.Copt. 54	Mani's *Epistles* or instruction by other church leader	House 3, room 3, context 1 and 3	Fifteen fragments from a single papyrus codex leaf	KLT2[8]
P.Kell.Copt. 55	Manichaean psalm (?)	House 3, room 9, context 3	Small papyrus fragment	KLT2
P.Kell.Copt. 56	Amulet against snake bite	Temple debris D/8 (mid 4th century domestic structure)	Miniature papyrus codex	KLT2
P.Kell.Copt. 57	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 3	Wooden board	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 58	Business letter	House 3, room 10, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 59	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 1	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 60	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 61	Manichaean letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments	CDT2[9]
P.Kell.Copt. 62	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 63	Personal letter	House 3, room 7, deposit 1 and room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 64	Personal letter	House 3, room 1, deposit 1	Reused papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 65	Personal letter	House 3, room 5, deposit 1, 3 and 4 and room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 66	Personal letter	House 3, room 3, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 67	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 68	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2

[7] Details in Gardner, *KLT2*, 14-15; Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 109.

[8] With earlier discussions in I. Gardner, "The Reconstruction of Mani's Epistles from Three Coptic Codices," in *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and Its World*, ed. J. D. BeDuhn and P. A. Mirecki (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 93-104.

[9] Discussed in Gardner, "Letter from the Teacher," 317-23.

P.Kell.Copt. 69	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 70	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3; room 3, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 71	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Reused papyrus[10]	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 72	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 5	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 73	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 74	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 75	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 76	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 77	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 78	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 79	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 80	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 81	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 82	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 83	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 1	Wooden board	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 84	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 85	Personal letter	House 3, room 2, level 1	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 86	Personal letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 87	Personal letter	House 3, room 1, deposit 1	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 88	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 89	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3[11]	Papyrus	CDT2

[10] The verso contained traces of a Greek text with a "contract for the teaching of letters." Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 76.

P.Kell.Copt. 90	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposits 2 + 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 91	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 92	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 93	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 4	Parchment	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 94	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3.	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 95	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 96	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 97	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 98	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 99	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 100	Personal letter ?	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 101	Personal letter ?	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 102	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3.	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 103	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 104	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 105	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 106	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 107	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 108	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, deposit 3	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 109	Personal letter	House 3, room 3, deposit 3; room 6, deposits 3 + 4; room 9, deposit 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 110	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2

[11] But see the notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 153.

P.Kell.Copt. 111	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 112	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, deposits 3 + 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 113	Business letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 114	Business letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 3	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 115	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 116	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 4	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 117	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, deposit 5	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 118	Personal letter	House 3, room 4, floor	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 119	Personal letter	House 3, room 1, deposit 1	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 120	Personal letter	House 3, room 11, deposit 2	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 121	Personal letter ?	House 3, room 14, deposit 3	Papyrus fragment	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 122	Personal letter	House 4, room 1B, deposit 2	Papyrus (folded)	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 123	Personal letter	House 4, room 6, deposit 14	Papyrus	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 124	Personal letter	House 4, room 6, deposit 14; room 4, deposits 1A and 6	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 125	List	House 4, room 1B, deposit 2	Wooden board (part of a codex?)	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 126	Invocation (?)	House 4, room 1, deposit 1 and room 1B, deposit 1	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 127	Personal letter ?	D/8, room 1, deposits 2 + 5 and room 3, deposit 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 128	Personal letter	D/8, room 7, deposit 2 and room 8, deposit 3 on 4	Papyrus fragments	CDT2
P.Kell.Copt. 129	Personal letter (Old Coptic)	Temple area, zone 20, (inner temenos) deposit 12 surface	Ostracon	CDT2[12]
P.Kell.Copt. 130	Unclear	Temple area, Shrine I (the	Ostracon	CDT2

[12] Gardner, "An Old Coptic Ostracon from Ismant el-Kharab?," 195-200. Interpretation challenged in Bagnall, "Linguistic Change and Religious Change," 11-19.

		mammisi), room 1, deposit 6		
P.Kell.Copt. 131	List?	D/8, room 8, deposit 3	Wooden board	CDT2
P.Kell.Gr. 1	Fragment of official document (293-294 CE?)	North building, room 1	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 2	Declaration on oath (301 CE)[13]	House 1, room 9	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 3	Document concerning irrigation	House 1, room 9 and House 3, room 1, level 1	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 4	Contract (331 CE)	House 2, room 2, level 2	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 5	Personal letter	House 2, room 7 understairs cupboard	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 6	Personal letter	House 2, room 5, level 3 and room 6 level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 7	Personal letter	House 2, room 6, level 3 and level 5	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 8	Sale of a slave (362 CE)	House 2, room 5 (floor) and room 6 level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 9	Private agreement	House 2, room 7	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 10	Order for payment	House 2, room 2	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 11	Order for payment	House 2, room 2	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 12	Fragments of personal letter	House 2, room 2 level 2 and North building, room 1	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 13	Division of property (335 CE)	House 2, room 2	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 14	Fragment of an agreement (356 CE)	House 2, room 7 and room 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 15	Declaration to Praeses	House 2, room 3, level 6 and room 5 level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1

[13]By two people from Hibis, Kharga Oasis. It is unclear how this text ended up in House 2 in Kellis.

	Thebaidos (357 CE)			
P.Kell.Gr. 16	Business note	House 2, room 2, level 2 and 5	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 17	End of a letter	North Building, room 2, level 2	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 18	Loan of money	North building, room 6, level 1	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 19a	Petition to Praeses Thebaidos	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 19a appendix	Petition to Praeses Thebaidos	House 3, room 8, level 3 and 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 19b	Fragment of prefectural hypographe	House 3, room 8, level 3 and 4 (on the back of Gr. 19a appendix)	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 20	Petition to the praeses Thebaidos	House 3, room 8, level 4 and level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 21	Petition to a former magistrate (321 CE)	House 3, room 8 level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 22	Part of prefectural (?) Hypographe (324 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 23	Petition to the Praeses Thebaidos (353 CE)	House 3, level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 24	Declaration to office of the Dux (352 CE)	House 3, room 3, level 3 and room 9, level 4 and room 6 level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 25	Official document (address)	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 26	Judicial report	House 3, room 6, level 3, 4, and room 11, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 27	Official document	House 3, room 6, level 4and room 1a, level 1 and 2	Papyrus fragments	GPK1

P.Kell.Gr. 28	Administrative account	House 3, room 3, level 1 and room 9, level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 29	Receipt transportation costs (331 CE)	House 3, room 2, level 3 and room 6, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1[14]
P.Kell.Gr. 30	Exchange of property rights (363 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and room 9, level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 31	Lease of a house (306 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 32	Lease of a room (364 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 33	Lease of a Room (369 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 3 and room 6, level 1	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 34	Sale of half of a foal (315 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 34 appendix	Fragment of a copy of the same sale as Gr. 34?	Unclear	Papyrus fragment	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 35	Sale of a heifer	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 36	Contract of sale (308 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 10 and room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 37	Sale of part of a house (320 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 38a	Property gift (333 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 38b	Property gift (copy)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 39	Sale of part of an orchard	House 3, room 1a, level 2	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 40	Loan ? (306/7 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 41	Loan (310 CE)	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1

[14] Revisited in R. S. Bagnall and K. A. Worp, "ΤΕΤΡΑΧΥΣΟΝ," *Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 15 (2000): 3-6.

P.Kell.Gr. 42	Loan (364 CE)	House 3, room 3, level 3 and room 9, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 43	Loan with mortgage (374 or 387 CE?)	House 3, room 6, level 1 and room 5, level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 44	Loan (382 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 45	Loan (386 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 46	Loan	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 47	Loan	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 48	Manumission of a female slave (355 CE)	House 3, room 9, level 3 and room 8, level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments (folded extensively)	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 49	Loan (304 CE)	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 50	Receipt	House 3, room 8, level 4 and 3	Papyrus fragments (with faded Coptic letter on the back)[15]	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 51	Receipt transportation (320?)	House 3, room 6, level 2	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 52	Receipt transportation	House 3, room 6, level 1	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 53	List of expenses	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 54	List of expenses	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 55	List	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 56	Subscription of a document (324 CE)	House 3, room 11, level 1	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 57	Fragment of dated subscription (332 CE)	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1

[15] This is P.Kell.Copt. 112

P.Kell.Gr. 58	Fragment of an agreement (337 CE)	House 3, room 1, level 1	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 59	Consular date (328 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 60	List of names	House 3, room 7a, level 2	Wooden board (no holes)	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 61	List of money arrears	House 3, room 3, level 1	Wooden board	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 62	List of rent payments	House 3, room 8, level 4	Wooden board	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 63	Manichaean letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 64	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 65	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 66	Personal letter	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 67	Personal letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus fragments	GPK1[16]
P.Kell.Gr. 68	Personal letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 69	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus (folded)	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 70	Business letter	House 3, room 6, level 3	Reused papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 71	Personal letter	House 3, room 9, level 3	Papyrus (folded)	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 72	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus (folded)	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 73	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 74	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 75	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus (rolled and tied up)	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 76	Personal letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 77	Fragment of a letter	House 3, room 7a, level 2 and room 6 level 3 and 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1

[16] Convincing new reading in Gardner, "P. Kellis I 67 Revisited," 223-28.

P.Kell.Gr. 78	Business letter	House 3, room 10, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 79	Business letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 80	Business letter	House 3, room 6, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 81	Business letter	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 82	Calendar of good and bad days	House 3, room 1, level 1	Wooden board[17]	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 83	Calendar of good and bad days	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus fragments	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 84	Greek Horoscope (373 CE)	House 3, room 6, level 3 and room 1	Wooden board (three pieces) with Copt. 48 on the other side	GPK1[18]
P.Kell.Gr. 85ab	Two magical formularies	House 3, room 11, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 86	Fever amulet	House 3, room 6, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 87	Fever amulet (copy of Gr. 85b?)	House 3, room 11, level 3	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 88	Christian (?) amulet (or liturgical document?)	House 3, room 8, level 4	Reused wooden board, part of notebook?	GPK1[19]
P.Kell.Gr. 89	Medical prescription	House 3, room 8, level 4	Papyrus	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 90	School exercise: calculation	House 3, room 6, level 4	Wooden board	GPK1
P.Kell.Gr. 91	Greek Manichaean prayer of praise (amulet?)	Structure 3[20], room 1, level 4	Complete papyrus bifolium	KLT1[21]

[17] The last page of a codex? Worp, *GPK1*, 206.

[18] Earlier publication in Worp and de Jong, "A Greek Horoscope," 235-40.

[19] Cf. Römer, Daniel, and Worp, "Das Gebet zur Handauflegung," 128-131

[20] It is not entirely clear what this means. As the North-Building was originally called “structure 4,” I think structure 3 was the street nearby.

[21] Edition in the appendix of G. Jenkins, "Papyrus 1 from Kellis,” 217-30.

P.Kell.Gr. 92	Manichaean hymn of praise	House 3, room 9, level 3	Complete papyrus bifolium[22]	KLT1
P.Kell.Gr. 93	Sethian (?) invocation or scripture (?)	House 3, room 1, level 1	Fragmentary part of papyrus codex leaf	KLT1
P.Kell.Gr. 94	Eulogy/amulet (?)	House 3, room 4, level 3	Wooden board[23]	KLT1[24]
P.Kell.Gr. 95	The Isocrates codex, three orations	House 2, room 9 (kitchen, SE corner) on top of KAB	Wooden codex of nine leaves	Published by Worp and Rijksbaron [25]
P.Kell.Gr. 96 (KAB)	The Kellis Agricultural Account Book	House 2, room 9 (kitchen, SE corner) with Isocrates codex[26]	Wooden codex of eight leaves	Published by Bagnall[27]
P.Kell.Gr. 97	Four texts, one with affinities with *Acts of John*, another section of a Manichaean psalm	House 1, the North building and House 3[28]	Papyrus fragments from one codex (?)	KLT2[29]

[22] In both cases is indicated by the editors that the document is "complete and self-contained," not deriving from a quire or a codex. Gardner, *KLT1*, 132, 37.

[23] Note how the use of the T numbers for wooden boards was no longer used after some time.

[24] Cf. Römer and Gonis, "Ein Lobgesang an den Vater der grosse," 299-300.

