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

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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" (ϩⲙⲙⲛⲉ) 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,

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[1] ⲡⲁϫⲉⲩ [….] ⲟⲩⲇⲓⲁⲕⲱⲛ ⲉⲣⲁⲩⲡⲁⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲛⲟ ⲡⲉⲧⲁⲩϩⲓ[….ⲉ]ⲩϩⲁⲧⲏ ⲛⲉⲑⲁⲓⲛⲓϣⲉ ⲛⲛⲛⲉⲩ ϩⲙⲙⲛⲉ ϫⲉ ϧⲙ [ⲡⲧⲣⲉϥⲙⲉ]ⲗⲉⲧⲁ ϣⲁⲩⲃⲱⲕ ⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲁϩⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲛⲙ̀ⲙⲁ̀ⲓ. (slightly modified translation). The interpretation and translation of this passage is difficult. I take ϧⲙ [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 pachoômien 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" (ⲣ̄ⲯⲁⲗⲉ).[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

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[12] ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲩⲛϣⲗⲏⲗ ϫⲁⲁⲛϥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ̄ ϥⲡⲁⲣⲁⲧ̣[ⲏⲣ]ⲏ̣ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ ϥⲛⲏⲩ ⲁⲡϣⲗⲏⲗ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲕⲁ ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ[ⲟⲩ] ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲓⲟⲩⲛⲁⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄[ϣⲗ]ⲏⲗ ⲥⲉⲛⲁ .. ⲟⲩⲁⲕ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϥⲙⲛⲧⲛ̣[ⲁⲉ ⲉⲧϥ]ϯ ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲥ ϩ[ⲛ̄] ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲁⲙⲡⲉ ⲥⲉⲛ[ⲁϣ]ⲡ [ⲛⲙⲙ]ⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ … ⲓϫⲛ̄ ⲛⲉϥⲁⲅⲁⲑⲟⲛ ⲧⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲉⲉⲥ ⲧϩ[ⲃ]ⲥⲱ ⲉⲧⲁϥⲧⲉⲉⲥ ϩⲓϫⲱⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲟⲩⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲓⲁ ⲙⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲉⲕⲟⲓⲛⲱⲛⲏ ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲩ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧⲥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲏⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲡⲟ̣ⲩⲁ̣ⲅ̣[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 ⲛ̄ϯⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲛⲁⲉ). BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 148n24. ⲣ̄ⲯⲁⲗⲉ 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

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[16] ⲛⲉⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟⲛ [ⲙⲛⲁⲩ ⲁⲛⲏⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲛ]ⲙⲏⲛⲉ ⲫⲁⲩⲣⲛⲏⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲉⲱⲟⲩ [ⲣⲏ] ⲡⲣⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲙ̄ⲧⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁⲕⲏ 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] ⲫⲁⲩⲭⲡⲟ ⲥⲁⲫ̄ⲩ̄ ⲛ̄ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛⲧⲙⲛⲥⲧⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩ[ⲉ ⲡⲟⲩ]ⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲟⲩ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲛⲉⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲧⲉ ⲁⲗ[ⲗⲁ ⲛ]ⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲭⲡⲟ ⲙ̣ⲛⲁⲩ ⲙⲡⲣⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲙ̄ⲧⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁ[ⲕⲏ ….and ..ⲁⲓ[ⲣⲭⲁⲣⲓⲍⲉ ⲛ̣ⲉ̣ⲩ] ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲛⲁⲅ ⲛⲣ̣ⲏⲩ ⲙ̄ⲙ ⲡⲁⲅⲁⲑ[ⲟⲛ] ⲉⲧⲁⲓⲉⲉⲩ. 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" (ⲉⲩⲧⲣⲉϥϣⲱ 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 (ⲡϣⲛϣⲉ 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

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[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] Ⳮⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ ⲡϣⲛϣⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉⲓⲱⲧⲛ Ⳮⲁⲃⲁⲧ ⲁⲡⲣⲉⲡ…. Ⳮⲉ ⲉⲛⲁⲣⲝ ⲛϣⲛϩ ⲛϣⲁⲁ [ⲛⲏⲣⲉ] 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" (ϩⲙⲙⲉ) 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,

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[27] P.Kell.Copt. 19.47-51. See the Coptic text and notes at the epigraph of this chapter.

[28] [ⲉ]ϩⲡⲓⲧⲱⲟⲩ ϩⲡⲓⲣⲏⲧⲉ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲏ ⲉⲧⲙⲏⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲁⲓϫⲱⲕⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥⲩⲭⲏ ⲉⲣⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲃⲱ 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" (ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲉⲗⲉⲧⲁ ⲛ̄ⲛⲣⲁⲩⲱ ϩⲡⲓⲃⲓ[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 ⲉⲣⲁⲩⲡⲁⲛⲉϥ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ϩⲙⲟ 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,

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[31] Gardner and Lieu, *MTRE*, no. 36.

