A New Citizenship:
Conversion in Roman Philippi as Reflected in the Letter
to the Philippians

Submitted to Charles Sturt University for the degree of Ph.D.

By
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B.A., MTh.

March 2017
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Certificate of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge and belief, understand that it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged.

I agree that this thesis be accessible for the purpose of study and research in accordance with normal conditions established by the Executive Director, Library Services, Charles Sturt University or nominee, for the care, loan and reproduction of thesis, subject to confidentiality provisions as approved by the University.

Name: Damian Szepessy

Signature:

Date: 13th of March 2017
Acknowledgements

The initial spark of interest in the topic of conversion came from discussions with my MTh thesis supervisor Dr Stephen Spence in 2008-2009. His insightful questions guided me as I explored what it meant for the first members of the Christ movement to live as a community. What focused my attention to conversion came when he asked the question; why would someone choose to become part of the Christ movement in the first century? My interest in conversion grew further after lectures on the impact that Roman culture had on Paul’s Christ communities. These lectures were given by one of my PhD supervisors, Dr Timothy J. Harris, in 2009 and focused on the subversive nature of Pauline ethics within the Greco-Roman world.

There are also two scholars who have influenced my thinking on the first-century Mediterranean world through their published research and in brief conversations. The first is Dr Zeba Crook, whose work has questioned many of the modern-day psychological assumptions about conversion that are superimposed over the Biblical texts, which caused me to question what I was superimposing on Paul’s converts. The second scholar is Dr James Harrison whose book on Paul’s use of charis in its ancient context opened new avenues of thought regarding the social context through which the world of the gods was experienced. Dr Harrison also encouraged me in my current research by pointing me to several sources on Philippi.

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My time in theological/Biblical studies has led me to reconsider how the divine story in Christ has been played out, not only personally, but also on how it continues today in Australian society. My desire is that the Church can once again take hold of the new identity in which God calls his people to live.
Abstract

In New Testament studies, conversion is understood to involve theological, ethical, and social transformation. Zeba Crook insists that New Testament conversion must be understood in its first-century CE cultural context, arguing that identity in the Greco-Roman world was formed and maintained by belonging to a social group. This thesis builds on Crook’s work and focuses on Philippi and the Letter to the Philippians, rather than on the broader Mediterranean region in the first century CE. It undertakes a close reading of the Letter to the Philippians and an evaluation of the material evidence of Roman Philippi to argue that, for Paul, conversion is construed as a new citizenship and that such a construal is unique to the Letter to the Philippians.

Research by Peter Pilhofer reveals evidence from inscriptions that demonstrates that Philippi’s socio-political context was thoroughly Romanised and lacked an established Jewish synagogue in Paul’s time. The gentile converts, therefore, could not relate to Paul’s God in the framework of covenant or inclusion in ethnic Israel. Because Paul believed that participation in his God’s mission was integral to the Philippians’ identity and evidence of their conversion, he hoped to persuade them by using the conceptual framework of ‘citizenship of heaven’, so that the Philippians could have a common in-group identity.

This understanding of conversion is elucidated through the application of Social Identity Theory (SIT), in adapted form. SIT identifies three main themes central to Paul’s understanding of conversion in the cultural context of Philippi:
1) A new identity based around participation in the κοινωνία – participation in the common goal of the propagation of the gospel. Paul considered that those who shared in his mission must share the same world view and mindset as him.

2) A new loyalty to a new κύριος. The Philippians would have taken loyalty oaths to Caesar, who was their κύριος. Paul, however, expected the Philippians to act in concord and to demonstrate their loyalty to their new patron, Paul’s Messiah.

3) A new citizenship that has a different κύριος and σωτήρ. The socio-political institution of citizenship provides a psychological bond that enables a new social identity to be formed by the Philippians in order to create a new civic community.

Thus conversion required a change in world view, ethical behaviour, and social identity, yet the converts remained in the same socio-political context.

To date, there has not been a major social-scientific study of conversion in the Letter to the Philippians. This thesis addresses this lacuna and, in so doing, brings further understanding to the notion of conversion not only in Philippians, but also in the broader Pauline corpus. Hence this thesis has implications for Pauline studies and more broadly for missional hermeneutics.
**Abbreviations:**

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>§</td>
<td>Section or numbered paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Anchor Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABD</td>
<td>Anchor Bible Dictionary</td>
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<td>ABR</td>
<td>Australian Biblical Review</td>
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<td>AE</td>
<td>L’Année Epigraphique</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHB</td>
<td>Ancient History Bulletin</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANRW</td>
<td>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</td>
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<tr>
<td>APIIS</td>
<td>The Advanced Papyrological Information System</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASOR</td>
<td>The American Schools of Oriental Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAFCS</td>
<td>The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCE</td>
<td>Before Common Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDF</td>
<td>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BECNT</td>
<td>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNTC</td>
<td>Black’s New Testament Commentaries</td>
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<td>BSac</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Sacra</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTB</td>
<td>Biblical Theology Bulletin</td>
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<tr>
<td>BzA</td>
<td>Beiträge zur Alteuromskunde</td>
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<td>BZNW</td>
<td>Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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<td>CE</td>
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<td>CEB</td>
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<td>CJ</td>
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<td>ConBNT</td>
<td>Coniectana Biblica: New Testament Series</td>
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<td>CIQ</td>
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<td>Currents in Biblical Research</td>
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<td>DDbDP</td>
<td>The Duke Databank of Documentary Papyri</td>
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<tr>
<td>DNTB</td>
<td>Dictionary of New Testament Background</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECCA</td>
<td>Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity</td>
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<td>EDH</td>
<td>Epigraphic Database Heidelberg</td>
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<td>EGGNT</td>
<td>Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament</td>
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<td>ESV</td>
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<td>FRLANT</td>
<td>Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments</td>
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<td>GBS</td>
<td>Guides to Biblical Scholarship</td>
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<td>HCSB</td>
<td>Holman Christian Standard Bible</td>
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<td>Historia</td>
<td>Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte</td>
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<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
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<td>HGV</td>
<td>Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens</td>
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<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Critical Commentary</td>
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<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<td>JETS</td>
<td>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</td>
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<td>JGRChJ</td>
<td>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</td>
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<td>JHS</td>
<td>Journal of Hellenic Studies</td>
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<td>JRS</td>
<td>The Journal of Roman Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSNT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</td>
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<td>JSNTSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series</td>
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<td>JSOT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</td>
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<td>New American Standard Bible</td>
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<td>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</td>
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The images of coins used in figures 1 to 4 and 6 have been used with permission from Classical Numismatic Group Inc., at www.cngcoins.com. The image in figure 5 is taken from Agora Auctions, Inc., at www.AgoraAuctions.com
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

In this thesis, conversion is argued to be not only personal transformation, but also transformation of identity, based on a new world view and ethical values. Although conversion is a psychological phenomenon, certain psychological models have been foisted onto definitions of conversion and this has ‘muddied the waters’. This is due to the assumption that conversion is a religious change for those who are seeking a solution to psychological plight or disturbance. These definitions have influenced New Testament (NT) scholarship on first-century CE conversion, particularly in Pauline studies. This thesis will argue that these definitions are inadequate and prone to imposing issues from another epoch with respect to Philippi.

The letter to the Philippians is distinctive among the accepted Pauline letters, in that it has political language and concepts that are not used in other letters. What is striking is Paul’s explicit political language at crucial points of Philippians in order to focus his converts on the reality of their social identity. Modern English translations do not render Phil 1:27 adequately; rather, they tend to translate the imperative πολιτεύεσθε as associated with conduct, such as ‘live your life in a manner’ (NRSV) or ‘conduct yourselves’ (NIV and NASB). The result is twofold. First, readers do not necessarily connect Phil 1:27 with Phil 3:20 and so do not notice Paul’s idea that the Philippians are to conduct themselves as citizens from a city above (πολίτευμα ἐν σύρανοις). This means the social identity, which was also a socio-political one, that Paul sought to form in his converts is missed. Second, readers can also overlook that Paul thought that the

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1 A number of translations render πολιτεύεσθε similarly. See the RSV, ESV, CEB, Holman.
2 Citizenship, it should be noted, is understood in this thesis in its uncontroversial sense as legal membership in a state, with concomitant rights, obligations, and loyalties. See § 4.5 and § 4.5.1.
3 The working definition of a socio-political community is ‘the social, religious, and political institutions that are created to maintain a particular ideology’, see Chapter 3.3.1.
notion of citizenship enabled his converts to form (psychologically) a new social identity. The new social identity would entail an alternative world view to the dominant one at Philippi.

Furthermore, this leads to the question, why did Paul think that he needed to use the socio-political category of citizenship as a metaphor for conversion? Paul did not seek to provide this category in his other letters, which indicates that he thought the socio-political situation at Philippi warranted such a construal. This thesis argues that the notion of citizenship was used by Paul here because he sought to form a community of converts whose primary allegiance was to the Messiah of his gospel. There are several arguments found in the text of Philippians for us to make such a claim, a claim further corroborated by the volume of inscriptive data documented in the works of Paul Collart and Peter Pilhofer. This data provides an insight into the socio-political context of first-century Philippi and indicates that the local population was highly Romanised.

The letter itself provides us with terminology to indicate that Paul was persuading his converts to have an alternative world view from the dominant Roman one. Scholars of Philippians have noted the high frequency of verbs referring to cognitive processes. Jeffrey T. Reed’s analysis of Philippians has identified 39 references to cognitive processes related to belief or opinion. Furthermore, Reed’s analysis highlights the emotional and relational language of the letter. In this thesis I argue that such cognitive and emotional language relates to the identity formation of Paul’s converts. As of yet, few NT scholars highlight this as Paul’s intention. By applying Social Identity Theory, and the related Social Categorization Theory (see Chapter 3), to the text of Philippians,

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4 J. T. Reed, A Discourse Analysis of Philippians: Method And Rhetoric in the Debate Over Literary Integrity, JSNTSup 136 (Sheffield Sheffield Academic, 1997), 340.
I demonstrate how such cognitive and emotional processes allow the individual to acquire a new social identity.

Paul’s use of the term κοινωνία and its derivatives is important to this argument. Many NT scholars argue that the term should be used to denote friendship. Recent research by Julien Ogereau however on the term κοινωνία shows that it had a connection with societas, which was a partnership struck between individuals that formed a binding contract. Critics of such a view have argued that there is no inscriptive evidence of an agreement between a group and an individual. But Ogereau’s in-depth research challenges this view by citing evidence showing that a partnership with a common goal between an individual and a group did exist and was considered to be a κοινωνία. This understanding of the term κοινωνία and its derivatives, strengthens my argument that the psychological bonds of the Philippians helped in the acquisition of a new social identity.

The identification of the genre of Philippians is also a matter of dispute in NT scholarship and it pertains to my argument significantly. This issue is discussed in detail below, where I argue that the genre of Philippians is ‘deliberative rhetoric’. Such identification highlights two important points: first, deliberative rhetoric has been used by several prominent NT scholars to demonstrate successfully the literary unity of the letter. This bolsters my argument that Paul has woven the motif of citizenship throughout the letter, particularly to persuade the Philippians to act in accordance with their new citizenship status. Second, deliberative rhetoric illustrates how Paul, through argument, analogy, and imagery, persuaded individuals in his audience to act as one unit psychologically.

Prior to Ogereau, Paul Sampley had been a lone voice in supporting Paul’s use of κοινωνία with this sense. See J. M. Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians: A Socio-Historical Investigation of a Pauline Economic Partnership, WUNT 377 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).
Another important consideration for this thesis is the question: why was there a need for a new identity? John Barclay observes that one of the reasons why a new identity was needed for non-Jewish Christ movement members in the first-century was due to the fact that, once they joined the Christ movement, they had lost their previous ones. Those who converted faced considerable losses and often disruption to their relational networks, which included family, friends, business partners, and civic authorities. This lack of identity is likely to be the reason why groups, such as the Judaizers, would be an attractive alternative to non-Jewish members of Christ movements.\(^6\) Barclay, however, seems to explain identity merely as a social position in a context, but does not explain how psychologically the individual can move from one group to another. In this thesis it will be argued that Paul used *citizenship* as a metaphor for conversion, thereby creating a new social identity for his converts at Philippi.

This thesis is not proposing a new definition of the English term ‘conversion’, nor for the term to be disregarded altogether. Rather, it will explore and highlight the connections between conversion as a personal transformation and a new social identity. NT scholars have argued that conversion involved change on a personal and corporate level. Accordingly, this thesis seeks to provide a framework for how this took place. By using Henri Tajfel’s Social Identity Theory (SIT),\(^7\) it will be seen that a new identity can be formed by the creation of a new social category that supersedes in importance all other group identities, but that is also a conscious and deliberate choice of the individual to be part of that group.


\(^7\) For an overview see H. Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Tajfel’s theory has been developed and expanded on by other researchers. Their research into SIT is included in this thesis. See Chapter 3.3 ff.
It will be argued that conversion is a world view event or a process that leads to a person acquiring a new social identity with its associated ethical conduct, established in recognition of a new world view. In broad terms, a world view is ‘shared ideas concerning life and the world, coupled with the claim that they are somehow grounded in the nature of things’ world view. In order to give an explanation about why Paul used new citizenship as a motif for conversion, there needs to be an understanding of its significance and importance in first-century Mediterranean society. The reason why citizenship would have impacted the Philippians so much can only be appreciated after an investigation of the socio-political institutions at Philippi and their connection with the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

Furthermore, the absence of an established community of Jews at Philippi meant that the Philippian converts would not be able to compare themselves with Judaism or Jewish identity. Though there were several different ethnicities present at Philippi and its surrounding territories, the city was thoroughly Romanised. The dominance of Roman culture meant that conversion would not have been viewed as a deviant form of Jewish identity. This was not necessarily due to total ignorance about Judaism or its customs by the Romans but, rather, that for Paul’s converts, Jewish identity would not be relevant to their previous social identities. Paul’s post-conversion Jewish identity involved a ‘new symbolic praxis’ and a ‘renewed world view’. This would not be a

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9 There is ongoing debate about the most appropriate English terms for concepts such as Jewish ethnic identity, ‘Judaism’ as a religious (and/or ethnic) identity or set of practices, and Ioudaioi. In this thesis, I employ the terms ‘Jewish identity’ when referring to a social identity (which could include an ethnic component) and ‘Judaism’ for Jewish religious practices, even though I am aware that the notion of ‘religion’ in the first century is considered anachronistic by some scholars. These terms should be seen as shorthand for the complex notions they represent, notions discussed throughout the dissertation. Moreover, I use the term ‘ethnic’ in its straightforward sociological sense, namely, a shared set of cultural elements (such as language, religion, traditions, history) that sets apart one group from other groups.

social identity that would have any great significance to them. It certainly would not have united them psychologically to act as a united group.

Further evidence that Paul perceived that Judaism’s symbolic practices and other significant socio-religious categories would not be significant for the Philippians is that references to such are lacking in the letter. Paul does not argue by using direct quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures or the LXX. There are no indications that the Philippians were having in-fights about faith in Jesus Christ versus keeping faith with the torah, observing certain festivals, or food laws, as are found in Romans and Galatians. The absence of established synagogues at Philippi, being as much a socio-political entity as a religious one, indicates that the Philippians would have had little knowledge of the socio-political and religious institutions of ethnic Israel.

There is a great amount of data on the city of Philippi. The numismatic and inscriptional evidence uncovered over the last one hundred years is considerable and in good condition, and provides a snapshot of Philippi’s socio-political context during Paul’s time. Furthermore, the evidence allows conclusions to be made regarding the issues likely faced by the Philippian converts, issues which would have impacted how they constructed and thought about their new social identity. Paul’s letter may fruitfully be read in the light of this background.

Much scholarly research has been focused on Jewish identity in the Diaspora, and on Greco-Roman identities in cities of the Roman Empire, where there were Christ

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Much of the focus, with a few exceptions, remains on socio-political locations where there has been an ethnic mix of both Jews and Gentiles. The result of this is that the research is heavily weighted towards Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians.

Though Philippians is included in NT studies on conversion, there is yet to be a study that has analysed the notion of conversion in the letter as a whole. Much scholarly attention is focused on Philippians 3 as part of Paul’s autobiography concerning his conversion. Furthermore, though there is an increasing number of works using SIT to highlight how Paul set out to create a new social identity for his converts at Philippi, their focus remains primarily on Philippians 2 and 3. Though the notion of citizenship is explored in these works, citizenship is not directly associated with conversion. This thesis thus seeks by a close reading of the whole text of Philippians to give a fuller picture of how Paul hoped to form a new social identity.

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In Chapter Two, there will be a review of the literature that has influenced thinking on conversion studies. Early studies of conversion, from the fields of sociology and psychology, define conversion as a change of one’s religion and attempted to answer why an individual would choose to convert to a new religion. These scholars emphasise the Western psychological models of personality and motivations for conversion, typically defined as a religious transformation for an individual who enters into a new community. Other studies argue that certain people are predisposed to having a religious conversion, due to their beliefs and personal circumstances. Their research results are enlightening for individuals and groups in modern times, but their results cannot be imposed upon persons from other eras without thinking through the presuppositions underlying the methodological process.

Many of the above conclusions and frameworks are undergirded, at least in part, by William James’s definitions about the function of religion in culture and the inner psychological life of individuals. The psychological models that undergirded early studies on NT conversion were influenced by James’s psychological categories. By the uncritical acceptance of his definitions, conversion came to be defined in terms of a ‘plight to solution’ scenario, which is then taken as the universal motive for all who undergo conversion. The assumption is that humans of all cultures are essentially the same, regardless of when and where they are located.

Krister Stendahl’s article, *Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West,* is a reconsideration of Paul’s relationship with Jewish identity; it also enabled subsequent

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scholars of NT conversion to challenge the Western, psychologically-orientated definitions of conversion (See 2.3 and 2.4). Stendahl argues that the Protestant view of Paul was influenced by Martin Luther’s interpretation, rather than based in Paul’s own first-century context. He rightly argues that Paul was not plagued by a guilty conscience, or someone who was dissatisfied by his Jewish identity. Philippians 3 was not a denouncing of Jewish identity, rather it is evidence of Paul’s awareness of the impact of his new symbolic praxis and world view, in which he reassesses and reinterprets his Jewish social identity markers in the light of his being seized by Christ Jesus (Phil 3:12). The enduring influence of Stendahl’s article is that it opens the way for social-scientific studies of the socio-political context of first-century Christ movements. Scholars are no longer restricted to using only theological categories for their work on conversion but are able to use methodologies that allowed for more nuanced approaches. This leads to a shift in perspective, avoiding the placing of modern assumptions on ancient peoples.

Another result of Stendahl’s article is thinking about conversion in a socio-political context, where conversion is seen as a deviation from traditional allegiances and customs. Zeba Crook argues that conversion can also be understood as apostasy, a disaffiliation from one socio-political group and the affiliation to another one. The term apostasy is usually used by those accusing someone of disloyalty, but those who are accused of it do not see themselves as apostates. Nevertheless, Paul needed to create a new social identity for his converts, one that used a referential framework for a group that did not exist before the Christ movements came into being. Thus a more accurate

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definition of conversion in the ancient world incorporates a disaffiliation from one group and affiliation to another.

A framework that would have both socially and psychologically informed Christ-following converts was the notion of *citizenship*. Paul’s use of this socio-political institution would have had a significant psychological\(^{19}\) impact on the new social identity of its converts. Furthermore, as will be seen below, citizenship in the ancient world was encumbered with a world view, ethical behaviours, and loyalties. Paul exhorts the Philippians to act as citizens (Phil 1: 27) with a particular world view, ethical, and social obligations. Their newly acquired identity of heavenly citizenship was characterised by the imitation of Paul and his imitation of the Messiah.

Chapter Three introduces the methodologies to establish a framework about how Paul hoped that the notion of citizenship would form a new social identity and enable personal transformation. It will be seen that the power of possessing citizenship in the ancient world impacted one’s perception of self and social status, and also gave an identity. It will be argued that Paul used Roman citizenship, in modified form, as a model for the citizenship of heaven.

A productive methodology for highlighting the socio-political influence of the Roman Empire in the ancient world is that of Berger and Luckmann’s, *The Social Construction of Reality*.\(^{20}\) The reason this theory is used is due to its focus on society as being constructed and maintained by humans, which forms a world view. Rome used existing traditions while also creating social institutions that enabled them to maintain and further their power. Philippi’s close connection with Rome was embedded within

\(^{19}\) The term ‘psychological’ in this thesis refers to the cognitive and emotional level.

the *Pax Augusta* narrative. The evidence from Philippi demonstrates that it was heavily influenced by Roman ideology and cultural values, reflected especially in its socio-political institutions.

There is a further need, however, for a complementary methodology to identify conclusions about the social significance of these institutions for those who were at Philippi. The use of SIT will be applied to the fledgling Christ movement at Philippi, as depicted in the letter to the Philippians. SIT is useful because it highlights Paul’s strategy in forming the social identity of his converts to enable them to act psychologically as a unified group. It is also helpful in offering some explanations as to how Paul has enabled the Philippians to become an ‘in-group’, influencing their worldview and associated behaviours. According to SIT, individuals choose to belong to social groups that give them a positive self-image over ones that do not. Further to this, once individuals have categorised themselves as having membership in a social group, they then adopt its values and beliefs. Individuals who choose to be members of a social group do so at a cognitive and emotional level. The social group values are also psychological in nature, rather than being merely cognitive, or simply an emotional decision.

For according to SIT, a new social identity is formed by comparing various groups in a particular social environment. By providing the Philippians with a positive image of themselves, Paul endeavoured to create a new social identity in the hope of unifying them. The notion that they were citizens of heaven and the gospel could help them to re-categorise themselves into an in-group, that had an overarching social identity. SIT’s notion of the Self Categorisation Theory (SCT) will also highlight identity as being fluid; an individual has several roles, or categorisations, which
constitute one’s identity. Once an individual or group has defined their social
categorisations, certain social situations will ‘activate’ an aspect of the social identity
within that person, in turn governing their behaviours, a phenomenon called ‘salience’.
The author of Acts claims that Paul possessed Greek and Roman citizenship (Acts
evoke the salience of Paul’s Greek or Roman citizenships.

The notion of salience is especially critical when there is (what SIT calls) a
superordinate social identity, as this will have the most ‘salience’; in turn, this relegates
other aspects of social identity into other, less important sub-groups. SCT illustrates
how Paul, while a fellow citizen of heaven with the Philippians, remained a Jew, yet
shared in an overarching social identity with the Philippians. The fact that SCT and the
notion of salience can be applied in any specific context means that it can be applied to
contexts where identity is derived from group-orientated societies.

SIT’s notion of prototype group members will also be used to explore those who
Paul thought exhibited correct in-group behaviour. The primary role of the prototypical
group member was to encourage other less committed group members to a higher level
of commitment to the in-group. His positive appraisal of these members further helped
to maintain a positive image of the Philippians, just as they had helped him in his
propagation of the gospel, despite encountering suffering and opposition. The use of the
prototype convert/leader of the in-group was also used to promote the ideals that Paul
held and that he wanted to see in the Philippians.

Chapters Four and Five constitute Part Two, where Berger and Luckmann’s
theory will be applied to the spread of Roman ideology through colonisation and to
Augustus’ reign under the influence of Pax Augusta. It will be shown that Augustus was
a masterful tactician of propaganda which he used to gain and maintain sole power. Augustus set about restoring Roman customs and practices that had fallen away. Central to his belief was that citizenship defined what it meant to be a Roman. Those who possessed citizenship attained not only great honour and esteem but also the obligation of loyalty to Roman customs and to Caesar. It gave loyal individuals in the provinces further honour, in that it exempted them from certain taxes and provided them with legal personhood.

Augustus used several established socio-political institutions to promote Roman ideology, centred on Caesar and his household. In the Republic under Julius Caesar, oaths, vows, and prayers in Roman religion had become centred on the Imperator and Dictator and not just the gods. Augustus continued this in the oaths of allegiance made by soldiers, Roman citizens, and even by entire populations in certain cities in the East. The form of the oaths demonstrate that they would have held a significant psychological influence, securing the loyalty and devotion of Augustus’ subjects.

Augustus exploited his status as the adopted son of the divine Julius Caesar to further the patronage networks, strengthening his control. He used his extensive patron client networks to influence the existing social and political hierarchy of the Roman order. By controlling the cursus honorum, he could gain a tighter control over political affairs as promotion was influenced by the patron-client networks. The concept undergirding the cursus honorum, and other Roman socio-political institutions, was that of the honour, reputation and the esteem granted to the one on whom it was bestowed.

Notions of honour and esteem also undergirded one of the most important socio-political institutions, worship of the living Caesar, which would strengthen the Caesars’ power in the Empire. In various parts of the Empire, and especially in the East, many
cities had incorporated the worship of the living Caesar into their civic and religious festivals. The cities in the East had a long tradition of honouring their kings as gods, because they had brought many benefits. Caesar’s divinity meant he held absolute power in comparison to his worshippers. Participation in the imperial cults, far from being an empty gesture or motivated by political ambition, was a way of giving honour to Caesar for his benefactions.

In Chapter Five the inscriptive and numismatic evidence shows Philippi’s pride in its association with Augustus. The city was founded as a Roman colony after the battles of Philippi, with both Antony, and later Octavian, settling veterans and other colonists there. The city was also granted the status of *ius Italicum*, which meant that it was considered to be on Italian soil and under Roman law. This gave it a distinction lacked by other cities in the province.

The colonists were enrolled in the Roman tribe of Voltinia and became the colony’s elite. Like others of the provincial elites, they replicated the honour-seeking behaviours and values of the elites in Rome. The inscriptive evidence shows that the boasting of one’s achievements and the display of other ascribed statuses, such as the possession of Roman citizenship, were common at Roman Philippi. Further, the inscriptive evidence reveals an extensive presence of the imperial cult, serviced by officials who demonstrated pride in their rank and status.

As the elites of Philippi replicated the behaviour of the elites of Rome, so too the lower stratum at Philippi replicated the behaviours of their superiors. Inscriptional evidence from Philippi also reveals honour-seeking achieved through listing the holding of public offices and associated self-commendation. Among the non-elite associations, this type of behaviour was not the domain of males only at Philippi; women, too, held
prominent positions in associations and some were patrons. Thus the Roman world view and behaviours were pervasive and dominant in much of the population.

In Part Two, Berger and Luckmann’s theory highlights how the Romans constructed and maintained their world view. Whereas Part Two establishes the socio-political context of Philippi, Part Three adopts SIT to highlight how Paul reformed the social identity of the Philippians, whose identities were already embedded in social groups located at Philippi.

SIT proposes that individuals will order their social environment and belong to groups that give them a positive image, rather than a negative one. Further, by comparing different social groups, they choose to belong to groups that have a positive distinction about them. The notion of group comparison was used by Paul to enable the Philippian church to have a positive social identity for themselves, compared to their opponents and other believers that Paul does not consider to have a Christ-centric world view, whom he portrayed negatively (cf. Phil 1:15a, 17, 28; 2:15b, 3:18). Paul considered those who did not exhibit behaviours aligned with his world view, which was based on his Messiah’s voluntary self-humiliation, as having ‘unconverted’ minds. In other words, they had not made the cognitive shift to the new world view that Paul thought was necessary. Thus they were considered, in SIT terms, to be ‘out-groups’ (see Chapters 7.2.2 and 9.2.1).

A positive assessment was given to those who exhibit the behaviours that were loyal to Paul and his Messiah’s gospel (cf. Phil 1:5, 15b, 27; 2:15c; 3:20-21). They were those who Paul considered to be his true converts: those in his in-group. Such were those who had supported him in the common goal of the in-group, the propagation of the gospel. Furthermore, because they had supported Paul in his mission, the Philippians
also had the approval of his God, and would be affirmed on the eschatological day of judgement.

It will also be argued that Paul sought to propagate the gospel without becoming entangled in reciprocal relationships that might impede him. He countered the honour-seeking culture of Roman Philippi by the formation of a κοινωνία, most likely recognised by the Romans as a societas. Recent research by Julien Ogereau on the use of the term κοινωνία and its cognates in its ancient setting shows that the term refers to a partnership that corresponded to the Latin word societas. His research includes papyri and other documental evidence previously overlooked by NT scholars. Furthermore, in such a κοινωνία, all members were considered to be equal partners and expected to contribute to the goal of the group. This also meant that Paul could receive resources for his mission without it becoming a patron-client relationship.

Ogereau’s study reveals the importance of the term’s reference to political partnerships. It will be argued that Paul was aware of this, as he was creating a civic community based on the reign of his Messiah and the gospel. Paul used the Roman notion of a civitas as a template for his civic community (see Chapter 4.4). A Roman civic community was a community of citizens who shared common customs and sought to promote the interests of Rome. I will argue that Paul hoped to create a civic community amongst the Philippians, who had acquired a new social identity, and shared in the propagation of the gospel. For a new social identity to be formed the bond needed between members of the in-group must be psychological. The possession of a citizenship of heaven would give a new personal and social identity, which would have a psychological impact on the Philippians. The key indicator of this is in Paul’s

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21 Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians.
imperative in 1:27, ‘only act as worthy citizens of the gospel’, given to his converts as they faced public opposition to their propagation of the gospel.

The high frequency of verbs associated with cognitive faculties supports the notion that Paul considered conversion as a change of world view and mindset. Further evidence that Paul had a new civic community in mind is seen in his comparison between his Messiah and the Caesars. The two rulers symbolise two different realities; the converts must choose between them. For Paul, the voluntary self-humiliating action in Philippians 2:6-11 is the new paradigm through which he and his converts were to view reality. Paul argued that his Messiah’s actions were vindicated and showed that he was the real χριστός of the world. In comparison, the imperial propaganda that promoted the world view in which the Caesars were gods is treated as a mere parody.22

If Paul and the Philippians were going to survive as an in-group, they needed to have overarching (or superordinate) identity. This was the possession of the citizenship of heaven (see Chapter Three for a detailed discussion. See also Chapter 7.2 and 7.3.1). The citizenship of heaven was the psychological framework used to unify the world view and ethical behaviours for the non-Jewish Philippians. In Philippians 3:5-6 Paul, as a prototype leader, relegates his Jewish identity which was formally his superordinate one into a sub-group identity (see Chapter Nine of this thesis). The social conditions that make the citizenship of heaven social identity salient, for both Paul and the Philippians, was the opposition they experienced. The fact that they suffered opposition to their propagation of the gospel meant that they shared in a similar status of humiliation and suffering as the Messiah. Thus, citizenship unites them in a common world view, behaviours, and experience.

SIT also highlights the impact of the common goal of the propagation of the gospel and the positive assessment of the Philippians as citizens, thereby providing the framework for members of the in-group to remain loyal. In relation to this, the role of oaths as a part of conversion has received scant attention. The socio-political institution of oath taking that was utilised by the Caesars to maintain their subjects’ allegiance and perpetuated the world view of Roman supremacy. Though Paul did not require the Philippians to take an ‘oath’ to his Messiah or to be baptised, the motif of allegiance is assumed in the letter and expected by Paul of his converts.

Oaths to Caesar would have had an impact on the Philippians and Paul sought to counter this by exhorting the Philippians to act in concord as citizens of heaven (see Chapter 8.2.3). It is possible that Paul drew attention to these people to counter the effects of previous pledges of allegiance to Caesar. Those amongst the Philippian converts, who were descendants of veterans, and held Roman citizenship would likely have been torn between their old allegiance to Caesar and making a new allegiance to a greater κύριος, an act considered subversive to the honour-seeking culture at Philippi.

The praising of ‘prototype’ leaders/members also highlights how Paul sought to encourage other less committed members of the in-group to be loyal to the goal of the κοινωνία. Those whom Paul names in the letter are those who had been, or were currently, with him, as he propagated the gospel. Thus, he considered conversion and the Philippians’ social identity closely tied to active participation in the business of the κοινωνία.

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23 This insight was brought to my attention by my supervisor, Dr Timothy J. Harris.
This Chapter has outlined the structure of the thesis. The final Chapter synthesises the findings of the thesis and considers the implications for broader issues in Pauline studies and missiology.

1.2. Methodological Presuppositions

Before moving to the Literature Review (Chapter Two), however, I will discuss some key presuppositions not covered in Chapters Two and Three and which are important to articulate from the start. These presuppositions relate primarily to scholarly analysis of the Philippians’ text.

The integrity of the letter is accepted and considered to be the best approach to analyse the structure of the text. Though there is a long history of scholars claiming that the letter was redacted from multiple versions, there are few recent NT scholars who support the theory. In recent NT scholarship, several influential articles and scholarly works have established the plausibility of the unity of the letter, according to ancient rhetoric and letter writing or from discourse analysis.