[25] Worp and Rijksbaron, *The Kellis Isocrates Codex*. Earlier publications on the KAB and Isocrates tablets mainly focusing on the codicology include J. L. Sharpe, "The Dakhleh Tablets and Some Codicological Considerations," in *Les tablettes à écrire de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne*, ed. E. Lalou (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 127-48; Sharpe, "Dakhleh Oasis Project: The Kellis Codices," 192-97.

[26] Detailed expose on the find location by Colin Hope in Bagnall, *KAB*, 5-16. The photos show a large jar next to the two codices.

[27] Bagnall, *KAB*.

[28] The North Building has been called "structure 4" in earlier publications (including GPK1). The join of fragments is unusual, see below and in Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 108.

[29] Earlier publication in I. Gardner and K. A. Worp, "Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 139-55. A discussion of the context is found in Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 156-61; Jenkins, "Papyrus 1 from Kellis," 197-230.

P.Kell.Gr. 98	The daily prayers (*Prayer of the Emanations*)	House 3 (rear courtyard)[30]	Single wooden board	KLT2[31]
P.Kell.Syr. 1	Syriac fragments	House 3, room 8, level 1 and room 13, and room 1 level 1	Three fragments of papyrus	KLT1, but new edition of the Syriac in CDT1
P.Kell.Syr. 2	Syriac fragments	Temple area, structure D/8, room 1, context 5	Single papyrus fragment	KLT2
P.Kell.Syr./Gr. 1	Syriac and Greek fragments	House 3, room 7, level 1	Fragments of a single codex leaf on parchment.	KLT1, but new edition of the Syriac in CDT1
T.Kell.Copt. 1	Doctrinal text about the father (resembles *Keph.*)	House 3, room 11, level 4	Wooden board (reuse)	KLT1
T.Kell.Copt. 2	Six (?) Manichaean psalms (only beginning of the line) and a commemoration hymn	House 3, room 4, level 3 (bound with T.Kell.Copt. 3)	Wooden codex with five folios, 1-3 and 5 are scrubbed clean	KLT1[32]
T.Kell.Copt. 3	Traces	House 3, room 4, level 3 (with T.Kell.Copt. 2)	Wooden codex with seven folios (all deliberately cleaned)	KLT1 (no edition)
T.Kell.Copt. 4	Two Manichaean psalms	House 3, room 6, level 1	Wooden board	KLT1

[30] Hope, Kaper, and Bowen, "Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab – 1992," 41 notes it derived from deposits against the north wall, presumably of the courtyard rather than the north wall of room.

[31] There is a relatively large number of publications on this important text. Earlier editions and discussions are Jenkins, "The Prayer of the Emanations ," 243-63. Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, 194-6; Khosroyev, "Zu einem manichäischen (?) Gebet." 203-22. Only later it was recognized as containing the daily Manichaean prayers. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis," 245-62

[32] Earlier published as Gardner, "A Manichaean Liturgical Codex," 30-59; Gardner, "Abbreviated Version," 129-38.

T.Kell.Copt. 5	Manichaean psalm (?)	House 3, room 9, level 3	Small fragment of wooden board	KLT1
T.Kell.Copt. 6	Manichaean Psalm	House 3, Room 8, level 4	Wooden board	KLT1
T.Kell.Copt. 7	Manichaean psalms (with devotional postscript)	House 4, room 1b, level 2	Wooden board	KLT1
T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 1	Syriac–Coptic glossary	House 3, room 2, level 3	Part of a wooden board	KLT1, but new edition of the Syriac in CDT1
T.Kell.Syr./Copt. 2	Syriac–Coptic glossary	House 3, room 6, level 3	Fragments of wooden board	KLT1, but new edition of the Syriac in CDT1
SB 26 16826 and SB 26 16827	Horoscope	D/8, room 8, deposits 5 and 6	Fragments of wooden board	Edition by De Jong and Worp[33]
SB 26 16828	Horoscope	D/8, room 4, deposit 2	Papyrus fragment	Edition by De Jong and Worp
SB 26 16829	Horoscope	D/8, room 4, deposit 2	Papyrus fragments	Edition by De Jong and Worp
TM 749353	Greek letter of church-official (?)	House 4, room 13, deposit 2	Papyrus	Edition by Worp and Gardner[34]
TM 699684 and 699685	Psalm 9.22-26 (LXX)	D/8, room 8, level 4, group on the left	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Worp[35]
TM 700788	Page of Oracle Book (inv. P96.150)	D/8, room 7, context 7	Papyrus	Edition by Hoogendijk[36]
TM 642081	Demosthenes' *De Corona* 82-83	Temple area, D/7 (close to the West Church)	Papyrus	Edition by Worp.[37]

[33] Worp and de Jong, "More Greek Horoscopes," 203-14.

[34] Gardner and Worp, "A Most Remarkable Fourth Century Letter," 127-42.

[35] Worp, "Psalm 9.22-26 in a 4th-Century Papyrus," 1-6.

[36] F. A. J. Hoogendijk, "Page of an Oracle Book: Papyrus Kellis 96.150," in *Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Papyrology*, ed. T. Derda, A. Lajtar, and J. Urbanik (Warsaw: The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements, 2016), 595-622.

[37] K. A. Worp, "A New Demosthenes Fragment from Kellis," *Symbolae Osloenses* 89, no. 1 (2015): 148-55.

SB 24 15919	Personal letter (late 3th century)	Temple area, room 3, level 2 and North corridor, level 2	Wooden board	Edition by Worp[38]
TM 60981	Fragment of Homer	Temple area, Shrine III, room 3b	Wooden board	Edition by Worp[39]
TM 91945, 48-50	A parody on Homer & fraction tables (school exercise?)	Temple area, Shrine I, room 2	Four miniature leaves of wooden codex and miniature wooden codex with three leaves	Edition by Worp[40]
P.Bingen 119a and b	Fourth century Greek business account	House 4, room 13, Level 2	Papyrus	Edition by Bagnall and Worp[41]
P.Bingen 120	Fourth century Greek business account	House 4, Room 1b, level 1	Papyrus	Edition by Bagnall and Worp[42]
P.Bingen 116	Greek account on Clay Tablet	Temple area, gateway to second *temenos*	Clay tablet	Edition by Worp[43]
TM 140729 and 140730	Census declarations (132, 146 CE)	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus	Edition by Bagnall and Worp[44]
TM 140731	Loan of money (138 CE)	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus	Edition by Bagnall and Worp
TM 140732	Repayment of loan (145	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus fragments	Edition by Bagnall

[38] K. A. Worp, "A New Wooden Board from the Temple at Kellis," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete.* 3 (1997): 1014-20.

[39] With description of find location by C. Hope Worp and Hope, "A New Fragment of Homer," 206-10.

[40] With description of find location by C. Hope Hope and Worp, "Miniature Codices from Kellis."

[41] With description of find location by C. Hope R. S. Bagnall and K. A. Worp, "Two 4th Century Accounts from Kellis," in *Papyri in Honorem Johannis Bingen Octogenarii*, ed. H. Melaerts. (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 495-509.

[42] With description of find location by C. Hope Bagnall and Worp, "Two 4th Century Accounts from Kellis," 495-509.

[43] With description of find location by C. Hope Worp and Hope, "A Greek Account on a Clay Tablet," 471-85. The excavation reports mention another clay tablet with a Greek account (?) found in the Roman Villa (Area B, 3/1/1). Of this new tablet is said it mentions "Psais the priest." Bowen et al., "Brief Report on the 2007 Excavations at Ismant el-Kharab," 27.

[44] With description of find location by C. Hope, in Bagnall, Worp, and Hope, "Family Papers," 228-53.

	CE)			and Worp
TM 140733	Repayment of loan	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Bagnall and Worp
TM 140734	Contract, rent/sale of a house	C/2/5, context 4 (roof collapse)	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Bagnall and Worp
TM 140735	Tax receipt	C/2/5,	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Bagnall and Worp
-	Mythological story of Kyknos son of Poseidon	West of Shrine II (Area D/3)	Ostrakon	Edition by Worp[45]
-	Order from chief priest to komarch	Main Temple D/1/75.13	Papyrus	Edition by Worp[46]
-	Order from chief priest to komarch	Main Temple D/1/75.13	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	Order by Stonios	Main Temple D/1/75.25	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	Petition to prefect (289-300)	Main Temple D/1/84.19	Papyrus	Edition by Worp[47]
-	Stonios (?) petition to Prefect	Main Temple D/1/75.4	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	List of priest	Main Temple D/1/75.5	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	Petition	Main Temple D/1/75.16	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Worp
-	Hypographe (response to petition?)	Main Temple D/1/75.2	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	Account	Main Temple D/1/75.2	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	Report to *strategos* (?) about priests	Main Temple D/1/75.16	Papyrus	Edition by Worp

[45] K. A. Worp, "A Mythological Ostrakon from Kellis," in *Oasis Papers 3*, ed. G. E. Bowen and C. A. Hope (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 379-82.

[46] The following twelve texts have been published in Worp, "Short Texts from the Main Temple," 333-49.

[47] Published earlier in Kaper and Worp, "A Bronze Representing Tapsais of Kellis," 116.

-	Regnal formula	Main Temple D/1/75.3	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
-	Regnal formula (5x)	Main Temple D/1/75.1, 19, 20, and from Shrine I (D/2/1 and D/1C/3)	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 67	Contract for irrigation work (368 CE)	House 4, Room 4, level 2	papyrus	Edition by Worp[48]
P.Gascou 68	Account of wheat and barley	House 4, room 4, level 2	Papyrus (verso of P.Gascou 67)	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 69	Petition (325-30 CE?)	D/8, room 7	papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 70	Receipt (304-24 CE?)	A/10, level 11	papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 71	Tax receipt (337 CE)	D/8, East corridor room 4, level 2	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 72	Order for payment (340-5 CE)	D/8, room 1	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 73	Receipt for rent	C/1, room 1, level 3b	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 74	Receipt for rent	C/1, room 4, level 2b	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 75	Fragment of receipt	C/1, room 4, level 3b	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 76	Fragment dating (with reference to Britain)	D/8, room 8	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 77	Dating formula (339 CE)	D/8, East corridor, room 4, level 2	papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 78	Dating formula (309 CE)	D/8, South corridor	papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 79	Fragment of administrative account	D/8, East corridor, room 4, level 2	Papyrus fragments	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 80	Personal letter	D/8, room 1	Papyrus	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 81	Fragment of personal	D/8, room 1	Papyrus	Edition by Worp

[48] P. Gascou 67-88 are published in Worp, "Miscellaneous New Greek Papyri from Kellis," 435-83.

	letter			
P.Gascou 82	Official correspondence	D/8, room 8	Papyrus (folded several times)	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 83	Perfume recipe/ Medical prescription	House 4, room 1b, level 1	Bottom of a small wooden box	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 84	Amulet	House 4, room 1b, level 2	Papyrus (folded)	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 85	Amulet	House 2[49]	Piece of wooden board	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 86	Amulet	House 2, level 16	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 87	Amulet	D/8, east corridor, room 4, level 2	Papyrus fragment	Edition by Worp
P.Gascou 88	Enigmatic text (magical?)	A/10/63, level 11	Papyrus	Edition by Worp

General observations

The majority of the documents, even when comprised of several fragments, derive from a single find location. Only some exceptional cases are joined together from widely dispersed locations. Examples of the latter are the fragments of P.Kell.Gr. 97, the codex leaf with a section of the *Acts of John* and a Manichaean psalm, which was found in House 1, House 3 and the North Building. According to the excavator, the disposal of this document took place over a length of time. The fragments in rooms 2 and 1 of the North Building must have been the primary deposits (last coin in the deposit is from Constants II (347-58 CE)) and the wind could have taken fragments to room 6. Human action probably caused the distribution of the fragments into room 1 of House 3 and under the animal manger in the courtyard of House 1.[50] This indicates the disposal of the codex with the *Acts of John* and the Manichaean Psalm(s) before the last generations of occupants in these houses. Others might have used the dumped material from the North Building while raising the floor levels of House 3 (room 1). Was the original codex discarded off intentionally? Was it a no longer useful to the liturgical practice of the owners? It is unfortunately impossible to answer these questions. It should however, be noted that the KAB and the Isocrates codex were found in similar layers of rubbish in House 2, room 9 (which used to be the kitchen). The mud brick oven was no longer in use during this period and a layer of animal droppings beneath the layer with the wooden boards suggests that the room was used as a stable for some time before the disposal of the wooden codices.