[32] ⲛ̣ⲉⲩⲛⲁⲃⲉ [ⲥ]ⲏ̣ⲕ ⲱⲁ̣ⲡⲉⲩⲥⲁⲛ ⲡⲉⲧⲉ̣ⲫⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲡⲡⲁⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲉⲧⲭ̄ ⲭⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲩⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ ⲁ̣ⲡ̣[ⲙ]ⲉ̣ⲥⲭⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉ̣ⲩⲥⲁⲛ ⲛ̣ⲩ’ⲥⲉⲭⲉ ⲛⲛ̄ⲛⲉ[ⲩ ⲉ]ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲭ̣’ⲟ̣ⲛ̣ⲧ ⲛ̣ⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲁⲥⲡⲁⲥⲙ̣[ⲟⲥ] ⲟⲩⲧⲱⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲩⲥⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ …[…]ⲡⲱⲙ̣ⲏⲣⲉ ⲡⲉ: ⲱⲁⲧ’ⲩⲉⲛ̄ [……].’ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲣⲛ̄ ⲡⲛⲁⲃⲉ ⲣⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲉⲉⲕⲉ ⲉⲛ̣ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲩ ⲉⲙⲛ̄ ⲫⲫⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲣⲙⲧⲩ… P.Kell.Copt. 53, 32.16-24 (slightly modified translation).

[33] ⲙ̣ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲁⲧⲙⲉⲧⲁ̣ⲛⲟⲓⲁ ⲛ̣ⲛ̄ⲣ̄ [ⲡⲕⲉ]ⲕⲱ ⲛⲉⲩ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲙ̣ⲟⲩⲛ̣[ⲁ]ⲃ[ⲉ] P.Kell.Copt. 53, 41.3-4.

[34] ⲛⲉⲕⲥⲙⲏⲩ ⲉⲧⲕ’ⲱⲙ̄ⲱⲉ 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 ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ, ⲡⲛⲁϩⲛⲉⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ).[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

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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 ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ (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 (ⲡⲁⲛⲛⲩⲭⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ, 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 ⲛⲟⲩ…ⲧ[ⲕ]ⲩⲣⲓⲁⲕⲏ…ⲡⲥⲱⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲕⲁ̣ⲧ̣ⲏ̣ⲭ̣ⲟⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛⲟⲥ ⲧⲁⲉⲩⲧⲉ̣[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" (ⲟⲩⲅⲗⲟⲅⲉ ⲁⲡⲭⲓⲥⲉ) contributing to salvation, but also strongly as a "chest filled with teaching" (ⲟⲩⲕⲓⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲛⲏϩ 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 ϥⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉ ⲁϩⲉ· ⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛ̄ⲭⲱⲕⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲱⲛϧ̄· ⲟⲩⲕⲓⲃⲱⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲛⲏϩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲃⲱ· ⲟⲩⲅⲗⲟⲅⲉ ⲁⲡⲭⲓⲥⲉ· ⲟⲩⲛⲁϥⲉⲥϣⲓ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ 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

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[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] ⲛ̄ϩⲁ̣ⲡ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲇ̣ⲟⲅⲙⲁ… 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 ⲙⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁ ϩⲛ̄ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲩ̈ⲓ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲟⲩ ϩⲛ̄ 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] ⲛ̄ⲧⲡⲁⲥ̣ⲭⲁ P.Kell.Copt. 22.18.

[55] μὴ οὖν ἀμελήσῃς πέμψαι μοι τὸ ἱμάτιον εἰ<ς> 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 (ⲁⲛⲣ̄ ϣⲁ̈ⲓⲉ, 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" (ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲏⲁⲛ̄ϣⲱⲡⲉ) or "a place" (ⲟⲩⲧⲟ[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

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[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] …ⲧⲁⲣⲟⲩⲫⲫⲏ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲓⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲛⲧⲛⲁⲉ [ⲉ]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 ἔκοψα 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" (ϣοει ⲛ̄ϑⲁⲗⲉⲧⲁ).[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]

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[77] Κα[θὼς ἐδήλως]ά σοι περὶ τὸν υἱὸν [...]βάλε εἰς τὸ μονοστή[ριον ὅπου δι]δάσκι αὐτὸν λίγ̣υ[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] ⲡ̄ⲡⲕⲟⲩⲥ ⲡ̄ⲡⲁ̣ⲫ̣ⲓⲱ̣ⲧ ϣοει ⲛ̄ϑⲁⲗⲉⲧⲁ 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] ⲟⲩⲛⲁⲓϩⲩⲙⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛⲛ̄ 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] ϣⲁⲣⲉⲛⲛ̄ ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ· ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲣⲕⲓⲑⲁⲣⲁ ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲓⲱⲛ 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]

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[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] ⲡⲉⲧϫⲱ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲫⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲫⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲱⲛⲧ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲕⲗⲁⲙ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱⲁⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲟⲩ ⲟ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲧⲏ ⲟⲩⲣⲧ̄ ⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧⲟ̄ 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] ⲉⲓⲁⲧⲉⲟⲩⲟ ⲡⲣⲩⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲡⲣⲁⲙⲛⲏ ⲛⲁⲣ[ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲭⲃⲉ] ⲥⲓⲫⲩⲥⲁⲡ ⲣⲁⲙⲛⲏⲛ *τογβαϊ*. 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]