This thesis will follow the view that Philippians is understood to be mainly deliberative rhetoric but with some epideictic features. Deliberative rhetoric is persuasion used in the ἐκκλησία whereby the speaker seeks to advise or dissuade the

audience concerning a future course of action. In Philippians this is seen in the central proposition of the letter – ‘only act as worthy citizens of the gospel…’ found in 1:27-30. Generally, deliberative rhetoric was used to refer to a course of future action; in Philippians, it is used for the present circumstances facing the converts. Watson notes that Paul’s advice was for the converts’ immediate situation but he also expected them to continue with it in the future. Further, and in keeping with deliberative rhetoric, it is concerned with that which is expedient or not advisable (1:28; 4:4-9). There is also within the *digressio* an example and comparison example (2:19-30), which is characteristic of epideictic rhetoric.

Another use of deliberative rhetoric was to solve the problems of disunity. Though there is little evidence that Paul was defending his apostleship amongst the Philippians, the members of the Christ movement at Philippi held previous memberships to other social groups which, in the creation of a new superordinate identity, caused some disunity amongst the converts. Furthermore, Paul’s imprisonment would also have caused some disunity amongst the converts. Persons in the Greco-Roman world were somewhat sensitive to social situations or associations that brought shame to them or their in-group.

It should also be pointed out that Philippians does exhibit some features of ancient letters of consolation. Paul Holloway, for instance, argues that χαρά (joy) characterises the letter as consolatory. Furthermore, he points out that Paul’s circumstance of

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28 Ibid. Translation is mine. Watson translates verse 27 ‘Only let your life be worthy of the gospel’, this translation, however does not highlight that Paul is building a new political community around his messiah.
29 Ibid., 59-60.
30 Ibid., 60.
32 Holloway, *Consolation in Philippians*, 47.
imprisonment would also contribute to disunity, and the possibility of discouragement.\textsuperscript{33} Hence the basis for his consolation is to reassure the Philippians that their shared mission of the propagation of the gospel is still progressing (cf. Phil 1:12-26).\textsuperscript{34}

The analysis of specific words in Chapters Six to Ten will reveal that the political themes in the letter to the Philippians demonstrate the relationship between the Christ movement and its political context. The political nature of the Philippians has already been highlighted by several studies that focus on the language and motifs. Timothy Geoffrion highlights the political and military images that had an emphasis on citizenship, \( \omicron \kappa \iota \nu \omega \nu \lambda \zeta \), and identity.\textsuperscript{35} Bruno Blumenfeld also highlights the political nature of Paul’s reference to the Christ-movement at Philippi as a new citizenship in a new society.\textsuperscript{36} As mentioned above, Peter Oakes’s article argues that the Philippians’ and Thessalonians’ Christ-movements beliefs and practices were in conflict with the Greco-Roman ideology.\textsuperscript{37} Paul as the anti-imperialist is an argument put forward by Erik Heen, who explores Philippians 2:6-11 as anti-Roman, particularly the imperial cult. He argues that Philippians 2:6-11 is a hidden or disguised discourse that is subversive of Roman rule.\textsuperscript{38} This thesis will not argue that Paul was an anti-imperialist,\textsuperscript{39} but that his converts have a greater loyalty because they now belong to a

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 47-48.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 48.
\textsuperscript{35} T. C. Geoffrion, The Rhetorical Purpose and the Political and Military Character of Philippians: A Call to Stand Firm (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen 1993), 23ff. For the use of political language used in Philippians see also B. W. Winter, Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994), 81-104.
\textsuperscript{36} B. Blumenfeld, The Political Paul Justice, Democracy and Kingship in a Hellenistic Framework, ed. S. E. Porter, JSNTSup 210 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 292-301.
\textsuperscript{39} The word ‘anti’ has the connotation that Paul was creating a socio-political movement with a gospel that was opposed to Caesar’s. I argue that this does not go far enough, Paul was opposed to
new socio-political group whose χύριος requires an allegiance other than to the Julio-Claudian Caesars.

Much of the political language used by Paul in Philippians is unique to the letter. It has not been associated, however, with the notion of conversion. Hence, a further analysis of the political language will further strengthen the argument that Paul was intentionally creating a new socio-political group, whose world view and ethical behaviours were influenced by their citizenship of heaven and the gospel. Paul was hoping that involvement in the κοινωνία at Philippi was where the new social identity of the Philippians would be learnt and praction. The analysis of political language will also show that Paul refers to his opponents in political terms, which further strengthens the case that conversion at Philippi was conceived as belonging to a civic community.

It is possible that some of his converts did not see that belonging to the new Christ movement did not require changing their world view. For Paul, however, conversion required more than merely acquiring a new social identity by belonging to the κοινωνία; it also required a change of world view. Jeffrey Reed’s analysis of the letter to the Philippians shows that there is considerable concentration of verbs associated with cognition and holding a view or opinion.⁴⁰ Many of these verbs are found in Philippians 2 and directly relate to world view, ideology, and identity, and are in conflict with the old world view, ideology, and identity.⁴¹ This would indicate that Paul considered

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conceptual machinery that upheld the power structures and maintained the symbolic universe. Paul’s messiah and gospel was forming a new socio-political order that had the messiah as its ruler and whose mindset was to be imitated.


conversion to be a redefining of pre-existing cognitive concepts, world view, and allegiances that were in turn reflected in behavioural change.

In the structural and grammatical analysis attention will also be given to the flow of Paul’s thought on a particular topic by his use of transition markers. The work of Jonas Holmstrand is followed because his focus on how transition markers contribute to meaning in the structure of the text is insightful.\(^42\) He argues that transition markers organise the text in three ways. First, they ‘delimit and mark units of meaning, expressions which indicate the theme of the text or provide other instructions to the receiver’.\(^43\) For instance, the conjunction ὅνυ found in Philippians 2:1 is a transition marker that indicates Paul was expanding on the consequences of what he said in 1:27; thus it continues the theme of the imperative ‘only act as worthy citizens…’ (1:27). Second, transition markers draw attention to the changes in topic, a contrasting meaning, or attract attention to the text. Third, they highlight significant changes in the topic that ‘heighten the intensity of the text’.\(^44\) By focusing on the transitional markers and how Paul has used them, one can explicate in greater depth how Paul has communicated to his converts regarding their new reality and identity.

Having reviewed key methodological assumptions, I now turn to review of the literature in Chapter Two.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 24. Italics original.
\(^{44}\) Ibid. Italics original.
Part One: Studying Conversion

In NT studies, there has been a number of significant publications on the topic of conversion, particularly in the last fifty years. Chapters Two and Three identify and analyse the scholars who have been influential in the study of conversion and the impact on NT studies, particularly with regard to Pauline conversion.

Chapter Two introduces two twentieth-century scholars of modern psychology, William James and Edwin Starbuck, who studied conversion in detail. There will be a critical evaluation of their work on conversion as individualistic, the result of inner turmoil, which is resolved by turning to religion. It will also be seen that these conclusions still influence studies of conversion in the social sciences and in NT studies.

Chapter Two is also a literature review that focuses on the most influential social-scientific studies of conversion in the NT but is mainly concerned with Paul’s ἐκκλησίαι. The review will highlight how these scholars have challenged James’s and Starbuck’s individualistic and psychological definitions of conversion and, instead, argue that Paul’s thinking was derived from his Jewish heritage and also from the social, political, and religious nexus of the ancient Mediterranean. Although NT scholars have not dismissed the idea that conversion is the action of an individual, they emphasise the importance of how ancients formed their identity primarily from belonging to a socio-political group.

The review will not include literature published on the letter to the Philippians. As noted above, the study of NT conversion has been influenced by scholarship from other academic disciplines, which need to be addressed in this thesis. Thus, the decision not to review literature on Philippians was taken in order to focus on the topic of conversion. There is, however, extensive interaction with this literature in Part Three.
In Chapter Three there will be an outline and evaluation of the methods chosen for this thesis, Berger and Luckmann’s *Construction of Reality* and SIT. Berger and Luckmann’s theory will be used to highlight how Augustus constructed a world view maintained by socio-political institutions. The careful use of their theory will be applied in Chapters Four and Five as a framework that elucidates how Augustus maintained control and influence in the colonies, and how the power of social, religious practices, and institutions supported a paradigm of his position as ἱππος of the entire world, especially at Roman Philippi.

Chapter Three will also outline and evaluate an adapted form of SIT and its application to the letter to the Philippians (in Chapters Six to Ten). SIT was chosen to complement Berger and Luckmann’s theory because it offers an explanation about how an individual forms a new social identity by belonging to a social group. It will also highlight how Paul has used the new group values to maintain the loyalty of his converts to him and his God.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter the outline of how this thesis is structured was laid out and a brief rationale for the methodologies was given. This chapter surveys and evaluates the literature on conversion that has influenced social-scientific NT studies on the topic.

In this literature review, the focus will be primarily on conversion studies that use social-scientific methodologies as a framework for interpreting and highlighting the significance of conversion in Pauline thought. Each study will be assessed with regard to its contribution to the study of conversion for the first generation of Christ movements in the Greco-Roman world. The literature review will highlight that many studies on NT conversion focus broadly on the topic of conversion in Pauline thought, which tends to overlook nuances and motifs for specific Christ groups. Further, although scholars have identified that Philippians includes a significant section of Paul’s understanding of his conversion (Phil 3:3-10), little attention is given to what conversion means for the Philippian Christ group.

By evaluating the literature on NT conversion it will emerge that SIT is yet to be used in a significant social-scientific study on conversion to demonstrate that conversion is a personal transformation and also a belonging to a new social community. Therefore the text of Philippians which offers a distinctive insight into Paul’s understanding of conversion will also be discussed.

In recent times, the phenomenon of conversion has been researched extensively in the disciplines of Biblical Studies, sociology, and philosophy of religion. Though all disciplines agree that conversion is a significant change for a person, each approach provides different explanations for the reasons someone chooses to convert. It will be seen that scholars often assume the basis for conversion is psychological and results
from internal turmoil. The function of religion in the process of conversion is to provide
the troubled individual with a solution to their turmoil; conversion is primarily
understood to be a change of religion. These scholars not only seek to answer why an
individual converts, but also to show how the impact of an individual’s personality or
psychology influences the decision.

This thesis does not seek to jettison the term ‘conversion’; rather the purpose is to
clarify what conversion meant for Paul’s gentile converts at Roman Philippi in the first-
century CE. Moreover, this thesis defines conversion as ‘identity formation in a new
socio-political group, namely as a citizen of heaven’.

2.2. Conversion Literature

In this section the psychological assumptions that underlie conversion literature are
addressed. It is argued that studies of conversion in the field of the social sciences
continue to influence NT thinking. The basis of these underlying assumptions is found
in nineteenth and twentieth century definitions based on the writings of the
psychologists, Edwin Starbuck and William James.

2.2.1. The Study of Conversion

In his historical study on conversion, Karl Morrison argues that modern notions and
ways of thinking about conversion cannot be foisted upon people of different historical
epochs:
It is a confusion of categories to use the word *conversion* as though it were an instrument of critical analysis, equally appropriate to any culture or religion.\textsuperscript{45}

Morrison’s observations, though made over twenty years ago, are still pertinent for scholars of conversion today. Scholars have too often applied frameworks on the phenomenon of conversion without analysing the presuppositions that undergird them.

A major presupposition that underlies the notion of conversion is that it is primarily a change of religion.\textsuperscript{46} Lewis Rambo describes religious conversion in its simplest definition as a

simple change from the absence of a faith system to a faith commitment, from religious affiliation with one faith system to another, or from one orientation to another within a single faith system.\textsuperscript{47}

Further he notes that ‘[r]eligion is the sacred – the encounter with the holy that, according to many religions, constitutes both the source and goal of a conversion’.\textsuperscript{48}

They are, however, not helpful for understanding how ancient peoples understood the relationship with their gods, which was not a ‘faith system’ with highly defined and homogenous theologies.

Although Rambo primarily sees conversion as religious, he argues an approach is needed that encompasses the whole person and their social environment. He identifies seven stages that can be used as a matrix to understand the data observed and collected:

Stage 1 Context
Stage 2 Crisis
Stage 3 Quest
Stage 4 Encounter


\textsuperscript{47} Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 2.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 10.
Stage 5 Interaction
Stage 6 Commitment
Stage 7 Consequences.\(^49\)

Though this type of research can be done by first-hand researchers, it does not mean that ancient persons’ experience can be categorised and analysed by using such a framework. The process above presupposes that conversion is a universal phenomenon of personal change because a convert is understood as someone searching for a personal solution from a plight or crisis (see Chapter 2.2.2). This underlying supposition has been reinforced by studies that focus on conversion as being a response to sociological and psychological upheaval.

An important study that critically analyses the why and how of an individual’s decision to convert to another religion was conducted by the sociologists, John Lofland and Rodney Stark,\(^50\) whose research focused on a Korean millenarian cult that had come to North America in the 1960s. The presupposition undergirding their work is that religious conversion provides a solution to a person’s plight. Their study sets out to show that certain individuals have ‘predisposing conditions’ that would influence whether someone would choose to convert or not, thus creating a stereotype of a person who was ‘ripe for conversion’.\(^51\) Lofland and Stark found that those individuals who were ripe for conversion had within them a kind of tension (dissatisfaction) and were seeking a resolution to their circumstances. Another characteristic was that the individual had rejected mainstream answers, whether secular or religious, for their situation. This meant that the troubled individual was open to accepting friendship with

\(^{49}\) Ibid., 16ff. This framework has sometimes been used by NT scholars to understand Paul’s conversion. See J. R. Beck, *The Psychology of Paul: A Fresh Look at His Life and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 59ff.


\(^{51}\) Ibid., 864ff.
members of the cult, who would supply solutions by providing their potential converts with an alternative reality and a supportive network of interwoven relationships.\textsuperscript{52} Thus religious ideology about reality and the cult’s social networks provide the convert with the solution to their plight.

The presupposition that defines conversion as offering a solution from a plight outcome has been expanded to include socio-political institutions other than religion.\textsuperscript{53} Durk Hak argues that conversion to a political ideology offers a solution to plight outcome that has some of the same features of individual religious conversion. Political ideology was found to offer potential converts general rewards for belonging to the group and explanations about reality to provide a guide for one’s actions. The affiliation (or sometimes re-affiliation) to these groups can provide members with a sense of belonging through social networks.\textsuperscript{54}

Subsequent to the research conducted by Lofland and Stark, there has been an increasing awareness that conversion is more than merely a religious change.\textsuperscript{55} Though studies include broader social factors other than religion, the perspective of the convert and those endeavouring to convert them is the focus. The reason for this is the psychological presuppositions that undergird many sociological studies on conversion, which remained fixated on the individual and in which an inner psychological crisis precipitates conversion.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 871-874.
\item\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 20-22.
\end{thebibliography}
2.2.2. Conversion as Transformation and Psychological Phenomenon

Studies on conversion have been heavily influenced by two scholars from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The first is William James (1842–1910) in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Though James’s study on conversion and religious experience came over a century ago, his conclusions on conversion are still influential. Central to his study on conversion was that it was a solution to an inner psychological crisis or plight.

The second scholar is Edwin Starbuck (1866–1947), who also argues that conversion should be analysed with psychological methods. Starbuck’s research focused on the various motivations of individuals who had converted to a religion. The study focused on the individual and the reasons why he or she converted. Furthermore, Starbuck argued that the experiences that preceded conversion could also be categorised. First are those who considered themselves to be at ‘the end of the line’, who feel helpless, hopeless, depressed, and estranged from God. The second group are those individuals who reach out for a new direction or a new life and strive and work towards this new life. Both James’s and Starbuck’s notions are based on research using modern Western notions of personhood, with a focus on an inner psychological upheaval. Though Starbuck’s ideas have been important, James’s psychological definitions have strongly influenced NT scholars.

Pivotal to James’ notions of conversion was that it is a religious change and an introspective affair within the individual. He believed that all attitudes, whether emotional or religious, were products of what he called ‘objects’ of our consciousness.

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57 Ibid., 49-51.
58 Ibid., 59.
These attitudes only existed because the individual believed they existed. Even the concept of the divine is seen as an abstract idea perceived by one’s senses from within. The essence of religion is experience of the divine and centred within the individual.

James argues that an individual’s attitudes are deeply embedded in the mind and cause an inner psychological struggle when there is a disparity between an individual’s inner attitudes and actions. The result is regret, which produces negative emotions such as guilt, remorse, and uncleanness, indicating that one was in ‘false relations to the author of one’s being’. Conversion is then the solution to the plight of the inner psychological struggle through an encounter with an individual’s religious deity.

James held that the pre-conversion state of an individual was a ‘divided self’ that was in the process of seeking unification: ‘[T]here are two lives, the natural and the spiritual, and we must lose the one before we can participate in the other.’ When a resolution to the divided self is achieved by means of unification, the individual experiences emotions in the ‘heart’ whereby he or she knows that the emotions felt now corresponded to the divine within and the ‘Word of God’:

…the eighth chapter of Romans… every verse seemed to almost speak and to confirm it to be truly the Word of God, and as if my feelings corresponded with the meaning of the word.

Conversion, in this account, involves an inner psychological change that is acknowledged by the individual who is highly conscious of their inner life and autonomous about how this change is experienced. The dilemma that James’s categories

59 James, Varieties of Religious Experience, 53ff.
60 Ibid., 61.
61 Ibid., 168-169.
62 Ibid., 170.
63 Ibid., 167.
64 Ibid., 192. (Italics not original).
created for studies of conversion was that he separated, and even discounted, the influences of the socio-political institutions on the individual’s experience.

Furthermore, James believed that a ‘divided self’ was evidenced in early Christianity, citing Paul in Romans 7:15 and Augustine’s conversion account as examples of the divided soul pre-conversion state.\(^{65}\) In applying the divided self framework to Paul’s conversion, he concluded that it was an emotional and psychological experience of Paul’s divided self.\(^{66}\) By overlaying James’ individualistic psychological framework onto Paul and the early Christians, subsequent scholars tended to analyse in ‘etic’ terms rather than ‘emic’ ones. These terms are used in the social and behavioural sciences to describe two different ways of analysing behavioural data. *Emic* is used to refer to meaningful behaviours as categorised from the perspective of the insider of a particular social group. *Etic* refers to the categorising of meaningful behaviour from the perspective of someone outside of a particular social group.\(^{67}\)

The legacy of James’s etic categories and assumptions continues to influence scholarship on conversion. For example, A. K. Min argues that conversion is a process that produces an inner psychological unity:

\[
\text{Conversion is the process of reducing inner discord and recovering some sort of unity and harmony within the self.}^{68}
\]

The notion of inner psychological upheaval is still considered by some to be the state of the pre-convert even when conversion is seen as a process and rational choice:

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 171.

\(^{66}\) Ibid., 217.


A person experiencing such a crisis or emergency will be justified both in deciding for whatever course of action seems fit to him or her under given circumstances and in believing …whatever appears to lend itself to being a possible therapy for and/or diagnosis of the acute problem at hand.69

In Rambo’s work on conversion, he unquestioningly accepts James’s definitions for human behaviour and motivations for conversion.70 Rambo does not, however, sever the relationship between the individual and social context, which includes events, ideologies, institutions, and experiences. He remains focused on the psychological changes in the personality of an individual who has undergone a religious conversion.71 Insufficient attention is given to conversion as a being connected to socio-political institutions. As will be argued in Part Three of this thesis, conversion in the NT includes personal change, rather than as going from one faith to another one or because of a psychological upheaval. The Philippians would have experienced a psychological upheaval but it will be argued that this was most often the result of conversion, rather than a precursor to it.

Modern studies on conversion that understand persons in individualistic psychological terms and underestimate how the ancients had their identities formed by group-oriented personality and collectivistic notions. Group-oriented persons considered themselves and their identity in terms of the group to which they belonged, whereas modern western persons tend to see themselves as having a unique identity distinct from the social group.72

70 Rambo, Understanding Religious Conversion, 9-10.
2.3. Influential Definitions of Conversion and the New Testament

This section will focus on how James’s psychological categories became prominent in NT conversion thought, particularly through the scholar Arthur D. Nock. Though some scholars are aware of potential problems relating to James’s psychological categories to NT conversion, his psychological definitions of personhood still underlie some approaches.

James’s individualistic and psychological categories influenced the work of scholars of both the NT and Classical Studies. The result was that conversion in the NT was understood as primarily being to Christianity from paganism or Judaism, and therefore to a new religion or faith. Further, Paul and his converts were understood to be going from what they considered to be a negative religion/faith or situation to a positive one. It was a pendulum-like change in the person.

The classic study of conversion, and the one mentioned by almost all other studies, is that by Arthur D. Nock. A classicist, Nock (1902–1963) was trained at Cambridge University in the early twentieth century. In his book, Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo, Nock set out to study the nature of religious experience in antiquity and the implications for a new practice of religion, particularly to provide an explanation for Christianity’s success in the Roman Empire, to ‘discover the presuppositions which a citizen of the Empire would bring to any new approach to the mystery of the universe’.73

Though Nock acknowledged James’s modern psychological categories of conversion he warned that we must not expect to find exact analogies of these categories in the ancient world.74 Having said this, in a later book, ‘St Paul’ (first

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73 A. D. Nock, Conversion, viii.
74 Ibid., 7-8.
published in 1938), Nock described Paul’s conversion in language and notions remarkably close to James’s psychological categories:

... as a convert whose conversion had involved a radical *volte-face*. Earlier convictions passionately held and then passionately abandoned after a volcanic internal crisis.\(^{75}\)

Nock assumed that Paul’s Damascus Road experience must have involved an internal psychological crisis. In the Acts 9 account, however, Paul is not portrayed as suffering from an internal crisis, nor had he ‘passionately abandoned’ his Jewish identity. Moreover, the narrator of Paul’s later speeches recounting his conversion experience does not explicitly refer to any emotional state of Paul’s (Acts 22:6-16; 26:6-16).\(^{76}\)

Nock understood that ancient persons, including Paul, already had religious commitments that were inherited from familial and other social organisations that were culturally embedded in religion. He argued that conversion was in contradistinction to ‘adhesion’.\(^{77}\) Adhesion was new worship incorporated as a supplement to the old religion left behind, as for instance, by the Greeks as Alexander the Great expanded across the Mediterranean. Nock calls this incorporation adhesion as it did not require renouncing the old life for a new one nor did it involve emotions *per se*.\(^{78}\) He defines conversion in individualistic terms as

> the reorientation of the soul of an individual, his deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved, that the old was wrong and the new is right.\(^{79}\)

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\(^{76}\) Richard V. Peace argues in several places that conversion is an experience and uses categories derived from James’s psychological categories. See R. V. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 6-11, 19, 66-72 and 276 n.70.

\(^{77}\) Nock, *Conversion*, 7.

\(^{78}\) Ibid., 37.

\(^{79}\) Ibid., 7.
For Nock, like James, conversion is primarily about the individual and the freedom to have religious choice without regard to how the individual’s community would understand this ‘reorientation of the soul’.

Furthermore, Nock focused on the unsatisfied individual as a reason for conversion. He argued that prophetic and philosophic approaches to conversion were deviant forms of religious conversion: a ‘prophet’ appears because he or she was dissatisfied with the status quo, wants to initiate change and was ‘fired’ by new ideas. The prophet sets out on a new path with a genuine conviction that they have been led by something external from themselves.\(^80\) Conversion to a philosophy involved a new way of living. In offering a philosophical schema, it gave a person a rationale to live a disciplined life.\(^81\) For instance, the Cynic wanderer would sometimes reject social standards by begging for food, giving haranguing lectures and offering advice. The voluntary demotion of oneself by the radical rejection of social standards required more than mere adhesion, as some left lives of great wealth to embark on this way of life.\(^82\) Though it is possible that individuals did change due to dissatisfaction with his or her circumstance, the focus is still on the individuals because they embrace a solution to their inner plight.

Another NT scholar, Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, argues that Paul had suffered a great psychological trauma because of the death of his wife and children.\(^83\) Furthermore, Murphy-O’Connor states that a part of Paul’s theology would lead him to blame God for the trauma, but a religious part of him would repress any blame directed towards God. He argues that the pain and anger suffered by Paul would not be directed

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\(^80\) Ibid., 2-3.  
\(^81\) Ibid., 167.  
\(^82\) Ibid., 169.  
to God which meant that he needed ‘[a]n outlet for his pent-up desire for vengeance which had to be rationalized.’

Paul’s emotional upheaval was manifested by his persecution of Christians and his zeal for his Pharisaic Judaism. Though Murphy-O’Connor does not mention William James’s work, he assesses Paul with modern western psychological presuppositions.

### 2.4. Turning Conversion Studies Around

The publication that moved studies of conversion in NT away from such introspective, individualistic, and psychological assumptions is Stendahl’s famous article, “The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West”. Stendahl argues that Reformed Protestant scholars had overlaid their own ‘human consciousness’ assumptions onto Paul’s conversion. These assumptions had been influenced by Martin Luther’s theology which was affected by concerns of medieval piety. Similarly, Protestant theology of individual sin and the inner struggle of the conscience have their roots in Luther’s own inner struggle. Stendahl argues that in scholarly readings of Romans 7, far too much emphasis is placed on Paul’s ‘pre-Christian or Christian experience’. Rather, Romans 7 is a discussion of Israel’s Law and Paul’s defence of its ‘holiness and goodness’. Stendahl argues that, despite Paul’s acknowledgment that he struggles in the body (1 Cor 9:27), he had a ‘robust conscience’ about the final judgement before God (cf. Rom 1:9, 2 Cor 1:12, 5:10). The sin Paul referred to at

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84 Ibid., 65.
85 Ibid.
87 Ibid., 200.
88 Ibid., 211.
89 Ibid., 212.
90 Ibid., 200, 210.
length, and that he considered to be a source of past shame, was his past persecution of
the church of God.\textsuperscript{91}

Stendahl’s article focuses on Paul the Pharisee in his first-century Jewish context.
Rather than reading Paul’s Damascus Road experience as a religious conversion,
Stendahl argues that Paul understood himself as being \textit{called}. He points out that
scholars usually think that Paul had ‘first a conversion, and then a call to apostleship;
there is only a call to the work among the Gentiles’.\textsuperscript{92} Paul, however, did not describe
himself as a convert by modern definitions, but as one called (cf. Gal 1:15) like the
prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures.\textsuperscript{93} Stendahl’s article is still influential in NT studies
of conversion because it forced NT scholars studying conversion to take seriously Paul
and his converts’ thoughts and actions as being significantly embedded in their own
experiences, located in first century religious and socio-political contexts.

One of the first social-scientific studies that used the insights of Stendahl’s work
was by Beverly Gaventa. In 1986 Gaventa, who had studied under W. D. Davies,
published her dissertation on conversion in an expanded form, \textit{From Darkness to Light}.\textsuperscript{94} Her study highlights that NT scholarship had understood conversion as being
‘born again’ or ‘turning’ but no one had examined the relationship between the two and
what it meant for conversion and transformation in the NT.\textsuperscript{95}

Gaventa is significant because she pays attention to the social context of Paul and
his converts. She argues that conversion has communal dimensions which enable
persons to come to a new faith and also to maintain this new faith in that social

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 209.
\item \textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 205.
\item \textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 204.
\item \textsuperscript{94} B. R. Gaventa, \textit{From Darkness to Light} (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).
\item \textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 3.
\end{itemize}
For Gaventa, conversion is about a community of believers, its self-understanding, and its attitudes towards outsiders, seekers, and newcomers. Conversion is measured by the changes that are required by the one converting: ‘[w]hat is involved when an individual gives up one view of self and the world for another?’

Although she warns against uncritical application of twentieth-century sociological models to the NT, she concedes that they are helpful in studying the influence and role of the new community and its effects on the convert’s ability to maintain new beliefs. Conversion is chiefly understood as a new paradigm that results from a cognitive shift. By paradigm, Gaventa means a theoretical frame of reference for understanding that is operative for a period of time but can change due to experience. Furthermore, there is also a radical change from previous behaviour, affiliations are rejected and new commitments and identity are embraced. Her study of conversion continued the shift away from inner psychological focused studies to the influences of social context of the first-century and the importance of the community’s influence on converts.

Gaventa, like Stendahl, argues that Paul’s conversion was not a change of religion in that Christianity became a sect of Judaism. Instead of synthesising the Acts account of Paul’s conversion with his letters, she concludes that Paul’s self-understanding of his conversion can only be understood against his Jewish ethnic background. She observes that Paul still had a positive view of his Jewish identity (Gal 3-4, Rom 4, 9-

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96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid., 8.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid., 11.
101 Ibid., 12.
102 Ibid., 18ff.
11) but that his self-perception and cognition had changed, ‘[h]e no longer valued those early credentials (Phil. 3:7); indeed, he regarded them as garbage because of his recognition that Jesus was the Messiah’ (Phil. 3:8). Thus, Gaventa’s work on Paul furthers the notion that conversion in the NT is not in essence the result of an inner psychological conflict.

Another scholar influenced by Stendahl’s article is Alan Segal who published *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* in 1990. Segal argues that Stendahl successfully countered the notion that Paul’s conversion was seen as the resolution to an inner psychological turmoil and the result of a guilty conscience. Paul’s ‘robust conscience’ meant that Romans 7 was not an autobiographical account of his ‘disturbed mind’. Furthermore, Segal argues that in Philippians 3:4-6 where Paul describes his conversion, there is no hint of a self-esteem problem or inner psychological turmoil.

Segal, nonetheless, defines conversion as both a personal and religious change. He argues that Paul was converting from within his religion to a sect of Judaism that resulted from ‘a radical change in a person’s experience’, which came from a personal revelation. Thus, conversion for Segal is much like an individual going from Roman Catholicism to the Orthodox Church due to a religious experience; essentially the person remains within Christianity. Conversion for Paul, therefore, was a change from first-century Pharisaic Jewish identity to a sect of Judaism, later called Christianity.

103 Ibid., 25.
104 Ibid., 37.
106 Ibid., 5.
107 Ibid., 6.
108 Ibid., xiii.
Segal, like Gaventa, argues that Paul was a Pharisaic Jew whose religious experience transformed him. Furthermore, he believes that Paul’s transformation was not to a messianic form of Pharisaic Jewish identity but a complete personal transformation. Paul’s self-understanding was as a first-century mystic and convert, a ‘Jewish apocalypticist’ as evidenced in his vocabulary of μυστήριον (cf. 1 Cor 1:23, 2:1, 2: 6-16). Mysticism in the first-century was esoteric and apocalyptic:

mysticism in first-century Judea was apocalyptic, revealing not meditative truths of the universe but the disturbing news that God was about to bring judgement.110

For Paul, conversion had two aspects: it is the community of believers who have personally experienced a revelation; and it is the ethical aspect that believers are being transformed into Christ’s image (2 Cor 3:18-4:6). What undergirded this was a mystical experience.111 Mysticism and transformation were intertwined in the person of Christ who is portrayed as the image of God (cf. 2 Cor 4:4) and in his μορφή (cf. Phil 2:6).112 The language of mysticism and transformation was used for the experience of believers who are also being transformed into the image of God’s son (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 15:49).

For Segal, the new community is a new social grouping within Judaism that is formed by conscious decision to re-socialise. Ethical transformation and cognitive re-socialisation are connected in that there is a cognitive shift required by the convert in order to belong to the new group. The converts needed to have an alternative reality that corresponded to the values of the group in order for conversion to be successful.113

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109 Ibid., 34-35.
110 Ibid., 34.
111 Ibid., 59-60.
112 Ibid., 59.
113 Ibid., 74-76.
What was important is the cognitive shift needed to be made by converts. The gap between the old and new values will affect the degree of change needed and the difficulty of creating a new reality. The amount of cognitive re-socialisation would depend on the dissonance between an individual’s old beliefs and social values and the new ones. Paul’s distance to ‘travel’ (cognitively) was less than his gentile converts.\textsuperscript{114}

Both of the above scholars used insights from sociological approaches in order to study conversion in the NT. These were seminal in that they moved away from defining conversion as an inner psychological change resulting from an emotional upheaval. Both of these studies focus to some degree on the Jewishness of Paul and his background as a Pharisee in order to explicate his understanding of conversion. They also place importance on the fact that there needed to be a paradigmatic change (world view) and cognitive re-socialisation into distinct new communities. Much of the focus of Gaventa and Segal, however, continues to be on Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians.

A more nuanced approach is needed, especially for studying Philippians. Segal tries to ascertain how Paul changed from the perspective of his fellow Pharisees and how they would see him after his conversion, and how his converts would need to be re-socialised into a group that was neither fully Jewish nor Gentile. But neither Segal nor Gaventa’s definitions of transformation address how the converts now categorised themselves nor give an adequate explanation of how a new identity is formed. Their studies use definitions that are too broad, and although they identified the need for change, they do not provide sufficiently defined categories. In other words, what Paul

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 74.
expected his gentile converts to display in changed ethical behaviours and world view is not always clear.