[49] P.Gascou 85 and 86 have inv. No. A/2/134 and A/2 level 16, both are without corresponding number(s) in the editions of Coptic and Greek documents.

[50] Hope, "The Archaeological Context of the Discovery of Leaves from a Manichaean Codex," 160-1.

There are a few other examples of widespread dispersal of fragments of a single document.[51] For most of these joins, simple explanations like the wind may be the most probable, since several rooms (like House 2, room 5 and room 6, or room 3 and 7) were adjacent and not separated by a wall. Harder to explain is the distribution of fragments of Mani's *Epistles*, which fragments were found all over House 3 (room 1, deposit 2; room 3, deposit 3, room 6, deposit 3 and 4; room 8, deposit 4; room 11, deposit 7).[52]

The large number of papyri fragments in House 3, and in particular room 6, is staggering. Over three thousand papyrus fragments have been found in this house alone, with domestic rubbish and an equally staggering amount of ceramics.[53] The location of the papyri fragments and ceramics suggests that the papyri were stored in vessels, as discussed in Chapter 3. While we are still awaiting a final publication of the excavation, we can already see this pattern in House 3, room 8, 9 and 10.[54] According to the initial publications and reports, the following documents derived from large jars, presumably water kegs (see Table 19).[55]

Find locations	Deposit no.	Documents (abbreviated)	Main characters or authors
House 3, Room 8, deposit 3	P61 & P65	G19b, 20, 21a, 31, 41,49,50,65,66,C43 & G20,21a,38b,50,C38,39	Pamour son of Psais (4x) and Philammon (3x), Pamour (?) (2x), Psais son of Pamour, Tehat, Petros (2x)
House 3, Room 8, deposit 4	P63	G20, 21b, Mani's *Epistles*	
House 3, Room 9, deposit 3	P51 & P52 & P56 & P57	C15, 16, 40 & G30, 38a, 38b & G30, 38b, C41& G71, C15	Orion, Petros (?), Psais son of Pamour (3x), Pamour & Psais
House 3, Room 10, deposit 3	P17	G33, 37, C18	Pamour son of Psais, Takysis, Orion

Table 19: Overview of the documentary finds at several find locations

From this overview follows that the Petros letters were kept together (P.Kell.Copt. 38 & 39) and at least several letters from Pamour family were kept presumably in the same jar. Some of the Orion letters were kept together in room 9, while one fragment came from room 10. Similarly, Colin Hope has pointed out how the majority of the letters associated with

[51] Worp, *GPK1*, 3-4.

[52] According to Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 120. See Gardner, *KLT2*, 14-22 for a reconstruction.

[53] C. A. Hope et al., "Dakhleh Oasis Project: Ismant el-Kharab 1991-92," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 19 (1989): 4.

[54] Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 104.

[55] Table distilled from Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 120-21.

Makarios derived from Room 6 in House 3, with a single exception found in room 3 (P.Kell.Copt. 24).[56] The location of the various rooms that have been discussed are indicated in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Find locations in Houses 1–3. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Modified to indicate the location of the documents.

Finds from House 2 show similar patterns in the deposits, although less directly associated with ceramic jars. One group of documents is associated with Pausanias and

[56] Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 108 and table 4 on page 20.

Gena, while the other group relates to Tithoes and his direct family.[57] The documents in House 2, room 2, deposit 2 were found in the material from roof collapse and could be associated with ceramic jars.[58] Presumably, they were stored together to a family archive.

Find locations	Documents	Main characters
House 2, room 2, deposit 2 (roof collapse)	G4, 10, 11, 12[59], C12	Pausanias, Tithoes
House 2, room 5, deposit 3	G6, 8	Pausanias, Tithoes
House 2, room 6, deposit 3 and 5	G6, 7, 8	Pausanias, Tithoes
House 2, room 7 (cupboard under stairs)	G5, 9	Pausanias, Tithoes

Table 20: House 2 deposits and documents.

On the basis of these find locations can be concluded that it is highly improbable that these documents were dispersed by the wind or by other secondary depositions. Although some secondary activity has taken place, like rats using papyri for nestling purposes, the close collocation of these documents suggests that they were kept as family archives.

Statistics

The statistical analysis of the Coptic texts, including unpublished letters and Syriac texts, shows that Houses 1–3 and the North Building are the most frequent as find location.[60] Adding the Greek papyri to this visualization would only increase this pattern (In this appendix, I include 103 texts, of which 24 letters, from Houses 1–3 and North Building, while only 10 texts derived from House 4 and 35 from the temple area).[61]

[57] Table constructed on the basis of short description by Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 106. Unfortunately, some of the detailed tables at the end of the edition do not include finds from House 2. This table, therefore, only represents the documents related to the characters Pausanias and Tithoes.

[58] Hope, "The Archaeological Context," 105.

[59] But note that one other fragment of this letter was found in the North Building, room 1, north of levels 2 and 4.

[60] Using the statistics of Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 7-8.

[61] This list is, however, far from complete and further publications of Greek papyri are forthcoming.

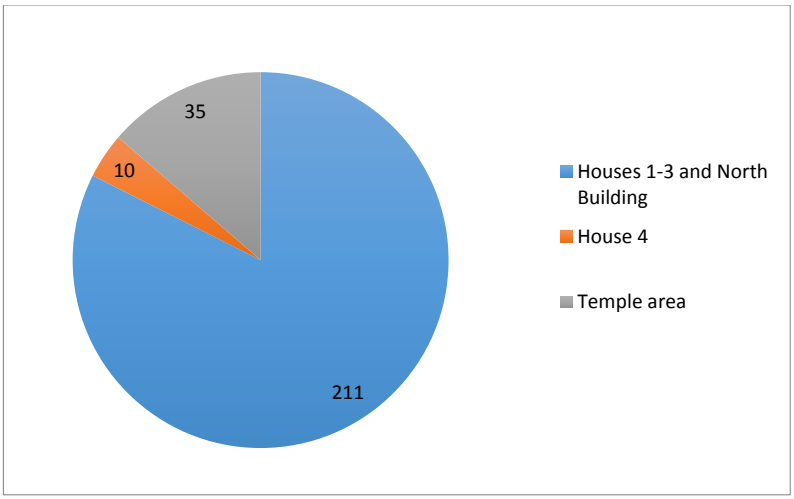

Figure 18: Visualization of the number of texts found at various locations.

If we count the number of texts (both Greek and Coptic) as published thus far and visualize them in relation to their find location in Houses 1–3 and the North Building, we see a similar pattern, in which one location dominates the rest (Figures 18 and 19). Most texts derived from House 3. A similar selection of Manichaean texts, regardless of how these are defined, would show similar prominence of House 3, with few materials in House 1, 2, and the North Building and only a little in House 4.

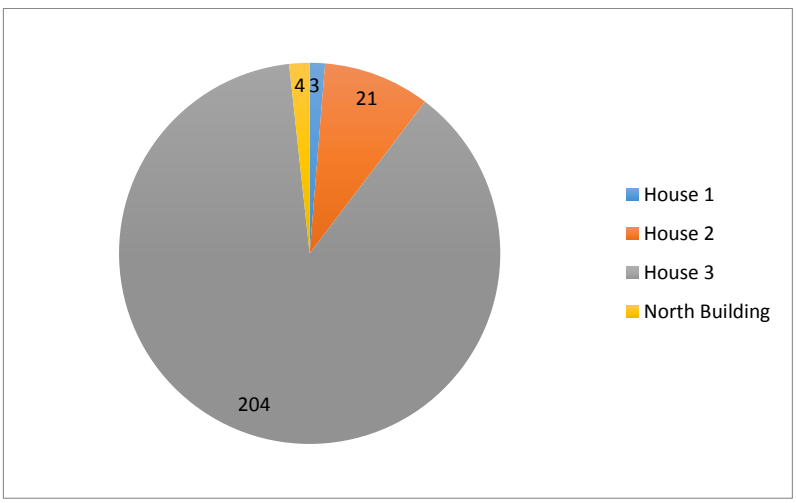

Figure 19: Visualization of the number of texts found in Houses 1–3 and the North Building.

Appendix 3. Self-Designators in Documentary Papyri

This list is not exhaustive, the references to the Coptic Medinet Madi documents are given as general indications. More references could have been included, but are easily found with the CFM Dictionary of Manichaean Texts (Vol. 1).

(Self-)designators	Documentary papyri	Parallels in the literary texts from Kellis	Parallels in the Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi
Loved one(s)	P.Kell.Copt. 14.4-6 (loved one of my soul, gladness of my spirit: ⲡϣⲟⲩⲛⲉ̈ⲓⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥⲩⲭⲏ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲁⲧ ⲛ̀ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲉⲩⲛⲁ). P.Kell.Copt. 15.1 (Loved one of my soul and my spirit: ⲡⲛⲉⲣⲓⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥⲩⲭⲏ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲡⲁ̣ⲡ̣̄ⲛ̣ⲁ).[1] P.Kell.Copt. 16.1-3 (loved one who is precious to my spirit and the beloved of all my limbs: [ⲡⲁⲛ]ⲉ̣ⲣ̣ⲓ̣ⲧ̣ [ⲉ]ⲧⲁ̈ⲓ ⲛ̄ⲡ̣ⲁ̣ⲡ̣̄ⲛ̣̄ⲁ̣ ⲁ̣ⲩⲱ̣ ⲡ̣ϣⲟⲩⲛⲉⲓⲉ̣ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗⲟ̣ⲥ ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣⲟⲩ). P.Kell.Copt. 19.1, 61.3 (loved one).	P.Kell.Copt. 53, 11.11; 12.09,17; 42.05; 44.12,20; 52.01; 54.44,55; 62.20; 71.16 (ⲡⲁⲛⲉⲣⲓⲧ).	*Often,* See for example Hom. 16.8, 1 Keph. 7.18, 9.24, 42.11, 43.26 etc. 2 PsB. 13.26, 29.20, 42.33, 44.27 etc.

[1] A similar construction as the inclusion of soul, spirit and heart in the Manichaean prayer formula is used in greeting formula's. The most elaborate is "Before everything: I write greeting my brother, my loved master who is very precious to me, the beloved of my soul, the gladness of my spirit (and) the joy of my heart" (P.Kell.Copt. 89). But much more generally used is "the beloved of my soul and my spirit" (14 (the gladness of my spirit) 15, 37, 90, 105) sometimes shortened to "precious to my spirit," "precious to me," "loved one," "whom I love with all my heart and soul." This is often combined with the notion of his/her memory being "sealed" in their heart (P.Kell.Copt. 25, 26, 29 all sons addressing Maria, but also used in variations in 17, 19, and 85).

	P.Kell.Copt. 20.1 (loved ones who are honoured of my soul:ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ [ⲉ]ⲧ̣ⲁ̈ⲓⲁ̈ⲓⲧ ⲛⲧ̣[ⲟⲧ]ⲥ̣ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϒⲩⲭⲏ). P.Kell.Copt. 25.30 (our beloved: ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲉⲧⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ). Often: "beloved brother"		
The brotherhood	P.Kell.Copt. 25.56 (ⲧⲏⲛⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ), 70.23.[2]	T.Kell.Syr/Copt 2 139-140 P.Kell.Copt. 53, 72.02 and 54.61 (ⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲁⲛ).	1 Keph. 147 338.20-340.19 (on five types of brotherhood).
Kinship terminology	*Often*	*Often*	*Often*
The children of the living race	P.Kell.Copt. 22.5 (ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛϩ̄). P.Kell.Copt. 30.5 (Our children who are among our (?) race: ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉⲛϣⲏⲣⲉ̣ ⲉⲧ̣ϩ[ⲛ̄ ⲧⲛ̄]ⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ).	T.Kell.Syr/Copt. 1.35 (your race). T.Kell.Syr/Copt. 2.126-7 (Syriac: sons of their race, Coptic: ⲁⲧⲟⲩⲣⲉ̈ⲓⲧⲉ) P.Kell.Copt. 53, 82.7	1 PsB. 154.15 (and reconstructed in Kellis T.Kell.Copt. 4, B41)[3] 1 Keph. 180.17, the opposite image is used in 1 Keph. 354.6 and 24, and 363.6. Used in the synaxeis codex and the Šābuhragān.[4] "Race" is frequently used

[2] Although not clear if the author is speaking here of "the" brotherhood or about "our" brotherly relation.