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[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] ⲉⲩⲁⲱⲗⲏⲗ ⲁⲡⲣⲏ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲟⲩ 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

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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] ⲙⲁ]ⲣⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲭⲉⲩⲁⲛⲁⲉ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲣⲱⲟⲛ ⲙⲁⲣⲛ̄ⲓ̣[ⲱ] ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲭⲉⲩⲁⲕⲱ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲣⲱⲟⲛ. 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" (ϩⲧⲥϥⲣⲁⲓⲥ 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" (ϧⲡⲟⲟⲩⲉ): "[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" (ϧⲡⲟⲟⲩ 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

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[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 ⲫⲱⲟⲩ [ⲁⲛⲉⲕⲥⲱ]ⲧⲧⲛ ϧⲡⲟⲟⲩⲉ. 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" (ϩ̣ⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ) 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

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[145] ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲧⲱⲃϩ̄ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲧⲱⲃϩ ⲙ̣[ⲛ ⲟⲩⲱⲓⲛ]ⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲟⲩⲱⲱⲃⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϫⲟⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲕⲁ̣ ϩ[ⲁⲛⲏ]ⲛ ⲱⲁⲩⲣⲥⲫⲣⲁⲫⲓⲥ 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] ⲡ̄ϩ̄ⲣⲁⲩ ⲙ̣ⲙ̣ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱⲱⲃⲉ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲭ ⲱⲁⲭⲥⲱⲟⲩ[ϩ] ⲁϩⲟⲩⲛ̣ ⲛ̄ⲭⲉⲓ ⲁⲛⲉⲭⲉⲣⲛⲩ ⲛ̄ⲭⲡⲙⲥⲥⲉ ⲛ̄ⲭⲍⲱⲓⲣⲁⲫⲉ [ⲁⲛ] ⲛ̄ⲥⲉ[ⲛⲁ]ⲛⲕⲏ ⲛ̄ⲭⲡ̄ ⲟⲩϩⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲥ…1 Keph. 122, 292.16-17, 18-19.

[148] ⲛ̄ⲥ̄ⲟⲩⲱⲥⲭ ⲛⲧⲉⲡⲫⲩⲙⲓⲁ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲡⲉⲓⲣⲁⲥⲙⲟⲥ̣ [ⲉ]ⲧⲁⲭⲃⲓ ⲁϩⲣⲏⲓ ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲧⲏ̄. 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." ⲉⲩϩ̄ⲑⲁⲗⲉ ⲉⲩⲏ ⲉⲁⲩ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲭⲱ[ⲣⲁ ⲭ]ⲱⲣⲁ: ⲉⲩϩⲱⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ· ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲙⲁ [ⲙⲁ · ⲕ]ⲁⲧⲁ ⲧ̣ⲁⲱ· 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]ⲥⲉⲥⲁⲧⲙⲉϥ ⲛⲥⲉⲕⲁⲥⲙⲏ ⲁⲣⲁϥ ⲱⲁϥⲃ̣[ⲓ ⲟⲩ]ⲯⲁⲙ ⲛ̣ϩⲛⲧⲟⲩ 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]

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[151] M 7.R.i.5-8 cited in BeDuhn, *Manichaean Body*, 186.

[152] ⲡⲉⲧϫⲱ ⲛⲟⲩⲫⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲩⲟ ⲛⲁⲉ ⲛⲓⲙⲉⲧⲱⲱⲛⲧ ⲛⲟⲩⲕⲗⲁⲛ ⲉⲣⲉ ⲙⲉⲧⲟⲩⲱⲱⲃⲉ ⲛⲥⲱϥ ⲟ ⲛⲁⲉ ⲛⲓⲙⲉⲧⲧ ⲟⲩⲣⲏ ⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ ⲡⲣⲣⲟ ⲛⲓⲡⲕⲣⲓⲧⲏⲥ ⲛⲧⲙⲛⲉ ⲙⲛⲡⲉⲫⲛⲏⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲓ ⲛⲉⲁⲩ ⲉⲫⲁⲧⲉⲉϥ ⲛⲉⲛ ⲣⲱⲙⲛⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲛⲉ ⲛⲉⲩⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲙⲛⲛⲉⲩⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ 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

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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 ϩⲱⲙⲉ ⲛⲁⲥⲛⲏⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛ ⲧⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲓⲥⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ. 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] ⲟⲩⲉⲁⲩ ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ ⲟⲩⲃⲣⲟ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙ̄ϧⲁⲓⲥ] ⲓ̣ⲙ̣ⲛ̣ⲁⲛⲓϧⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ ⲛ̣ⲉⲩ[ⲥⲱⲧⲧⲏ̄ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲃⲉ ⲟⲩ]ⲃⲣⲟ ⲛ̄ⲧⲧⲩⲭⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲙⲇⲁ̈ ϧⲏ̄[ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ ⲧⲩⲭⲏ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲁⲕ]ⲁⲣⲓ̣ⲁ ⲙ̣̄ⲙ̣ⲁⲣⲓⲁ. 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" (ⲁⲫⲭⲱⲕ) 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.