This thesis argues that a city by city and institution by institution approach needs to be adopted in order to more fully discern how Paul engaged with Gentile converts in differing contexts.\footnote{The notion of city by city has been the approach of several scholars and published major works. See E. A. Judge, “The Social Identity of the First Christians,” in Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays, ed. D. M. Scholer (Peabody: Hendrickson 2008), 117-135. Other studies that take this approach include: G. Theissen, The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982). W. A. Meeks, The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). Originally published 1983.} For instance, the lack of evidence of established synagogues in Philippi in the first-century CE might be indicative of why Paul did not require the Philippians to appropriate cognitively Jewish symbols of identity. Paul’s identity markers as a Jew are discussed in Philippians 3, but they are not directly relevant to the new social identity of his Gentile converts at Philippi.

### 2.5. Pauline Conversion in Perspective

In this section, two influential studies on NT conversion, by Stephen Chester and Zeba Crook, will be reviewed and their contribution evaluated. Their studies build upon previous NT conversion studies but also significantly move it forward in different ways. Though both these works use different methodologies, they seek to define conversion in terms of how it would be understood by the first-generation members of the Pauline ἐκκλησίαι. As will be seen below, this has resulted in more nuanced approaches that are sensitive to the socio-political world of first-century Mediterranean cultures.
2.5.1. Stephen Chester

Stephen Chester’s book, *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul’s Theology and the Corinthian Church*\(^{116}\) is based on his doctoral dissertation under the supervision of John Barclay. Chester chose the Corinthian correspondence because it focuses on the communal issues of life. He insightfully notes that Paul’s ministry was about making converts, and while much has been written about his conversion and its impact on his theology, little research had been done on what Paul’s attitude was compared with other viewpoints among other Christ \( \varepsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\nu\sigma\iota\alpha \).\(^{117}\) He argues that even amongst the Pauline congregations, there was not necessarily one view of conversion:

> I avoid the false impression that Paul’s view of conversion was the only one current within early Christianity or even within those communities which he himself had founded. A comparison between these two understandings of conversion may thus illustrate the limited degree to which advocates of conversion can control the understandings of it constructed by their converts.\(^{118}\)

Chester believes that a competing view of conversion came from the community of converts themselves. In order to understand any differences between what Paul understood by conversion and his community archaeological data is needed. Chester argues that the availability of data from the city of first-century Corinth enables him to understand what would be considered as conversion in Corinthians in a wider context.\(^{119}\)

> Part of the problem, as Chester sees it, is that the term ‘conversion’ is used by scholars as if it was a methodological tool that could be successfully applied over all

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\(^{116}\) S. J. Chester, *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul’s Theology and the Corinthian Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2005).

\(^{117}\) Ibid., 31.

\(^{118}\) Ibid., 32.

\(^{119}\) Ibid.
religions and cultures. This results in a one-size-fits-all approach, meaning that a theoretical (emic) model is being placed onto Paul and his converts rather than defining conversion as it would be understood by people within their own context (emic).

Furthermore, although scholarship perceives this problem, there is no agreement about how to define conversion.

According to Chester, definitions of conversion for NT studies are, on the one hand, too individualistic, or on the other, viewed primarily as a change of religion. Furthermore, he argues that many studies on conversion do not take into consideration communal and moral aspects that were embedded in the society of those who were converted in the first-century. Questions need to be answered regarding how both the converts and the wider surrounding culture would understand that conversion had occurred. His working definition of conversion is borrowed from Bennetta Jules-Rosette who defines conversion as ‘an experience that is rooted in both self and society. It involves a personally acknowledged transformation of self and socially recognised display of change.’ Conversion as a social change in the NT, therefore, must be recognised by the individual and by the community.

Chester argues that the methodology of ‘Structuration’, developed by the sociologist Anthony Giddens, can be used as a heuristic tool to highlight the difference between what Paul thought the implications of conversion were and what his converts thought. Structuration is then applied to how Paul understood conversion from a theological perspective.

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120 Ibid., 5-6.
121 Ibid., 12-13.
He argues that Paul understood his conversion in theological and forensic categories rather than through his Damascus Road experience or as a mystic doctrine of being ‘in Christ’. Furthermore, he argues that Paul’s understanding of conversion is seen in his soteriological paradigm, which is from ‘solution to plight’.\(^{124}\) Paul’s disagreement with Judaism is that it ‘has not despaired of human capacity to respond to God’s grace by obeying the law’.\(^{125}\) Conversion for Paul, therefore, is primarily a theological shift, not in abstract terms but in real change: ‘[c]onversion is, as it were, soteriology in action’.\(^{126}\)

Rather than focusing on the event of conversion, Chester is more concerned with its consequences in the new community. For both Jew and Gentile, the point of conversion is a reception of a calling (καλέω, κλησις, and κλητός) by God that has its roots in both the LXX and in Greco-Roman philosophy.\(^{127}\) The positive reception of the calling by both Jews and Gentiles creates new relationships, both divine and human, which disrupt the pre-existing social patterns of the converts, while also creating new ones.\(^{128}\)

Chester’s study is also sensitive to the different ethnic groups that make up Paul’s audience at Corinth. In his analysis of 1 Cor 6:9-11 and 1 Cor 14:20-25 Chester argues that Paul deals with both individual and communal conversion amongst the Gentiles. In 1 Cor 6:9-11 the group is invited to think about their past lives as sinners, but from the point of view that they have now been categorised to the status of saints.\(^{129}\)

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\(^{124}\) Ibid., 50, 52.
\(^{125}\) Ibid., 51.
\(^{126}\) Ibid., 53.
\(^{127}\) Ibid., 59ff.
\(^{128}\) Ibid., 60-63.
\(^{129}\) Ibid., 136.
individual aspect is analysed in 1 Cor 14:20-25 where it is revealed that the outsider experiences conversion through prophecy.\textsuperscript{130}

Chester argues that the new believers’ status as saints means that the same solution to plight problem affects both Jew and Gentile because theologically ethnic identity is irrelevant before God.\textsuperscript{131} Chester highlights that Paul’s attitude after his conversion changed his pre-existing theology. By the analysis of Paul’s autobiographical accounts (Gal 1:11-17, Phil 3:4-12, Rom 7:7-25, 1 Cor 4:1-5), Chester argues that these are the re-imagined personal account of his conversion.\textsuperscript{132} In light of the gospel, his sin is persecuting the church; Paul understood that the previous forensic theological categories he once held needed to be rethought rather than abandoned, particularly in regard to righteousness and ignorance of sin.\textsuperscript{133} In Philippians, however, according to Chester, there is no emphasis on a theological category of sin as found in the Corinthian or the other Pauline correspondences. The Philippians are not called to repent of past sins, nor does Paul require them to reflect on their past life before they converted. It would seem that conversion, according to Philippians, is not framed in a turning from sin.

According to Chester, Philippians 3:2-14 demonstrates that Paul held a positive view of his life within Pharisaic Judaism: ‘[w]hen Paul says that he was blameless ... (as to righteousness under the law, 3:6), we must take him seriously.’\textsuperscript{134} Furthermore, the pre-converted Paul viewed his persecution of the ἐκκλησία in a positive light (3:6), as it was a demonstration of his commitment to Judaism.\textsuperscript{135} Post-conversion, however, Paul

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 121-122.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 149.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 151ff.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 172-181, 205.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 164.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 166.
understood that his persecution, which he thought was ‘righteousness under the law’, turned out not to be the case. Rather it was the law that caused him to sin. Chester highlights an important point; namely, that theological and moral aspects in affiliating to the Christ movement cannot be neglected. That said, Philippians lacks many of the theological categories of salvation, *torah*, and sin which are found in Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians, which reflect more of a Jew and Gentile mix. Though Paul does mention δικαιοσύνη in Philippians 3, it is only discussed by Paul in relation to his former thinking and from a position of having his symbolic praxis and world view reinterpreted by the Messiah event. Further, although there are allusions to the LXX in Philippians, they are not used as direct quotations or as the basis for arguments referring to the *torah* or δικαιοσύνη. All this demonstrates is that Paul needed to use a different framework of reference for his Philippian converts that would have conveyed the necessity of a new world view and ethical behaviours.

Chester’s study fills a gap in previous social-scientific studies on conversion, that of expected moral behaviour and an acknowledgment that Paul believed that divine agency was involved in the calling of both Jew and Gentile. His study on NT conversion was a seminal contribution because he combines three aspects that previous studies had not: the social, ethical, and forensic theological categories. Combining these aspects gives a fuller picture of Paul’s moral and behavioural expectations for his converts.

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136 Ibid.
2.5.2. Zeba Crook

Another ground-breaking work on NT conversion studies was published by Zeba Crook in 2004, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*.\(^{137}\) As the title suggests, Crook believes that the notion of conversion in NT studies needs to be reconceptualised. Crook argues that studies on conversion are still heavily influenced by modern Western psychological models of interpretation. These models are then placed on Paul’s conversion experience, which implies that his conversion was somehow unique in the ancient world:

Paul was not a paradigm-setting convert who was without peer or parallel in the ancient world.\(^{138}\)

Rather, Crook sets out to explore the relationship between Paul and the event of his conversion and to highlight the relationships between persons in the first century and the culture that ‘housed’ Paul and his converts as the framework for understanding conversion.\(^{139}\)

He argues that many modern Western studies on Paul’s conversion are culturally ethnocentric. NT scholars have assumed that Paul’s psychological experiences can be retrieved and understood because we (wrongly) see ourselves analogically in Paul. The Western psychological paradigms fall into two subcategories, undergirded by Western notions of personality as individualistic, and by Western psychological explanations such as introspection and conscience.\(^{140}\) This has led scholars to have psychologistic presuppositions:

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\(^{138}\) Ibid., 1.

\(^{139}\) Ibid.

\(^{140}\) Ibid., 2-3.
Psychologism is the assumption that all people share the same basic psychological structure, and that cultural difference leads to little more than differences in how psychological experience is expressed.\textsuperscript{141}

Psychologism carries with it the assumption that humanity is essentially the same and any differences in cultures are only skin deep. Furthermore, Western scholars uncritically place their psychological assumptions upon persons of non-Western origins.

Crook’s criticisms are also levelled against cross-cultural psychological readings of conversion in the NT. He observes a similar criticism made by John Pilch about scholars indiscriminately using social-scientific methods. Pilch warns that many of the psychological and cross-cultural approaches to the Bible were developed in North America and Europe between Darwin and World War II in Western nations.\textsuperscript{142} Crook argues that cross-cultural psychologists are using western emic assumptions when studying other cultures, which results in ethnocentric assessments.\textsuperscript{143} He echoes the cultural anthropologist Richard Shweder’s caution concerning the underlying presupposition that in all personal and cultural diversity there can be found within people a ‘central… processing mechanism (fixed and universal) in human beings.’\textsuperscript{144} According to Crook, such an approach means that psychological experiences are universalised and homogenised. Yet ancient peoples’ personality and behaviours are not necessarily congruent with those of modern westerners.\textsuperscript{145}

The concept of ‘self’ is culturally constructed and specific to each culture.

Undergirding Crook’s analysis of how self-identity is constructed, is the work of Harry

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{141} Ibid., 4.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 31ff.
\item \textsuperscript{144} R. A. Shweder, Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 77. Cited by Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 33.
\item \textsuperscript{145} Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 33.
\end{itemize}
C. Triandis’s \textit{(et alia)} model of ‘Allocentric versus Idiocentric Tendencies’\textsuperscript{146}. According to this model, cultures are categorised as either allocentric or idiocentric, to describe people and culture as either collectivist or individualist, terms that describe the tendencies of behaviour and values as a whole.\textsuperscript{147} Collectivists are allocentric and display different behaviours, such as primacy of interdependence, in-group goals where social norms determine social behaviour, shame control, a focus on in-group harmony, a sense of common fate, and the importance of exchange or communal relationships. Those who are individualistic are idiocentric and exhibit certain relational characteristics, such as the self as independent, the primacy of personal goals over the in-group, a belief that confrontation within the in-group may be positive, guilt control, personal fate, and the self as distinct from the ingroup, especially in regard to social behaviour.\textsuperscript{148}

In order to highlight the differences between modern and ancient persons and cultures, he uses the categories of ancient personality developed by Bruce Malina and Jerome Neyrey. Malina and Neyrey believe, in line with Stendahl, that Paul’s robust conscience meant that his conversion experience did not occur due to an inner psychological upheaval but was external, as the result of revelation of his God who was his patron, and that he was now loyal to a new group.\textsuperscript{149} In other words, for Paul, his conversion was not a happening to the soul.\textsuperscript{150} Ancient personality in its Greco-Roman context exhibited behaviours more in line with those in collectivist and group oriented

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 397.
  \item \textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 397-398.
  \item \textsuperscript{149} B. J. Malina and J. H. Neyrey, \textit{Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality} (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 206.
  \item \textsuperscript{150} Ibid. Also cited by Crook, \textit{Reconceptualising Conversion}, 49.
\end{itemize}
cultures. Many non-Westerners display primacy of interdependence, in-group goals where social norms determine social behaviour, and the importance of exchange or communal relationships.\textsuperscript{151} This behaviour is also seen in the importance of social patron-client relationship networks in the ancient Mediterranean world which were to be found in the various levels in Greco-Roman society, including within religious traditions.\textsuperscript{152}

These aspects indicate that external factors influenced identity markers, especially the family, ethnicity, and other social networks. Thus, analysing social relationships and external behaviours, enables Crook to illuminate factors other than internal ones that influence conversion. Furthermore, he argues patronage was a concrete relationship which was not primarily an emotional experience or a psychological category. Rather, he perceives that the self-identity aspects of conversion need further exploration based on evidence that Greco-Roman persons used to describe themselves and others. Thus, he rightly concludes that methodological approaches, whether modern or not, need to be able to account for ancient behaviours not construed through ‘the Western idiocentric self’.\textsuperscript{153}

Not only does Crook’s study highlight the modern Western psychological categories that undergird much of NT studies, it also further demonstrates the need for NT researchers to question the presuppositions of methodologies used.

By applying insights from analysing ancient personalities, Crook argues that ancient people’s ‘experience of conversion is going to be an extension of the experience

\textsuperscript{151} For a sketch of these attributes see Crook, \textit{Reconceptualising Conversion}, 36. See also Malina and Neyrey, \textit{Portraits of Paul}, 12-18. 
\textsuperscript{152} L. T. Johnson, \textit{Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 35-36. 
\textsuperscript{153} Crook, \textit{Reconceptualising Conversion}, 50.
of exchange and of loyalty to the gods and to philosophers’. Ancient writers used reciprocal exchange language to describe the relationship between humans, humans and their gods, and with their philosophical teacher. Divine and human patronage came in the concrete forms of favours or benefactions, which is often denoted by the term χάρις and its cognates. The term χάρις and its cognates in its Greco-Roman context denote favours and benefactions given by a patron but also refer to the gratitude given to, and expected back from, the client. Crook argues that Paul used the term as it would be used by other writers during Paul’s time. Thus, he concludes that χάρις and its cognates were used by Paul to describe both his and his converts’ relationship with God who was their patron.

Another insight into NT conversion studies by Crook is that of loyalty to patrons and benefactors. Crook argues that conversion cannot be totally devoid of emotional commitment as he states, ‘it is hard to believe that some degree of introspection would be wholly absent from Paul’s conversion experience’. Loyalty, whether shown to a philosopher, political ruler, patron, or between a freedman and former master, would exhibit some degree of emotional attachment. Moreover, loyalty, fides in Latin and πίστις in Greek, was expected by patrons of their clients at the political level, and by the Romans more than any other group. He argues that political loyalty by client kings of

154 Ibid., 59.
155 Ibid., 59.
157 See Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 143-145.
158 Ibid., 199.
159 Ibid., 201-202.
Rome was not only expressed in terms of patronage but also by changing one’s name, or taking on the names of important Roman citizens.\textsuperscript{160}

Crook argues that conversion must be defined by identifiable behaviours and world views based on literary evidence from the ancient world and the first century. His work clearly shows that researchers on the NT need to be mindful of how a person in the first century formed and maintained relations together with their obligations, rather than assuming that humans are universal in how they think and display emotional responses. Further, in highlighting conversion as group loyalty, Crook has opened a fruitful area of study. It will be argued in Chapter Seven that a change of loyalty or allegiance is an area that has not received sufficient attention in NT conversion studies, especially in the letter to the Philippians.

\textbf{2.6. Conversion as a New Affiliation}

In a subsequent work, Crook further refines his notions of conversion in terms of apostasy and disaffiliation.\textsuperscript{161} He explores conversion from the perspective of the socio-political community from which the person is converting, particularly in non-Western nations in the Middle East. One’s conversion is seen as a rejection of the community itself and is demonstrated in highly visible protests that contain substantial political tensions and is couched in theological language (turning one’s back on God); though in reality, doctrine is not the main issue for the group. Rather it is the collective identity of the community.\textsuperscript{162}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., 222.
\textsuperscript{161} Crook, “Agents of Apostasy,” Dr Crook kindly provided me with a copy of this chapter before its publication. See Z. A. Crook, “Agents of Apostasy, Delegates of Disaffiliation,” in \textit{Conversion and Initiation in Antiquity: Shifting Identities - Creating Change}, 119-134.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., 120.
\end{flushright}
Such treason is seen as a threat because it concerns issues of community identity and challenges the collective. The adverse reaction to conversion by one’s former community occurs in allocentric and collective peoples, who are characterised by their strong commitment to group goals and ties. The breaking of these ties by a rejection of the community’s values, especially in cultures where kinship and ancestral worship are central, is a rejection of the community itself.\textsuperscript{163} Thus the person commits treason by acting as socially distinct against the group.

Nevertheless Crook argues that ancient persons were not wholly constrained by their culture; human behaviour is, in part, determined but also, in part, voluntary. Persons exercise individual agency within a limited range of options based on a cultural structure.\textsuperscript{164} If this were not so, then leaving one socio-political community for another would not be possible. This more nuanced view corrects a flaw in Triandis’ methodology which understands persons exclusively as either collectivists or individualists.

Crook contends that ancient notions of conversion are better understood as a \textit{disaffiliation} than apostasy. Although the term apostasy is used by ancient authors to denote disloyalty to one’s king, group, or ethnos, Crook argues apostasy is not an ‘objectively definable entity’.\textsuperscript{165} He notes that another difficulty using the term apostacy is that apostacy can be taken at face value because its meaning is self-evident but, in reality, the charge of apostasy could cover a range of behaviours. Apostasy is hard to define because it is the recognition and assessment by those in the group which

\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 121-122.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 124.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., 130.
someone leaves. Thus, what is considered to be apostasy, is dependent on what others assess as offensive.  

For Crook, the term disaffiliation is more appropriate because the change of community is acknowledged by the one converting and also by the surrounding cultures. The complexity of what constitutes disaffiliation and boundary crossing is not always clear or agreed upon in cultural contexts. In Shaye Cohen’s article on boundary crossing in ancient Judaism, there is a diverse range of behaviours that a Gentile might have to exhibit and identify with before he or she be considered a Jew by other Jews. Furthermore, Gentiles who adopted certain Jewish customs, such as ritual observances or veneration of the God of the Jews, might have been seen as being Jewish by other Gentiles, but to some Jews they remained Gentiles.

Crook’s work on conversion is seminal because he identifies the notion that conversion in the ancient world involved a new loyalty. The term apostasy in ancient literature resembles what would be understood as ‘treason’ in modern times because it included disloyalty in political terms. Disaffiliation is a rejection of the community as a whole which includes its socio-political and religious institutions, beliefs, and values. What can be concluded then is that a new affiliation requires new loyalties to the new socio-political group in which a new identity is created from the group’s values and world view. Loyalty to a group therefore enables a new identity to be formed by the construction of identity markers, defined by groups to which a person belongs.

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166 Ibid., 131.
168 Cohen, “Crossing the Boundary and Becoming a Jew,” 28-29.
170 See example in ibid.
The notion of disaffiliation is applicable to the converts at Philippi, noting that Paul did not use notions of belonging to a particular ethnicity as a motif of conversion. In Philippians, there is no mention of or connection with an historical Jewish prototype leader, such as Abraham found in Romans 4 and Galatians 3, or Moses as in 2 Corinthians 3. It is highly possible that the converts at Philippi had very little knowledge of the historical significance of these figures within Judaism. What sets Philippians apart from the other letters is the explicit political language and concepts used to describe the fledging Christ movement. Importantly, the Philippians are to act as citizens worthy of the gospel (Phil 1:27) and that their new κυρίος will come from heaven where their citizenship resides (Phil 3:20). Thus, Paul used the notion of being a citizen as a referential framework that would effected change at a psychological level to affect their world view and create ethical change. This matter is discussed in Chapters Six to Nine.

One might legitimately ask, does the preceding discussion beg the question: is ‘conversion’ the correct word to use when describing individuals or groups who leave one socio-political group for another? For instance, Paula Fredriksen argues that the word ‘conversion’ is inadequate and anachronistic to use for the first-generation Christ believers who would not have understood themselves as turning from one religion to another.\(^{171}\) The English word ‘conversion’ comes from the Latin term *conversio* and has the basic meaning ‘a turning round’ or ‘revolving’\(^ {172}\) and indicates a significant change in direction. As Crook’s work highlights, the change would include new customs and beliefs distinct from the previous socio-political community, which would include...


religious activities. So, rather than dispensing with the word conversion altogether in NT studies, a clear definition, from an emic perspective is preferred.

What this thesis sets out to do is to demonstrate that Paul construed conversion for the Philippians as a change of both personal and corporate identity, which came from belonging to the Christ in-group. This did not mean that Gentiles, or Jews for that matter, needed to leave their previous identities entirely, though this might have been the case for some in the first century. For Paul, rather, belonging to the new Christ movement was an overarching identity to which he expected all his converts to have allegiance; hence it had precedence over all other loyalties.

2.7. Other Studies on Conversion

Before proceeding to the next chapter, it is necessary to acknowledge other studies on NT conversion. Though these works have been consulted, they are being excluded from detailed attention in this thesis, either due to their particular focus of study or use of differing methodology less conducive to the present needs.

In 1994, there were several published works on conversion that are worth mentioning. First is Martin Goodman’s research on conversion in *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire*.\(^ {173}\) His study is concerned with evidence for the religious proselytizing amongst Jews and Gentiles in the ancient world.\(^ {174}\) It is excluded not on methodological grounds, rather because of its focus. Although we do find a reference to the possibility of Jews proselytizing in

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\(^{174}\) Ibid., 2.
Philippi (Phil 3:2), it is unlikely to be the case. It is not until the third-century CE that evidence is found at Philippi of an established Jewish presence.

Another work is a short social-scientific study on conversion by Karl Olav Sandnes.175 This is a cross-cultural approach to conversion of individuals who join Christianity living in a filial piety-based context in the East and South Asian societies. Sandnes believes that parallels could be made between family in first-century CE Greco-Roman society and that of the East and South Asian cultures because in all of these societies family ties are strong.176 An individual converting in this context severed filial ties and underwent similar social consequences for individuals in both the first-century Greco-Roman culture and those in his present day cross-cultural study.177

Sandnes sets out to demonstrate how someone could maintain a new faith or form a new identity. New faith is maintained by social structures within the new socio-religious group, which is seen in terms of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s notion of a ‘plausibility structure’.178 Sandnes utilises ‘plausibility structure’ to demonstrate the link between conversion and social structures used to maintain the new faith, in contexts where leaving one’s social and family traditions isolated an individual. Conversion, therefore, is understood as forming new relationships that are like joining a new family, as the ancient household had the necessary relational structures that could successfully substitute what had been lost.179

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176 Ibid., 7.
177 Ibid., 11.
178 Ibid., 13-14. This methodology will discussed further in the next chapter but suffice to say here that conversion is understood essentially to be in a religious change, with a new supporting social network that enables a new reality to be comprehended.
179 Ibid., 14.
He notes that conversion stories in the NT often occur in the household and involved the *pater familias* or resulted in family conflict (Lk 17:34; 1 Cor 7:12-16).\(^{180}\) The household model was the framework that supported converts in non-Western cultures.\(^{181}\) Despite some conflict within the household as the result of conversions, Sandnes believes the family in antiquity, as seen in the NT with its familiar structure and relational obligations, provided some form of security and continuity for an individual who had lost family support due to his or her affiliation with Christianity.\(^{182}\)

The study is helpful from a social and community viewpoint but his focus is too broad to be directly relevant to this study.

The Roman Catholic scholar Ronald D. Witherup published *Conversion in the New Testament* in 1994.\(^{183}\) This short study focused on the traditional language of conversion as found in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. His treatment of Paul is brief and covers the topics discussed in Gaventa’s and Segal’s studies; therefore, his study will not add to this thesis.

In 1997, Thomas M. Finn published *From Death to Rebirth: Ritual and Conversion in Antiquity*.\(^{184}\) Finn’s study sought to understand conversion within the religious and ritual framework of the Greco-Roman world. He believed that conversion was too often understood to be a sudden and dramatic change, rather than as a process found in religious rituals: ‘[c]onversion in Greco-Roman religion, whether Pagan, Jewish, or Christian, was an extended ritual process that combined teaching and symbolic enactment’.\(^{185}\) Although Finn understood that conversion was a cognitive

\(^{180}\) Ibid., 22-24.
\(^{181}\) Ibid., 35.
\(^{182}\) Ibid.
\(^{185}\) Ibid., 9.
process, essentially conversion is still a change of religion, which is an inadequate definition to describe someone joining the Christ movement in the first century.

An evangelical work on conversion was published in 1999 by Richard V. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve*. Peace understands conversion as a personal experience, and that all conversions, including Paul’s, followed a core pattern if they were to be considered genuine. He goes on to connect what he argues are similarities between Paul’s experience on the Damascus Road event and the autobiographical accounts in Philippians and Galatians. Peace’s notion of conversion is one dimensional, in that the core of conversion in the NT is ‘turning’. Furthermore, the NT writings are understood to give NT exegetes the context of conversion. The result is that he puts forward a normative definition of conversion derived from his view from the Book of Acts and Paul’s letters. His ‘one size fits all’ approach, however, assumes there is a normative pattern without taking the converts’ socio-political contexts into consideration and this renders his study less helpful.

A recent study on conversion in the NT was published online by David Morlan in 2010, and focuses on conversion in Luke and Paul. Morlan’s thesis uses theological and exegetical analysis rather than a sociological model, as his aim is to compare Luke and Paul’s theological thoughts on conversion. He seeks to answer questions relating to the necessity for humanity’s conversion: what characterises humanity’s relationship to God in its pre-conversion and post-conversion state? His study seeks to clarify the

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187 Ibid., 17ff. For further treatment of Peace’s study on conversion, see pp.346-353.
188 Ibid., 37-55. These pages cover chapter two of the book and is titled, ‘Insight: The Context of Conversion’. In his work, however, there is insufficient space given to the first-century context of Paul’s converts.
190 Ibid., 17.
role divine agency plays in conversion and to understand, to what extent, an individual is an ‘active agent’ in their conversion.\textsuperscript{191}

The reason for Morlan’s exclusion as a dialogue partner is that his scope in Pauline literature is limited to Romans 2 and 9-11.\textsuperscript{192} The selected passages focus on the conversion of both Jew and Gentile and, how for both of these groups, conversion is considered to be a theological and religious change:

[b]y theological, I mean how the writers understood the role God (however it is they understood him) played in converting someone from their inherited religion to the Jesus movement.\textsuperscript{193}

Conversion is still understood primarily, but not exclusively, as a change of religion. Paul clearly believed that there was divine agency at work amongst the ἐκκλησία at Philippi (Phil 1:6, 29). In the letter to the Philippians, however, we do not find Paul arguing for a doctrinal or theological change.

\subsection*{2.8. Conclusion}

In this chapter, the purpose of the literature review was to trace the psychological presuppositions that underlie and impact scholarship on conversion. What became clear is that the psychological categories and definitions of personhood and the role of religion put forward by William James still influence studies in conversion, even in studies of NT conversion. James’s approach emphasised the role of an individual’s inner disposition to the motivations for conversion, which means that conversion is individualistic and motivated by inner psychological turmoil. His conclusion was that

\begin{footnotes}
\item[191] Ibid.
\item[192] Ibid., 164, 191.
\item[193] Ibid., 16.
\end{footnotes}
religion is the solution to the individual’s turmoil. Thus, conversion was considered as a private affair for certain individuals.

What also became evident in this literature review is that in the last twenty years of NT socio-scientific studies on conversion, the focus has shifted. Stendahl’s article, which questioned traditional Protestant reading of Paul’s conversion, shifted the focus for NT studies on conversion, which resulted in the application of methodologies and frameworks that accounted for Paul and his converts’ social, religious, and political contexts. This is particularly seen in recent works on NT conversion by Chester and Crook, whose thinking on NT conversion is sensitive to how individuals and groups form a new identity and also how it is maintained by joining a new group. Crook’s argument that conversion as expressed loyalty exhibited by clients to their patrons is particularly important to this thesis, which will be addressed in Chapters Six to Ten, and specifically in Chapter Nine.

As it has been seen in this chapter, NT studies on conversion have, with some exceptions, focused on defining conversion itself. The result has been that studies on conversion have been broadly conceived, with the bulk of research focusing on the letters to the Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians. Though Philippians 3 is identified and addressed by other studies of Pauline conversion, it is isolated from the rest of the letter, and from its socio-political context. What this literature review has shown is that the specific socio-political context of Philippi, and its impact on the Philippians, has yet to be fully explored in social-scientific studies on conversion.

For conversion to be understood in the text of Philippians, a thorough understanding of its socio-political context is required. In Chapter Three, Berger and Luckmmann’s theory will be outlined as the necessary groundwork for interpreting the
archaeological evidence of first-century Philippi. This literature review has also shown that SIT has not been applied to any major study of conversion in the NT. Therefore, the next chapter includes a discussion on how SIT will be used on the text of Philippians. What will be seen is SIT’s usefulness as a methodology to account for the individual and group aspects of NT conversion.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter was a discussion and evaluation of conversion literature. What emerged from the chapter is the necessity for NT conversion to be studied in the socio-political context of the first-century. In this chapter the methodologies forming the framework for this thesis will be outlined and their effectiveness and suitability for the study of first-century NT conversion will be assessed. As noted in Chapters One and Two, the two methodologies that are being employed in this thesis are Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s *The Social Construction of Reality* and Herni Tajfel’s *Social Identity Theory*.194

Berger and Luckmann’s theory will be helpful in demonstrating how the Roman elites, and especially Augustus, constructed a social reality that affected all in the Roman world at various levels. They argue that the sociology of knowledge encompasses that which ‘is concerned with the relationship between human thought and the social context within which it arises’.195 Their notions of how a society creates and maintains social institutions that reflect and reinforce a symbolic universe of that society are found in a discussion of externalisation, objectivation, internalisation, and plausibility structures. These provide us with a conceptual framework which shows how Augustus used Roman socio-political institutions to gain and maintain his power during his reign, which continued to affect the population of the empire after his death.

SIT has been chosen to highlight how Paul endeavoured to form a new social identity that enabled the Philippians to act as a single psychological unit. It will be shown that SIT is an appropriate methodology to apply to the text of Philippians

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194 Tajfel’s theory and how it has been developed further by others will be explored and evaluated from several publications. See Chapter 3.3 below.

because it demonstrates how an individual can acquire a new social identity by adopting that social group’s values. SIT will also highlight the connection with one’s social identity as influenced by one’s social context through group comparison.

Further, SIT and the related Self Categorisation Theory (SCT), identify a change of social identity whereby an individual or group disaffiliates from socio-political groups to another. SIT and SCT highlight the fact that conversion required the re-mapping of the converts’ symbolic universe\(^{196}\) and of the ethical behaviours from one socio-political group to another. It will demonstrate how a new social identity could have been formed and maintained from the available existing socio-political frameworks of reference known to the Philippians.

This chapter will also discuss how the critical analysis of the Philippian text will be adopted. The critical analysis will make use of the genre and grammatical structure in order to highlight Paul’s thought on conversion as social identity. There will also be a brief discussion on the role of emotions in culture. The rationale for discussing emotions is based on an observation by Crook about studying emotions in non-Western cultures.\(^{197}\)

Before introducing SIT and SCT, however, it is worth reviewing the broader question of the appropriateness of utilising social-scientific methodologies at all in NT studies, given the cautionary sentiments voiced by John Barclay and others.

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\(^{196}\) Peter Oakes argues along a similar line regarding the socio-political situation of the Philippians. The conflict faced by Paul’s converts came as a result of a change of their world view and ethical behaviours. See P. Oakes, “Re-mapping the Universe,” 318ff.

3.2. The Use of Social-Scientific Methodologies in Biblical Studies

Various sociological theories and models have been used to highlight the necessary changes for those affiliating with the Christ movement, but their effectiveness as interpretative tools is still questioned by some.