[3] Gardner, *KLT1*, 39.

[4] ⲣⲉⲣⲉ seems to have had a more intimate familial meaning. In Hom 2.4 it is contrasted with ⲣⲉⲛⲟⲥ, and in 1 Keph. 149, 362.2-6 it is used to divide the elect in five families, only three of which are virtuous. The designator "children of the living race" has been used in Mani's *Epistles* (above) but also in the First discourse of Mani's Living Gospel, cited in Gardner, *KLT2*, 83. It also features in some of the Syriac fragments from Egypt, see Pedersen and Larsen, *Manichaean Texts in Syriac*, 204-7. The Šābuhragān is cited at A. Adam, ed. *Texte zum Manichäismus* (Berlin: De Gruyter), 7 "Kinder der lebendigen Familie und der Lichtwelt."

			in Coptic Manichaean texts. Other self-designators include “race of light” (1 Keph. 112, 268.5), “race of faith and truth” (1 Keph. 112 268.21) and “only begotten race” (1 Keph. 119 286.5)
Master(s)	In almost all letters combined with ‘my brother(s)’. (ⲡⲁϫⲁϊⲥ ⲡⲁⲥⲁⲛ, also attested in Greek address with κυρίῳ and δεσποτή)	-	“Masters” is often used for supernatural powers, for example in 1 Keph. 145.23.
Child of Righteousness	P.Kell.Copt. 14.5, 15.2, 19.1 (ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥⲩⲛⲏ), (19.9 “disciple of righteousness” in a quotation).	-	1 Keph. 96.26-27, Hom. 59.21-22. Righteousness and righteous appears often.
Child, Children	P.Kell.Copt. 31.4-5 (Children of God: ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ) P.Kell.Copt. 61.3 (my children: ⲛⲁϣⲏⲣⲉ) Often: children (in supposedly actual families cf. P.Kell.Copt. 107 “my good child” in a letter from father to son).	T.Kell.Copt. 2, B2, 155 (“All thy Children”). P.Kell.Copt. 53, 32.22, 41.02, 14 (ⲛⲁϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲁⲛⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ), 20 and 42.03, 44.11, 52.20, 62.19 (ⲛⲁϣⲏⲣⲉ).	*often*
Shona	P.Kell.Copt. 31 (“my *shona*-daughters” ⲛⲁϣⲉⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥϩⲟⲛⲁ).	-	-

	P.Kell.Copt. 20.50, 44.14 and 58.21 (ϩϩⲟⲛϩ).		
Daughters of Light Mind	P.Kell.Copt. 31.3-4 ([ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲣⲉ] ⲙ̄ⲡ̣ⲛⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁ̈ⲓⲛⲉ) For the Light Mind, see P.Kell.Copt. 15.3-4 ("good limb of the Light Mind").	The Light Mind is also mentioned in T.Kell.Copt. 2.114.	Both Daughters and Light Mind are relatively common, but never in this combination. See 1 Keph. 37.19 for the "daughters of the Light and truth."
Elect and catechumen	P.Kell.Copt. 15.28-29, 16.40-41 (ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲕⲗⲉⲕ[ⲧ]ⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁ̣ⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛⲟⲥ), 17.52 (catechumens only) 22.61 (catechumens only) 32.2 (catechumen of the faith: ⲧⲕⲁⲑⲏⲕⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲁϩⲧⲉ)	P.Kell.Copt. 2 C1,71-2 and C2,105-6 (parallel in Medinet Madi, Coptic: ϩϣ̣ⲧ̣ⲡ̣ [ⲉⲧⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛϥ̣ⲕ̣[ⲁ]ⲑⲏ̣ⲕ̣ⲟ̣ⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟ[ⲥ]). P.Kell.Copt. 53, 51.5,9; P.Kell.Copt. 2. 71-2, 106 (ⲛϥϩ[ⲱⲧⲡ] ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ [ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ …] ⲙ̣̄ⲛ̄ ⲛϥⲕⲁⲑⲏ̣ⲕⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉⲛ̣[ⲟⲥ]).[5]	1 PsB. 278.3 (and reconstructed in Kellis, P.Kell.Copt. 2, text C2, 105-6).[6] Both designators are often used. They are mentioned together, for example, in 2 PsB. 20.2, 21.22, 25.27, 27.14, etc. 1 Keph. 6.22, 10.14, 36.10-11 etc. Hom. 7.2, etc.
They who give rest	P.Kell.Copt. 15.28, 16.41, 17.53, 35.47, 36.14 and 115.40. (ⲁⲛⲉⲧϯ ⲙ̄ⲧⲁⲛ ⲛⲉⲕ, and variations)	Not as self-designator, but rest is an important concept.	Not as self-designator, but rest is an important concept.
Patronage	P.Kell.Copt. 31.16ff ("helpers," "worthy patrons" and "firm unbending pillars": ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲟ̈ⲓ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲛ̄ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ ϩⲓ	-	1 Keph. 233.24. "Helper" (ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲟⲥ) is used frequently (although often for supernatural beings), for example Hom.

[5] P.Kell.Copt. 51.82 several times speaks about "being chosen" and P.Kell.Copt. 2.Text A, 16 has ⲥⲟⲧⲡ reconstructed in a very fragmentary context.

[6] Gardner, *KLT1*, 71.

	ⲡⲁⲧⲣⲟⲛ ⲉϥϣ̄ϣⲉⲩ· ϩⲓ ⲥⲧⲩⲗⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲧⲁϫⲣⲁⲓ̈ⲧ).		17.20, 1 Keph. 11.11, 15.17, 97.33 etc. 2 Keph. 346.8, 350.9
God-loving-souls	P.Kell.Copt. 31.5 (The favoured, blessed, god-loving: ⲙ̣ⲩ̣[ⲩ]ϫ̣ⲁ̣ⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁⲧ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ)	-	-
A blessed one	P.Kell.Copt. 35.42 (ⲉϥⲥⲙⲁⲙ[ⲁ]ⲧ)	Blessed is used as adjective, not as self-designator.	Same sentiment, but not as a self-designator. See 1 Keph. 164.1 etc. "blessed are you…" and 166.11 about the "blessed elect" (ⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ). Cf. Hom. 75.
The faithful/believers	-	P.Kell.Gr 91.20 (Make us worthy to be your faithful). P.Kell.Copt. 53, 34.23 (ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲙ̈ⲥ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣), see "Church of the faithful."	Often, see for example 2 PsB. 28.17, Hom. 25.1, 85.29, 1 Keph. 34.7, 189.19,21,29 etc.
The Pious	P.Kell.Gr. 63 (Soul of the pious: ψυχικων τής ευϛεβουϛ)	-	Not as self-designator, but often as "the holy" (ⲛⲓⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ, 1 Keph.189.21) or "the holy ones" (1 Keph. 213.2).
The righteous	-	P.Kell.Gr. 98.96 (Prayer of the Emanations; δικαιούϛ).	2PsB. 50.18 "Blessed and righteous man." Hom. 14.22, 25.1 ("the righteous and the believers") 38.15 etc. 1 Keph. 36.25, 80.32 etc.

			Also 2 Keph. 384.6
Tree–Fruit–Blossom (Metaphor)	P.Kell.Copt. 32.4-5 (“good tree whose fruit never withers”: ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲁ ⲡϥ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ϩⲱϭⲛ̄ ⲁⲛⲏϩⲉ) P.Kell.Copt. 22.4-5 (“the good care-takers,” “the fruit of the flourishing tree and the blossoms of love”: ⲛ̄ϥⲁ̈ⲣ[ⲁ]ⲩϣ ⲉ̣ⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ … ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡϣⲏⲛ ⲉⲧⲣⲁⲩⲧ ⲛ̄ϯ ⲟⲩϣ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ)	T.Kell.Copt. 2, A2, 41 (“Tree of life”). P.Kell.Copt. 53, 42ff (metaphor of the farmer, growing fruit, giving it to the master). P.Kell.Copt. 54.30ff (metaphor of growing a vineyard, cultivating, producing fruits).	*Often*, see for example 1 Keph. 96 on good farmers and bearing fruit.[7]
This Word	P.Kell.Copt. 25.74 (“everyone who wishes our word”: ⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲏ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲱϣ ⲡ̄ϣⲉϫⲉ) P.Kell.Copt. 37.19-20 (“Those of this word”: ⲁⲛⲁ ⲡⲓⲥⲉϫⲉ)	Not used as self-designator	“Word(s)” is used often, but not as self-designator.
Member/limb	P.Kell.Copt. 31.2-3 and 32.1-2 (The members of the holy church: ⲛ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗ̣ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ). P.Kell.Copt. 34.1 (Worthy member: ⲙ̣ⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉⲧ̄ϣⲉⲩ) P.Kell.Copt. 14.5 (joyful limb: ⲡⲛⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲉ̣ⲧⲧⲁ[ⲗⲏⲗ]) P.Kell.Copt. 15.3-4	P.Kell.Copt. 53, 42.8, 11 and 54.7 could have been self-designators, Mani’s limbs) The Light Mind is also mentioned in T.Kell.Copt. 2.114	Limb is used often, also as form of address, Mani called his disciples brothers, loved ones and “my limbs” (ⲛⲁⲛⲉⲗⲟⲥ), 1 Keph. 41.25-30, 144.2, 213.3, 285.21. See also Hom. 85.26 (limbs of the church?)

[7] L. R. V. Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus* (Bonn: Religionswissenschaftliches Seminar der Universität Bonn, in Kommission bei Brill, Köln, 1978), 40-44.

	("good limb of the Light <ind": ⲡⲙⲉⲗ[ⲟ]ⲥ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛ̣ⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄[ⲟⲩ]ⲁ̣ⲓ̈ⲛⲉ) P.Kell.Copt. 16.2-3 ("beloved of my limbs": ⲛ̣ϣⲟⲩⲙⲉⲓ̣ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗⲟ̣ⲥ ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲣⲟⲩ)		
Kingdom of the saints/holy ones	P.Kell.Copt. 34.14 (ⲧⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲣ̄ⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ). Cf. P.Kell.Copt. 29.12 "kingdom" and P.Kell.Copt. 34.9-10 on the "king."		Kingdom is often used for the supernatural realms (for example 1 Keph. 13.31, 25.6, 36.25 etc.)
Congregation of the holy ones	-	P.Kell.Copt. 53, 31.12 (ϩ̣ⲁⲩϩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲧ̣ⲟⲩⲁ̣ⲃ̣ⲉ̣)	Congregation (ⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ) is the general term used for the gathering of the Manichaeans (for example 1 Keph. 77.25, 165.26, 167.1 etc.) Hom 15.20-22 combines several designators; "holy ones," "church," "my lord's assemblies" (ⲁⲛⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ ⲙⲡⲁϫⲁⲓⲥ) 2 PsB. 99.31 mentions the "virtuous assembly of the righteous" (ⲧⲥⲁⲩϩⲥ ⲛ̄ϣⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲇⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ).

Strangers to the world	Not used, twice strangers (ϣⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲓ) are mentioned in a non-metaphorical way (i.e., foreigners, people you do not know): P.Kell.Copt. 20.31, 43.31.	T.Kell.Copt. 2, A1,15 (ⲛ̄ϣⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲉⲓ ⲁ̣ⲡⲕ̣[ⲟⲥ]ⲙ̣ⲟ̣[ⲥ]).[8] P.Kell.Copt. 7.15 also refers to a stranger (but in a non-Manichaean context ?)	The image of being/becoming a stranger is used often. For example 2 PsB. 175.26.
Church	See below "Holy church" and P.Kell.Copt. 62.14, 73.17.	P.Kell.Copt. 53, 34.01; 51.6,9; 61.7; 71.1; 72.24 (ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ) P.Kell.Copt. 53, 71.01 (protectors (?) of the church, ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϣ[ⲧⲉ] ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ).[9]	*Often*
Church of the faithful	-	P.Kell.Copt. 53, 33.22-23 (ⲛ̄ⲧ̣ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲡⲓ̣ⲥ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣)	See above "the faithful."
Holy Church	P.Kell.Copt. 31.2-3 and 32.1-2 (The members of the holy church: ⲛ̄ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲗ̣ⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲕⲕ̣ⲗ̣ⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ)	P.Kell.Gr.97A,14	2 PsB. 13.20, 59.18, 160.7, 1 Keph. 20.24, 24.29, 24.32, 25.3, 28.30 etc. (ⲛⲉⲕⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ) See also 2 PsB. 56.24 and 134.19 on Jesus and the Church, 2 PsB. 8.25 and 21.7 on the Paraclete and the Church[10] Church of Mani.[11]
Those of the household	Often included in greetings, for example P.Kell.Copt. 15.33	T.Kell.Copt. 2 140-143 "kingdom of the household" (ⲧⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ⲣ̄ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲉⲓ).[13]	1 Keph 38.26, 39.10, 41.30 designators like "the household of

[8] Fragmentary context, is it used as designator for themselves of for others? Gardner, *KLT1*, 10.

[9] Suggested reading of a fragmentary passage. Gardner, *KLT2*, 62.

[10] See notes in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 74.

[11] Pedersen, "Manichäer in ihrer Umwelt," 251.

[13] But see notes at Gardner, *KLT1*, 14 most people prefer the easier reading "this one."

	(greets you and all who are in the house: ⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲏ̄ ⲛⲉⲧϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲛⲏ̈ ⲧⲛ̣ⲣⲟⲩ). P.Kell.Copt.21.27 (all those who are with you) 25.69-74, 28.35 (they who are with you: ⲁ̣ⲛⲉⲧ̣ϩⲁⲧⲛⲧⲛ̄), 29 (from those who are with me) 36.13, 39.4, 40.3, 60.4,66.33, 83.3, 105.75, etc.[12]		the living" or "the kingdom of the household of his people." (I don't think this is connected to the phrases in the Kellis letters).
Those of the neighborhood	P.Kell.Copt. 36.40 (Ⲙ̀ⲡⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏ̈ ⲧⲟⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲛⲉⲧⲣⲁ̣ⲟⲩⲏ), 39.5 (ⲛⲁⲧⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ), 71.31 (ⲣⲙ-ⲣⲉⲟⲩⲏⲧⲟⲩ) 77.4 (ⲛⲏ̄ ⲧⲣⲉⲟⲩⲏ), 85.8 and 96.28 (ⲙ̀ⲡⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏ̈ ⲁⲧⲣⲁⲟⲩⲏ̣).		

[12] Gardner, "Some Comments on Kinship Terms," 136 includes more published and unpublished examples.

Appendix 4. Prosopography of Makarios's and Pamour's Relatives

In this appendix, the prosopography of a selection of the Kellis letters is laid out. It includes mostly the relatives of Makarios and Pamour III, especially those who are also discussed in the main text. The notes here should be read in the context of the prosopography in CDT1 and the reconstructed family trees in Chapter 4. I have incorporated all material from GPK1 and CDT2. Many of these reconstructions, however, remain tentative and are open to further scrutiny. For most suggestions I am indebted to the editors of the material, to whom I could have referred to every single time. Instead I have included references for the most controversial identifications only, or where I have a different interpretation than the editors. The abbreviations in this Appendix are shortened, G = P.Kell.Gr. + no., C = P.Kell.Copt. + no. Only the **bold** letters were (probably) written by the individual, other letters only mention his/her name. The names are presented in alphabetical order.

Andreas
C12 (?), C19, C25, C26, C36, C37, C59 (postulated) C65, C71, C73, C79, C84, C86, C88, C92 (?), C96, C105, C107 (?), C111, C115, G71, **P92.1**
Andreas is one of the most enigmatic figures in the corpus, as he is greeted by many but his exact relationship with them is never entirely clear. Pamour greeted Partheni 'and her children by name, especially my son andreas' (C71). In C84 Theognostos wrote to Psais III 'our son Andreas, if he is unoccupied, let him come to us'. Pegosh greets him as 'my son' (C73) and as 'brother' (C79) and he is described as Theognostos' son by Pamour III (G71). His position in the generation below Theognostos and Pamour III is uncontested, but it remains unclear whether he was a child of one of these people.[1]
In C78 another Andreas, son of Tone is greeted, and the Andreas greeted by Timotheos in C92 might also have been someone else. The village scribe in G45 is presumably another Andreas. P92.1 is an unpublished fragment, presumably written by Andreas to Psais.[2] C36 is a letter of Ouales (Vales?) to Psais and Andreas, which has led the editors to reconstruct Andreas and Ouales in the fragmentary C59. In C107 Andreas is addressed by a certain Dorotheos and lacks references to all other familiar names.

Apa Lysimachos
C21, C24, C29, **C30**, C72, C82, **G67**
Lysimachos, who is often addressed with the honorary 'Apa', was a close contact of Makarios and his sons. He also had connections with Theognostos, Philammon and others who traveled with him (see C72 postscript of 'those of Apa L.'). He is presumably one of the Manichaean elect.

Charis (Wife of Philammon II)
C19, C20, C24 (unnamed), C25, C26, C64, C66, C67, C70, **C76** (postscript), C102, C105 (?)

---

[1] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 135. suggest that if Theognostos was the husband of Partheni, Andreas might have been their son.
[2] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 247.

See notes at Philammon II. In C64 she is greeted by Maria (wife of Pamour III) as 'mother Chares and her children'. In C76 she adds a postscript to Pegosh's letter to Partheni, which has led some to suggest she may have been Pegosh's wife.[3] In several letters she is refered to without her husband (has he passed away?) (C70, C76, C102, C105).

Horos (Son of Maria and Pamour III)
G30, G72

Hor (presumably more than one individual)
Separating out the different individuals with the name Hor (and variations) is close to impossible, as Hor is a common name in the oasis. However, by making the tentative distinction between various individuals, the proposed connections between letters and clusters of individuals become slightly more clear. Of crucial importance are two identifications, who is the Hor associated with Apa Lysimachos and who are the author and recipient of C15-18? Decisions in these two cases could influence other identifications, like the question of Ploutogenios the recipient of the letter of the Teacher (C61).

Hor I: Apa Lysimachos is closely associated with Hor, as he is included in the postscript in C72 and addressed by Apa Lysimachos in C30. Both of these letters mention a 'brother Psais', whom I identify with Psais III. Psais III, Pamour III and Pegosh greet Hor in their letters (C70, C76, G72) and so did Philammon II (C80, C81, C82) and Theognostos (C84, see also C111). If we take these passages as referring to the same individual, Hor appears to have been a central figure. G72 reveals the existence of Horos, presumably the son of Pegosh, although the exact phrasing may alow for Pamour III to have a son Horos as well (See notes on Horos).

Hor II: 'father Horos' addressed by Pegosh in C78-79. Since he is senior to the generation of Pamour III and Pegosh, he is probably not to be identified with the recipient of C30 and C80-82.[4] Whether or not 'father Hor' in C43, C94 is the same individual is not clear.

Hor III: It is difficult to see whether the Hor associated with Ploutogenes (presumably on the generational level of Psais III and Andreas, see G75, C89) is the same as one of the previous figures. A logical identification would be Hor I, as he was closely associated with the Pamour III' brothers. This would be acceptable for Hor in G75, C89, C36, C105, but less so in C115 where Hor and Piene are children (presumably the generation below Psais III). If we combine the notes on Ploutogenes III and Hor, it seems most logical to identify a Hor IV in C36 (reconstructed) and C115). The sub deacon Hor in C124 is another individual.

The question remains who is addressed by Horion in C15-17? The recipient of these letters was familiar with Manichaean terminology and was presumably a contemporary of Tehat (contemporary of Horion, C18, C43, C50, C58?). Cross-referencing prosopographical information suggests a date in the 350s, slightly earlier than Hor I, but there is not enough evidence to identify the recipient of C15-17 with the 'father Hor' of C78 and C79.

---

[3] The option is considered in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 99. But see also the reconstruction in which she is the wife of Philammon Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 23, 38-9.
[4] Contra Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 106.

Jemnoute (daughter of Maria and Pamour III)
C19 (once ?), C25, C26, C44 (?), G30 (unnamed), C64 (unnamed), C65, C71, C72 (?), G71
Is she to be identified with the J(e)mnoute of C25 and C44? In G71 Pamour III greets 'mother Maria and the little Tsempnouthes' and requests the 'girl' to be sent, probably as maid, and in C64 Pamour III and Maria repeat their request to send the 'little girl' to them. The use of this adjective mirrors Pamour's ' little Tsempnouthes' in G71.[5] In C65 and C71 Maria greets her (unnamed) mother with 'my daughter Jemnoute', but in light of Pamour's greeting in G71 it seems reasonable to identify the older Maria, wife of Makarios, with the mother of Maria, wife of Pamour III.[6] In this reconstruction, Maria is the mother of Maria (wife of Pamour) and Jemnoute stays with her grandmother while Pamour and his wife work in Aphrodite. It is, however, difficult to reconcile this reconstruction with Pamour's promise to pay her travel money and present wool for a cloak as 'her hire' (G71).

The Jnpnoute in the list of people traveling with Apa L. (C72) and the Jemnoute in the economic account (C44) might be distinct but contemporary to Jmnoute. Makarios also greets two individual Tshemnoute's in C19, only one of which as 'my daughter'.

Kapiton (son of Kapiton)
C65, C70, C72, C75, C76, C77, C81, C92, C86, C108, **C109**, C116, **G45**, G71, G76
Kapiton son of Kapiton (Patronym in G45) was married to Tagoshe, the sister of Psais III, Pegosh and Pamour III. As such he was often addressed by the brothers (C65, C72, C77[7]) and he is referred to in business and travel arrangements (C81, C82, C86, C108, C116). In one letter of Pegosh (C75), Kapiton adds his own greetings to Tagoshe. G76 however shows he became estranged from his wife and Pegosh wrote that he no longer knows if Kapiton is alive.[8] Kapiton is presumably the author of a letter to his wife (C109 spelling her name as Tegsogis (?)). The Kapiton in G45, who borrowed money from someone in the hamlet of Thio (386 CE), is presumably his son because Pegosh reports that his former brother-in-law has been living in the Nile valley.[9]

Kyria (Wife of Psemnoute)
C12 (?), C19, C20, C21, C22, C25, C44, C66 (unnamed), C68, C82
Kyria has been associated with Psemnoute and they are addressed at least three times together with Maria (C20, C21, C22). Since Matthaios addresses them as 'Father Psemnoute and Mother Kyria' (C25) they were probably married and belong to the generation of Makarios and his wife Maria. Kyria could have been Maria's sister.[10] The alternative spelling Goure/Gouria (C20 and C19) may indicate that 'Mother Goure/Gouria' in C68 and C82 is the

[5] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 46.
[6] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 52. If so, it is remarkable to see no connection to Makarios, who did greet his daughter Tsempnouthes at least once.
[7] See on the double greeting Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 103.
[8] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 100-1.
[9] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 100.
[10] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 29.

same woman, probably after the death of her husband.[11] In this latter letter, Philammon II greets 'my mother Gouria and my sister and her husband and her daughter'. If Gouria is indeed Kyria, the wife of Pshempnoute and if she is the sister of Maria, we could have connected both the Kyria-Pshempnoute couple and Philammon to the Makarios archive.[12] There is however no definitive reason to understand Philammon as a biological son of Kyria.

Maria (Wife of Makarios, mother of Matthaios and Piene)
C19, C20, C21, C22, C24, C25, C26, C29, C70, C76, G71
Maria is addressed by both her sons and her husband. Pamour III, Pegosh and their wifes greeted her as 'mother Maria' (C70, C76), which probably indicates her position in the generation older than them.

Maria (Wife of Pamour III)
C25, C26, G71, C64, C65, C66, C71, C77
Maria adds her postscript to a number of letters by Pamour III, most of which are probably sent from Aphrodite. In C25.57 Maria (wife of Makarios) has asked after the name of the (newborn?) daughter of Maria. In C26.46 Matthaios addresses this Maria, in a letter to his mother.

Makarios
C19, **C20**, **C21**, **C22**, **C24**, C25 (postulated)
Makarios is the father of Matthaios and Piene, husband of Maria. His letters often address Maria, Kyria, and Pshemnoute. He is to be distinguished from the Makarios in C43, G10, G46.

Matthaios (and variant spellings, son of Makarios)
C19, C20, C21, **C25, C26, C27**

Pamour I
G4(?), G19b, **G20**, **G21**, G30, G31, G33, G38ab, G41, G42, G44, G50, G76,
G19b is a prefectoral hypographe in a petition of Pamour son of Psais and Philammon. G20 and G21 (from the first decades of the fourth century) are petitions by Pamour son of Psais. G30, G33, G38ab, G42, G44, G50, G76 is patronym only.