Edwin Judge and others argue that social-scientific methods can apply inappropriate frameworks of interpretation. The problem arises, so the argument goes, when the sociological data is forced to fit into a model created from sociological research carried out in quite different contexts such as in Africa, Australia, and Melanesia. 198 A recent example of this in regard to the nuances of first-century cultures is highlighted by Erlend MacGillivray. He criticises NT social-scientific scholars for a lack of sensitivity to the nuances of reciprocal exchange in the ancient Mediterranean world: scholars have either used too broad a definition to describe patronage or have understood patronage as a Roman phenomenon that did not make ‘inroads’ into Greek and Jewish societies. 199 The result is that the term patronage is used as a generic term that cannot cover all forms of reciprocal giving. 200

In order to avoid this, social-scientific theories or methodologies should be used cautiously to highlight the social structures extant in first-century Mediterranean culture, with care not to impose modern assumptions on ancient persons or structures.

In this thesis, it is argued that the historical and social contexts have nuanced meanings, world views, and identities influenced by geographical and social location.

200 Ibid., 42. For a discussion on the complexities of the Roman social convention patronage, and other forms of reciprocal giving between social equals, and between elites and non-elite individuals or communities see R. P. Saller, “Patronage and Friendship in Early Imperial Rome: Drawing the Distinction” in Patronage in Ancient Society, ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill (London: Routledge, 1989), 49-62.
Richard Rohrbaugh argues that there is a connection between social groups’ beliefs and ideology within a given context; the substructure of ideology he calls a *social location.* There are, however, overlaps with other social locations that make it difficult to correlate ideas and beliefs within a culture.

The place where nuances of local meaning are found in the first-century Greco-Roman world is the πόλις. Simon Price argues that NT scholars must analyse the impact of the dominant Roman socio-political institutions upon a city’s pre-existing socio-political institutions in their exegesis:

Cities formed the backbone of the Empire…. Cities remained basic, both as administrative units that served the interests of Rome, and as entities to which individuals belonged. Cities were major bearers of local meanings: they embodied common values, expressed in rituals and in iconography. Because of the construction of local meanings and local societies, diversity was inevitable.

This observation illustrates an important insight for studies on NT conversion. A thorough analysis of Paul’s converts’ social location is needed in order to uncover the nuanced world views and beliefs of the first converts. The analysing of the socio-political institutions of Philippi in Chapter Five will enable conclusions to be formed from the available data about the world view and ethical behaviours that Paul sought to supplant with different ones based on a new world view, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Eight.

John Barclay is another scholar who has recently questioned the validity of SIT for NT studies. His concern is that SIT is a ‘form of social analysis based on necessarily

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202 Ibid., 105-106.
artificial experiments on modern subjects’. He is extremely doubtful that SIT’s categories, which were developed from laboratory-based social psychology, can be applied to persons and social groups who are vastly different across time and space.

In response to these objections, I of course agree that SIT is a modern theory and with any modern social-scientific approach, the use of etic terms to describe ancient socio-political contexts is therefore unavoidable. Hence those employing such social-scientific methodologies must take great care not to impose modern day categories on ancient texts. Nevertheless, this does not mean that some methodologies cannot be used as heuristic tools when it can be demonstrated that there is plausible cross-cultural applicability.

An example of this can be seen in the recent study of Stephen Reicher and Nick Hopkins, who found that Henri Tajfel’s categories of intergroup discrimination – even though developed by Tajfel in laboratory-based social experiments – could be insightfully applied to the ways in which individuals form a national identity. Reicher and Hopkins argue, for instance, that what motivated the Serbs of 1999 to fight in the Kosovo war was the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. This demonstrates that the conflicts of the distant past can have a significant impact on generations hundreds of years later. Further evidence of the cross-cultural validity of the application of SIT is presented in Section 3.3 below.

Accordingly, Barclay’s cautionary comments notwithstanding, it will be shown in Chapters Six to Ten that the application of SIT to the text of Philippians sheds

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204 Barclay, *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews*, 7 n.10.
205 Ibid.
207 Ibid., 4.
significant light on how Paul used inter-group conflict and competition to form the social identity of the Philippians, in a socially complex context.

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Two, ancient persons derived their identity primarily from being part of a collective. This characteristic is exhibited by Paul, who divided persons into two distinct groups, that of Jew and Gentile (cf. Rom 9-11; Gal 2:15).\footnote{M. Hengel, Jews, Greeks and Barbarians: Aspects of the Hellenization of Judaism in the Pre-Christian Period, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM 1980), 65-66.} Initially for Paul, the Christ event presented a dilemma, in that the Gentiles were now incorporated into the elected people of God. Thus his previous categories that contrasted Jewish election over and against Gentile non-election had to be re-worked post conversion.\footnote{N. T. Wright, Paul: In Fresh Perspective (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 112-113.} The re-working is evidenced in Paul’s writings. The new Christ movement was to remain one group that was constituted from two main ethnic groups, Jews and Gentiles, but this distinction no longer defined the elected people of God (1 Cor 7:17-20).

It should be noted also that the Romans exhibited a similar understanding of identity as being understood in terms of membership in a distinct ethnic group. Cicero understood that ancient persons were embedded in a particular group:

> Then, too, there are a great many degrees of closeness or remoteness in human society \([societatis]\). To proceed beyond the universal bond of our common humanity, there is the closer one of belonging to the same people, tribe, and tongue, by which men are very closely bound together.\footnote{Cicero, \textit{Off.} 1.53 (Miller, LCL).}

Similarly in Strabo’s conception of history, people are divided into the categories of civilised and uncivilised:

> …after withholding praise from those who divide the whole multitude of mankind into two groups, namely, Greeks and Barbarians.\footnote{Strabo, \textit{Geogr.} 1.4.9 (Jones, LCL).}
The ethnic term ‘barbarians’ meant uncivilised and was used in comparison to ‘Greeks’, whom Strabo considered civilised. Strabo then used these historical representative terms to denote the Romans, whom he considered civilised, and for non-Romans, who were uncivilised.\(^{212}\)

The above example is but one illustration of how ancient Mediterranean socio-political groups contrasted themselves with others. Paul’s converts had already been socialised in such particular social practices and world views, which created and maintained identity of the community and individual. This is the cultural context which Paul faced in Philippi. We will address this in detail in Chapters Six to Nine.

3.3. The Social Construction of Reality

The Greco-Roman world in NT times experienced a significant re-definition of its cosmology under Augustus, which affected the socio-political paradigms. The spread of Roman influence and governance included its socio-political institutions. This was particularly seen in the growth of imperial worship in the civic activities of the πολίς, used to demonstrate political loyalty to Caesar, to whom one’s ultimate loyalty was owed.\(^{213}\)

Though the Romans had often created their regime by the use of war, they maintained their provinces by, amongst other means, the social institution of patronage. The Caesars imposed consensus with their subjects by encouraging the reproduction of Roman ruling order.\(^{214}\) This included accepting the patronage of the emperor, extending


\(^{213}\) T. J. Harris, “The Subversion of Status,” xxvii.

to every level of government and society. The acceptance of Roman rule also meant that conquered peoples incorporated the Roman emperor into their pantheon of gods and participated in the Roman rituals and ceremonies of the Roman community.\textsuperscript{215}

Berger and Luckmann’s theory\textsuperscript{216} argues that society is solely a product of humans, yet humans are also a product of society. Societies create a reality and the knowledge of what is considered to be reality is defined by specific societies.\textsuperscript{217} The empirical and dialectical process of reality and knowledge, whereby humans create a social world, is expressed by the process of \textit{externalisation}, \textit{objectivation}, and \textit{internalisation}.\textsuperscript{218} \textit{Externalisation} refers to the creation of the social world by human activity, which includes the physical and mental activities that produce them. Humans express themselves in the world in which they find themselves and where they continue to develop the world around them into culture, which is the production of structures that provide stability.\textsuperscript{219}

According to Berger, although humans are an organism that exist in a material world, unlike other living organisms, human development is incomplete; they continue to develop biologically with their environment.\textsuperscript{220} Other animals enter into their social environment with highly developed drives (instincts) that direct their behaviours.\textsuperscript{221} Humans differ in that they must go through a process of incorporation into a social order.\textsuperscript{222} Furthermore, humans differ from other living organisms because they are not

\textsuperscript{216} From this point onwards when referring to Berger’s and Luckmann’s theory of ‘The Social Construction of Reality’, we will use ‘Berger’s theory’ unless otherwise stated.
\textsuperscript{219} Berger, \textit{The Social Reality of Religion}, 14-16.
\textsuperscript{221} Berger, \textit{The Social Reality of Religion}, 15.
\textsuperscript{222} Berger and Luckmann, \textit{The Social Construction of Reality}, 66.
‘a closed sphere of quiescent interiority’\textsuperscript{223} and must externalise their internal activity. According to Berger, the fact that humans continually express inward activity outside themselves derives from the incomplete biological development of the human organism which, in turn, drives humans to create social order.\textsuperscript{224}

Social order provides humans with a stable environment for human social conduct and for ordering human drives and desires.\textsuperscript{225} This is achieved by \textit{habitualisation}, whereby human behaviour is made into patterns that typify the performer of the action (see 3.2.1).\textsuperscript{226} Habitualisation enables cultures to develop patterns of behaviours that negate the human ‘undirected instinctual structure’.\textsuperscript{227} It also paves the way for the institutionalisation of human activities.

The building of a culture is one of ‘world building’, incorporating structures that consist of human products. These human products are the result of human physical and mental activity in the world that is experienced as object reality, in a process called \textit{objectivation}.\textsuperscript{228} This objectivation is experienced by humans as mental and physical but also confronts its creators with unintended and unforeseen subjective meaning.\textsuperscript{229} Objectivation creates social institutions (objective reality) that are ‘external and coercive, imposing its predefined patterns upon the individual’.\textsuperscript{230} Thus a person has an expected role prescribed by the social institution, such as mother, father, uncle or aunt, that is defined by models of conduct.\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{223} Ibid, 70.
\textsuperscript{224} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{225} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid., 71.
\textsuperscript{227} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{228} Ibid., 18.
\textsuperscript{229} See examples in Berger and Luckmann, \textit{The Social Construction of Reality}, 49-51.
\textsuperscript{230} Berger, \textit{The Social Reality of Religion}, 23.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.
Internalisation refers to the re-absorption into the consciousness of the objective reality produced from externalisation that has given meaning to the social institutions.232 Humans undergo the process of socialisation when the socially constructed world is internalised. Persons participate in this process by identifying with the social norms, world view, and customs of the social group they inhabit. The process of socialisation is both conscious and the result of social structures imposed by the larger society.233 The socialisation process is taught to each new generation in accordance with prescribed social institutional roles.234

3.3.1. The Maintenance of World Construction

For Berger, the institutionalisation of human activities occurs in order to bring it under social control. This he describes as ‘reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors’.235 In other words, typification is the shared reciprocal actions that form an accepted and expected pattern to form an institution. Societal institutions are created over a period of time in the context in which they are produced, and control conduct by establishing predefined patterns that enable a system of social control: ‘To say that a segment of human activity has been institutionalized is already to say that this segment of human activity has been subsumed under social control’.236

Furthermore, social institutions play a role in validating symbolic universes that provide an identity to the individual, which is known as legitimation. Cultural symbolic universes are overarching structures that protect the social order,

232 Ibid., 24.
236 Ibid., 73.
[t]hey are sheltering canopies over the institutional order as well as over individual biography. They also provide the delimitation of social reality; that is, they set the limits of what is relevant in terms of social interaction.\textsuperscript{237}

Symbolic universes order history by locating collective events into a unity that includes past, present, and future, thus linking present generations to their predecessors and successors.\textsuperscript{238}

The political order and roles are seen as a representation of the cosmic principles and are legitimised by the cosmic order of power and justice. The ancient institution of divine kingship is an example of this type of legitimation.\textsuperscript{239} The need for legitimation to be maintained is considered paramount as institutional order is constantly under threat by other realities that it considers to be chaotic and without meaning. Thus there is a need to keep this perceived chaos at bay.\textsuperscript{240}

The prevailing symbolic universe is maintained by concept\textit{ual machinery,} which involves the systematising of cognitive and normative of reality. This can be reinforced by employing mythology, philosophy, theology, and science in order to persuade or justify the prevailing ideology.\textsuperscript{241} This can be seen, for instance, in the institutional structures that legitimised Augustus’ and Rome’s right to rule in the civic activities throughout its provinces in imperial images, processions, and sacrifices at the temples of the imperial cult. These socio-political institutions with their activities were crucial in forming a collective construct that enabled Augustus to let his subjects ‘construct the world and themselves’.\textsuperscript{242}

\textsuperscript{237} Ibid., 120.
\textsuperscript{238} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{239} Ibid., 121.
\textsuperscript{240} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{241} Ibid., 127.
According to Berger, definitions of reality are defined by groups or individuals, whom he labels ‘definers of reality’. Though reality is defined socially, it is embodied in individuals and groups. The effect of these groups or individuals is to maintain and strengthen the legitimate institutionalised actions. As will be seen in the next two chapters, Augustus will be understood as a ‘definer’ because he redefined what it meant to be Roman, reinforced by the Roman conceptual machinery of the imperial cult, colonisation, and through patronage of the entire Empire.

Furthermore, those who have been through the socialisation process continue to maintain their internalised identity by recourse to what Berger calls plausibility structures. These plausibility structures are reinforced by the community and confirm to the individual the rightness of his or her self-identification within the society or social group. For instance, Roman Catholic faith is maintained by the individual having a significant relationship with a Catholic community. If the individual is cut off from the Catholic community then it is difficult to maintain a Catholic identity. The reason for this is that community provides the individual with plausible social structures and allows for one’s self-identity to be maintained against competing realities or world views.

Within societies, however, there can be a deviant symbolic universe or sub-universe created. This can become a problem when a deviant symbolic universe is shared by others within the same social context and an alternate reality is proposed. More to the point, this new reality, by its existence, challenges the reality status of the

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244 Ibid., 135.
245 Ibid., 174.
246 Ibid., 175.
247 Ibid.
original symbolic universe.\textsuperscript{248} If a person rejects the institutionalised reality and becomes affiliated with a different socio-political group, then a re-socialisation with new plausibility structures needs to be accepted by a person ‘by the means of significant others’.\textsuperscript{249} There is a need not only to accept, but also to embrace actively the new world view or reality, which necessarily involves the displacement of the previous world view.\textsuperscript{250}

David Horrell argues that there are several weaknesses with Berger’s theory. The first is that it neglects the ‘relationship between reproduction and transformation’.\textsuperscript{251} According to Horrell, Berger and Luckmann’s theory of externalisation and objectivation are rigidly imposed upon humans without taking into consideration that social structures can change, especially by the reproduction of language.\textsuperscript{252} Horrell argues that Giddens’ theory of structuration demonstrates that, in the process of transmitting the rules of language, an opportunity exists for transformation.\textsuperscript{253} Second, Horrell argues that Berger and Luckmann’s theory perceives change to the dominant social order as a threat and are essentially negative. Furthermore, those who seek change to the social order are portrayed as ‘marginal’ and confront this order with chaos. Horrell argues that Berger and Luckmann’s theory pits social order against social stability as dualistic.\textsuperscript{254} Third, there is a lack of attention to the issues pertaining to ideology. It is argued that there is no explanation of how ideology comes about because

\textsuperscript{248} Ibid., 124.
\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., 177.
\textsuperscript{250} Ibid., 178.
\textsuperscript{252} Horrell, The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence, 41-42.
\textsuperscript{253} Ibid, 42.
\textsuperscript{254} Ibid, 42-43.
any inequities or exploitations of social groups are seen as simply reflecting natural
order.\textsuperscript{255}

Both Chester and Horrell argue that ‘Structuration’ is a more contemporary
framework that highlights the relationship between reproduction and transformation in
societies.\textsuperscript{256} Notwithstanding Horrell’s points, the use of Berger and Luckmann’s theory
demonstrates how the Romans, and in particular Augustus, constructed and maintained
the socio-political communities under their rule. Horrell does not take into consideration
the fact that the result of Roman colonisation often significantly changed or influenced
the social and political structures of the city. It will be seen in the next chapter that
Augustus had considerable influence on the symbolic universe which he used to
maintain his power as an expression of natural order (see 4.2, 4.3.1-4).

This point cannot be overestimated because both Paul and the Philippians already
had a social identity that came from having memberships in socio-political institutions,
which had been heavy influenced by Roman culture. There are several institutions that
held the conceptual machinery in place that can be found at Philippi during Paul’s time
and these will be discussed further in the two chapters below.

3.4. Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory is the product of Henri Tajfel (1919-1982) and his experiences of
being a World War II prisoner-of-war and the war’s aftermath.\textsuperscript{257} His research on

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{255} Ibid, 44.
  \item \textsuperscript{256} Ibid., 41.
  \item \textsuperscript{257} For an overview see Tajfel, \textit{Human Groups and Social Categories}, 1-3. P. Esler, “An Outline of
    Tucker and C. A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 13ff. Parts of this section will follow Esler’s
    chapter outline.
\end{itemize}
intergroup comparisons ‘is concerned with the social psychology of human groups in conflict’\textsuperscript{258} The results of his early research experiments found that humans, when organised anonymously and randomly into groups, developed categories that were discriminatory and in favour of the group that they were organised into. Tajfel and his colleagues found that groups also exhibit what is called \textit{intergroup favouritism}: the favouring of one’s own group against out-groups.\textsuperscript{259} Individuals exhibited behaviours and attitudes demonstrating that they considered themselves as belonging primarily to a group with distinct social categories.\textsuperscript{260}

Tajfel argues that the individual’s self-definition in a particular social context is a social identity. The basis of SIT is that individuals are members of numerous social groups, and that these groups will be perceived as giving them either a positive or negative self-image.\textsuperscript{261} Because individuals strive for a positive self-image they will categorise and evaluate their social groups, ordering them in a hierarchical fashion. This is the process of social categorisation which enables an individual to ‘simplify’ his or her social context: ‘social categorisation can be understood as the ordering of the social environment in terms of groupings of persons in a manner which makes sense to the individual’.\textsuperscript{262}

Tajfel found that the ordering of an individual’s social environment is done on several levels, and was based on the observation made by Muzafer Sherif about group behaviour from his ‘summer camp experiments’ in the 1960s. Sherif’s experiment found that inclusion in groups resulted in behaviours that were determined by

\textsuperscript{260} Tajfel, “Interindividual Behaviour and Intergroup Behaviour,” 27.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid.
membership of that group, rather than by personal relationships or individual characteristics.  

The term *group* refers to face-to-face relationships among several people that include three aspects. The first is an individual’s self-concept that he or she has cognitive knowledge of belonging to a social group. The second aspect is that the individual evaluates one’s membership in that group as either positive or negative. Evaluations act as a guide at the cognitive level and help the individual to judge and evaluate the differences between social groups. The third is the emotional aspect, whereby the individual attaches emotional significance to membership in that group (or groups) which affects an individual’s attitudes towards both the in-group and out-groups, thus forming a social identity. Tajfel found that these three aspects were found in groups regardless of their ethnicity, size, or number of categories.

Furthermore, individuals demonstrated a preference or bias towards others who were members of the same group, at the expense of those who were considered to be out-group categories. Indeed, other SIT practitioners notice that participation and affiliation with various social groups is maintained by ‘evaluative comparisons’ between in-groups and out-groups. Comparison between groups produces a competitive process that perpetuates a continual process of assimilation, and thus differentiation is needed in order to solidify cognitive categories that constitute identity:

> essentially it says that we cannot know who we are except by reference to others... that social comparisons are central to our identity.

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266 Ibid., 30-31.
267 Ibid., 33-34.
269 Ibid., 48-49.
The above is true in both the formation and the maintenance of identity for individuals and groups. As was stated above, many ancient Mediterranean societies identified themselves and others in terms of group membership. Thus, the use of SIT’s basic notion of in-group and out-group comparison can be used as a heuristic tool for the study of conversion in the NT.

The differentiation of groups whether by linguistic or ethnicity markers aims to maintain or preserve the distinctiveness of their characteristics and identity. Tajfel recognised that many different social groups were at the same time both separate and yet ‘unavoidably shackled together’ and that the survival of each group depended on the nature of their relations. This aspect of SIT can, with care, be applied to either distinct geographical locations or to an overarching power such as the Roman Empire. The socio-political structures can be highlighted to demonstrate how social groups maintained distinction while interacting with other groups.

Nevertheless, Tajfel observed that an individual, or family unit, also has the ability to be socially mobile. By socially mobile he means a change in social groups: change in the nature of the relations between large-scale social groups, such as socio-economic, national, religious, racial or ethnic categories; and therefore social moments will be understood on the social psychological level.

The movement can only occur from one social group with its social categories to another one with a different set of social categories which is indicative that the individual has acquired a new sense of belonging to a new group. An individual,

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271 Ibid., 4.

83
however, can choose to belong to a new group, acquiring another identity while maintaining pre-existing ones.  

In SIT there is a linking of social categorisation, social identity, and self-conception that defines the individual’s place in society. The individual makes comparisons based on his or her membership in a particular social group. If the group considers that it has limited access to resources and opportunities in comparison with other groups, then it experiences ‘relative deprivation’.  

Relative deprivation can produce an inability of a social group to maintain a positive image for its members in comparison with other social groups. The inability to maintain a positive image of social identity of the group can result in a loss of membership.

In order to give membership in a particular social group a positive image, Tajfel argues intergroup conflict will enable an individual to distinguish between the in-group and the out-group. Where there is intergroup conflict, a particular group attempts to establish its distinctiveness. This often occurs in societies where there are several different ethnic groups that are trying to maintain ethnic distinction. Tajfel found that great emotional emphasis is placed on the differences between languages, anthems, sporting teams, and anything that conserves and differentiates their cultural social systems from others. The behavioural and psychological distinctiveness is formed whereby the worth of groups and individuals is ‘as clear-cut and inflexible as possible’. The result is a clear establishment of the distinct social identity.

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273 Ibid., 50.
275 Ibid., 67.
277 Ibid., 83-86.
278 Ibid., 83-84.
3.4.1. Self-Categorisation Theory

SIT is primarily concerned with intergroup discrimination and conflict between individuals and groups. Both individuals and groups seek to differentiate themselves in order to maintain a positive image from other groups that they perceive as not providing a positive social identity.\(^{279}\) John Turner, one of Tajfel’s doctoral students, expands SIT by describing an intra-group process he calls Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT).\(^{280}\) Turner seeks explanations as to why individuals would perceive and define themselves, and act as a single unit.\(^ {281}\) His expansion focuses on the process that takes place inside groups between what he calls sub-groups and a superordinate group. SCT highlights the fact that not only do people belong to different groups but also that the different groups hold varying levels of importance to one’s self-concept. The individual’s self-concept is defined by Turner as

\[
\text{at least in part as a cognitive structure, a cognitive element in the information-processing system. The self-concept may be defined as the set of cognitive representations of self available to a person.}\(^ {282}\)
\]

Turner’s notion of self-concept is operative at three levels: a) the superordinate level, that is, self-categorisation of one’s identity as shared features with other humans, b) the intermediate level is the in-group and out-group social level, based on similarities and differences (e.g., ‘elite’, ‘working class’, ‘black’, ‘white’), c) the subordinate level is the personal, where a person self-categorises himself or herself as an individual and highlights the differences with other in-group members.\(^ {283}\) Thus these categories define

\(^ {282}\) Ibid., 44.
\(^{283}\) Ibid., 45. The subordinate level will also be referred to in this thesis as a ‘sub-group’.
an individual’s human, social, and personal identity based on both inter-group and intra-group comparisons between the individual and others.\textsuperscript{284}

The varying levels of importance to one’s self identity can be activated by different social conditions. The different social conditions will make one aspect of identity more ‘salient’. The term ‘salient’ or ‘salience’ refers to the self-defining and social categorisations of an individual or group that become prominent depending on social conditions. As Turner notes it is

\begin{quote}
the conditions under which some specific group membership becomes cognitively prepotent in self-perception to act as the immediate influence on perception and behaviour.\textsuperscript{285}
\end{quote}

An example of this can be seen in 1 Corinthians 5, where Paul commands the \textit{ἐκκλησία} at Corinth to expel the \textit{πόρνος} who is sleeping with his step-mother. SCT’s approach would suggest that it is possible that the Corinthians will do nothing about this man because he is a rich patron of the \textit{ἐκκλησία} at Corinth whom they do not want to dishonour.\textsuperscript{286} Thus they considered that being his client is more salient to their social identity than perceiving that they belong to the superordinate group of the \textit{ἐκκλησία} at Corinth, of which Paul is the apostle. In such an analysis, the Corinthians see themselves as a group who identify as clients of the \textit{πόρνος}, and membership in a group that is salient for the individual acts as a guide for both individual and group behaviour.\textsuperscript{287}

Further studies on the factors that contribute to the influence salience has on group identity highlight that salience increases when: a) the group is goal or task

\textsuperscript{284} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., 54.
orientated; b) the group is made a priority and is seen as a pure entity; c) when there is clarity and separation between groups and the individual is able to correlate his or her membership into a group’s division; d) intergroup conflict is present; and e) explicit references to group identity are made or that group membership is ‘cognitively reachable’. 288

There are a number of categories at the abstract level that will activate a person’s self-categorisation within his or her culture. Turner notes that a particular self-category can become more salient by the comparisons ‘of stimuli defined as members of the next more inclusive (higher level) self-category’. 289 An individual is more likely to categorise himself or herself as belonging (psychologically) to an in-group with those whom they perceive as having fewer differences with themselves, than with others in the same social context. 290 Turner also notes that the process of self-categorisation is one of ‘depersonalization’ of one’s self-perception that he or she is a unique individual. This is not the loss of individuality but a change that leads from personal identity to a social identity. Depersonalization includes the stereotyping of self and other perceived in-group members of shared collective categories. There is also the notion of ‘self-stereotyping’ where people perceive that they are an exemplar of a social category rather than a unique individual. 291 This can be the case for newly formed groups or for pre-existing ones. 292

Stereotypes are part of the categorisation process that enables both individuals and groups to simplify their social context in order ‘to explain social events and to justify

289 Turner, Rediscovering the Social Group, 46.
290 Ibid., 51-52.
291 Ibid., 50-51.
the ingroup’s actions’. The categorisation process is based on cultural beliefs, which people superimpose as a systematic set of classifications between social categories, particularly the similarities and differences within them. The reason people see themselves as belonging to a group is due to their perception that they possess the same characteristics as other in-group members and that they share their in-group’s attitudes and perceptions of other groups. Thus, stereotyping is a cognitive process that reflects and prescribes the world view, behaviours, and attitudes that demonstrate one’s allegiance to the group by upholding discrimination of those in out-groups. As will be seen in the chapters below, Paul uses in-group and out-group comparisons in the letter to the Philippians where he evaluates and stereotypes those who are his opponents, whom he categorises as outsiders (cf. Phil 2:15b; 3:2, 18a).

3.4.2. The Common Group Identity Model

Another aspect of SIT that demonstrates its applicability for the study of NT conversion is its notion of a Common Group Identity Model. The common group identity gives an explanation as to how a socially and ethnically diverse group can not only come together in the first place, but also remain together. In socially and ethnically diverse contexts the presence of groups and individuals with pre-existing social identities that have salience for these groups co-exists. Intergroup comparisons that involve group...
salient identity would normally be at odds with the formation of a new socio-political
group identity.

The common group identity model offers a possible explanation regarding how
identity can be constructed amongst those who come from diverse cultural backgrounds.
It reduces intergroup bias by showing how those previously perceived as out-group
members can become in-group ones by changing the perceptions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ to a
more inclusive ‘we’.297 This is done by increasing the salience of the existing common
superordinate group, a process known as recategorization.298 Gaertner et alia note that
‘recategorization’ of the in-group does not eliminate categories, rather it reduces
previous intergroup bias and conflict:

if members of different groups are induced to conceive of themselves as a
single group rather than two completely separate groups, attitudes towards
former out-group members will become more positive through processes
involving pro-ingroup bias.299

By re-categorising the boundary markers that define membership, there is a reduction of
bias and the increase of positive attitudes towards former out-group members in a
stereotyped fashion. Thus, in creating a new superordinate group, the psychological and
cognitive distance between in-group members and the self diminishes, while the
distance between the self and non-group members changes little.300

Interestingly, it was found in a subsequent study that it is necessary for groups
where there is a perception of equal status to maintain some of their previous groups’
salient features. Researchers found that for a new identity at the superordinate level to

Ingroup Identity Model: Recategorization and the Reduction of Intergroup Bias,” European Review of
298 Ibid., 5ff.
299 Ibid., 6.
300 Ibid.
form, there is a need to recognise sub-group distinctiveness. Intergroup situations where groups maintained their distinction but have their particular roles and expertise recognised by other groups further reduces intergroup bias.\textsuperscript{301} This allows for groups’ previous salient identities to still exist at a sub-group level, thus keeping intact some group distinctiveness but also facilitating the development of the superordinate group.\textsuperscript{302}

An instance of this can possibly be seen in Philippians 1:2 where Paul makes special mention of σὺν ἑπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις (with the overseers and deacons). It is possible that Paul deliberately made a differentiation of status amongst his converts because some would feel that their previous status and rank and positive social identity were threatened. If there is recognition of these distinctions from others such as Paul, then this mutual acknowledgement of superiorities and inferiorities will maintain part of the salience of the previous social identity.

The creation of a new superordinate group from separate sub-groups with both having equal status means that the psychological distance is less between those who are members of the new in-group than those who belong to an out-group. This is due to the fact that there is a tendency to attribute positive behaviour to group members, rather than to non in-group members.\textsuperscript{303} Persons who were once two distinct groups now conceive of themselves as being part of the one superordinate group and exhibit positive emotional and personal behaviours to one another.\textsuperscript{304} This is not based on the activities of the group but is based on the recognition that they are one group.


\textsuperscript{302} Dovidio, Gaertner, and Validzic, “Intergroup Bias,” 117.


SCT’s notion of the superordinate group that provides an overarching social identity has already been used insightfully in the NT. In his commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Romans, Philip Esler argues that Paul was combining two ethnic groups of Jew and Gentile into one superordinate group. The superordinate group has a new overarching identity that included Jew and Gentile but allowed them to remain distinct sub-groups, while simultaneously they had equal status of belonging to the Christ movement. Thus, though once belonging to different superordinate and sub-groups, his aim was to transform them at the superordinate level where the converts see themselves and fellow converts as belonging to the same superordinate group. Though Paul is not dealing with problems of different social identities between Jew and Gentiles in Philippians, Esler’s insight that Paul is encouraging his converts to re-categorise into one overarching identity is helpful, and will be used in Chapter Eight to illustrate how Paul can remain a Jew and his converts can remain Gentiles, yet together they can have a common social identity.

Esler draws on the work of Naomi Ellemers, Russell Spears, and Bertjan Doosje, who found that the commitment to following group behaviour norms and loyalty is higher among those whose membership of a particular group is very important to them. Such members will more likely behave in accordance with that group’s social values and norms than those members who are less involved with the group. It was found that those who considered themselves to be ‘die hard’ group members displayed group-oriented behaviours and were more willing to sacrifice for the group than other

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305 P. F. Esler, Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul’s Letter (Minneapolis: Fortress 2003), 31ff. For a similar approach on the Book of Acts with a focus on Peter and Paul as prototypical leaders see C. A. Baker, Identity, Memory, and Narrative in Early Christianity: Peter, Paul, And Recategorization in the Book of Acts (Eugene: Pickwick 2011), xv.

306 Esler, Conflict and Identity in Romans, 31.

members. Furthermore, when highly committed members believe that the group’s positive image is threatened, they will seek to maintain a positive distinctiveness between their in-group and other groups. Members were often willing to sacrifice personal comfort to maintain a positive image. In environments where group boundaries were fixed, even those who belonged to a low status group were more willing to remain loyal, as long as the identification with that group provided them with a positive social identity.