Pamour II
G42
Pamour II is the uncle of Pamour III, presumably he was a brother of Psais II as he identifies in a load of money (G42) as the son of Pamour I and Takose/Tekysis.

Pamour III (son of Psais, grandson of Pamour)
C22 (?), C24, C25, C26, **C64, C65, C66, C67, C68, C69, C70, C71, C72**, C77, C80, C82, G24, G33, **G71**, G72,

---

[11] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 131. Although the Gouria (daughter of .... (unnamed)) in C19.73 is not necessarily the same as the Gouria in C19.74 and/or C19.82 (Makarios calls her 'my mother Gouria).
[12] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 118.

Pamour III is the son of Psais () and the brother of Pegosh/Pekysis (greeted as brother in C24, C25, mentioned together in C80). Presumably they had a third brother, Psais III, with whom they corresponded regularly. Pamour III traveled with Philammon II (C82), Pegosh (C77) and maybe with Matthaios (C26) for business purposes. In G24, Pamour son of Psais is included in a legal petition.

Partheni (wife of Pegosh)
C19 (?), C25, C47, C64, C70, C71, C75, C76, C83, C102, G76 (unnamed)
Partheni is presumably the wife of Pegosh, since she is addressed twice in his letters (C75, C76), in the former as 'my lady Parthene'. She is greeted several times by the other brothers (C70 by Pamour III or Pegosh, C64 and C71 by Pamour III, C102 by Psais III). C19, C25 and C47 may refer to the same person, although the texts are generally considered to be earlier and they refer to a 'mother Partheni', which may point to an elderly lady. The Partheni in C19 is, moreover, located in the hamlet Thio. Confusing is also the use of short names, as Partheni might be addressed as 'Heni' in several letters (C76, C83).[13] If that is a correct reconstruction, one might wonder whether the Heni in other letters also refers to this Partheni (C26, C33, C38, C44, C45). A strong connection exists between C83 (Theognostos mentioning 'father Pollon' and 'Sister' Heni) and C45 (with the same names).[14]

Pegosh (brother of Pamour III)
C24, C25, C26, C65, C66, C67, C68, C69, C70 (?), **C73, C74, C75, C75, C76, C77, C78, C79,** C80, C82, C108, C109, C120 (?) **G44,** G68, G71, **G72, G76**
Pegosh/Pekysis is the son of Psais, grandson of Pamour (C75 address). He is a brother of Pamour III, they are often addressed together (C24, C25, C80) and correspond regularly. They belong to the generation of Matthaios, who greets them as brothers. Pegosh seems to live in Antinoopolis (G71) and wrote to his brother about the liturgical duties of his son (G72). In G76 he offers a surety for the tax debt of his former brother-in-law Kapiton. G44 details a loan of money from April 382 CE, which dates Pegosh's activities into the 380s. The letters C73-C79 are mostly addressed to Psais III (C73, C74) and Partheni (C75, C76). The latter seems to have been his wife (see notes at Partheni). C70 was either written by Pamour III or Pegosh.[15] C120 was written by a Pekos to Pamour, who, despite the variant spelling, may be the same person.[16]

Piene (Son of Makarios)
C20, C21, C24, C25 (postulated), **C29**

Philammon II (Husband of Charis)
C19, C24, C25, C64, C65, C66, C73, C77

---

[13] On the use of these truncated names see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 39, 60, 71. Reference is made to Bagnall and Ruffini, *Amheida I. Ostraka from Trimithis, Volume 1*, 60.

[14] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT1*, 25. I consider the weaver in C44 someone else and do not recognize Partheni in C38. The (H)eni in C26 and C33 may connect Partheni stronger to the Makarios family, but I am not convinced she is in fact the same person.

[15] See notes on the address at Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 69-70.

[16] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 84.

Philammon II is probably the husband of Charis, as they are greeted together several times (C19, C25). Since Makarios greets them as 'brother' and 'sister', and Matthaios and Gena opt for the more formal 'father' and 'mother', Philammon II and Charis belong to the generation of Makarios. It is difficult to distinguish him from Philammon III, who belonged to the generation of Pamour III and Pegosh. They, however, often greet a 'father Philammon', whom I identify as this Philammon II (C64, C65, C66, C73, C77).

Philammon III

C78, C79, **C80**, **C81**, **C82**, C88 (?), C89 (?), C108, C114 (?), C122 (?), G64 (?), G71, G72, G79

In G71 Philammon is mentioned by Pamour III, but without family-designator. In C78 and C79, written by Pegosh to father Horos, Philammon III is the most probable candidate, but no family-designator is used. The same is true for G71 (Pamour III to Psais) and G64 (Valerius to Philammon).[17] G79 reveals Philammon was *dromedarius,* which is often associated with the military but might have been used here as indication of his trade. Other individuals with the name Philammon cannot be ruled out, since we know at least one other individual, Philammon (and Pamour) of Tjkoou, mentioned in C20. An identification with Lammon (C24, C65, C72, C77, C78) has been suggested, but is not likely because this person is addressed as 'my son' by Pegosh and Pamour (C77, C72) and he seems to be distinct from Philammon in C24. C122 derives from House 4, which makes it less likely that it is about the same individuals.

Philammon I

G19b, G49, G65

There seems to have been another Philammon in the older generation, as he addresses Tekose the mother of Pamour II (G65).[18] In G19b he is associated with Pamour I and G49 also dates back to the early years of the fourth century.

Ploutogenes (presumably more than one individual)

C36**,** C61 (?) C80**, C85 C86**, **C87**, **C88**, **C89,** C90, C91 (?), C94 (?), C105 (?),C106 (?), C115 (?), C118 (?), G58?, G75

Ploutogenes (and variant spellings) appears to be a central figure in the Kellis papyri, but he is difficult to place in terms of kinship relations. He belongs to the generation of Pamour III and his brothers and corresponded with Psais III and Andreas (C36 (?), C85, C86, C88). Two possible identifications are of importance. The first is the identification of the Ploutogenes of C85-C89 with the recipient of the letter of the Teacher (C61 addressing a Ploutogenios). The second is the usage of the short name Piena or Iena for Ploutogenes in C90, which leads us to wonder whether the Piena/Iena in other letters is to be identified as Ploutogenes, author of C85-89. The latter question is made more difficult by the appearance of a Hor and Iena, whom are greeted several times (C91, C118, C36, C115, C105). C106 has been associated with C85 and C86 on the basis of the handwriting.[19]

These considerations amount to at least three different individuals with the name Ploutogenes/Piena:

---

[17] Following Worp, *GPK1*, 171.

[18] Worp, *GPK1*, 37.

[19] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 143.

Ploutogenes I: called 'father Iena' in C90, C105. Probably belonging to the generation of Psais II. Did his name have derive from Ploutogenes in the way as Ploutogenes II became abbreviated as Piena? An identification with the Ploutogenes in G58 would pin the date on the year 337 CE and attest to contact with a catholic priest.

Ploutogenes II: Author of C85-C89, who used the abbreviated name Piena (C88, C89).[20] Same generation as Psais III, Andreas and others. His greeting to Plotogenes and Hor (C89.19) indicates the presence of another figure with the same name.[21]

Ploutogenes III: On the same generational level as Ploutogenes II (C89.19 as 'brother') or in the generation below Psais III and Andreas (C36, C115 'little brothers' of as 'the children'). Could C91 have been addressed to this Ploutogenes III/Iena and Hor (cf. C105)? In G75 Psais III, Ploutogenes and Hor are greeted as if they belonged to the same generation. Could there have been a Hor in the generation of Ploutogenes II?

Psais I
Psais I does not appear in the Kellis corpus apart from as patronym.

Psais II (son of Pamour)
C25, C64, C65, C66, C70, C71, C72, C73 (unnamed), C77 (?), C82, C105, C108, **C110,** G30**, G32,** G38ab,G44, G50, G75 (?), G76.
Psais II lived for a long time and served as paterfamilias in a large extended family. As such, he is addressed by his sons, their wives, and others as "father Pshai/Psais." In G75 he may be greeted as 'my most esteemed brother Psais 'the great'. The 'father Shai' in C77 by Pegosh could also refer to someone else. C110 is presumably written by father Psais II to his sons Pamour III and Pegosh.[22] G32 is a lease contract (from 364 CE). G38ab (333 CE) is a grant of a plot of land. In G30 (363 CE) he represents his son Pamour III and grandson Horos, in a case about land ownership in Aphrodite.
G33, G44, G76 is patronym only.

Psais III (brother of Pamour III)
C19 (?), C30, C64, C65, C67, C70, C71, C72, C73, C77, C78, C79, C80, C84, C109 (?), G67, G71, G72, G75 (?).
Although Psais III is nowhere as explicitly connected to the family as his two brothers, he is consequently addressed as brother by Pamour III and Pegosh. Since Psais is a common name in the oasis, it is difficult to distinguish him from his father, Psais II, and other individuals.[23] The Psais in C19, C30, and C109 could have been another person.

Psemnoute

---

[20] In C88 Ploutogenes/Piena greets Kepitou (?) = Kapiton, Philammon and Mother Lo. Which leads me to identify this Ploutogenes with the author of C85-86. Many unfamiliar names feature in C89.
[21] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 143, 153-5.
[22] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 221-4.
[23] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 77 expresses doubt, but also distinguishes the Pshai of C64, G71 and C72 from their father Psais II.

C12, C20, C21, C22, C25, C26, C33 (?), C66, G70 (?)
Psemnoute was presumably the husband of Kyria and a close associate of Makarios, since he is addressed several times. His name in C33 features without the presence of other familiar names and in G70 a Psempnoutes is addressed by Timotheos the carpenter. He may or may not be the same individual. Alternative individuals are probable also named in G23, G24, G74, KAB 575, 1155.

Tagoshe (wife of Kapiton, sister of Pamour III)
C64, C67, C75, C78, C83 (?), C96, C109 (?), **C115**, C120, C116? G76 (unnamed)
Tagoshe is greeted several times by Pamour and Pegosh (C64, C67, C78, C120). In C83 Theognostos mentions a "mother Tagoshe," could she be the same?[24] See the notes under Kapiton for her marriage. From G76 follows Kapiton has left her. She is presumably the author of C115, addressing Psais III. The children greeted in this letter could have been her children (especially Maria, who is addressed as 'my daughter'), but this is less secure for Hor and Piena.

Takose (wife of Pamour I)
G30**, G37**, G42, G65
Takose/Tekysis is the wife of Pamour I and mother of Psais II and Pamour II, whom included a matronym in some of their documents (G42 Pamour II, G30 Psais II). In G37 (from 320 CE) Aurelia Takysis sells a part of her house. G65 is a letter from Philammon I to "my sister Tekose."

Tappollos (Mother Lo, wife of Psais II)
C45, C48, C64, C65, C70 (?), C88, C103, C108, G44, G87
Mother Lo is greeted several times by relatives of Pamour III (C64 by Pamour III, C66 by Maria, C108 by Psais III, C70 by Pamour or Pegosh). The Lo in C70 could be another person since she is addressed as "sister Lo." An amulet (G87) is made for Lo. In G44 Pegosh refers to his father as well as as grandfather and grandmother: Tapollos. Could Tapollos be the same as the elderly "mother Lo"? The strongest supporting argument for this identification is the way Maria in C64 starts with greetings for the elderly ladies before moving on to more practical errands.[25]

Theognostos
C65, C71, C72, C73, C80, C81, C82, **C83**, **C84**, G67, G71
Theognostos is strongly associated with Philammon III, Pamour III and Pegosh. He is moreover, the recipient of a letter by Apa Lysimachos (G67). In various letters (of which only C80, C81, C82 are addressed to him alone) he is included in the addressees (C72, C65). How exactly Theognostos related to Andreas, Hor and Partheni is not clear. One option that has been explored is whether he could have been Partheni's brother and therefore brother-in-law of Pamour III, Psais III and Pegosh. See also the notes at Andreas.[26]

---

[24] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 180 distinguished between the Tagoshe/Tekysis in C96 and the wife of Pamour I.
[25] Worp, *GPK1*, 54 is carefully suggesting she may be identified with Tapollos. Cf. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 40, 46, 196, 214.
[26] Gardner, Alcock, and Funk, *CDT2*, 135, 142.