Again, this is a fruitful avenue to explore in relation to the Philippians. Though the dominant socio-political context at Philippi was Roman, Paul’s converts belonged to various social and ethnic groups which had specific behaviours that reflected group solidarity. In the letter to the Philippians, Paul re-categorised his converts to have a common in-group identity using several notions, which will be mentioned here but explored further in Chapters Six to Ten. These notions are themes throughout the text and include his reference to their κοινωνία (partnership) in the gospel, in the spirit, and the sufferings of Jesus (1:5; 2:1; 3:10), which always refers to participation or fellowship with a group. Another theme is loyalty, referring to their citizenship, ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα (Phil 3:20), and the command to act as citizens (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύσεθε) (1:27). Paul also refers to all who are fellow imitators (συμμιμητής) (3:17) because they belong to a group with a common in-group identity which also affected their social identity at the superordinate level, reducing intergroup bias. This does not suggest, as Esler observes, that Paul is a social-scientific theorist, but rather

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308 Ibid., 85.
309 Ibid., 86.
310 Ibid., 90.
311 This will be discussed in Chapter Five.
that SIT and SCT can be used to demonstrate how Paul was aware of inter and intra
group conflicts in his context and how he learnt to reconcile groups that were usually
antagonistic to one another.313

3.4.3. Prototypical Members and Leaders

SIT highlights that the self-categorisation process creates and promotes uniformity to
the group, which is known as an in-group prototype.314 The prototype or prototypical
member reduces uncertainty ‘about ourselves and the world we live in’.315 They possess
what are considered by other in-group members to exhibit the ‘fuzzy sets of attributes’
that SIT argues

describe the group’s attributes but also, very importantly, prescribe how one
should think, feel, and behave as a member of the group. Psychologically
identifying with a group involves a cognitive process of categorizing oneself
as a group member.316

Furthermore, persons are more likely to self-categorise as members of a group in a
context of inter-group rather than an intra-group environment. This is due to the
perception that in a particular context, the values shared by those in the same category
are more salient than those who are considered to be outsiders.317

Because the prototype leader is perceived as having the essential qualities of the
in-group, he or she is able to unify the group and have them working together for the

313 Esler, Conflict and Identity in Romans, 31.
314 For a concise outline of the significance and use of the prototype in Biblical studies see Baker,
“Social Identity Theory and Biblical Interpretation,” 131-132. For a more in depth study see Idem,
Identity, Memory, and Narrative in Early Christianity.
316 Ibid., 1273-1274.
317 S. A. Haslam and M. J. Platow, “Your Wish is Our Command: The Role of Shared Social Identity
in Translating a Leader’s Vision into Followers’ Action,” in Social Identity Processes in Organizational
common good of the in-group.\textsuperscript{318} More specifically, a leader influences the re-
categorisation process of the group from within the group. The first quality the leader
must have is to be ‘one of us’; that is, the prototype leader must embody the norms and
values of that group.\textsuperscript{319} Further, the prototype leader must be representative of the
shared social identity, emphasising what makes ‘us’ better than ‘them’; the result is that
a positive distinctiveness is established for the in-group.\textsuperscript{320} Furthermore, he or she must
stand up for the superordinate group, by showing bias towards the in-group, especially
in situations of inter-group conflict and competition.\textsuperscript{321} As it will be seen in the exegesis
of the letter to the Philippians, Paul and his converts are in conflict with more than one
group, both at Philippi and from outside the city. The use of SIT’s notion of prototype
leader to describe Paul’s leadership of the Philippians will highlight how he unified the
group against several out-groups while at the same time preserving the group’s new
identity.

3.5. Conclusion
Berger and Luckmann’s theory of \textit{The Construction of Social Reality} was discussed and
its explanations of how societies create and are influenced by their socio-political
contexts were assessed. Berger and Luckmann’s notions of externalisation and
objectivation convincingly show the relationship between humans as producers of their
societies and the products of such. Further to this, it was seen that internalisation
enables societies to reproduce the social practices and their meaning resulting from

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{318} Ibid., 217.
\item \textsuperscript{319} Ibid., 218.
\item \textsuperscript{320} Ibid., 221.
\item \textsuperscript{321} Ibid., 224-225.
\end{itemize}
objectivation. The theory also demonstrates how societies create and maintain the symbolic universes that they produce. Societies use socio-political institutions to legitimise their ideology (symbolic universes) by the creation of societal institutions. Thus conversion can only be cognitively formed in an alternate symbolic universe where there is a new reality that supplants the previous one. Alternative ideologies or sub-universes can co-exist within a society but conversion requires a rejection of the dominant symbolic universe.

SIT’s basic supposition that individuals cognitively order and categorise their social environment by comparing and evaluating social groups as providing them with either positive or negative self-image, highlighting the psychological basis to explain why someone might choose to affiliate with a new social group. A group that provides a positive self-image for the individual highlights the personal dimension of decision making. The other benefit of using SIT for the study of conversion in the NT is that it understands that an individual’s self-concept and social identity are not a product of the individual per se; rather they are based on their acknowledgement that they belong to a social group. The distinctiveness of the notion of citizenship for Paul’s converts at Philippi would solidify cognitive, emotional, and salient bonds that constituted the converts’ social identity.

The use of the SCT notion of re-categorisation into a superordinate one allows for the inclusion of individuals or groups from diverse cultural and social in-groups to affiliate in one’s group. Paul uses of the framework of citizenship as a category would be significant both cognitively and emotionally for the converts to regard that as having salience to their social identity over other sub-group identities.
Chapter Three marks the end of Section One and has laid the methodological foundations for the study of conversion at Roman Philippi as reflected in the letter to the Philippians. In the following two chapters, Berger’s theory will be used to show how Augustus constructed a symbolic universe that was legitimised by societal institutions in the πόλεις throughout the Empire.
Part Two: Historical Context

Chapters Four and Five employ Berger and Luckmann’s framework to describe and analyse the ‘symbolic universe’, as they put it, of Roman Philippi, in its location in the eastern realm of Roman colonisation. This has a number of features. Chapter Four will critically describe how Roman identity was bound to Roman ideology which was constructed and maintained through imperial propaganda that lay behind Pax Augusta. Roman religion, patronage, and social values were used to Romanise conquered territories. The evidence for the pervasiveness of Roman values will be demonstrated by the evidence from numismatics and Roman historians.

Chapter Five will focus on describing how Roman ideology propagated by Augustus impacted on the city of Philippi. The numismatic evidence and literary evidence will elucidate the significance for the socio-political environment that Paul’s converts were immersed in. Furthermore, in Chapter Five it will be demonstrated that many of the socio-political values exhibited by the Roman elites trickled down and were pervasive amongst the non-elite in a heavily stratified society. The conclusions of Chapters Four and Five will then be brought focus on the text of Philippians in Chapters Six to Ten to demonstrate the significance of Paul’s language and concepts to his converts.
Chapter Four: The Propagation of Roman Ideology

4.1. Introduction

Chapter Four describes the pervasive social and political power of Rome and how Roman ideology was constructed and maintained through imperial propaganda and Pax Augusta, using the framework of Berger and Luckmann. It is argued that Augustus was a master tactician in pre-existing socio-political ideology to gain and maintain power. The evidence from numismatics and literary sources demonstrate how his sustained use of these media enabled him to gain control of the Empire and eliminate other contenders. The literary evidence reveals how Octavian portrayed himself as the initiator of a Golden Age for Rome, and shows how he assailed his opponents. The numismatic evidence tells the narrative (or propaganda) of Augustus as a recipient of divine favour for avenging Julius Caesar’s assassination, and that his rule was divinely approved.

This chapter also shows how Augustus used oaths of allegiance and Roman citizenship to maintain the symbolic universe of his rule. The use of oaths of allegiance in the military and in the provincial colonies demonstrated the giving of honour and loyalty to Caesar. Further to this, Augustus’ revival of Roman religion and customs showed the importance of the possession of Roman citizenship, which was not only a status of honour but also a guide as to how act loyally to one’s Roman identity.

Augustus was a builder of social, religious, and political order that was deliberately replicated in the provinces by the establishment of socio-political institutions. These institutions were often established by the Romans, but other institutions were established and practised by in the πόλεις of the east of the empire, and had the goal of giving honour to Augustus. The significance of studying the literary and
numismatic evidence demonstrates the clear historical connection between the Roman colony at Philippi and the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

Augustus used patronage networks, political offices, and the imperial cult offices to further his world building, and these were all undergirded by the social value of honour. Having honour was not just the preoccupation of the elites but, as it will be seen, the social value of honour was imitated in non-elite associations that practised an adapted cursus honorum. Thus Roman elite social values and behaviours that originated in a highly socially stratified society had penetrated every level of society, through the replication of its values in the provinces.

4.2. Augustus: The World Definer and Builder

Octavian (later Augustus) set out to build and propagate the symbolic universe that had him at its centre. For this to become a reality, Octavian needed to use symbolic mediums, such as art and coins, as these were the mediums of political rhetoric in ancient Rome.322

After the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, the struggle for power continued for another thirteen years. Octavian used art and other symbolic mediums against his rivals who were also contending for power.323 Paul Zanker notes that during this time the visual symbols distributed by Octavian and his rival groups were considerable and carried to the extreme. Zanker describes the rivalry between Octavian and his greatest opponent, Marc Antony, as rulers in battle: ‘[o]ne has the impression that two Hellenistic kings are competing for control of Rome’.324

322 See pages 87-90.
324 Ibid.
If Octavian was to have sole power, then his two main rivals, Sextus Pompey and Antony needed to be eliminated. To achieve this, Octavian and his supporters set out ‘to win men’s minds’\textsuperscript{325} by creating a symbolic universe that placed Octavian as the rightful ruler over Rome and its empire. In order to create a symbolic universe, he needed to use Roman ideology to his advantage which was done by the stressing of his relationship with Julius Caesar (see Chapter 3.2).\textsuperscript{326} At every opportunity, he evoked the memory of Caesar in the minds of the veterans and the plebeians. In July of 44 BCE Octavian staged the \emph{Ludi Victoriae Caesar}, which were games that Julius Caesar had vowed to Venus, to hold before his death.\textsuperscript{327} During the games, a comet appeared in the sky for seven days and Octavian used this opportunity to claim it to be a divine portent as a sign of Caesar’s elevation to divinity:

\begin{center}
His late Majesty Augustus had deemed this comet very propitious to himself; as it had appeared at the beginning of his rule, at some games which, not long after the decease of his father Caesar.\textsuperscript{328}
\end{center}

The comet was named the \textit{sidus Iulium} (Julian Star) and used on all Caesar’s statues and later on his helmet. The star soon appeared as a symbol on coins that depicted Octavian familial association with Caesar, as in Figure 1.\textsuperscript{329}

\textsuperscript{326} Especially externalisation and objectivation.
\textsuperscript{327} Zanker, \textit{The Power of Images}, 34.
\textsuperscript{328} Pliny, \textit{Nat.}, 2.93-94. (Rackham, LCL).
\textsuperscript{329} Zanker, \textit{The Power of Images}, 35.
Octavian. 36 BCE. AR Denarius
Obverse:
Legend: IMP·CAESAR·DIVI·F·III·VIR·ITER·R·P·C
Type: Head of Octavian.

Reverse:
Legend: DIVO·IVL·COS·ITER·ET·TER·DESIG
Type: Tetra style temple; within, figure wearing veil and holding lituus in right hand; on architrave, inscription; within pediment, *sidus Iulium*; on left, lighted altar.

The star was also used as a symbol of good news, of a new age of happiness and hope that was commemorated on coins, finger rings, and seals.\(^{330}\) Thus it was a symbol and used by Octavian and his supporters to legitimise himself as Caesar’s heir.\(^{331}\)

In the year 42 BCE, Octavian further sought to legitimise his claim to be the rightful heir to Caesar by Julius Caesar’s deification and admission into the state cult, which meant that he was worshipped in all Italian cities. By succeeding in doing this, he could, as far as he was concerned, now legitimately call himself the *divi filius* (son of a god).\(^{332}\) The title of *divi filius* gave Octavian many advantages to gain and maintain power. By claiming *divi filius* he could claim to have divine ancestry, just as Julius

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Caesar had divine ancestry. The title of *divi filius* also enabled the transition into his reign within the Roman dynastic ideology.

Octavian’s adoption as Julius Caesar’s son also provided him with a direct connection with Julius Caesar’s social networks and clients. This gave him and his supporters a network of clients who disseminated his propaganda amongst the people. The symbol of the *sidus Iulium* sought to legitimise his birth as a Julian ‘and of the destiny, as “the divine son” of his own future divinity’. Octavian, however, was not the only one vying for political power claiming to be the son of a god and using coins as propaganda. Sextus’ generals announced him to be, as his father before him, the protégé of the god Neptune and an adopted son of a god, as seen in figure 2.

![Figure 2](image_url)

SEXTUS POMPEY, younger son of Pompey the Great. 42 BCE. AR Denarius. Uncertain mint in Sicily.

**Obverse:**
Legend: MAG • PIVS IMP ITER
Type: Diademed head of Neptune right; trident behind

**Reverse:**
Legend: [P]RÆF CLAS • ET • O-R-Æ MARIT • EX [S C]
Type: Naval trophy set on anchor, top of trident visible above helmet; the arms composed of the stem of a prow in right and aplustre in left; heads of Scylla and Charybdis at base.

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334 Ibid., 47.
Coins were a means of the winning of minds; would-be emperors minted coins to advertise the legitimacy and validity of their government. The chief means of dissemination was paying their soldiers with coins bearing their names.\(^{337}\) Even before Octavian’s rise to power, Brutus minted a coin shortly after he, along with Cassius, assassinated Julius Caesar:

Brutus stamped upon the coins which were being minted his own likeness and a cap and two daggers, indicating by this and by the inscription that he and Cassius had liberated the fatherland.\(^{338}\)

Coins were minted to reflect the immediate political and propagandistic interest of the one who minted it and also in order to gain support of the court.\(^{339}\)

Octavian understood that images on coins were powerful mediums; the head marked the authority and, on the reverse, the image of the ‘persuasive content’. Both sides constituted a strong message and the significance of the person.\(^{340}\) Wherever possible, images were used to associate Octavian either directly or indirectly with Julius Caesar and the Julian gens.\(^{341}\) For instance, coins with the sella curulis (curule chair), a symbol of Roman political authority, his golden wreath, and the legend ‘CAESAR DICTATOR’ were attempts to display publicly Caesar’s golden throne and jewel-studded wreath to stir up emotions.\(^{342}\)

\(^{338}\) Dio Cass. *Roman History*. 47.25.3. (Cary and Foster, LCL).
\(^{339}\) Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty*, 216.
\(^{341}\) Zanker, *The Power of Images*, 36. The term gens refer to those who hold name and certain rites in common.
\(^{342}\) Ibid. See Figure 3.
Figure 3

Octavian. 42 BCE. AR Denarius Military mint with Octavian in Italy.

Obverse:
Legend: CAESAR III VIR R P C
Type: Bare head right

Reverse:
Legend: CAESAR DIC PER
Type: Curule chair, front and back legs decorated with eagles, upon which rests a wreath.

Though Antony had won the battles at Philippi and had avenged Julius Caesar in 42 BCE, Octavian was forced from the battles due to ill health. Nonetheless, Octavian demonstrated that he was a master tactician of propaganda to rid himself of Antony with a vicious campaign against his political opponent. From the beginning Antony was in an uphill battle against Octavian because the later could claim to be the son of a god while Antony had no such claim. According to Plutarch, Antony had associated himself and his ancestral family with the lineage of the god Hercules and with the mode of life of Dionysus. The god, Dionysus, represented victory and wine in the east. In reality, however, he could not match Octavian’s claim to be the son of a god. Indeed, the portrait of Antony that is found in the Roman poets, Cicero, and Plutarch, is somewhat pejorative.

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343 Dio Cass. *Roman History*, 47.45.
346 Plutarch, *Ant*. 60.3
Octavian accused Antony of not upholding Roman customs because of his relationship with the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra.\textsuperscript{348} Antony was portrayed as bewitched by the foreign queen, who was plotting the ruin of the Capitol.\textsuperscript{349} Furthermore, the accusation that Antony was behaving in ways that were not in the traditions of the Republic was especially harsh from Plutarch and Cicero.\textsuperscript{350} Cicero’s character assassination on Antony was quite strident:

But you, who cannot deny you were distinguished by the same Caesar, what would you be if he had not bestowed so much on you? Would your merit have elevated you on to any height? would your birth? You would have wasted every day of your life in brothels, in cookshops, in gambling, in drinking, as you used to do when you deposited your beard – and your wits – in the bosoms of your actresses.\textsuperscript{351}

A similar portrait of Antony as a womanising drunk was painted in Plutarch’s \textit{Life of Antony}.\textsuperscript{352} Cicero’s and Plutarch’s portrait of Antony, however, is a one-sided portrait as Galinsky notes: ‘Julius Caesar was not in the habit of picking incompetents and Antony was his right-hand man both in the field and in affairs of state’.\textsuperscript{353} The mudslinging by Cicero (died 43 BCE) and others, however, had stuck to Antony and ultimately resulted in many of his leaders deserting him before the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE.\textsuperscript{354} Octavian’s final rival for power was now eliminated, opening the way for him to assume sole power.

From the years 42 to 31, the young Octavian used both verbal and visual symbolic media to create a symbolic universe from Roman social institutions that legitimised his right to rule Rome. His prolific use of these symbolic media showed that he understood

\textsuperscript{348} Plutarch, \textit{Ant}. 25.1.
\textsuperscript{349} Horace, \textit{Odes} 1.37.7-10.
\textsuperscript{351} Cicero. \textit{Phil}. 13.11.24. (Walter, LCL).
\textsuperscript{352} Plutarch, \textit{Ant}. 2.3, 24.7-8.
\textsuperscript{353} Galinsky, \textit{Augustus}, 21.
\textsuperscript{354} Starr, \textit{Civilization and the Caesars}, 39.
the power of their influence in the winning of the people’s minds. Once Octavian had gained sole power he was able to implement a cultural revolution that would influence the social and political institutions of Roman identity.

4.3 Pax Augusta and the Cultural Revolution

Even after Octavian had rid himself of rivals, there was no guarantee that the peace would last. He, therefore, had to perpetuate the conceptual machinery that would legitimise his position. He now had to consider how he was going to rule, or perhaps more to point, which way he wanted others to perceive his reign. In order to gain and maintain power he used several socio-political institutions to achieve this. From Octavian’s point of view he was the restorer of the Republic:

In my sixth and seventh consulship, when I had extinguished the flames of civil war, after receiving by universal consent the absolute control of affairs, I transferred the republic from my own control to the will of the senate and the Roman people. For this service on my part I was given the title of Augustus by degree of the senate. 355

Nonetheless he had not made the same mistake as his uncle in appointing himself dictator for life. 356

Rather, Octavian portrayed himself as a servant of the republic and as one who had reluctantly assumed power. Dio Cassius records a speech given by Octavian to the senate in which he recounted his acts that resulted in peace after many years of internal conflict. 357 After enumerating his achievements which ultimately brought peace to the republic, he asked that he should be allowed ‘to be at peace as I live out my life’. 358 Octavian’s speech was well targeted, explaining how under his leadership peace and

355 Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug., 6.34.
356 Galinsky, Augustus, 63.
358 Dio Cass. Roman History, 53.9.1. (Cary and Foster, LCL).
security had come and the importance of its maintenance in the future.\textsuperscript{359} According to Dio, this produced mixed emotions among the senators, some were enthusiastic but others were suspicious. The result, whether through enthusiasm or the fear of others, was that the senate ‘begged’ Octavian until they forced him to assume autocratic power.\textsuperscript{360} Thus, Octavian (now Augustus) had achieved his goal of sole power.

The support of the senate for his rulership enabled him to put structures in place that further legitimised the symbolic universe he was creating. Legitimising his reign continued with the conceptual promotion and shaping of Roman cultural identity was explicitly connected to Roman citizenship, especially so for provincial cities seeking prestige and status.\textsuperscript{361} Two key identity markers used for Roman citizenship were the use of Latin and the wearing of the toga.\textsuperscript{362} The Romans’ use of Latin was preferred over the use of Greek or other local dialects, and it was also the language of official public discourse.\textsuperscript{363} The assumption of the toga was the formal enrolment into the citizen tribe and was part of the identity of being Roman.\textsuperscript{364} According to Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, the wearing of the toga was so closely connected with citizenship that non-citizens were banned from wearing it.\textsuperscript{365}

Furthermore, being Roman meant the practice of Roman customs and traditions was connected to the Roman state. Part of Augustan peace (\textit{Pax Augusta}) was the revival of Roman religion. Augustus claimed that he reversed the neglect of Roman

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{359} Dio Cass. \textit{Roman History}, 53.9-10.
\item \textsuperscript{360} Dio Cass. \textit{Roman History}, 53.11.4.
\item \textsuperscript{361} According to Cicero, a person’s Roman citizenship was to claim a higher allegiance than other citizenships held. See Cicero, \textit{Leg.}, 2.2.5.
\item \textsuperscript{362} A. Wallace-Hadrill, \textit{Rome’s Cultural Revolution} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 40-70.
\item \textsuperscript{363} Ibid., 64-65.
\item \textsuperscript{365} Wallace-Hadrill, \textit{Rome’s Cultural Revolution}, 42.
\end{itemize}
religion and was its restorer.\textsuperscript{366} The revival of Roman religious ritual and customs was done with deliberate awareness of Roman rites, both practised and forgotten, to restore Rome, and to firmly secure his place as its ruler.\textsuperscript{367} thus Augustus was the definer of what it meant to be Roman under his rule.

Augustus also set out to reinforce the concept of the Roman virtue of \textit{pietas}. The term denoted one’s dutiful conduct, faithfulness to one’s gods, parents, benefactors, and country,\textsuperscript{368} and was seen as an integral part of what it meant to be a Roman, especially for the elites. Many, including Augustus, believed that the tumultuous times and moral decline were due to the previous generations’ rejection of traditional custom.\textsuperscript{369} Augustus had legitimised his political power by appealing to his traditional ancestry. Traditional custom was also considered to be a living tradition passed down from the ancestors and which connected elites to their ancestors; thus a connection between the present and past generations was seen as being maintained. By knowing the ancestors, one knew how to act Roman because the ancestors of previous generations were considered to be the repository of Roman values and customs.\textsuperscript{370} Thus, this shared sense of history and religious and social customs determined who was Roman but, just as importantly, who was not.

4.3.1. The Propagation of the Roman Symbolic Universe

The Roman belief that their \textit{mores} (customs) were superior to other peoples was the basis for Roman colonisation. The word ‘colony’ comes from the Latin \textit{colonia}, and to modern persons is loaded with notions of imperialism, of a large, distant, foreign-ruling

\textsuperscript{366} Vellei Paterculi, \textit{Historiae Romanae}, 89.2-5.
\textsuperscript{368} Charlton and Short, \textit{“pĕtas,” A Latin Dictionary}, 1374-1375.
\textsuperscript{369} Goldsworthy, \textit{Augustus}, 224.
\textsuperscript{370} Cicero, \textit{Rep.} 2.2-4.
power. Ancient notions of colonisation did not only refer to a subject territory but also the Roman *colonia* was one of the main instruments of expansion and Romanisation, the spread of Roman power, influence, and culture.\footnote{E. T. Salmon, *Roman Colonization Under the Republic* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1969), 13. Joanne Berry notes that this started in the Republican era in Italy. See J. Berry, “Urbanization,” in *A Companion to Roman Italy*, ed. A. E. Cooley (Wiley, 2016), 294ff.}

In the late Roman Republic, establishing colonies had a strategic political purpose. The *colonia* served to secure and consolidate the Roman state as they repelled enemy attacks and maintained the subjection of conquered peoples.\footnote{Ibid., 15.} A colony also was a means of propagation of Roman power and ‘denoted a group of settlers established by the Roman state, collectively and with formal ceremony, in a specified locality to form a self-administrating civic community.’\footnote{Ibid. See also Charlton and Short, “cōlōnīa,” *A Latin Dictionary*, 370.} There were two types of colonists who were authorised and sent out in the late Roman Republic: the Latin colonies, *coloniae Latinae*, were considered to be inferior as they did not possess Roman citizenship but possessed Latin citizenship. The other category of colony was Roman citizen colonies (*coloniae civium Romanorum*).\footnote{Salmon, *Roman Colonization Under the Republic*, 15.} The Roman citizen colonies were rarer as they were less suitable in foreign territories. In early Roman political thought, it was unthinkable that there should be a citizen body separated by a foreign land and having a separate sub-local government.\footnote{Ibid.} The Roman citizen was considered to have more honour than those with Latin citizenship.

Augustus continued to use Roman colonisation as a means of extending his power through patronage.\footnote{Suetonius. *Aug.* 46. Berry, “Urbanization,” 305.} Colonisation achieved the enfranchisement of individual

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provincials and colonies mainly through the settlement of veterans,\textsuperscript{377} as in the case of Philippi. Colonies could be shown further favour by having the status of \textit{ius Italicum} (Italian rights), which meant that they were recipients of imperial benefactions that other colonies did not possess.\textsuperscript{378} The bestowal of \textit{ius Italicum} meant that it was considered to be part of Italy and had privileges of Roman law, administration, and tax exemptions. But more importantly the colonies that had Italian rights were considered to be superior in rank compared with other colonies.\textsuperscript{379}

Such status also was indicative of the non-Greek character of the community, and was often a reward for service to the Roman state.\textsuperscript{380} In the Julian period \textit{ius Italicum} was granted to Roman colonies in the East of the Empire, in particular to certain veteran settlements to compensate the settlers for the remoteness of their environment.\textsuperscript{381} It is interesting to note that the dispossessed veterans of Antony, who had been settled in Philippi, possessed \textit{ius Italicum} but other colonies such as Corinth, Carthage, and Thessalonica did not.\textsuperscript{382} It was quite possible that this was politically expedient to bestow \textit{ius Italicum} on a city where veterans who once held allegiance to Antony lived.

Furthermore, the \textit{ius Italicum} was a category of colony, mostly made up of veterans, with the goal of securing and maintaining his interests. Augustus created the category because he was ‘[e]ager to promote the glory and greatness of Rome, and he sought to increase the prestige of her extension, the \textit{colonia’}.\textsuperscript{383} As \textit{ius Italicum} could only be bestowed by Augustus, colonies having such status were now the highest type

\textsuperscript{378} Galinsky, \textit{Augustus}, 168.
\textsuperscript{381} Ibid., 316.
\textsuperscript{382} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{383} Salmon, \textit{Roman Colonization Under the Republic}, 141.
of Roman community. What is also important here for investigating Philippi is that honour status and identity were based on one’s city of origin. In both Greek and Roman thought, a person’s birthplace was considered either to help or hinder them in their society. Regional snobbery in the form of rank (colonia) over other cities and regions was common; this will be explored further in Chapter Five.

4.3.2. Oaths of Loyalty

Part of the conceptual machinery used by Augustus, which reflected the reality of Pax Augusta, was that of the socio-political institution of oath taking. Oaths of allegiance that helped to legitimise Augustus’ power were also one facet of a ‘plausibility structure’, a concept of Berger’s that describes contexts that support a group’s beliefs and meanings (see Chapter 3.2.1). An oath of allegiance was taken by Roman citizens and non-Romans to pledge personal loyalty in perpetuity to Augustus and his descendants. Even before he became emperor, Augustus required all of Italy to swear an oath of allegiance to him before the battle of Actium. Bruce Harris observes: ‘the ancients were habitual takers of oaths, both personal and corporate, in private and in public’. The use of oaths not only had religious significance but also political, especially when declared to the emperors. The Romans believed that those who took such oaths seriously would be rewarded by the gods with protection and prosperity for the individual and the state.

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384 Ibid.
385 See Chapter 3, especially internalisation.
387 Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug., 5.25
389 Ibid.
Oath taking was particularly important in the Roman military. Upon joining their unit for the first time, recruits would swear a voluntary oath of allegiance to the commander. The oath obligated the recruit:

not to depart in order to take flight or through fear, nor to retreat from the line except to recover or obtain a weapon, strike a foe or rescue a friend.

Although this oath predates *Pax Augusta*, military oaths would later partially constitute the civil oaths of allegiance in imperial times. The notion of allegiance is important as some of Philippi’s colonists were Antony’s veterans, who would have initially sworn an oath of allegiance to him. The veterans would have had to take a new oath to Augustus, which would mean changing loyalties.

The reciprocal relationship between a commander and his soldiers in the military was based on *fides* or πίστις. Teresa Morgan notes that the inscriptive and numismatic evidence of the Early Principate reveals that loyalty between Roman armies and emperors was celebrated and even used as a boast by soldiers. Emperors would award the title *pia fidelis* to legions or auxiliary units for demonstrating their loyalty, particularly during their successful bid for power or for the suppression of a revolt. Throughout the empire, the value of the title *pia fidelis* given to army units and individual soldiers is evident in its inclusion in retired soldiers’ career summary.

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391 Harris, “Oaths of Alligence to Caesar,” 110.
392 Ibid.
393 Augustus, *Res gest. divi Aug.*, 1.3.
395 Ibid.
396 Ibid.
inscribed on their tombstones and in military diplomas of retiring soldiers who were awarded Roman citizenship. ³⁹⁷

The template for imperial oaths sworn to Augustus was first used by Julius Caesar. The use of oaths, vows, and prayers became centred on the dictator, Julius Caesar, rather than the gods alone. Harris notes that in the last two years of his life ‘Caesar surrounded himself more openly with these manifestations of power’. ³⁹⁸ The annual offering of public prayers for his safety was an acknowledgment that Rome’s salus (safety, welfare) and incolumitas (soundness, safety) were now centred on Caesar. ³⁹⁹ Furthermore, magistrates entering office were required to swear support for Caesar’s acta (deeds) both past and future. ⁴⁰⁰ Though there is no direct evidence of a voluntary oath of allegiance taken at the same time to Julius Caesar, it was the regular practice of Augustus and the Caesars after him. Harris believes it is likely that a voluntary oath of allegiance was taken at the same time. ⁴⁰¹

After the Battle of Actium, the legionary recruits took the sacramentum (oath) ⁴⁰² to Augustus personally, which meant that allegiances to other commanders were surpassed. ⁴⁰³ In all prayers offered on behalf of the senate and Roman people the name of Augustus was included. The impact of oaths to Augustus was further demonstrated at public and private banquets where people were to offer libations for Augustus. ⁴⁰⁴ Oaths of loyalty were a personal pledge to Augustus and his family and a total commitment to protecting his interests.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.
³⁹⁸ Harris, “Oaths of Alligence to Caesar,” 111.
³⁹⁹ Dio Cass. Roman History. 44.6. See also Morgan, Roman Faith and Christian Faith, 81.
⁴⁰⁰ Harris, “Oaths of Alligence to Caesar,” 111.
⁴⁰¹ Ibid.
⁴⁰³ Harris, “Oaths of Alligence to Caesar,” 112.
Oaths of allegiance taken by client kings were not made to the senate or Rome but to Augustus. For instance, the client king, Deiotarus of Paphlagonia, his officials, all the cities of the region, and all local communities swore an oath of allegiance to Augustus:

I swear by Jupiter, Earth, Sun, by all the gods and goddess, and by Augustus himself, that I will be loyal to Caesar Augustus and to his children and descendants all of my life in word, deed, and in thought, regarding as friends whomever they so regard, and considering as enemies whomever they so adjudge; that in defense of their interests I will spare neither body, soul, life, nor children, but will in every way undergo every danger in defense of their interests; that whenever I perceive or hear anything being said or planned or done against them I will lodge information about this and will be an enemy to whomever says or plans or does any such thing….But if I do anything contrary to this oath or not in conformity with what I swore, I myself call down upon myself, my body, my soul, my life, my children, and all my family and property, utter ruin and utter destruction unto all my issue and all my descendants, and may neither earth nor sea receive the bodies of my family or my descendants, or yield fruits to them.405

Although there are no standard oaths of allegiance sworn to Augustus, a similar formula have been found in other oaths of allegiance. In the Cypriot oath of allegiance to Tiberius those taking the oath swore: 1) loyalty to the Caesar and his house, 2) to have the same friends and foes, and 3) to receive curses if the oath is broken.406 Oaths of allegiance expected a depth of loyalty that was pervasive in one’s personal and public life and would have been taken seriously by those taking the oath. Also, we see that loyalty was considered by Augustus to be an active conformity to the protection of his interests rather than a passive pledge that could be ignored after the ceremony was completed.

The pervasiveness of oaths of allegiance in the colonies occurred not only at the elite level but also extended to whole populations. Benjamin Rubin argues that in the first-century BCE the whole Roman colony of Antioch in Galatia demonstrated their loyalty by taking an oath of allegiance to Augustus and the imperial family during

405 OGIS, no.532 (= Dessau, no. 8, 871) trans. Lewis and Reinhold, Roman Civilization, 589.
imperial festivals. He believes this indicates that, at Antioch, there was a sense of participation in Rome’s empire building:

Every segment of Antioch’s diverse population came together to give thanks for the blessings of Augustan rule.

If the imperial cult was pervasive at Antioch in the first century BCE, then it can be argued that Philippi would have a similar demonstration of loyalty and allegiance. The fact that Philippi possessed *ius Italicum* and was settled by veterans, who continued to maintain connections with the Roman military, would mean it highly likely that oaths of allegiance would be administered regularly.

The relationship between the imperial cult and the socio-political practice of oaths highlights the fact that both of these institutions were significant aspects of Roman citizenship and Roman identity. It has also shown that oaths taken were not merely empty gestures but were a plausibility structure that was integral to Roman identity. Oaths of allegiance were taken by non-Romans during imperial festivals highlights the fact that the imperial cult was used as a plausibility structure in order to reinforce the prevailing symbolic universe.

4.3.3. The Imperial Cult

In this section the spread of the socio-political institution of imperial cult will now be explored as part of the conceptual machinery that maintained Augustus’ symbolic universe. The participation by elite Romans and non-Romans in the imperial cult was

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408 Ibid., 35.

not an empty or an expedient necessity to further one’s political ambitions. Rather the imperial cult was another form of conceptual machinery that was used to legitimise the symbolic universe that had Caesar at the centre. As was discussed above, the individual was expected to show loyalty to the state, particularly to Caesar, but also to familial religious tradition. For both the Greeks and the Romans there were expected behaviours which indicated the loyalty of individuals to family and state. This could be problematic for Paul and his converts because the converts were to express their loyalty to a new lord and saviour over and above all others (see Chapter 8.3.2-8.3.3).