The Teacher
C20, C24, C25, C29, **C61**
The Teacher is presumably a high-ranking Manichaean elect, working and traveling in Alexandria and the Nile valley. He is often mentioned by Makarios and his sons, one of which travels with The Teacher. The author of C61 self-identifies as The Teacher, following the anonymous style of Mani's *Epistles*, but this may have been another individual (his predecessor/successor?).

Unnamed (Son of Maria and Pamour III)
Postulated from G30

Nederlandse Samenvatting

De Manicheeërs in Kellis: Religie, Gemeenschap en het Alledaagse Leven

Deze dissertatie is het eerste boek over de manichese gemeenschap in Kellis. Kennis over het leven van deze mensen is vrij recentelijk toegankelijk geworden. Eind jaren 1990 werd een groot aantal Koptische en Griekse teksten gevonden in het Egyptische dorpje Kellis in de westelijke woestijn van Egypte (deel van de Dakhleh Oase). Onder deze teksten waren veel persoonlijke brieven van gewone mensen uit het dorp, maar ook liturgische documenten met manichese gebeden en psalmen. Het verband tussen deze persoonlijke brieven en de manichese teksten is de basis van deze dissertatie, omdat ze voor het eerst een blik gunnen op de alledaagse levens van manicheeërs in het Romeinse rijk. Dankzij de teksten uit Kellis zijn we nu in staat om deze laatantieke religie op een andere manier te leren kennen.

Het manicheïsme is een derde-eeuwse godsdienst die ontstond in Mesopotamië, rondom de boodschap van Mani, de Apostel van het Licht (geboren op 14 april 216 n. Chr.). Vanuit deze regio verspreidde de religie zich over de gehele antieke wereld, zowel in het Romeinse rijk, het Sasaniden rijk en tot diep in het huidige China. Daar bleef het lange tijd voortbestaan, terwijl het in het westen in de loop van de zesde eeuw verdween. Kennis van het manicheïsme was voor een lange tijd gebaseerd op de polemische verslagen van vroeg christelijke auteurs. De belangrijkste van hen was Augustinus, die zelf lange tijd toehoorder was binnen manichese gemeenschappen. In de loop van de twintigste eeuw zijn authentieke manichese bronnen gevonden in het huidige China (in Turfan en Dunhuang), in Egypte (Medinet Madi, Kellis) en elders (Tebessa, modern Algerije). Deze bronnen hebben ons erg veel nieuwe informatie opgeleverd over het manicheïsme, maar vooral van theologische of kosmologische aard. Tot nu toe zijn de nieuwe teksten uit Kellis vooral gelezen binnen het kader van deze andere vondsten, maar ze bieden juist een uitgelezen kans om te ontdekken hoe het manicheïsme in de dagelijkse realiteit werkte voor gewone mensen in een dorpscontext.

Hoofdstuk 1 introduceert de tweeledige doelstelling van deze dissertatie. Ten eerste wil ik weten waar en wanneer de manichese religie belangrijk was in het alledaagse leven in Kellis. Ten tweede wil ik deze nieuwe bronnen lezen tegen de achtergrond van een groot religieus en sociaal veranderingsproces van "gemeenschapsgodsdiensten" naar "groep-specifieke religies," of in de woorden van Jan Assmann, van "*primary religion*" naar "*secondary religion*." Godsdiensten van dit laatste, nieuwe, type waren niet langer volledig deel van bestaande sociale formaties zoals het gezin, de wijk, of de stad, maar stonden op zichzelf en werden gedefinieerd als autonome sociale eenheden waar je bij kon gaan horen door bekering. De waarheidsclaims van deze groepspecifieke religies waren bovenal gericht op de transformatie van de gehele kosmos en niet op de status quo van de maatschappij waarvan ze deel uitmaken.

In hoofdstuk twee heb ik mijn specifieke invalshoek nader gedefinieerd als "everyday groupness," gebaseerd op moderne sociaalwetenschappelijke theorieën over religie, groepen, individuen en hun bewegingsruimte (*agency*) om religie vorm te geven in het dagelijks leven. Deze nadruk op individuen is vernieuwend binnen de studie van het manicheïsme en sluit aan bij een recente onderzoekstrend naar de geleefde religieuze praktijk (*lived religion*). Deze moderne studies leggen de nadruk op religieuze praktijken die buiten de institutionele kaders vallen. Daarmee verleggen ze de focus naar personen en alledaagse praktijken die traditioneel minder belicht werden. Tegelijkertijd is het niet de bedoeling om alledaagse religie en institutionele religie tegen elkaar uit te spelen. Institutionele en tekstuele religie doet ertoe, maar komt binnen deze benadering aan bod zodra het van belang is voor gewone

mensen. Een centrale uitdaging hierbij ligt in de aanname dat verschillende religieuze groepen met elkaar in competitie waren in de late oudheid. Hoeveel van het dagelijks leven werd eigenlijk beïnvloed door deze groepen? Éric Rebillard, voortbouwend op het werk van Rogers Brubaker, heeft gesuggereerd dat veel vroeg christelijke teksten niet gelezen moeten worden als een representatie van een veelheid aan christelijke groepen, maar als een elite strategie om zulke religieus gedefinieerde groepen in het leven te roepen. Deze sceptische houding ten opzichte van het bestaan—en de invloed van—religieuze groepen past goed bij de vraag waar en wanneer individuen zich als manicheeër gaan gedragen. Situaties waarin zo'n manichese identiteit of de aangeleerde verwachtingen van het manicheïsme een rol spelen worden aangeduid met het neologisme "manicheesheid" (*Manichaeanness*). Om dit uit te werken gebruik ik het werk van Bernard Lahire en Ann Swidler, vooral aangaande de vraag hoe individuen omgaan met de verschillende sociale en religieuze disposities die ze aangeleerd hebben gedurende hun leven. Lahire stelt voor om vooral te kijken *wanneer* een religieuze dispositie of identiteit geactiveerd wordt, al naar gelang van situationele behoeftes en verwachtingen.

In het derde hoofdstuk staat de sociale en economische context van de Dakhleh Oase centraal. Archeologisch onderzoek sinds de jaren 80 heeft duidelijk gemaakt hoe rijk deze regio was in vergelijking met de rest van Egypte. Deze rijkdom is ook terug te zien in het veelvoud van religieuze en culturele repertoires. In Kellis zijn niet alleen prachtig gedecoreerde traditioneel Egyptische tempels teruggevonden (zoals die van de lokale godheid Tutu), maar ook veel beelden en afbeeldingen met een klassiek Grieks-Romeinse achtergrond. Hierin wordt de culturele eigenheid van het gebied goed zichtbaar: aan de ene kant zijn er architecturale en religieuze praktijken zichtbaar die in de rest van Egypte al lang uit de mode waren, terwijl er aan de andere kant ook een duidelijke hang is naar een klassieke Griekse levensstijl met Romeinse invloeden. Griekse en Koptische amuletten en horoscopen laten ook zien dat de inwoners van het dorp bovennatuurlijke krachten aanroepen voor dagelijkse zaken als ziekte, liefde en vruchtbaarheid. Grote religieuze tradities (inclusief het christendom en het manicheïsme) dienen hiervoor als repertoire, waaruit individuen kunnen putten. Daarnaast is het christendom in opkomst gedurende het begin van de vierde eeuw. Er werden drie kerken gebouwd en de papyri verwijzen naar een regionale bisschop en andere kerkelijke ambten. Tegelijkertijd worden christelijke uitdrukkingen in teksten in volle vrijheid gecombineerd met traditionele formules en frases. Het is niet altijd duidelijk hoeveel deze woorden en uitdrukkingen betekenen voor de reconstructie van vierde-eeuwse religie. Een zekere flexibiliteit om elementen te combineren is evident. In ditzelfde hoofdstuk wordt betoogd dat de teksten die gevonden zijn in de huizen 1-3 ook daadwerkelijk toebehoorden aan de inwoners van deze huizen. Op die manier zijn er dus twee soorten bronnen die licht werpen op het leven van deze mensen: papyrologische brieven en archeologische vondsten.

Het tweede deel van deze dissertatie bestaat uit zes hoofdstukken over de dagelijkse praktijken van de mensen in deze vierde-eeuwse huizen in Kellis. Ze laten zien waar manicheesheid ertoe doet en zichtbaar wordt in de bronnen, maar ook waar dat niet het geval is.

Hoofdstuk vier introduceert de families van Makarios en van Pamour. De brieven van deze individuen en hun verwanten vertellen ons veel over hun familierelaties, werk en religieuze betrokkenheid. Hierin valt op dat de manicheesheid er soms dik bovenop ligt, vooral in de introductie van sommige brieven die uitgebreide gebedsformules gebruiken. Deze formules hebben soms expliciet manichese elementen, zoals een verwijzing naar de

Licht-Nous (een van de bovennatuurlijke wezens), maar vaak zijn er meerdere achterliggende tradities met elkaar verweven. Alhoewel er parallellen zijn met christelijke liturgische teksten uit Egypte, betoog ik dat de meest voor de hand liggende bron voor sommige van deze formules toch de brieven van Mani zijn. Het gebruik van dit manichese model, of manichese terminologie in het algemeen, kan bevorderd zijn door het frequent deelnemen aan gemeenschappelijke bijeenkomsten waarin manichese teksten gelezen werden, maar ook door het samen reizen met de uitverkorenen (de ascetische *elect*). Uit de persoonlijke brieven blijkt bijvoorbeeld dat een van de kinderen van Makarios op reis ging met een vooraanstaande manichese leraar, en ook onderwijs van hem ontving. De aanname dat alle manicheeërs in deze periode vervolgd werden en zich daardoor stil moesten houden, blijkt incorrect. De vervolging van manicheeërs in het Romeinse rijk was sporadisch en lokaal. Sommige teksten lijken te verwijzen naar episodes van religieus geweld, maar het merendeel van de teksten getuigt van een relatieve rust. Sterker nog, er zijn duidelijk aanwijsbare connecties tussen manicheeërs in het dorp en de regionale Romeinse elite. Mogelijk werden deze manichese families in de loop van de vierde eeuw ook beschermd door een lokale patroon: Pausanias de zoon van Valerius.

Specifieke manichese uitdrukkingen en namen zijn het onderwerp van hoofdstuk vijf. Juist in namen kan je immers zien hoe de auteurs denken over hun rol in de wereld. In contrast met voorgaande interpretaties van Samuel Lieu en Peter Brown blijkt dat het niet waarschijnlijk is dat we hier te maken hebben met een strikte sektarische gemeenschap. Opvallende en expliciet manichese aanspreekvormen en namen werden soms gebruikt in persoonlijke brieven, maar voornamelijk in de brieven van de uitverkorenen. Zij gebruiken deze labels om een situatie te scheppen waarin duidelijk is dat de ontvangers van de brief zichzelf moeten zien als manichese toehoorders (of catechumenen) en op grond daarvan geld en voedsel dienen te schenken aan de uitverkorenen. Nergens blijkt uit deze uitdrukkingen en namen dat er een vijandige houding is ten opzichte van andere sociale groepen in de lokale samenleving. De tweede vraag van dit hoofdstuk gaat over de rol van het Koptisch. Het is opvallend dat er zoveel Koptische brieven en liturgische teksten gevonden zijn in dit dorp. In tegenstelling tot Ewa Zakrzewska, zie ik geen directe een-op-een relatie tussen het gebruik van Koptisch en manicheesheid. Het lijkt er meer op dat het gebruik van het Koptisch deel is van een groepspecifiek gebruik binnen een netwerk dat gekarakteriseerd wordt door zowel familiebanden, als een dorpsidentiteit en religieuze banden.