First, it is important to note that modern definitions of religion differ significantly from those of ancient Greek and Roman ones. In Greek and Latin there was no word that corresponds to the English concept of ‘religion’. The word used for the proper reverence towards the divine in Greek is εὐσέβεια, and pietas in Latin. Other words described how appropriate reverence was to be exhibited, in Greek λατρεία (service) and θρησκεία (worship, ritual), and in Latin colere, which means ‘to tend’ or ‘look after’.

Religion in the Greco-Roman world was marked by having proper reverence towards the divine and the proper observance of associated traditional customs. Both Greek and Roman religions are understood and practised as a ‘coherent whole’, meaning that religion is seen as emerging from sacred practices that developed over time, were connected to local civic and state traditions, and safeguarded orthopraxic.

The term εὐσέβεια is a significant term because it reveals how the Greeks understood the emperor’s status and was another way of gaining honour either for the

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411 Ibid.
individual or the city. Inscriptions reveal that local benefactors and priests in the imperial cult are praised for their public display of εὐσέβεια which was a witness for both the city and the province.\textsuperscript{413} The display of εὐσέβεια was part of the oath of allegiance taken by the island of Cyprus to Tiberius. Lines 10-15 are revealing:

\begin{quote}
We, ourselves and our Children, [SWEAR] to HARKEN unto and to OBEY alike by land and sea, to regard with LOYALTY [εὐνοησειν] and to WORSHIP [σέβασεσθαι] TIBERIUS CAESAR AUGUSTUS, son of AUGUSTUS, with all HIS HOUSE.\textsuperscript{414}
\end{quote}

According to Price, the term εὐνοησειν is used to denote loyalty that was displayed by citizens to their communities, although it was never used in oaths of allegiance to one’s local community. The term εὐσέβεια is a stronger term that was used when referring to the gods. Augustus had divine status as a god in that he was considered to have absolute power in relation to his worshippers.\textsuperscript{415} Thus the display of εὐσέβεια was the performance of the cult’s rituals in order to secure stable order and demonstrated that they saw themselves as dependent on the emperor as they were on the gods.\textsuperscript{416}

Though ambition and competition for honour were a part of ancient Mediterranean society, they did not negate the importance of demonstrating the virtue of εὐσέβεια in cultic observances, especially in the provinces.\textsuperscript{417} The giving of honour and the formation of a cult around the emperor occurred due to Hellenistic customs and the traditional view of honouring the kings for their benefactions. In Hellenistic cities, ruler cults were practised, in which the ruler was recognised as a god by its citizens.

\textsuperscript{414} Translation from Mitford, “A Cypriot Oath of Allegiance to Tiberius,” 76.
\textsuperscript{416} Price, “Gods and Emperors,” 89.
Thus the ruler cults were tributary in nature and participation in the cult demonstrated the public display of gratitude for benefactions.418

The imperial cult was established in Hellenistic cities and was expressed by traditional customs. Recently several Roman historians have argued that there were a number of imperial cults rather than one imperial cult that was centrally controlled by the emperor.419 According to Dio Cassius, it was at the provinces’ initiative that the establishment of the emperor cult became pervasive as they sought to express honour to Augustus in dedicated spaces within established sacred precincts.420 Thus imperial cults in the eastern provinces were expressed in local ways: ‘These forms of cult were rarely a separate export to the provinces from Rome, but developed in different ways and in the context of the various forms of Romanized religion that operated there’.421

Furthermore, the imperial cult was incorporated into local civic festivities, which meant that it was a public display that conveyed εὐσέβεια. Festivals honouring the emperor were often held with traditional festivals in honour of the city’s chief deity. These festivals involved the entire community and were not half-hearted affairs, but part of the provincial cities’ religious festivals and celebrations. Simon Price argues that the organisation, duration, and celebration of the festivals indicate that they were important for the whole city, not merely to the elite.422 In the East there were regular festivals in honour of the emperor, with the most prominent ones being festivals associated with competitions in athletics or music, which were held every four years, although a two year cycle has also been found.423

422 Price, Rituals and Power, 101-103.
423 Ibid., 104.
The significance of the imperial cult to the life of the city is further seen in that imperial festivals were held in both religious and civic centres. For instance the city of Lycia held a provincial festival in the sanctuary of Leto.\textsuperscript{424} Sacrifices were sometimes performed in the central square, or as in Ephesus in the council house where there was an imperial temple. The council house was also possibly the starting place from where a procession would weave through the city and pass by significant political sites. This meant that the cult was seen to be intertwined with civic institutions.\textsuperscript{425} In some cities the theatre and gymnasium were places where imperial statues or friezes were permanently displayed.\textsuperscript{426}

Roman citizens, however, were not to worship a living emperor as a god as only the dead Caesars were given this status. The imperial cult for Romans living abroad enabled them to express honour to Caesar, as seen for instance in the imperial cult at Bithynia:

Caesar…gave permission for the dedication of sacred precincts in Ephesus and in Nicaea to Rome and to Caesar, his father, whom he named the hero Julius…. He commanded that the Romans resident in these cities should pay honour to these two divinities.\textsuperscript{427}

Augustus used the imperial cults as part of his reordering of the Roman culture by supplying structure, order and meaning. In other words, it was a response and an alternative to chaos that enabled Augustus to re-stabilise the Roman state and empire.\textsuperscript{428} Order and meaning since the time of Augustus had begun to be centred on the emperor and the imperial cult was an avenue to further this order. As seen in the inscription

\textsuperscript{424} Ibid., 109.
\textsuperscript{425} Winter, \textit{Divine Honours for the Caesars}, 77. In the East, imperial cults were also used to make diplomatic approaches to the emperor.
\textsuperscript{426} Price, \textit{Rituals and Power}, 109-111, 139.
\textsuperscript{427} Dio Cass. \textit{Roman History}, 51.20.6-7. (Cary and Foster, LCL).
above, the giving of honours to Julius Caesar and Rome implied that it was a
demonstration of honour and loyalty to Augustus and also to Rome.429

In a recent study, Justin Hardin argues that the eastern provinces further
demonstrated their fervent reverence for the living emperor in provincial coins. He cites
the numismatic evidence from the provinces Pergamum and Ephesus that commemorate
Augustus’ benefactions.430 In Pergamum a coin minted 19-18 BCE displays the Roman
temple along with Augustus commemorating the building of the temple ten years
earlier. In 28 BCE a coin issued in Ephesus had stamped the words:

IMP(erator) CAESAR DIVI F(ilius) CO(n)s(ul) VI LIBERTATIS P(opuli)
R(omani) VINDEX’ ‘Imperator Caesar, son of god, consul for the sixth time,
protector of the Roman people’s liberty.431

The imperial cult had a marked effect not only on Roman citizens but also on the
entire empire. What has emerged in this section is that ‘religion’ as understood by the
Romans and Greeks was connected to one’s social and ethnic customs. The tributary
function of the cult also shows that religion was as much a matter of official state
relationships as it was about expressing one’s ethnic customs.

4.3.4. Imperial Culture as Patronage

The imperial culture’s influence was pervasive, not just in the civic activities of the city
but on a personal level through having Augustus as one’s supreme patron. On February
5, in 2 BCE Augustus was declared by the senate to be the father of the Romans and
given the titles pater patriae and parens patriae. This portrayed him in the role of both

431 Ibid., 29.
benefactor and father of the Roman people. Romans throughout the empire considered Augustus to be *pater familias*, father of the household.432 The Roman poet Ovid declared him to be father of the homeland, the honorific title describing Augustus’ role as one who brought peace and security, ‘by our native land which is safe and secure under thy fatherly care’.433 One should note, though, that Ovid’s show of reverence to the imperial house had an ulterior motive as he was hoping for a pardon and a return to Rome after being exiled.434

The scope of Augustus’ and the Julio-Claudian Caesars’ patronage via imperial culture is evidenced in both the public and private lives of the Romans. Archaeological finds at Pompeii uncovered imperial portrait busts and statues located in private houses. In the Villa dei Misteri, a statue of Livia was found and, in another private house, a portrait of a Julian prince, possibly Marcellus.435 A life size statue of Galba was found in the street immediately outside a grand house in Herculaneum, which was likely dropped in a panic due to the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE.436 Tacitus also records that a senator, named Junius, in Rome had a bust of Tiberius in his house.437 This demonstrates the pervasiveness of imperial culture in Roman life during the Julio-Claudian reign. The presence of imperial propaganda found in private homes also dispels the notion that participation in the imperial cult was meaningless or an empty outward gesture.

The influence of imperial patronage in associations was also present in non-elite associations. Philip Harland argues that imperial propaganda influenced non-elite

436 Ibid., 201-202.
437 Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.64.
persons in the first-century CE Greco-Roman society at large. Many private associations throughout the Empire had devotions to the imperial cult. Inscriptions dated 38-42 CE from an association of Demeter-worshippers at Ephesus show imperial cult connections, claiming as their patron deity a member of the imperial family, Sebaste (the wife of Augustus). Other inscriptions give public honour to prominent persons who had been elevated to the priesthood of the imperial cult. If the non-elite incorporated the imperial cult into their associations, then the case for them being influenced or participating in actions created by Roman ideology in the colonies is highly possible.

Thus, it can be concluded that the patronage of the Julio-Claudian emperors was accepted by many and had a significant impact on both Roman and non-Roman at every stratum of society in the Greco-Roman world. This suggests that the imperial cult aided the process of the internalisation, or at least substantial amount of internalisation, of Roman values and world view.

4.4. Roman Social Order and the Preoccupation with Honour
The social value of honour was a virtue that was held in the highest regard throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. In order to understand the social and ethical behaviours at Roman Philippi, it is necessary to understand this prime social value, which was pervasive in every social interaction. The value that drove the Roman

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elites, including the Emperor, and undergirded the Roman social stratification and its socio-political institutions, was based on honour.

Nowhere was this truer than in the Roman Empire where it was the glue that held together its socially stratified social network. Roman society was hierarchical and based on a network of relationships bonds which bound them into a community and society; Roman behaviours were a product of these bonds. The fact that the boundaries of these bonds were not always stable, meant that one’s position in society could be affected by others, resulting in the individual continually expending much energy in order to maintain an honourable position. The gaining of honour or maintaining one’s honour was achieved by public displays of virtue, or in a public contest for positions or possessions. Catiln Barton points out the extreme behaviours that some went to win a contest; she also notes that contests for honour were often unequal. She cites the contest between a poor market gardener and a Roman soldier in *Metamorphoses* (9.39-42). The soldier was determined to requisition the gardener’s donkey. The gardener resists but the end result is the loss of the gardener’s donkey and his life.

At the top of Imperial Rome’s social pyramid were the emperor and his family. It was Caesar who possessed the greatest *dignitas* and he also had *tribuncia potestas* (tribune power), which gave him the power to change civil affairs in Rome. The *tribuncia potestas* enabled him to increase his influence over the senate, as changes to legislation would enable some social mobility between the senatorial order and the equestrian order, who could now be elevated if the requirements were met.

442 Barton, *Roman Honor*, 35.
443 Ibid., 89.
444 Ibid., 90.
446 Harris, “The Subversion of Status,” 137.
Within the elite stratum, a distinction was made between two groups of people, the *ordo senatorius* (senatorial order) and the *ordo equester* (equestrian order). The senatorial and equestrian orders were just below the top of the social pyramid. Admission into the senatorial or equestrian orders was not solely based on wealth or economic success\(^447\) which, as Ramsay MacMullen points out, is a common modern assumption among scholars.\(^448\) Membership in these groups was determined by the following factors: family of origin, possession of citizenship, freedom from servile origins, ethnic and regional affiliation, individual ability, background and loyalty to the imperial monarchy.\(^449\)

The *ordo equester* was somewhat more open to a larger group of people due to the lower threshold of wealth and was not reliant on nobility for membership. After their military service, the *equites* were used by Augustus to administer imperial property for the economic and financial administration provincial cities of the empire.\(^450\) The function and importance of this group changed significantly under Augustus, as membership in the senatorial order no longer totally depended on family origins, wealth or occupation of traditional offices. Rather, it rested on having an official career in the imperial service achieved through the pursuit of the *cursus honorum* (sequence of offices).\(^451\) Although the social stratum within the Empire was stable, change within the social strata was possible especially to the senatorial elite class by equestrians. This was due to the integration of provincials through the extending of Roman citizenship and the

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\(^450\) See also Alföldy, *The Social History of Rome*, 107.

urbanisation in the provinces of the Empire by Augustus. Any social mobility by those from a lower status was carefully monitored.

The stratum was reinforced in the social and legal ordering of Roman society and was biased towards those who had possession of honor (esteem, repute) or dignitas (worth). For the Romans, the virtue of honour was one’s worth in the estimation of not just anyone, but of those who themselves possessed honour:

For just as reputation does not consist of one person’s remarks, and as ill repute does not consist of one person’s disapproval, so renown does not mean that we have merely pleased one good person. In order to constitute renown, the agreement of many distinguished and praiseworthy men is necessary.

Seneca goes on to state that one’s reputation or glory is also dependent on the esteem of those who gave it. The bestowal of public praise and honour is a judgement of others who are considered by the Roman elite to be ‘good men’. Although honour belongs to the one it is bestowed upon, it can also be lost by the judgement of the same people who initially bestowed it. In short, the virtue of honour was a matter of elite public opinion, not the plebs’.

The gaining of honour also meant that the person or a group could use it for influence over others (patronage). In the Roman world, some could have wealth but ultimately their social origin, political connections, or possession of Roman citizenship determined their place in the Roman order and ability to have influence. Pax Augusta had brought with it favourable economic conditions, especially for the elite, which enabled urbanisation to progress further than it had before. This gave Augustus and

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452 Ibid., 95.
453 Seneca. Ep. 102.9. (Gummere, LCL).
Rome’s elites an opportunity to expand their patronage over and within the provinces. The giving of Roman *beneficia* and the response by their *cliens* was couched in powerful honour-shame codes of conduct present in reciprocal giving.\(^{457}\)

The social value of honour understood as the motivating factor for action among the elites highlights the fact that honour was a value that had undergone the process of ‘internalisation’, whereby, according to Berger, an individual accepts the norms and values of others (see Chapter 3.2). The fact that honour was a status bestowed by others on an individual or group meant that it had the power to affect esteem and had influence over the behaviour of others (either by shame or praise). As will be seen in the following section and in more detail in Chapter Five, the value of honour had trickled down to the non-elite associations and provincial elite at Philippi.

### 4.4.1. The Course of Honour in the Provinces

Augustus’ conceptual machinery also used the existing socio-political institution of patronage to maintain his control on the colonies’ elites. The empire ruled through its cities, particularly the elites of provincial cities, and the Caesars sought the loyalty of their subjects by encouraging the reproduction of Roman ruling order. The acceptance of Roman rule meant a relationship of patronage and loyalty to the emperor.\(^ {458}\) Local elites responded by incorporating the Roman emperor into his or her pantheon of gods, and participated in the Roman rituals and ceremonies that marked membership in the Roman community.\(^ {459}\)

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\(^{459}\) Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty*, 337-338.
Roman colonisation had brought Rome’s socio-political institutions into its provinces. One such institution was that of the *cursus honorum*, the sequence of offices ‘that marked the standard career for the Roman senatorial class, and which had been in place since the middle of the fourth century BCE.’\(^{460}\) Though initially found in the senatorial order in Rome, it was later replicated in other strata of society and in the colonies. The order in which the *cursus* ascended was: 1) quaestor, 2) aedile, 3) praetor, 4) consul, 5) censor.\(^\text{461}\) Each office held certain public responsibilities. The quaestors were responsible for receiving taxes and making payments to the treasury at Rome. The aediles were responsible for the upkeep of public buildings and staging games for the populace that they were expected to finance personally. The first rank in the *cursus* to hold the *imperium*\(^\text{462}\) were the praetors, who were judges in Rome or acted as magistrates in the provinces.\(^\text{463}\)

The *cursus* increased honour reputation because those who had passed through all the offices were considered to have attained the highest level of prestige. Even among the equestrian order, a distinction was made between those who had held a public office in the *cursus honorum*, and those who had not.\(^\text{464}\) Those who had completed the *cursus honorum* could then confer honour and esteem on others whom they considered worthy of it.\(^\text{465}\) For instance, Pliny wrote to Vibius Maximus regarding a post of military tribune for a friend, ‘I think I may claim a right to ask the same services of you for my


\(^{461}\) Tacitus. *Ann.* 12.64.

\(^{462}\) This refers to the power of the magistrate or pro-magistrate by Cicero. See J. Richardson, *The Language of Empire: Rome and the Idea of Empire from the Third Century BC to the Second Century AD* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 66ff.

\(^{463}\) Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*, 52.

\(^{464}\) Alfoéldy, *The Social History of Rome*, 103.

friends, as I would offer to yours if I were in your station.\textsuperscript{466} Thus junior public or political offices were bestowed on the basis of reciprocity that meant a person would have to have the right connections (patron) in order to gain the position. It was also dependent on the possession of honour for both the patron and the client.\textsuperscript{467} Thus the offices were considered to be favours that publicised someone’s esteem which would add to the honour of the client.\textsuperscript{468} Pliny’s request for an office was proof to his clients and others that his honour reputation was of considerable influence.

The language used to describe those in public offices reveals the connection of honour and esteem to the office; the most common words are honor and dignitas in Latin and in Greek τιμή.\textsuperscript{469} The honour of receiving public office also carried with it a degree of honour already incumbent with it that was apart from the person. This was marked by preferential treatment with special attire and seats of honour at public events and this distinguished them from others.\textsuperscript{470} The honour of the office was at the discretion of the emperor and it could be stripped of its honour by the revoking of its privileges.\textsuperscript{471} Thus it was the emperor who had the greatest influence on the virtue of honour for those in public office in Rome.

The replication of the Rome’s cursus was practised in the provinces by Roman citizens and included the same titles and offices as found in Rome.\textsuperscript{472} But the vying for honour was not just a preoccupation of the elite. The cursus was replicated in the provinces as a way of obtaining honour in local cults and associations. In lower status groups, the cursus was replicated by local civic honours, associated with offices within

\textsuperscript{466} Pliny the Younger. Ep. 3.2. (Radice, LCL).
\textsuperscript{467} Pliny the Younger. Ep. 3.2.
\textsuperscript{468} Lendon, Empire of Honour, 185.
\textsuperscript{469} Ibid., 176.
\textsuperscript{470} Ibid., 181.
\textsuperscript{471} Ibid., 182.
\textsuperscript{472} Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 57-58.
their voluntary associations and non-elite cult groups that accrued greater honour for the individual.\textsuperscript{473} Associations were seen as an opportunity to participate in a \textit{cursus honorum} than that which was otherwise available in the local social context. Joseph Hellerman gives the example of the Mithras cult that was popular among non-elite males in the second and third centuries CE. The cult had offices in the ascending order of \textit{Corax} $\rightarrow$ \textit{Nymphus} $\rightarrow$ \textit{Miles} $\rightarrow$ \textit{Leo} $\rightarrow$ \textit{Perses} $\rightarrow$ \textit{Heliodromus} $\rightarrow$ \textit{Pater}. This sequence of offices was institutionalised as part of the cult ideology with those who achieved the grade of \textit{Leo} to be considered as true 'participants'.\textsuperscript{474}

Wealthy persons living in Roman municipals who were not part of the ruling elite used associations and \textit{collegia} as an avenue to gain honour. Patrons would provide finances to one or more groups for banquets and festivities and in return would receive public honour in the form of honorific inscriptions or a memorial service.\textsuperscript{475} According to John Kloppenborg, voluntary associations, including trade and household associations, were often organised and structured in similar ways to the army or city. In these associations, evidence from inscriptions demonstrate that honour offices such as \textit{mater}, \textit{curator}, \textit{honoratus}, \textit{questor}, and \textit{sacerdos} can be found.\textsuperscript{476}

The socio-political institution of \textit{cursus honorum} was generally not reproduced in the lower stratum of the Roman provinces and municipals. The honorific inscriptions found in Roman provinces, however, strongly suggest that Roman values and customs had trickled down and influenced its colonies. This thesis does not assume that every social level in Philippi had become Roman in its values and world view at the expense of

\textsuperscript{473} Ibid., 56-57.
\textsuperscript{474} Ibid.
local identity but it does suggest that Roman social order was profoundly influential in community identity.

4.5. Roman Citizenship

The socio-political institution of Roman citizenship gave one status; it also had the expectation of the practice of Roman customs. Although Roman citizenship was initially connected to knowing one’s ancestors and the city of Rome itself,\textsuperscript{477} citizenship could also be bestowed on those outside Roman traditional ancestral lines. During the Republic and Imperial times, Roman citizenship was given to non-Romans as a way of furthering the interests and control of Rome over other territories.\textsuperscript{478} Augustus’ enfranchisement of non-Romans and provincials with a bestowal of Roman citizenship nevertheless was restricted to those who were deemed to be worthy of it.\textsuperscript{479}

In Roman political thought, citizens were the only ones worthy and able to work together in order to replicate Roman social and political structures: ‘a populus is formed through the consensual commitment of its members to a particular normative order’.\textsuperscript{480} A particular normative order is agreed upon by the citizens only.\textsuperscript{481} By law, the non-citizen was excluded from the ius civile (civil laws).\textsuperscript{482} In the provinces, the widespread practice of law-making by citizens only, meant that it was a select few who could set or approve the civil laws for their location. Thus the Romans used the word civitas (citizenship) as a metonym for both city and political community.\textsuperscript{483} The civitas was the

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\textsuperscript{478} J. P. V. D. Balsdon, \textit{Romans and Aliens} (London: Duckworth, 1979), 82.
\textsuperscript{481} Cicero, \textit{Rep.}, 1.39-40.
\textsuperscript{482} Garnsey, \textit{Social Status and Legal Privilege}, 262.
\textsuperscript{483} Ando, \textit{Law, Language, and Empire}, 3.
political community, but undergirding this was the fact that it belonged to the individual who was willing and committed in their participation as a member, and this enabled the community to be one. The Romans considered the bond shared by citizens as one of the most intimate ones because they shared all that was considered to be Roman, including customs, institutions, legal judgements, and politics.

The corresponding Greek πολιτεία did not accommodate the same notions. For the Greeks, membership and its entailments was a secondary feature to what they understood as the essential qualities that united the community, which was more centred on kin.

4.5.1. Roman Citizenship as Status

The deferment to, and preferential treatment of, the Roman citizen was enshrined in Roman law. Discrimination in favour of the citizen as opposed to the non-citizen was a permanent feature of Roman law. When the Romans administered the law they took into account a person’s reputation – was he or she ranked among the honestiores (those possessing honour) or the humiliores (those who did not). In Roman law, a person who possessed honestiores had to meet two criteria for full legal personhood: libertas (freedom) and civitas (citizenship). Those who did not meet these criteria were discriminated against. For instance, Dio Cassius records Tiberius’ treatment of Roman and non-Roman astrologers after he dreamt they were deceiving him. He rounded up the

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484 Ibid.
487 Garnsey, Social Status and Legal Privilege, 260.
488 Gaius. Inst. 1.9ff.
astrologers and magicians, putting to death the non-citizen astrologers and magicians, but exiling those who were Roman citizens.\textsuperscript{489} Thus, for the same offence, a Roman citizen was dealt a milder punishment.

Furthermore, because non-Roman citizens were considered to be outside of \textit{ius civile}, they were subject to \textit{coercitio} (coercion) by magistrates. Roman citizens, however, could seek the aid of a tribune or exercise the \textit{provocatio} (right of appeal) against the magistrate.\textsuperscript{490} Paul’s indignation was against the magistrates when he informs \textit{οἱ στρατηγοί}, sent to free Silas and himself, that both of them are Roman citizens.\textsuperscript{491} Also, Paul makes an appeal to the emperor in Acts 25:9-21 to ensure he is not treated like a non-citizen. This strongly suggests that Paul knew that he would receive better treatment by using his status as a Roman citizen.

Within Roman society, the status of citizenship was influenced by Roman social values and stratification that so marked Roman culture. Those who had received their citizenship from emancipation (freedmen) could not hold the roles of Roman magistrates, priesthood or vote in elections. They were also forbidden access to the legions, Praetorian Guard, and the urban cohorts, and would not rise to the orders of curial or equestrian.\textsuperscript{492} Furthermore, freedmen citizens were subject to harsher punishments than non-freedmen citizens. Garnsey cites Tiberius’ persecution of citizens in Italy who practised Jewish and Egyptian rites:

\begin{quote}
\begin{flushleft}
a senatorial edict directed that four thousand descendants of enfranchised slaves, tainted with that superstition and suitable in point of age, were to be shipped to Sardinia and there employed in suppressing brigandage: “if they succumbed to the pestilential climate, it was a cheap loss.” The rest had orders to leave Italy, unless they had renounced their impious ceremonial by a given date.\textsuperscript{493}
\end{flushleft}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{489} Dio Cass. \textit{Roman History} 57.15.8-9.  
\textsuperscript{490} Garnsey, \textit{Social Status and Legal Privilege}, 261.  
\textsuperscript{491} Acts 16:35-40.  
\textsuperscript{492} Garnsey, \textit{Social Status and Legal Privilege}, 262.  
\textsuperscript{493} Tacitus. \textit{Ann.} 2.85.4. (Jackson, LCL).
The above example also shows Roman attitudes towards foreign religious rites, in that they are seen to cause Roman citizens to practise un-Roman customs\(^{494}\) and are therefore a threat to the Roman *civitas*. The citizenship itself was both a product of and subject to Roman social order and values, as it was controlled by those who were in positions of power and who had an interest in maintaining the social order.

The value of honour was also expressed in social stratification that produced two types of citizenship. There were some communities (and individuals) who had ‘Latin rights’. In effect, having Latin rights meant that a person or community had the private rights of a Roman citizen, which included the right to own Roman land, intermarriage, inheritance from Roman citizens but they had no political power, except for symbolic participation in Roman assemblies in Rome.\(^{495}\) Having the status of Latin citizenship was always ranked second after Roman citizenship until the second-century BCE.\(^{496}\) Colonies that possessed Latin rights in the second-century BCE could later gain the rank of *Latium maiar*, which meant that the *decuriones* (local senators) automatically became Roman citizens.\(^{497}\)

The possession of Roman citizenship was a matter of title and honour in the provinces. Those in the provinces who were granted Roman citizenship were now able to show off their status for all to see. The new Roman citizen also had to be enrolled in a Roman voting district (*tribus*). The *tribus* was written in abbreviated form after one’s ancestral name. For instance, Lucius Cornelius Balbus’ official name was L. Cornelius L.f. (Ouf) Balbus.\(^{498}\) The ‘Ouf’ is an abbreviation of the rural *tribus* of Oufentina. The

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\(^{497}\) Lintott, *Imperium Romanum*, 165.

\(^{498}\) Ibid., 162.
absence of a *tribus* in one’s Roman name could mean that he was either a foreigner or only had Latin rights.\(^{499}\)

Although Roman citizenship gave great honour and status it also carried the obligations of loyalty to both Roman political interests and customs. The bestowal of citizenship to individuals or a province was rare during Augustus’ reign and rather than being based on ethnic or kinship criteria, the bestowing of it was a reward for services rendered to Rome, or to those who had taken on Roman customs.\(^{500}\) The other important point is that the granting of Roman citizenship to non-Romans included the acceptance of patronage. The Julio-Claudian Caesars granted citizenship with the objective of binding the loyalty of important people in the empire, not only to Rome but also to the imperial house.\(^{501}\) These men were considered to be friends of Caesar. They and their descendants would be considered for embassies to the emperor, and as mediators between Rome and her provincial territories and other Roman officials.\(^{502}\)

In the next chapter we will see how important to one’s honour status Roman citizenship was to the elite at Philippi. The honour inscriptions and inscriptions from gravestones that have been excavated show just how important citizenship in life and death meant to those who possessed it.

4.5.2. Paul’s Greek and Roman Citizenship

Paul’s possession of multiple citizenships gave him a status that many of his converts lacked. In my view, if Paul was not a Roman or Greek citizen, then there is no rationale as to why he would use it as a template for forming the Philippians’ social identity. His

\(^{499}\) Ibid.

\(^{500}\) Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 240.


\(^{502}\) Ibid.
possession of multiple citizenships would have also meant that he understood what the status and obligations of loyalty associated with citizenship meant. Furthermore, his membership of the Pharisees meant that he understood loyalty was required in belonging to different social groups.

In Pauline studies, the idea that Paul was a Roman citizen is not universally accepted. Some scholars argue that Paul’s holding of both Greek and Roman citizenship, while being an active member of the Pharisees was impossible, and therefore must be a Lukan creation made to suit his narrative needs.503 The problem, as John Lentz argues, is that Paul’s claim of being a strict Pharisee, which required stringent observance to the torah, cultic cleanliness and table fellowship, would be problematic for someone that possessed multiple citizenships.504

Though Lentz concedes that Jews could possess citizenship and civic status in the cities of the Diaspora, they did not necessarily have full citizenship. This was due to the requirement of worshipping the city’s gods and undergoing a Greek education.505 Furthermore, he argues that Greek citizenship was earned, bought, or inherited. Honorary grants were rare.506 It is possible, however, that Jews were given Greek citizenship as an en bloc grant and therefore considered to be a Jewish tribe in the political structure of the city.507 Evidence from Josephus points to the granting of

505 Ibid., 25.
506 Ibid., 33.
citizenship by Seleucus Nicator (359 BCE-281 BCE) to the Jews in the cities that he founded, which included the ones in Asia.\textsuperscript{508}

Seleucus Nicator granted them citizenship in the cities which he founded in Asia and Lower Syria… and declared them to have equal privileges with the Macedonians and Greeks…this citizenship of theirs remains to this very day.\textsuperscript{509}

Lentz argues that this did not mean that the Jews had full citizenship in Tarsus as was granted, yet he concedes that this cannot be proved.\textsuperscript{510}

Lentz argues that the Jews would not have accepted the required obligations of service to the city’s god and participation in civic festivals.\textsuperscript{511} Josephus, however, records that the Jews had an exemption that resulted from an appeal to Agrippa by Ionian Jews:

\begin{quote}
a great multitude of Jews, who lived in its cities, took advantage of their opportunity to speak out freely… and told them of mistreatment which they had suffered in not being allowed to observe their own laws.\textsuperscript{512}
\end{quote}

Further in Josephus’ account (\textit{Ant.} 16.60), he records that the Ionian Jews were granted privileges to practice their customs but with no reference to the possession of either Roman or Greek citizenship. The disparity between Josephus’ accounts has raised concerns about the likelihood of Jews in Ionia having citizenship.\textsuperscript{513} Nonetheless, Josephus had earlier recorded that Agrippa preserved Jewish privileges after the non-Jews of Ionia protested against them in Asia Minor:

\begin{quote}
concerning the Jews, for when the Ionians agitated against them and petitioned Agrippa that they alone might enjoy the citizenship which Antiochus, the grandson of Seleucus, called \textit{Theos} by the Greeks, had given them… the Jews won the right to use their own customs.\textsuperscript{514}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{508} C. J. Hemer, \textit{The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History} (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 122, n.159.
\textsuperscript{509} Josephus, \textit{Ant.} 12.119. (Marcus, LCL).
\textsuperscript{511} Ibid., 32-33.
\textsuperscript{512} Josephus, \textit{Ant.} 16.27. (Marcus, LCL).
\textsuperscript{513} Trebilco, \textit{Jewish Communities in Asia Minor}, 169.
\textsuperscript{514} Josephus, \textit{Ant.} 12.125. (Marcus, LCL).
\end{flushleft}
Josephus reports that Agrippa agreed to maintain their customs and citizenship. Brian Rapske correctly observes from Josephus’ writing that the Jews had sufficient power to assert their Greek citizenship and belong to the πολιτικὸς without conceding their religious distinctiveness. Though in the Ant. 16.27 there is no mention of citizenship, as is mentioned in Ant. 12.119, 125, in both accounts, Jewish claims of the right to practise their customs are challenged but affirmed, which confirms an en bloc grant of citizenship. The mention of citizenship in Ant. 12.119 could well have been added to clarify the account in Ant. 16.27. Thus Paul’s claim that he was a citizen of Tarsus is not without credence and quite possible.

Scholars agree that the possibility of Paul possessing Roman citizenship is less problematic. Paul Trebilco argues that Roman citizenship could be more accommodating than assumed by scholars. His research reveals that ethnic groups, such as the Jews, were quite active in civic life in the cities of Asia Minor. He concludes that Jews could possess Roman citizenship, yet also could have an exemption to practise traditional Jewish rites, though he is cautious about how far this exemption extended and how many Jewish Roman citizens could claim this exemption. This did not discount the fact that the possession of Roman citizenship included loyalty to Rome, Caesar, and the furthering of Roman interests.

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515 Josephus, Ant, 12.127.
516 Rapske, The Book of Acts, 82. For fuller arguments supporting Paul’s claim of Greek citizenship, see pages 72-83.
518 Though he denies Paul’s Roman citizenship, Lentz concedes that it is less a problem than Paul’s claim of Greek citizenship. Lentz, Luke’s Portrait of Paul, 45.
520 Ibid., 172-173.
Furthermore, in the first-century CE, it was possible that an individual could possess citizenship of a *πόλις* along with Roman citizenship. As Rome extended its territories, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the loyalties of its cities because, according to the Romans, one could not be a citizen of two cities.\(^{521}\) This restriction was later relaxed as Rome had an established presence in its *municipia*.\(^{522}\) This point, however, does not solve the problem of how Paul came into the possession of Roman citizenship.

There were several possibilities as to how Paul might have obtained Roman citizenship: 1) being born a citizen; 2) by manumission; 3) after completing military service; 4) as a reward; 5) received by a grant to a body of people; or 6) on financial grounds.\(^{523}\) It is true that Tarsus had received favours from Augustus for loyalty in opposing Cassius and his associates.\(^{524}\) Thus it is possible that a grant of citizenship was given as a reward for loyalty. Any reason offered as to how it was obtained by Paul, however, is speculative, as neither Dio Chrysostom nor Dio Cassius mention that citizenship was bestowed upon Tarsus.

If Paul was a Roman citizen by birth, then he would have been given a Roman name. In the Julio-Claudian period every Roman citizen had a full Roman name, which included three names. The first is the *praenomen* (first name), the second was the *nomem*, and the third was the *cognomen*. Those who received a franchise usually took the *praenomen* and *nomen* of their patron, but retained their original name as their *cognomen*.\(^{525}\) It is possible that Paul used the *cognomen* Παῦλος after his encounter with

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\(^{521}\) Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 47.

\(^{522}\) Ibid., 53.


the proconsul Sergius Paulus in Acts 13:7. The name L(ucius) Sergius Paullus was found in a partial fragment of an inscription known as the *travertine cippus* or boundary stone, that marked out the bank of the Tiber. It is dated to the time of Claudius, and identifies Sergius Paulus at an early stage of his senatorial career, which aligned with Paul’s second missionary journey in Acts. The link, however, could be no more than a coincidence, or that Paul took his name with the goodwill of the governor. It is interesting to note however, that his Hebrew name Σαῦλος was changed to Παῦλος in Acts 13, without explanation.

Nonetheless, in Acts, Luke stressed Paul’s claims of belonging to the sect of the Pharisees. According to Lentz, Jews who obtained citizenship could hardly be those who observed a strict form of Pharisaic Jewish identity. But as we have seen above, this was not necessarily the case. The likely reason Luke had included Paul’s Pharisaic education was to depict him in connection with his Jewish identity because of the threat of persecution by the Flavians. Martin Hengel observes that, although Luke stressed Paul’s connection with his Jewish identity, Paul himself expresses a radical break with it. Though Paul did distance himself from his Jewish honour markers, the break is not as radical as Hengel argues, as Paul remained loyal to his Jewish heritage (Acts 21:26; 1 Cor 9:20; Gal 2:15). Furthermore, Paul’s persecution of the Christ movement could be attributed to an increase in salience of his Jewish social identity, against those whom he considered to be deviant from his interpretation of the Law (cf. Acts 7:2ff.). This could

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526 The spelling of Paullus in Acts 13:7 contains only one L.
528 Ibid., 288.
532 Ibid.
also be a partial explanation as to why Paul seems to reject outright his Jewish ‘social identity markers’ in Philippians 3. His devotion to a particular interpretation of the Law had caused him to persecute God’s ἐκκλησία.533 The revelation of the Messiah, and the inclusion of the Gentiles, had, in Paul’s mind, reduced the inter-group bias between the two ethnic groups. For Paul and the Philippian church, what was salient for their social identity was having the citizenship of heaven, as will be argued in Chapter Nine.

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter it was seen how Augustus and his supporters effectively used the visual medium of coins in order to construct what Berger calls a ‘symbolic universe’, to enable Augustus to gain and maintain power throughout his reign. Colonisation was an effective means by which Pax Augusta could flourish in the provinces and this meant the conceptual machinery which perpetuated his symbolic universe was propagated. He also effectively used other forms of conceptual machinery to legitimise his symbolic universe through the pre-existing socio-political institutions of oaths of allegiance, emerging imperial culture, and citizenship, in order to maintain loyalty and to create an ideology that provided order and meaning, both in Rome and the provinces. Augustus’ success was in using pre-existing and devising new socio-political institutions to create and maintain a symbolic universe with him at the centre.

Undergirding Roman socio-political institutions was honour that motivated both elite and non-elite, in Rome and its provinces, to reproduce Roman political and social values. The quest for honour and the attainment of honour for elites and non-elites not only produced self-worth but also validated the world view and values it offered.

533 See Chester’s analysis below.
It was also seen that a significant aspect of Augustus’ conceptual machinery was the possession of Roman citizenship as being central to Roman identity. Much of Augustus’ notions of Roman identity revolved around the obligations and status of citizenship. For someone to have Roman citizenship meant the obligation to accept Roman customs and to actively pursue Roman interests or, more to the point, the interests of Augustus and his household. The fact that Roman citizenship was not solely based on kin meant that Romanisation could be more pervasive in its colonies than it would have been if it were based on belonging to a particular ethnicity.

Evidence of the pervasiveness of Roman socio-political institutions in the provinces could be seen in the mimicking of the Roman hierarchical structure of *cursus honorum*, especially in voluntary associations. The replication of Roman socio-political offices, in the local government, throughout its colonies also suggests that it was influential at every stratum and highlights that social values had been internalised. Furthermore, the giving of honour to Caesar in the Eastern parts of the empire was through the active participation in the emerging imperial cult and its festivals that included the swearing of an oath of allegiance. These were not empty outward gestures but acts of loyalty to and friendship with Rome. In Chapter Five it will been seen how Augustus’ symbolic universe influenced the world view and values of the population at Roman colony of Philippi.
Chapter Five: The Impact of Roman Ideology at Philippi

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter it was seen how Pax Augusta created a symbolic universe that perpetuated Roman world view and social values. Chapter Five critically evaluates how the Roman world view and social values shaped the identity of the population of Roman Philippi in the first-century CE. To date, there is no archaeological evidence that there was a Jewish socio-political group at Philippi during Paul’s time which means that his converts would have had little Jewish influence. Therefore memberships in social groups and institutions amongst the members of the ἐκκλησία at Philippi would be Greco-Roman.

The evidence from honorific inscriptions and numismatic materials demonstrates that Philippi’s identity was in its Romanness and included strong ties of friendship and loyalty to the Julian-Claudian dynasty. This chapter argues that the social values and structures of patronage within the Roman army would be salient to the colony’s elites in the first-century CE.

The pervasiveness of Roman culture at every level of society at Philippi during the first century cannot be overestimated. If membership in different socio-political groups and institutions gives a person identity, then this will impact the behaviour and attitudes of both groups and individuals. This chapter demonstrates that Augustus’ symbolic universe, along with its conceptual machinery were pervasive at Philippi. It will be seen that even non-Romans adopted and incorporated the Roman world view and social values. This would mean that, for many at Philippi, the Roman world view and behaviours were salient to their identity.

534 The use of the term ‘Romanness’ in this chapter will refer to identity that was derived by exhibiting behaviours associated with loyalty and friendship to Rome and its customs, which undergirded social values and ideology.
Philippi’s pride as being the location for the commencement of Augustus’ reign also indicates that this would be salient to their social identity. The study of Roman Philippi’s socio-political context elucidates the context that formed the social identity of the Philippians.

5.2. Philippi and its History and Roman Connection

The city of Philippi had a pre-Roman history. First-century Philippi was situated in a region originally inhabited by Thracian tribes. They are first mentioned by Herodotus in connection with the Persian invasion in 490 BCE. Herodotus describes the people as excellent warriors and worshippers of Dionysus. He also mentions that the land had gold and silver mines. In 360 BCE, the Thasians founded a colony named Datus, later named Crenides, located near Mt Pangaion, which would later become the city of Philippi. The gold and silver mines caused tension between the Athenians, Thasians, and Thracians, who all desired to gain from the mines. In 356 BCE, after repeatedly being attacked by Thracian tribes, the Thasian colony sought the assistance of Philip II of Macedonia. At this time, Philip was looking to expand his territory in the East and took the request for help as an opportunity to invade Crenides. Having said this, the city was a dependent ally rather than a conquered enemy as it retained a limited independence for approximately ten years. After Philip took control of the city he fortified and renamed the city after himself.

535 Hdt., Histories 7.111-112.
536 Hdt., Histories 7.111-112.
The city fell into relative obscurity until 42 BCE when Philippi became the location of the battles between Octavian and Antony against the assassins of Julius Caesar, Brutus and Cassius. In reality, however, it was Antony who fought and won the battles. Octavian was ill during the battles and was initially left behind at Epidamnus,\textsuperscript{540} so that Antony was left alone to command the armies. Although Octavian did recover to take part in the second battle, his role was a minor one.\textsuperscript{541} The two battles and victories at Philippi were later recorded by Octavian (then Augustus) as his victories and the place where he avenged Julius Caesar’s death:

Those who slew my father I drove into exile, punishing their deed by due process of law, and afterwards when they waged war upon the republic I twice defeated them in battle.\textsuperscript{542}

The status of a Roman colony was bestowed on Philippi after the two battles and then later, after Actium, the status of \textit{ius Italicum} was bestowed by Augustus as part of his plan of Romanisation. \textit{Ius Italicum} might also have given Augustus favour amongst his former foes’ veterans at Philippi. It is possible that Augustus considered loyalty between the colony’s original founder and his veterans would be a potential threat that could undermine his consolidation of power.\textsuperscript{543}

Philippi also received permanent settlers, many being discharged veterans who were sent together with their families.\textsuperscript{544} Colonisation ensured the stabilisation of the city and furthered Roman interests in the region. The city limits were marked out by priests in accordance with Roman religious practice. Both Paul Collart and Lukas

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{540} Appian, \textit{Bell. civ.} 4.106, 108. Dio Cass. \textit{Roman History}. 47.2-3.
\item \textsuperscript{541} Goldsworthy, \textit{Augustus}, 142. See Appian, \textit{Bell. civ.} 4.129.
\item \textsuperscript{542} Augustus, \textit{Res gest. divi Aug.}, 1.2. (Shipley, LCL).
\item \textsuperscript{543} Hellerman, \textit{Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi}, 67.
\item \textsuperscript{544} P. Collart, \textit{Philippines, ville de Macédoine, depuis ses origines jusqu’à la fin de l’époque romaine}, 2 vols. (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1937), 224.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Bormann state that this ritual emulates Romulus’ marking of the borders of Rome, as seen in figure 4.545

![Figure 4](image)

Augustus, 27 BCE-14CE, AE
Obverse:
Legend: AVG
Type: Bare head of Augustus right
Reverse:
Type: Two colonists ploughing with a pair of oxen right.
RPC: 1565 (uncertain, Philippi?)

**5.3. The Roman Colony of Philippi**546

The numismatic and inscriptional evidence clearly demonstrates that Roman values and world view were entrenched at Philippi due to the large number of Roman colonists, and, although there were three main ethnic groups that lived in Philippi in the first-century CE (Thracians, Greeks, and Romans), there is no scholarly consensus as to the number of Roman colonists present in Philippi.547 Some scholars have suggested that around 500 of Antony’s veterans were settled in 42 BCE while a similar number of

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546 Several sections of this chapter are indebted to the study of the Roman colony at Philippi by Hellerman who has shown, from the inscription evidence, that many of the inhabitants held Roman social values. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*, 64ff. Though this thesis uses some of the same inscriptions found in Hellerman’s study, they have all been considered directly.
Augustus’ veterans were sent after Actium. Most Caesarean colonies received between 2,000 and 3,000 colonists which is most likely to be the case for Philippi. The influx of colonists from Italy might have attracted Italian businessmen and their households who were already residing in the province and would have significantly increased the population of the small town and encouraged its Romanisation.

The pervasiveness of the Roman world view and social values at Philippi amongst the population has been brought into question. Debate over the size and ethnicity of Philippi’s population in recent scholarship is centred on Peter Oakes’s estimates. Oakes argues that the ethnicity of Philippi was approximately 40% Roman and 60% Greek (including Thracians and Macedonians). He suggests that the Romans owned almost all the surrounding land, which resulted in the Greeks being dispossessed of their land and being mainly involved in service and farming industries to the Romans. This meant that all Greeks in the city were dependent on Roman wealth and power. Oakes’s research seems to affirm that in colonisation there was little integration among the groups.

Craig de Vos argues, however, that colonisation had an impact on the ethnic demographic and integration among the groups and is not taken into consideration by Oakes. The city of Philippi and its surrounding population did not necessarily have a Greek majority. He posits that there would have been a considerable reduction in the population after the battles at Philippi as some of the legions fighting

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548 Bormann, Philippi, 21-22. See also C. S. de Vos, Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationships of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with their Wider Civic Communities, SBLDS 168 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 236.
549 Ibid., Italian Manpower, 236.
552 Ibid., 42.
553 Ibid., 74-76.
554 Ibid., 53-54.
for Brutus were from the region.\textsuperscript{555} It is likely that many fled or were captured and made slaves after the battles.\textsuperscript{556} Also, if there were only the minority of 3,000 who were sent to Philippi, who were given on average 50 iugera each, then they would only occupy around 20\% of the land surrounding the city. This means that Oakes’s argument for Roman colonists having possession of almost all the land through dispossession is highly unlikely.\textsuperscript{557} Usually local land owners who were not dispossessed by the Roman colonists continued to live and work side by side with the colonists.\textsuperscript{558}

The re-founding of Roman colonies in pre-existing Greek cities often resulted in the restructring of architecture to accommodate Roman building designs of houses and temples, alongside pre-existing Hellenistic structures. For instance, Corinth and Pisidian Antioch both existed as Hellenistic cities before Imperial times but, after becoming Roman colonies, the city’s benefactors erected buildings and monuments that conformed to Roman architecture. In Corinth’s case the Roman design was superimposed over the old Greek city.\textsuperscript{559} Usually, the local citizens would share citizenship with the Roman colonists sent by the State. At Philippi the local landowners, like other provincial land owners, were dispossessed of their land and assigned to the status of non-citizens, with the high-ranking veterans constituting the colony’s elite.\textsuperscript{560}

At Philippi the architecture of the colony also conformed to the Roman standards of design. In the first and second centuries CE it was a thoroughly Roman city; the

\textsuperscript{555} de Vos, \textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 241, n.34.
\textsuperscript{556} Appian, \textit{Bell. civ.} 3.79
\textsuperscript{557} A fuller argument can be found in de Vos, \textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 240-244.
\textsuperscript{558} Brunt, \textit{Italian Manpower}, 246.
\textsuperscript{560} Hellerman, \textit{Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi}, 66. Hellerman acknowledges that the local land owners were dispossessed without taking into consideration de Vos’ arguments, which are convincing.
theatre was modified to Roman tastes where a Latin troupe performed plays in Latin. The Forum was built in the Roman style and located at the centre of the city.\textsuperscript{561}

Further Romanisation of Philippi can be seen in the presence of Roman religions amongst the traditional religions practised by the Greek population. Evidence from inscriptions included the worship of Roman gods: Bacchus/Liber Pater, along with Hercules and Libera, Cupid, Diana, Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, and Silvanus.\textsuperscript{562} There was also the presence of the gods Fortuna, Victoria and several \textit{genii} that include the colony’s \textit{Genius}, and the imperial cult.\textsuperscript{563} The worship of Thracian gods included Dionysus, Bendis, and the Thracian Horsemen. Sanctuaries, carvings, and inscriptions that indicate the presence of the Oriental cults of Isis, Magna Mater, and Cybele have also been found.\textsuperscript{564} Latin inscriptions dedicated to the Thracian horsemen gods found with Latinised names suggest that some of the colonists had incorporated these gods into their worship. The Roman worshippers are most likely from the lower stratum of the colony, as they are found in the quarries in the surroundings of Philippi, rather than in the city.\textsuperscript{565}

Further evidence of the Roman restructuring of Philippi can be found from Imperial times. By the time Paul walked the streets of the Julio-Claudian city, it exhibited Roman architectural characteristics. Excavations have uncovered Hellenistic streets underneath Roman ones near an Octagon complex and to the north of the Via Egnatia.\textsuperscript{566} Closer to the centre of the city was the Forum. It is not known when the first Forum was built but it would have existed when Paul visited the city. Remains of the

\textsuperscript{561} Pilhofer, \textit{Philippi}, 91.
\textsuperscript{562} de Vos, \textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 247.
\textsuperscript{563} Portefaix, \textit{Sisters Rejoice}, 71.
\textsuperscript{564} Ibid., 71-72.
\textsuperscript{565} Ibid., 72. H. L. Hendrix, “Philippi,” \textit{ARD} 5: 316.
original Forum were found under the north, east, and west side of the Antonine Forum.\textsuperscript{567} Inscriptions were found from honorary monuments in the Western temple at the Forum dedicated to the veteran L. Tatinius Cnosus who had completed the \textit{cursus honorum} in the time of Domitian. While he was still a centurion, Cnosus had a monument to Augustus erected in the northeast corner of the Forum.\textsuperscript{568}

\textbf{5.4. Philippi’s Military Character}

This section demonstrates that the Roman military exhibits what Berger calls typification,\textsuperscript{569} which is seen in their replication of Augustus’ symbolic universe through their participation in the socio-political institutions at Philippi. The numismatic and Latin inscriptional evidence from the founding of Philippi as a Roman colony demonstrates the influence of the colonists, especially the veterans, on the city from 31 BCE to the first and second centuries. Numismatic evidence initially associated Antony with the establishment of Philippi as a Roman colony,\textsuperscript{570} with the ritual ploughing of the field marking out the city limits associated with the founding of Roman cities on one side of the minted coins and the head of Antony on the reverse.\textsuperscript{571} But after Augustus’ triumph over Antony a decade later, the coins produced affirmed that Philippi is associated with the new order brought by Augustus.

After Actium, Augustus set about erasing Antony’s role from the public record. The effacing of Antony took the form of coins minted depicting Augustus alone as the

\textsuperscript{567} Ibid., 15.
\textsuperscript{568} Collart, \textit{Philippes, ville de Macédoine}, 351-352.
\textsuperscript{569} See Chapter 3.2.1.
\textsuperscript{570} Ibid., 227. Bormann, \textit{Philippi}, 14.
founder of the colony. He alone was the victor and avenger at Philippi, which associated Augustus with the goddess Victoria. The post-Actium coins minted clearly connect Augustus’ victory at Philippi with the new political reality of Pax Augusta and Philippi as the location where he began his career as the emperor. Thus, after Actium, some of Augustus’ Praetorian cohort ‘re-founded’ the colony.

Philippi’s connection with Augustus is seen on coins minted in Philippi that depict the association of the emperor and the goddess Victoria. Sophia Kremydi-Sicilianou states that colonial coins were produced to represent the beliefs and cultural identity of the city:

In Macedonia, numismatic references to Roman cults and mythology are rare.... Philippi, for example, was according to all the evidence the most ‘Romanized’ city in Macedonia. This conclusion is also corroborated by numismatic iconography since Roman cults were dominant on its coins. Victoria Augusta was the main obverse type for the ‘pseudo-autonomous’ issues… and Fortuna, another Roman military deity, was depicted on third-century issues.

Kremydi-Sicilianou concludes that the reason for the prominence of Roman religious and military iconography was tied to the city’s identity. In other words, coins minted at Philippi were deliberately minted to express its identity as a military colony that continued to supply soldiers to the Roman army. For Philippi, their military history connected them with Augustus and his household and formed part of their civic identity.

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572 See Figure 4.
573 Bormann, Philippi, 22. S. Kremydi-Sicilianou, “‘Belonging’ to Rome, ‘Remaining’ Greek: Coinage and Identity in Roman Macedonia,” in Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces, eds. C. Howgego, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 100. See Plates 7.1.12-7.2.13. See also Figure 6 below.
574 Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 67-68.
575 Kremydi-Sicilianou, “‘Belonging’ to Rome, ‘Remaining’ Greek,” 100.
576 Ibid. Italics original.
577 Ibid. See also Figure 5.
Obverse:
Legend: VIC AVG
Type: Victoria standing left on globe, holding wreath and palm
Reverse:
Legend: COHOR PRAE PHIL around three military standards.
RPC: 1651

There is also evidence demonstrating that the relationship between the Julian household and Philippi continued well after the death of Augustus. An inscription from a second-century CE shield fragment from the Forum reveals that the elites at Philippi gained some of their civic identity by their association with the Julian-Claudian household, as seen in the example of the bronze letters found on shield fragments in the Forum the second-century CE by Paul Collart:

[Vict]ọ-
[ri] ae
Aug(ustae).\(^{578}\)

In the Victoire Auguste.

Also found in the Antonine Forum were fragments decorating the pediment of the Curia. Each end of the pediment was represented by a winged Victory, which recalls on the legend Vic (toria) Aug (usta) stamped on coins minted by the colony in the second

\(^{578}\) C. Brélaz, *Corpus des inscriptions grecques et latines de Philippi, tome II.1, la vie publique de la colonie et de l’Etat romains* (Ecole française d’Athènes, 2014), Inscription 17.
half of first-century CE.\textsuperscript{579} Thus, from the evidence from the Forum, Philippi continued to draw on its connection with Augustus and his household and their civic identity.

5.4.1 Roman Political and Military Stratification at Philippi

The founding of Philippi as a Roman colony meant the dispossession of some of the local population’s land and its allocation to veterans. Though the exact numbers of veterans who were settled at Philippi is unknown, it is clear that they would have been the landowners and in positions of power. Regardless of their numbers, the colonists and veterans had disproportionate social and financial influence in the colony.\textsuperscript{580} One of the defining characteristics of this power was expressed through Roman social and political stratification, especially as found in the military.

Stratification within the army can be found at every level of rank. Each rank had its own identifiable clothes, weapons, pay, and compensation (booty) that was based according to social status:\textsuperscript{581}

The next in seniority called \textit{hastati} are ordered to wear a complete panoply. The Roman panoply consists firstly of a shield …. Besides the shield they also carry a sword, hanging on the right thigh… a brass helmet, and greaves…. The \textit{pila} [javelin] are of two sorts—stout and fine…. Finally they wear as an ornament a circle of feathers with three upright purple or black feathers about a cubit in height…. The common soldiers wear in addition a breastplate of brass a span square, which they place in front of the heart and call the heart-protector, this completing their accoutrements; but those who are rated above ten thousand drachmas wear instead of this a coat of chain-mail. The \textit{principes} and \textit{triarii} are armed in the same manner except that instead of the \textit{pila} the \textit{triarii} carry long spears.\textsuperscript{582}

\textsuperscript{579} Ibid., 110.
\textsuperscript{580} Hellerman, \textit{Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi}, 72.
\textsuperscript{581} Ibid., 72-74.
\textsuperscript{582} Polyb. \textit{Histories}, 6.23.11-16. (Paton, LCL).
The army’s stratification was also expressed in the spatial dimensions of a legion’s camp layout. The dwellings of those who possessed the rank of *legatus* (consular or senatorial commander) covered approximately 75,000 square feet, and included fine furnishings, decorated halls, and peristyle courtyards. In contrast, a typical legionnaire had approximately 50 square feet of living space. Furthermore, morning life in the camp mimicked morning life at Rome in a way that emphasised the social value of honour in both settings. The practice of the morning salutatio seen in the camp saw soldiers attending to the centurions; the centurions, in turn, attending to the tribunes, and the officers of the camp would then attend to the legion’s commanders. Thus the replication of the salutatio was not just an issue of rank and order, but also of social status. The Roman army stratification was highly honorific. As Hellerman notes, ‘military hierarchy was not only a hierarchy of responsibility and obedience but also a hierarchy of honor’.  

5.4.2. Replication of Roman Stratification at Philippi

At Philippi, as in other colonies, land allotments, magistracies, priesthoods, and *decurial* status were bestowed upon high-ranking colonists by its founder. After the victories at Philippi in 42 BCE, Antony delegated this responsibility to Q. Paquius Rufus who, according to the numismatic evidence, was the colony’s legate installed by Antony. Rufus’ distribution was done in a scripted, public, and ritualised ceremony.

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583 Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*, 73.
584 Ibid.
585 Ibid., 74.
Land was measured and sub-divided into portions by the officials (agrimensores). The colonists were then divided into groups to determine the order of land allocation by drawing lots. Once this was done, Rufus, while seated on the ceremonial chair sella curulis, took the formal record of the proceedings and presided over the distribution of land.587

Figure 6

42 BC. Q. Paquius Rufus, legatus coloniae ducendae.
Obverse:
Legend: A I C V P
Type: Bare head Antony
Reverse:
Legend: Q PAQVIV[S]/RVF LEG/C D
Type: Togate figure seat left on curule chair, holding up tabellum(?); at feet to left, an urn.
RPC: 1647

As noted above, many of the first colonists came from the legions and rank-and-file soldiers who would have initially served in Antony’s XXVIII legion. There is evidence of their presence early in the colony:

Sex(to) Volcasio
L(uci) f(ilio) Vol(tinia) leg(ionis)
XXVIII domo
Pisis. 588

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587 Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*, 74. See Figure 6.
Dem Sextus Volcasius, dem Sohn des Lucius, aus der Tribus Voltinia, von der achttundzwanzigsten Legion, aus Pisa.

Sextus Volcasius, son of Lucius, from the tribe Voltinia, of the twenty-eighth legion, from Pisa.

The distribution of land, however, would also be disproportionate among the colonists, especially amongst the veterans. Deferment and privileged treatment were in line with the military; there was also the presence of veteran Praetorian guards at Philippi, who were paid around ten times more than a legionnaire.\(^{589}\) Thus this disproportion of pay between the two groups, and the social status connected to military rank, would likely be replicated in a similar fashion in land distribution.\(^{590}\)

Even after retirement, the army’s honour hierarchy influenced the social organisation of the colony. The Roman social value of honour was replicated in the military in a similar fashion to politics. Inscriptions found at Philippi show that veterans displayed their achievements, especially in the attainment of public office. The disproportionate influence of the Roman colonist was reinforced by the fact that military was, by its nature, a highly stratified and ‘alternative’ society.\(^{591}\) Thus a veteran soldier’s legion and or rank was salient for his social identity not only for each individual, but also for the entire legion. This is evident in that the Roman army had its own rank and cursus which was maintained in retirement in veteran colonies, ‘when entire legions – with tribunes, centurions, privates in their proper centuries – were so transplanted as to create, by their unanimity and their comradeship, a little commonwealth’\(^{592}\). After they were settled in the colonies soldiers formed collegia that had their own offices, such as presidents and treasurers. The veterans commemorated

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\(^{589}\) Bormann, Philippi, 23.  
\(^{590}\) Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 75.  
\(^{592}\) Tac Ann. 14.27.3. (Jackson, LCL).
their fellow soldiers with honour memorials and served as guardians of burial memorials.\textsuperscript{593}

\section*{5.5. The Elite of Philippi}

The veterans continued to exhibit behaviours which highlight the results of Roman societal typification, as described in Berger’s theory. At Philippi, there is evidence of veterans replicating Roman elite behaviours in the form of honorific inscriptions. Veterans would become the colony’s elite and catalogue their various public civic offices on their monuments for posterity’s sake. Inscriptions from the forum and marketplace publicised various citizens and their benefactions to the city. Honour inscriptions of elite families at Philippi publicised their public acts. For instance, the \textit{aedile} Lucius Decimius Bassus paid for the construction of a fountain in the Forum:

\begin{quote}
\[\text{[L(ucio) D]ecimio [L(uci) f(ilio)]}
\[\text{Vol(tinia) Basso, ae [d(ili)]} \text{.}\textsuperscript{594}\]
\end{quote}

Für Lucius Decimius Bassus, den Sohn des Lucius, aus der Tribus Voltinia, den Ädil.

For Lucius Decimius Bassus, son of Lucius, from the tribe Voltinia, the \textit{aedile}.

A nearby honorific inscription also reveals that Lucius’ father had attained the civic \textit{cursus} rank of \textit{duumvir}:

\begin{quote}
\[\text{L(ucio) Decimio L(uci) f(ilio)}
\[\text{Vol(tinia), q(uaestori), IIvir(o)} \text{.}\textsuperscript{595}\]
\end{quote}

Für Lucius Decimius, den Sohn des Lucius, aus der Tribus Voltinia, den Quästor und Duumvir.

\textsuperscript{593} MacMullen, “The Legion as a Society,” 443.
\textsuperscript{594} Pilhofer, 216/L351 second-century CE.
\textsuperscript{595} Pilhofer, 214/L349 second-century CE.
For Lucius Decimi, son of Lucius, from the tribe Volinia, the Quaestor and Duumvir.

Other honorific inscriptions found at the Forum from the second-century CE show that the elite families who descended from veteran colonists paraded previous family members’ honorific posts. The army was one of the few institutions where upward social mobility could be achieved. The inscriptions also show that veterans rose to become involved in the political affairs of the city:

C(aio) Mucio Q(uinti) f(ilio) Fab(ia) Scaevae, primopilo leg/ionis VI Ferratae, praef(ecto) c(o)hort(is), ex testamento 5 ipsius C(aius) Muscius C(ai) f(ilius) Fab(ia) Scaeva posuit.596

Für Caius Mucius Scaeva, den Sohn des Quintus, aus der Tribus Fabia, den ranghöchsten Hauptmann der sechsten Legion Ferrata, den Präfekten einer Kohorte, hat aufgrund seines Testaments Caius Mucius Scaeva, der Sohn des Caius, aus der Tribus Fabia, (die Inschrift) gesetzt.

For Caius Mucius Scaeva, son of Quintus, from the tribe Fabia, the most highly ranked leader of the sixth legion Ferrata, the Prefect of his Cohort, on the basis of his testament, Caius Mucius Scaeva, son of Caius, of the tribe Fabia, has placed (the inscription).

Caius’ brother also had a career in the military that enabled him to improve his social status and hence, become upwardly mobile:

P(ublio) Mucio Q(uinti) f(ilio) Vol(tinia) c(enturioni) leg/ionis VI Fer(ratae), Ilvir(o) i(ure) d(icundo) Philipp(is), ex testamento C(ai) Muci Q(uinti) f(iili) Fab(ia) Scaevvae, 5 C(aius) Mucius C(ai) f(ilius) Scaeva posuit.597

Für Publius Mucius, den Sohn des Quintus, aus der Tribus Volinia, den Centurio der sechsten Legion Ferrata, den Duumvir iure dicundo in Philippi, hat aufgrund des Testaments des Caius Mucius Scaeva, des Sohnes des

596 Pilhofer 218/L352 second-century CE.
597 Pilhofer, 219/L353 second-century CE.
Quintus, aus der Tribus Fabia, Caius Mucius Scaeva, der Sohn des Caius, (die Inschrift) gesetzt.

For Publius Mucius, son of Quintus, of the tribe Voltinia, the Centurion of the sixth legion Ferrata, the Duumvir iure dicundo in Philippi, on the basis of the testament of the Caius Mucius Scaeva, the son of Quintus, of the tribe Fabia, Caius Mucius Scaeva, son of Caius, placed (the inscription).

These inscriptions reveal that veterans did indeed advance their personal (and that of their family’s) status in Philippi’s political life. The inscriptions also reveal the importance of displaying and boasting about belonging to a Roman tribus. Thus for the elite and veteran colonists at Philippi, a public display of their cursus, and of their Roman citizenship was a salient part of identity which enabled individuals and families to have a disproportionate influence within the colony compared with non-citizens.

Furthermore, some elites continued to take pride in their full Roman citizenship, even in the first and second century CE. According to Pilhofer’s catalogue of inscriptions, there are approximately eighty that include the person’s citizenship as a demonstration of status. The inscriptions include: honorary inscriptions, grave inscriptions (31), from the Praetorian List (6), and Military diplomas (2). Other inscriptions, placed in pre-eminent public spaces, also included the advertisement of the individual’s citizenship such as the Forum (16), the Macellum (4), inscriptions and fragments (17). Though a majority of the occurrences are of the tribe of Voltinia, there are several on the list that are from other tribes which would indicate that this

598 A member of the Decimii family who did not hold any cursus offices boasted in an inscription about his citizenship. Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 90. Pilhofer, 215/L350. Other inscriptions 221/L334 (first-century century CE), 202/L313 (first-century century CE), 203/L314 (first-century century CE), demonstrate that some veterans went on to public office and mention their status as Roman citizens. Inscriptions found in the Macellum from the first and second centuries CE reveal more honours in the form of cursus and the boast of citizenship – 253/L447. Including one’s status as a member of tribe of Voltinia, are found in public inscriptions and gravestones of veterans and elites of the colony.