Hoofdstuk zes keert terug naar het thema fondswerving. Alhoewel het verleidelijk is om vooral te kijken naar potentiële situaties waarin aalmoezen gegeven werden voor specifiek religieuze redenen, is het noodzakelijk om eerst het brede scala van verschillende types giften in kaart te brengen. Daaruit blijkt dat de fondswervingsbrieven van de uitverkorenen (vooral P.Kell.Copt. 31 en 32) maar een klein onderdeel uitmaakten van een grote stroom van goederen die werd uitgewisseld tussen de oase en de Nijlvallei. Veel andere situaties vertonen kenmerken van economische transacties, of er ontbreekt zoveel informatie dat het speculatie is om de giften religieus te duiden. Dit alles wijst erop dat de situatie in Kellis meer complex was dan de schematische ideologie van het geven van aalmoezen zoals we die kennen uit manichese teksten als de *Kephalaia* (een verzameling met lezingen, toegeschreven aan Mani). Een belangrijke factor die het verschil kan verklaren is de geografische ligging van het dorp in de oase. Gedurende het grootste deel van het jaar waren er inwoners van Kellis op reis naar de markten van de Nijlvallei om daar goederen te verkopen. Ook als we lezen over de uitverkorenen, bevinden die zich in de steden van de Nijlvallei (opvallend genoeg aangeduid als "in Egypte," alsof de oase daar niet bij hoort). De

afwezigheid van de uitverkorenen in het dagelijks leven in Kellis had grote gevolgen voor de rituele praktijk. Ik stel dat het niet aannemelijk is dat er sprake was van een dagelijkse rituele maaltijd waarbij de catechumenen voedsel brachten naar de uitverkorenen om het goddelijke licht (de "Levende Ziel") eruit te bevrijden. Eerdere studies zagen deze maaltijd verscholen achter een aantal korte passages over *agape*, maar dat is niet waarschijnlijk. Al deze observaties laten zien dat er een verschil was tussen de geleefde manichese praktijk in Kellis en het gesystematiseerde rituele systeem zoals we dat kennen uit andere manichese (en buiten-manichese) bronnen.

Hoofdstuk zeven bouwt voort op de vraag naar specifiek manichese bijeenkomsten. Verschillende teksten, waaronder de *Kephalaia,* schetsen een beeld van een georganiseerde collectieve groepsstijl, maar het is lastig om dit terug te vinden in de teksten uit Kellis. Af en toe zijn er aanwijzingen voor incidentele, dagelijkse, wekelijkse en jaarlijkse bijeenkomsten, maar hiervoor moeten echt alle type bronnen samen gelezen worden. De manuscripten uit Kellis met manichese psalmen wijzen erop dat er gezamenlijk gezongen werd. Vooral de houten codex met meerdere psalmen wijst op een liturgische bijeenkomst. Waarschijnlijk werden zulke bijeenkomsten niet gehouden in een van de kerkgebouwen van Kellis, alhoewel dat moeilijk te bewijzen is, maar in een overdekte tuin of in de huizen van rijke sponsoren. De vorm en inhoud van de psalmen en gebeden suggereert dat gezamenlijk zingen en bidden een grote impact had op de ervaring van deze individuen. Door het zingen en bidden, waarschijnlijk gepaard met het zich volledig ter aarde werpen, konden de manicheeërs zich diepgaand identificeren met de gemeenschap en het kosmologische narratief. In tegenstelling tot veel andere situaties, was dit een situatie waarin manicheesheid niet alleen actief was, maar ook identiteitsvormend.

Ideeën, rituelen en bijeenkomsten rondom de dood zijn het onderwerp van hoofdstuk acht. Een korte passage in een persoonlijke brief laat zien dat er uitgesproken verwachtingen waren over manichese rituelen rondom de dood. In de *Kephalaia* wordt uiteengezet hoe aalmoezen, liederen en gebeden de ziel van de overledene kunnen helpen na de dood. Een korte hymne (of is het een gebed?), gevonden in Kellis, noemt alle stadia waar de ziel voorbijkomt in haar reis door de hemelsferen. Ook andere psalmen uit Kellis zijn gerelateerd aan dit thema. In zulke bronnen zien we een spanningsveld tussen twee soorten eschatologische verwachting. Aan de ene kant verdwijnt alle persoonlijkheid uit de ziel, die op dient te gaan in het totaal van het goddelijke licht. Aan de andere kant is er volop aandacht voor het voortleven van een vorm van persoonlijkheid en verhalen over een toekomst van de perfecte gemeenschap op aarde. Begrafenissen zelf worden nooit beschreven met manichese terminologie. Ook in de materiële cultuur van de graven en begraafplaatsen in het dorp zien we geen indicaties die wijzen op het manicheïsme. Voortbouwend op het werk van Rebillard, en in directe tegenspraak met de interpretatie van Gillian Bowen, zie ik geen overtuigende redenen om überhaupt een onderscheid te maken tussen een traditioneel Egyptische begraafplaats en een "christelijke" begraafplaats in het dorp. Het is aannemelijker dat christenen en manicheeërs participeerden in de lokale begrafenis gewoontes, waarbinnen een langzame verschuiving te zien is naar meer eenvoudige, oost-west georiënteerde, graven. Alhoewel het niet onmogelijk is dat er groepspecifieke religieuze handelingen werden verricht, is het meestal onmogelijk om op basis van de materiële cultuur met zekerheid een religieuze achtergrond vast te stellen.

Hoofdstuk negen sluit het tweede deel van de dissertatie af met een focus op boeken en het schrijven van teksten. Veel van de persoonlijke brieven uit Kellis getuigen van dit proces, zeker omdat een van de kinderen van Makarios getraind werd in het kopiëren van

religieuze teksten. Het is soms mogelijk om een verband te leggen tussen de manuscripten die gevonden zijn in het dorp (zoals een fragmentje van de Romeinenbrief van Paulus, of Mani's canonieke brieven) en de verwijzingen in de persoonlijke brieven. Deze passages en manuscripten laten zien dat er een breed scala was aan teksten en boeken die gelezen werden in het dorp: klassieke literatuur van Homerus en Atheense redenaars, maar ook bijbelse en apocriefe teksten. Daarnaast was er duidelijk sprake van het kopiëren van manichese teksten, zowel liturgisch als theologisch van aard. Sommige passages kunnen gerelateerd worden aan de manichese canon. De vondst van een Koptische versie van Mani's canonieke brieven is van uitzonderlijk belang voor de studie van het manicheïsme. Samen met het houten plankje met de tekst van de dagelijkse Manichese gebeden (P.Kell.Gr. 98, het zogenaamde Gebed van de emanaties), wijzen deze teksten erop dat de inwoners van Kellis in contact stonden met een transregionale en transhistorische manichese traditie, waarvan elementen ook elders aangetroffen zijn. Uitzonderlijk is ook dat blijkt dat de catechumenen betrokken waren bij het kopiëren van deze teksten. In mijn visie was dit niet (alleen) onderdeel van een missionair proces, maar was het in eerste instantie een rituele handeling van individuele manicheeërs. Mogelijk vroeg de afwezigheid van de uitverkorenen ook om een actievere inbreng van de lokale toehoorders.

Hoofdstuk tien, in het derde deel van deze dissertatie, sluit het geheel af door terug te komen op de dubbele hoofdvraag: waar en wanneer is manicheesheid zichtbaar en hoe verhoud dit zich ten opzichte van de grote transformatie van religie in de late oudheid? Manicheesheid was meer en minder relevant in situaties rondom spreken (*talking Manichaeanness*), kiezen (*choosing Manichaeanness*), uitvoeren (*performing Manichaeanness*), en consumeren (*consuming Manichaeanness*). Hieruit blijkt dat manicheesheid soms extreem zichtbaar is, bijvoorbeeld in de fondswervingsbrieven van de uitverkorenen (P.Kell.Copt. 31 en 32) of in het gebruik van manichese gebedsformules in de introductie van sommige brieven. Veel andere situaties lijken echter vrijwel geen manichese elementen te vertonen. Zelfs waar je expliciet manicheïsme het meest zou verwachten, in het geven van aalmoezen en andere giften, speelt het maar een kleine rol. Ook rondom de dood waren er situaties waarin manicheesheid van groot belang was (zoals de herdenkingsrituelen), maar vervolgens was het onzichtbaar in de materiële cultuur van de graven. Deze dubbelheid was ook kenmerkend voor situaties waarin manicheesheid vorm kreeg in de uitvoering van collectieve rituelen of het consumeren van specifieke producten. Er is beperkt bewijs voor manichese bijeenkomsten, maar de documenten met psalmen en de gebeden wijzen op gezamenlijk gebed en zingen. Dit zal zeker bijgedragen hebben aan een uitgesproken identificatie met het manichese narratief en de *imagined community*. Tegelijkertijd zijn er goede redenen om aan te nemen dat niet iedereen heel vaak participeerde in deze bijeenkomsten, en de impact van zulke situaties beperkt was. Manicheesheid werd waarschijnlijk wel geactiveerd tijdens het kopiëren van religieuze teksten en het reizen met de uitverkorenen, maar vaak was het onzichtbaar. Net als bij de teksten die er gelezen werden, moeten we concluderen dat er meer was dan alleen manicheïsme in de levens van deze inwoners van Kellis.

Deze laatste observatie lijkt in een paradoxale tegenspraak te zijn met de conceptualisering van het manicheïsme als een *secondary religion,* een van de nieuwe groep-specifieke en autonome religies van de late oudheid. In Kellis is er soms wel sprake van een uitgesproken groeps-identificatie met bijbehorende verwachtingen, maar vaak lijken de manicheeërs zich gewoon te gedragen zoals al hun andere dorpsgenoten. Er is vrijwel geen indicatie van religieuze conflicten, geen spoor van het afbakenen van de groep, noch van wat

er precies gedaan werd in specifieke religieuze bijeenkomsten. Bovendien zijn veel van de interacties van de manicheeërs in Kellis niet gebaseerd op een religieuze groepsidentiteit, maar veel eerder op identificaties met andere sociale formaties zoals het dorp of de familie. Een stereotypering van de manicheeërs in Kellis als "sektarisch," "exclusief" of "vervolgd" is daarom niet correct. Dit onderzoek heeft laten zien dat religie af en toe geactiveerd werd in het dagelijks leven, maar dat de groepspecifieke normen lang niet het hele leven bepaalden. Voortbouwend op het theoretisch kader van Bernard Lahire, heb ik gesuggereerd dat sommige situaties waarschijnlijk niet vroegen om de activering van een religieuze identiteit. Ann Swidler's onderscheid tussen *settled life* en *unsettled life* helpt vervolgens om na te denken over de differentiatie tussen verschillende soorten situaties. Een "common sense" modus van religieus handelen is zichtbaar in de meeste brieven, terwijl de brieven van de uitverkorenen een nadrukkelijke geïntegreerde religieuze modus laten zien. Sommige auteurs zullen bewust gekozen hebben voor het combineren van religieus en niet-religieus taalgebruik als een strategie van netwerk differentiatie (*strategy of network differentiation*), terwijl de uitverkorenen meer vanuit een totaliserend perspectief schrijven. Dit verschil tussen een geïntegreerde modus van religie in het dagelijks leven (*integrated mode*) of een segregatie tussen uitgesproken religieus en andere identificaties (*segregated mode*) is vervolgens ook van belang voor de groepsvormen die we kunnen ontwaren achter de verschillende soorten manichese teksten. In plaats van goed georganiseerde groepen met wekelijkse bijeenkomsten, zullen veel vormen van manicheesheid anders georganiseerd geweest zijn, zoals het incidenteel lezen van religieuze teksten, gezamenlijk of individueel gebed thuis, of het reizen met de uitverkorenen. Lang niet al deze groepsvormen vragen om een expliciete religieuze identificatie of om een geïntegreerde modus van religie.

Curriculum Vitae

Mattias Brand was born on September 16, 1986, in Dordrecht, The Netherlands. After studying history at Utrecht University (BA 2009) and Leiden University (MA 2010), with a specialization in ancient history focused on domestic religion, he obtained a ResMA (2012, *cum laude*) in Classics and Near Eastern Civilizations, specialization track New Testament and Early Christianity. After working outside the university, he was granted an NWO grant for the project "Manichaeans and Others in Fourth-Century Egypt: The Mechanisms of Religious Change in Late Antiquity." This dissertation, written under the supervision of A.F. de Jong and J. van der Vliet, is a product of this project.

In 2016, Brand spent time as a visiting researcher at Macquarie University (Sydney). During most of his studies and part of his PhD, he lived and worked in the Jeannette Noelhuis in Amsterdam, combining academic study with social activism. Since 2014, he taught various courses at Leiden University on ancient religions, archaeology of religion, and ancient gnosis. He is a board member of the Dutch Association for the Study of Religion (Nederlands Genootschap voor Godsdienstwetenschap) and various non-academic charities.

Brand currently works at the Department for the Study of Religions of the University of Zürich.