599 Pilhofer, 700/L738, 701/L739, 702/L740, 703/L741 refer to Caius Antonius Rufus, who was a fiamen divi Augusti in the first-century CE.

600 Pilhofer, 218/L352 (Fabia), 389/L605 (Pollia), 763/L743. The Inscription 763/L743 is the Praetorian List and includes the tribes: Aemilia, Aniensis, and Claudia.
was practised in the wider empire. The display of one’s full Roman citizenship was a status that added to one’s honour reputation of the colony’s elite.

The fact that many of these inscriptions were in such a public space would mean that it would be highly likely that Paul would have noticed them. Though many public inscriptions of the elite did not include the tribe Voltinia in them, the prominent positions of the inscriptions that advertised Roman citizenship means that it can be concluded that Roman citizenship was considered salient for the elites of Philippi. Furthermore, the boasting found in the inscriptions indicates that the process of internalisation of the Roman value of honour had taken place.

5.6. The Imperial Cult at Philippi

In recent NT scholarship, the defining of imperial cults as a religion has come into debate.\textsuperscript{601} Karl Galinsky has pointed out that NT scholars need to be more precise when defining the imperial cult because many NT scholars incorrectly define the imperial cult as the fastest growing ‘religion’ in the first-century (see Chapter 4.3.3).\textsuperscript{602} This definition, according to Galinsky, is an incorrect framework for understanding the function of religion in the Greco-Roman world. A better way to understand imperial cults is as a civic activity that gave a religious role to the emperor which allowed religious integration in a variety of contexts in the Greco-Roman world.\textsuperscript{603} As noted above, the imperial cults were performed in temples of a city’s deities or theatre, rather

\textsuperscript{601} See the recent publication J. Brodd, J. L. Reed eds., Rome and Religion: A Cross-disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult (Atlanta: SBL, 2011).
\textsuperscript{603} Rives, Religion in the Roman Empire, 155. For a discussion of the confusion between the modern and ancient notions of religion see E. A. Judge, “Was Christianity a Religion?,” 404-409.
than in a specified Imperial temple. There were some Roman colonies, however, where there were specific spaces dedicated to the worship of the emperor and his household. The Roman colonies that included congregations founded by Paul and had temples in the city’s Forum were Corinth and Philippi. Thessalonica had also erected a temple dedicated to Divus Caesar.

At Philippi in the first-century, the documented presence of public offices associated with the imperial cult has been well attested. These included an augur, two pontifices, several lower ranking priests, flamines, and two priestesses who served in the cult of the empress. The inscription below attested to the presence of the public offices of the imperial cult from the first century CE:

P(ublius) Cornelius Asper Atiarius Montanus
equo publico honoratus, item ornamentis decu-
ritionatus et Ilviralicis, pontifex, flamen divi Claudii Philippis, ann(orum)
XXIII h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

Publius Cornelius Asper Atiarius Montanus, ausgezeichnet mit einem equus publicus, auch mit den ornamenta eines Ratsherren und eines Duumvir Priester, Priester des vergöttlichten Claudius in Philippi, dreiundzwanzig Jahre alt, liegt hier begraben.

Publius Cornelius Asper Atiarius Montanus, recognised with equus publicus, also decorated as a Councillor and Priest of Duumvir, Priest of the divine Claudius in Philippi, aged twenty-three, is buried here.

The established presence of the imperial cult in the first-century at Philippi further demonstrates that the elite of the city derived their identity from the public offices of Roman customs, encouraged by the Julio-Claudian emperors.

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604 B. W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2001), 273. Though the imperial temple at Corinth is dated as being constructed in the second-century CE.
605 de Vos, *Church and Community Conflicts*, 142.
607 Pilhofer, 001/L027. See also 700/L738.
The significance of the imperial cult for the social and political life of Philippi can be seen in the two temples at the Forum where inscriptions and monuments of the imperial family have been excavated.\textsuperscript{608} Roman administration was managed in the name of the \textit{Imperator divus} and the high priest of the imperial cult was responsible for the administration of the city. The cult of Augustus, the empress, Livia, and Augustus’ adopted sons, Gaius and Lucius Caesar, became established in the city.\textsuperscript{609} Furthermore, in the east temple are the remains of a monument and inscriptions to Livia from the second half of the first-century CE.\textsuperscript{610}

Philippi, already closely connected to Augustus’ household as the place of \textit{Victoria Augusta}, continued the connection through civic activities of the imperial cult.\textsuperscript{611} The city had \textit{seviri Augustales}, who were officials devoted to the organising of festivals, games, and sacrificial rites in honour of the \textit{divus Augustus} and his household.\textsuperscript{612}

\begin{verbatim}
C(aius Postumius) Ianuarius
sevir Augustalis
an(thorum) XXXV h(ic) s(itus) e(st).
\textsuperscript{5} [...] ELA
[mar]ito.\textsuperscript{613}
\end{verbatim}

Caius Postumius Ianuarius, Sexvir Augustalis, fünfunddreißig Jahre alt, liegt hier begraben... (hat den Stein) für ihren Mann (anfertigen lassen).

Caius Postumius Ianuarius, Sexvir (official) of Augustus, aged thirty-five is buried here...(has placed the stone) for her husband.

\textsuperscript{608} Koukouli-Chrysantaki, “Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis,” 15-16.
\textsuperscript{609} Tellbe, \textit{Paul Between Synagogue and State}, 215.
\textsuperscript{610} Bormann, \textit{Philippi}, 41.
\textsuperscript{612} Tellbe, \textit{Paul Between Synagogue and State}, 216.
\textsuperscript{613} Pilhofer, 037/L037.
The seviri Augustales often came from a different social class, such as libertini (freedmen). The fact that the seviri Augustales had their own reserved seats at the theatre suggests that the role within the life of the city was considered important, contributing to one’s personal honour. The office of seviri Augustales also played a role in the legitimising of Augustus’ symbolic universe of the Golden Age.

A city’s veneration of emperor and the imperial family at public civic activities became an important part of the ruler cult. In the ancient Greco-Roman world, the emperor was seen as a god who protected the public. The public good was, by implication, to include the status quo of social hierarchy. The imperial cult, was part of the conceptual machinery of Pax Augusta, which continued the legitimisation process that propagated the message that the emperor and his household’s well-being was central to the maintenance of peace and security of the state, which according to Augustus’ re-writing of history, started at Philippi.

Participation in the imperial cult for the Roman citizen was a public demonstration of Romanness too, which shows that the process of internalisation of Augustus’ symbolic universe had occurred. This was important for in the provinces where there was a sea of multicultural ethnicities, the imperial cult enabled the Roman citizen to be or feel Roman. It also meant that the Roman citizen could know that he or she was within the boundaries defined by the term religio. The term religio was

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614 Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 83.
615 Tellbe, Paul Between Synagogue and State, 216.
616 Bormann, Philippi, 46.
617 Rives, Religion in the Roman Empire, 155.
618 Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug., 1.2-3.
619 Ibid.
620 Ibid.
used by the Romans themselves to describe someone who practised traditional Roman customs in the correct manner, particularly with reverence towards the gods. It was opposed to *superstitio*, which was the ‘irregular’ practice of traditional customs, more specifically the customs and religion of the state.\textsuperscript{621}

The fact that Philippi possessed such important officers of the imperial cult gave it status over other cities in Macedonia. Cities in the East of the Empire would vie with one another to gain the emperor’s approval to host imperial festivals. This resulted in rivalry and strife between cities as they sought to claim supremacy over each other. The inter-city rivalry was motivated by honour as individuals endeavoured to enhance the glory of their native state by giving benefactions that would go towards the building of theatres, archways, porticoes, and other buildings.\textsuperscript{622} Philippi, however, could not boast that it was the first city of Macedonia, as that title and honour belonged to Thessalonica.\textsuperscript{623} Philippi could, though, boast of being the place where *Pax Augusta* began.

### 5.7. Honour and Status among the Non-Elite Cults and Associations

Thus far the importance of Philippi’s self-identification as a Roman colony with a connection to the Julio-Claudian household, starting with Augustus himself, has been discussed. It has also been established that Philippi and its surrounding territory were under the control of Roman colonists. The question remains about how much of the

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\textsuperscript{621} Ibid., 217.  
\textsuperscript{622} R. S. Ascough, “Civic Pride at Philippi the Text-Critical Problem of Acts 16.12,” *NTS* 44 (1998): 96-97. See also Chapter 4.3.3.  
\textsuperscript{623} Ibid., 94.
Roman world view and values were prevalent amongst the non-Roman and non-citizen population.

As discussed in Chapter Four, voluntary associations and cult groups throughout the empire imitated the power structures of the elites, albeit expressed in local ways. It was also seen that the social value which underlay the behaviour of individuals and groups was honour. Further, many of these associations had political connections within the πόλις which, as Bruno Blumenfeld notes, involved a web of power structures: ‘[p]olitics is concerned with the human association and the power relationships between individuals in a stratified society’.

The evidence demonstrates that Roman social values are indeed pervasive in Philippi in non-elite and non-citizen associations and cults. The study of the behaviour of non-elite voluntary associations at Philippi reveals the significance to sections of the Philippian correspondence in regards to status. Although there is no direct evidence that Paul could read Latin, it is likely that he had at least a basic grasp of the language. Paul had visited several Roman colonies and provinces (Philippi, Corinth, and Illyricum) and, according to Romans 15:28, Paul planned to go to Spain. If Paul had planned to evangelise in Spain it was likely that he had learnt or knew Latin.

At Philippi there are a number of non-elite religious associations which replicated the Roman cursus of power structures and boasting concerning public acts of benefaction:

Gn(aeo) Velleio
Urso acto-
ri col(oniae) an(norum) XLII
cultores Cupidi-
5 n[is...].

626 Pilhofer, 350/L448.
Für Gnaeus Velleius Ursus, dem Prozeßverteater der kolonie (verstorben) im Alter von 42 Jahren, (haben) die Verehrer der Cupido (die Inschrift gesetzt).

Gnaeus Velleius Ursus, counsel of the colony (died) aged 42 years old, (Inscribed by) the worshippers of Cupid.

There is also an inscription relating honours given to an official from a group thiasus Maenadum, who were an association which included men women associated with the Bacchus cult:

Lib(ero) et Lib(erae) et Herc(uli).
thiasus Maenad(um)
regianar(um) aq-
[ua]m induxit [p(ecunia) a(ua)].

Dem Liber und der Libera und dem Hercules (ist es geweiht). Der Thiasus der Mänaden hat auf eigene Kosten das Wasser hineingeleitet (d.h. die Wasserleitung errichtet).

The Freedman and the Freedwoman and the Hercules (it is dedicated). The thiasus of the Maenads paid to have the water installed from their own expenses. (that means: plumbing in the water pipes).

The two inscriptions above suggest that the social value of honour was pervasive at the various power and social levels at Philippi. Furthermore, other honorific inscriptions from voluntary associations present at Philippi were mostly written in Latin although some are in Greek. Even though most of these inscriptions are from the second-century CE, the use of Latin indicates that the non-elites of Philippi continued to replicate elite values and, by implication, a Roman world view.

Associations could also give an individual the possibility of improving one’s status through the holding of offices and the contribution of benefactions. Hellerman

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628 For inscriptions relating to specific associations at Philippi consult Idem, Greco-Roman Associations, 313-335. For study specifically focused on women and associations at Philippi see, Portefaix, Sisters Rejoice, 75-128.
notes that the non-elite associations at Philippi replicated a *cursus* of offices and the boasting of public benefactions.\(^{629}\) One such group was the Roman Silvanus cult, which was a popular cult in the private domain. This association’s membership was male only and made up from the non-elite that include freeborn, freedmen, and slaves. The cult’s members and offices were not categorised according to one’s birth status as the office of *aedile* was held by a freedman.\(^{630}\)

Latin inscriptions found at Philippi refer to the cult and confirm that they had participated in their culture’s ways of public honours which gave status in the estimation of others.\(^{631}\) Four fragments comprising the name [...] Silvano [...] were found at the theatre.\(^{632}\) Another inscription contains the name of an official of the cult, followed by a list comprising the names of those who had donated to the building and ornaments for the temple to Silvanus:

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P(ublius) Hostilius Philadelphus  
ob honor(em) aedilit(atis) titulum polivit  
de suoe et nomina sodal(ium) inscripsit eorum  
qui munera posuerunt.  
5 Domitius Primigenius statuam  
aeream Silvani cum aede.  
C(aius) <H>oratius Sabinus at templum tegend(um)  
tegulas CCCC tectas.  
Nutrius Valens sigilla marmuria  
10 dua, Herculem et Mercurium  
Paccius Mercuriales opus cementic(ium)  
XCCL ante templum et tabula picta Olympum X XV.  
Publicius Laetus at templum aedificandum donavit X L.  
15 item Paccius Mercuriales at templum  
aedificandum cum filis et liberto donavit  
X L, item sigillum marmurium Liberi X XXV.  
Alfenus Aspasius sacerdos  
signum aer(eum) Silvani cum basi,  
20 item vivus X L mortis causae sui
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\(^{630}\) Ibid., 102.

\(^{631}\) Ibid.

Publius Hostilius Philadelphus, on account of the honor of the office of aedile, had inscribed at his own expense the names of the association members (sodales) who gave funds (for the construction of the temple). Domitus Primigenius (gave) a bronze statue of Silvanus with a house. Gaius Horatius Sabinus (gave) as the covering of the temple 400 roof-tiles. Nutrius Valens (gave) two marble statues of Herakles and Mercury. Paccius Mercuriales (gave) 250 denarii for concrete in front of the temple and 15 denarii for a painted board of Olympus. Publicius Laetus (donated) 50 denarii for building the temple. Likewise Paccius Mercuriales with his sons and freedmen (donated) 50 denarii for building the temple as well as 25 denarii for a marble statue of Liber. Alfenus Aspasius, priest, (gave) a bronze image of Silvanus with a base and, while he was still living, deposited 50 denarii mortis causa. Hostilius Philadelphus had the rock ascending into the temple quarried at his own expense.

The above inscription is of those who wanted to be publically acknowledged as benefactors to the Silvanus cult. There are also offices within the cult, such as the aedile Publius Hostilius Philadelphus, which had public honour ascribed to it; thus they imitated in miniature the elites of the city. The important point is that their behaviour is a replication of the elite values of honour and boasting.

The Silvanus cult was organised into decuriae, replicating the local Roman municipality adoption of terms from the senatorial cursus honorum in Rome. The Silvanus had offices that included sacerdotes (priests) or aediles. The same mimicking behaviour was found in other associations at Philippi. Another association gave honours to offices found in the cult of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus of curator and sacerdote. In the cult of Diana there is the presence of an antistes (high priest),

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633 Pilhofer, 164/L001.
634 Translation from Kloppenborg and Ascough, Greco-Roman Associations, 316-317.
635 Pilhofer, 163/L002, 164/L001, 166/L004.
636 Pilhofer, 177/L014, 588/L236. See also Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 103-105.
another *sacredos* (priest) and several *subcuratores*, which means that there would be *curatores* present in the cult of Dionysus.\(^{637}\)

Another association that highlights the trickle down of Roman values to the non-elite Greco-Roman world is the Dionysaic ecstatic cult. The cult was associated with nymphs who cared for the infant Dionysus at Mount Nysa which they identified with Mount Pangaion.\(^{638}\) According to Lilian Portefaix, there are no records of their rituals in the evidence found at Philippi, other than that they are related to the myths referring to the archaic past.\(^{639}\) There is evidence, however, that the association replicated the dominant culture by placing inscriptions in public locations. The other important point about this association was that it was a mixed one whereby women had a significant role:

Dem Liber und der (und) dem Herculus ist es geweiht. Caius Valerius Fortunatus mit seiner Frau Marronia Eutychia.

The Freedman and the (and) the Herculus it is dedicated. Caius Valerius Fortunatus with his wife Marronia Eutychia:


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\(^{639}\) Ibid., 101.

\(^{640}\) Pilhofer, 338/L333.

\(^{641}\) Pilhofer, 339/L338.
By order of the Freedman and Freedwoman and the Herculus. And no one will want to disturb this rock face/façade, because there is an order against doing so. By order (of the deities) Pomponia Hilara had it established.

These inscriptions show that although the cult was of a mixed sex, it was largely dominated by women. Other inscriptions (341/L267 and 342/L292) identify two different women who made offerings to the gods. This indicates that the women were able to make their own offerings to the gods and suggests that they had a certain degree of economic independence.\textsuperscript{642} As noted above, the association consisting of the \textit{thiasus Maenadum}, which was most likely largely female, had the means to pay for the building of an aqueduct.\textsuperscript{643}

Furthermore, the above inscriptions demonstrate that women within the association held the roles of leadership. None had the authority to touch (modify?) the inscription on the facies except by order of Pomponia Hilara, who may be either a noblewoman from the household of Pomponians or a freedwoman who took the name of her mistress.\textsuperscript{644} The inscription identified by Pilhofer as 338/L333 identifies that a husband and wife may be benefactors to the group.\textsuperscript{645} The fact that women had prominent roles in this association could help shed some light on Phil. 4:2 where Paul urges (\textit{παρακαλῶ}) Euodia and Syntyche to think the same way (be of one mind). The converts at Philippi constituted a mix of male and female, who most likely had other affiliations with other associations because an individual could belong to more than one

\textsuperscript{642} For a brief discussion on the status of women mentioned in the inscriptions 341/L267, 342/L292, 339/L338, and 338/L33 see Portefaix, \textit{Sisters Rejoice}, 100-101. Kloppenborg and Ascough, \textit{Greco-Roman Associations}, 334-335.

\textsuperscript{643} Ibid., 335.

\textsuperscript{644} Ibid., 334.

\textsuperscript{645} Ibid.
cult or association simultaneously. Associations did not require allegiance or exclusivity in the first-century CE.\textsuperscript{646}

From the inscriptive evidence there was clearly inter-group rivalry among the associations. Inter-group rivalry would come from competition for a greater pre-eminence.\textsuperscript{647} It can be seen that non-elite associations and cults at Philippi, during the time of Paul, exhibit behaviours which demonstrate that the inhabitants participated in the dominant culture’s values. The behaviours, such as the giving of benefactions along with its boasting through honorific inscriptions often located in prominent places, increased both personal and group honour reputation. The receiving of public honour was also achieved via the holding of offices within the group. Although there was no official \textit{cursus} at the non-elite association stratum of Philippi in the first and second centuries CE, the associations and cults replicated behaviours that perpetuated the value of honour bestowed by others as a means of personal esteem. The emulation of these behaviours was undergirded by Roman values and suggests that they were entrenched in the minds of non-citizens.

\textbf{5.8. The Absence of an Established Jewish Presence}

According to Acts, Paul’s usual method of entering synagogues and engaging his fellow Jews did not occur at Philippi because there is no evidence at present to suggest that the socio-political institution of synagogues existed there before 300 CE.\textsuperscript{648} Established synagogues served the Jewish community in a number of ways but were primarily

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{646} R. S. Ascough, \textit{Paul’s Macedonian Associations}, 87.
\item\textsuperscript{647} Ibid., 88.
\item\textsuperscript{648} B. Chilton and E. Yamauchi, “Synagogues” \textit{DNTB}: 1151.
\end{footnotes}
places where the reciting and the study of the torah was done. It was also a place where Judaism’s traditions, customs, and rulings were transmitted. Thus, they were an institution where Judaism’s ethnic and social identity was powerfully reinforced. The lack of established synagogues means that the extent of the Philippians’ knowledge of Israel’s historical figures and narrative was in all likelihood minimal.

There is evidence that there were some proselytes at Philippi because Lydia was described as a σεβομένη τον θεόν (godearer) in the Book of Acts (16:14). The term σεβοντες τον θεόν could denote a full convert or Gentiles who were considered to be a sympathisers, accepted Israel’s monotheistic God, attended the synagogues, and participated in some ceremonial requirements of the torah. There is, however, no mention of Lydia in the letter to the Philippians, nor can it be known how much she knew of Israel’s historical narrative. Furthermore, NA identifies only a few verbal parallels to the LXX, which, again, suggest that Paul’s converts at Philippi would have had limited knowledge of Israel’s historical narrative.

Furthermore, the fact that Paul does not explicitly refer to citizenship in any of his other letters suggests that he chose something that was significant for his converts. Though Acts is a theological portrayal of Paul, the issue raised of citizenship in Acts 16 is significant to Paul’s time at Philippi. For the above reasons, Paul needed to construe conversion in categories familiar to his converts, in order to ensure the fullest possible understanding by the Philippians.

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649 Ibid., 1149.
651 Trebilco, Jewish Communities in Asia Minor, 149. J. P. Ware, Paul and the Mission of the Church: Philippians in Ancient Jewish Context (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 32-33.
652 In the Loci Citati Vel Allegati of the NA there are eighteen citations of allusion from the LXX found in the text of Philippians, and one from the Masoretic Text (Ps 145:18). The most cited LXX come from the Book of Isaiah (five times), which means that it was possible that the Philippians had some knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures. The lack of extended argument using the LXX by Paul however means it cannot be certain how much they knew.
5.9. Conclusion

This chapter has critically evaluated the inscriptional and numismatic evidence found at Philippi. What became evident is that, in the language of Berger, the inhabitants of Philippi had internalised the symbolic universe propagated by *Pax Augusta*. The numismatic and honorific inscription evidence at Philippi clearly shows that it was conscious and active in promoting its connection with Augustus and his victory at Philippi, even after his death. It is also evident that Philippi’s identity as being the place where Augustus’ rule commenced, was salient to its identity.

Augustus’ conceptual machinery maintained the symbolic universe by the presence of the Roman socio-political indicates Augustus’ success at implementing his control over the colonies. The evidence also demonstrated that the veterans, *sevir Augustalis*, and other offices of the imperial in the city acted in ways that shows they were influenced by socio-political institutions dedicated to maintaining Augustus’ symbolic universe at Philippi. It also illustrates that the process of internalisation at Philippi had occurred. Philippi’s inhabitants’ active participation in the imperial cult and festivals was not an empty gesture but, rather, demonstrated personal and the city’s loyalty to Caesar, an important aspect of Roman citizenship and identity.

Further evidence that the world view and values of Augustus’ symbolic universe had been internalised is seen in the active participation in the mimicking of Roman hierarchical structure. The replication of elite social values of public boasting and a *cursus honorum* was found in non-elite associations at Philippi, evidenced in honorific inscriptions. This highlights the fact that participation in the conceptual machinery also helps to form a social identity. The internalisation of the conceptual machinery of Roman values, as seen in its socio-political institutions and historical connection to the Julio-Claudian household, would have served to maintain the symbolic universe by
facilitating membership of social groups that had internalised Augustus’ symbolic universe.

This chapter concludes Part Two, which provides the historical socio-political foundation that will be used in Part Three. In Part Three, which covers Chapters Six to Ten, SIT and SCT will be applied to the text of Philippians. The methodologies will highlight and illustrate the influence of Roman socio-political institutions on the Philippians’ pre-conversion social identity and on their new post-conversion social identity, which is that of a new citizenship.
Part Three: Conversion at Roman Philippi

Part Three is the application of the methodologies discussed in Part One to the text of Philippians.

In this section the application of SIT and SCT will be the dominant methodologies used. SIT will be used in Chapters Six and Seven as an heuristic tool that will illustrate, through inter-group comparison, how Paul began to form a new social identity for the Philippians. Those who are considered in-group members have behaviours assessed in positive terms, consistent with a new world view based on Paul’s gospel. Those who do not have the same world view and values as Paul’s in-group are described in the negative stereotypical characteristics of those who exhibit behaviours consistent values from the dominant Roman world view.

Chapters Eight and Nine will predominately use SCT as a framework for understanding in-group behaviour, particularly how the Philippians are to act with loyalty to the in-group. Individuals belonging to the in-group are to use their status as citizens of heaven as being salient to their identity. What will become clear is that worthy citizens are those who exhibit loyalty to the in-group and Paul’s Messiah. SCT will highlight how Paul used proto-type leaders/members of the in-group to connect loyalty not only to being a citizen but also to actively propagating the gospel.

In Chapters Nine and Ten, SIT’s notion of in-group versus out-group comparison and SCT’s proto-type leader/member will be used again. What will emerge is the destiny of Paul’s in-group, who are citizens of heaven, versus the fate of out-groups. The citizens of heaven have demonstrated their loyalty to Paul and his Messiah by propagating the gospel. It will also be demonstrated that Paul effectively uses the prototype leader/member to both exhort his in-group to remain loyal and to be an example for those who act as worthy citizens of the gospel.
Berger’s theory is still applied in this section but SIT and SCT is predominately used for my exegesis. Berger’s theory is used to focus on behaviours and world views that arose from Roman socio-political institutions which influenced the Philippians’ world view. The theory’s frameworks of internalisation, ideology, and conceptual machinery will help to highlight the political themes used by Paul to create a new civic community.
Chapter Six: Philippians 1:1-11

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter SIT highlights how Paul began to re-form the social identity of the Philippian converts. It is argued that Paul had formed an association that would have been perceived in Roman culture as a *societas*. Though many NT scholars have dismissed the notion of a *societas* at Philippi, a fresh study into the term *κοινωνία* and its cognates now makes it likely that an agreement like those found in a *societas* was struck between Paul and his converts. This partnership with the Philippians had a dual purpose. The first purpose was to further the propagation of the gospel: the second was to counter the honour-seeking culture at Philippi. Paul did not want his relationship with the Philippians to resemble a patron-client relationship which became an asymmetrical relationship.

In this chapter, SIT is applied to Philippians 1:1-11 to illustrate how Paul began to form the Philippians into a socio-political group that acted in unity on an emotional and cognitive level. SIT’s basic notion of in-group and out-group comparisons highlights how Paul sought to form and to maintain a new social identity amongst them, Paul hoped that his positive assessment of the Philippians’ participation in his mission would give them a positive distinction that would facilitate a common in-group identity.

The group comparison used in this chapter highlights how Paul attempted to create a new social identity for the Philippians by their participation in the common goal of propagation of the gospel. Paul’s group comparison in 1:1-11 is used in Chapter Seven to identify those he considered not to be in the same in-group.
6.2. The Κοινωνία at Philippi

This section analyses Julien Ogereau’s study of the term Κοινωνία and its cognates.

Ogereau contends that Κοινωνία would be understood by the Romans (and Philippians) to be a partnership known in Latin as a societas. The notion of the Philippian Κοινωνία as the equivalent to a societas, however, is debated in NT scholarship and will be discussed below.

6.2.1. Sampley’s Case for Societas

The notion of Paul’s Κοινωνία as a societas has been rejected by Gerald Peterman and G. H. R Horsley due to the lack of hard primary literary and papyri evidence connecting the Latin word societas with the Greek word Κοινωνία. A recent study by Julien Ogereau, however, challenged these objections by analysing the terms Κοινωνέω, Κοινωνός, and Κοινωνία in their historical and literary context. First, though, we turn to the work of Sampley, who first argued in favour of societas as a valid description of Paul’s communities.

In 1977 J. P. Sampley argued that a conceptual framework for understanding Paul’s communities, both the internal relationships and how they related to their Greco-Roman context, was as a societas. Sampley broadly described societas as a partnership where a group came together in order to achieve a common goal or aim. The

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653 From this point when referring to a consensual societas the word societas will be used, unless otherwise stated.

654 Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians.

usual aim of a societas was that it was entered into for the pursuit of financial goals but there were others that did not have financial profit as the goal. A societas was a voluntary contract but was also legally binding under Roman law, even though there was no need of any witnesses, notification to officials, or any written contract or legal paperwork required. Rather the agreement came into effect once it had been agreed to. Sampley argued in favour of societas as a valid description of Paul’s communities. The partners of the societas were considered as equals but each one might contribute something different. Sampley gives the example of a slave owner and a professional actor who might reach an agreement about a particular slave; the slave owner’s half is the contribution of the slave and the actor’s half is to provide skills. Both would share in the profit from the slave’s use in the theatre. All the members of the societas were expected to contribute property or work of some value that would progress the common aims of the group.

The foundation and stability depended on the group having mutual trust and obligations to others in the societas. Once a societas commenced, no member was free to take a course of action without considering the rights of the other members. No one was allowed to further his or her own interest at the expense of other partners. The societas continued on in good faith while all members remained in agreement.

Sampley argues that the evidence in the NT indicated that Paul understood his ἐκκλησία at Philippi to be a societas. He highlights that phrases such as δεξίας ἔδωκαν ἐμοί καὶ Βαρνάβα in Gal. 2:9 allude to the custom of sealing a contract between two equal parties, Paul and the Jerusalem leaders, in order to promote the gospel. The

656 Sampley, “Societas Christi,” 159.
657 Ibid.
658 Sampley, Pauline Partnership in Christ, 11-12.
659 Ibid., 14.
evidence for Sampley that Paul had formed a *societas* with the Philippians is based on the terminology used in 4:10-20 and the acknowledgement of a received gift via Epaphroditus. The commercial terms of *εἷς λόγος* referred to the balancing of accounts, and *ἀπέχω* is employed when used in a commercial context is rendered as ‘to receive something in full’.

Furthermore, Sampley argues that the presence of the term *κοινωνία* expresses partnership in Pauline literature and was the equivalent of the Latin *societas*. Because Philippi was heavily influenced by Roman institutions, Paul’s converts would have understood their *κοινωνία* was a reference to a *societas*. The presence of other *societas* terminology and concepts, such as *τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν*, were used to keep the Philippians unified and in agreement with the aims of the *societas*.

### 6.2.2. Critics of Societas

Sampley’s arguments, however, fail to convince many scholars who point out possible weaknesses in his thesis. Gerald Peterman objects that the case for a *societas* is overstated. The argument that the basis for Paul’s terminology was referring to a legally binding agreement lacked enough evidence to be credible. Instead, the commercial terminology used by Paul in Philippians 4 is understood as referring to social mores of Greco-Roman reciprocal giving between friends. The technical terms used are

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661 Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ*, 57. See also L & N, 57.228 ‘settlement of an account’.

662 Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ*, 53. See also L & N, 57.137. One of the semantic domains that L & N locate *ἀπέχω* is in “Possess, Transfer, Exchange”.


664 Ibid., 62-72.

metaphors of gift and service relationships in the Greco-Roman world. The basis of Peterman’s argument is Peter Marshall’s interpretation of the terms in Phil 4:15 (ἐκοινώνησεν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήμψεως), which he describes as referring to friendships of various kinds using commercial terms, as in the writings of Seneca and Cicero. Though Marshall notes that the aforementioned terms have a commercial basis, he interprets them differently. He argues that because commercial terminology was used idiomatically in the majority of friendships in the ancient world, the usage in Philippians indicates reciprocal giving between friends.

Peterman further argues that exchange between friends provided a safety net when a sudden disaster happened, based on Seneca’s use of societas in De Beneficiis 4.18.1-2. From this one instance he concludes:

a relationship solely built on the social exchange of goods and services has no legal basis. No more needs to be found in Paul’s use of κοινωνία than is found in Seneca’s use of societas in De Beneficiis 4.18.1-2.

Seneca’s work is applied as representative of reciprocal giving in the Greco-Roman world by Peterman. Ogereau argues that Peterman, however, did not use enough primary documentary evidence regarding Paul’s use of the commercial terminology found in Philippians, and his choice of texts supporting his claims of social reciprocity rather than a societas is too selective. Peterman’s arguments accordingly cannot be regarded as decisive against a Pauline societas.

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666 Ibid., 125.
668 Ibid., 160.
669 Ibid., 163.
670 Peterman, Paul’s Gift from Philippi, 126.
671 For a full discussion and Ogereau’s objections to Peterman’s criticisms and research on this topic see Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 28-40.
Furthermore, Peterman’s argument that the absence of *societas* terminology in 1 Corinthians 9, where Paul argued for his right of support from the Corinthians as evidence that a *societas* could not exist between Paul and the Philippians fails to account for the unique situation at Corinth. At Corinth, it is more likely that Paul did not accept financial assistance because he did not want to be entangled by the reciprocal obligations expected from clients by their patrons within the Corinthian ἐκκλησία.

Another point to be considered is Paul’s language in Philippians to describe the members of the ἐκκλησία. He referred to his κοινωνία with the Philippians as συγκοινωνός (Phil 1:7), which had the meaning of ‘partaking’ in ancient Greek that carried on into NT times. Other words used to describe Paul’s helpers in Philippians are συνεργός (2:25; 4:3), συστρατιώτης (2:25), and σύζυγος (4:3). Again there is continuity of meaning from ancient Greek into Koine Greek: συνεργός, in *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* is translated ‘one who joins forces or collaborates, helper’ and in BDAG ‘to working together with, helping’. The term συστρατιώτης, meant ‘comrade in arms, fellow soldier’. The term σύζυγος in Ancient Greek has the meaning ‘yoked, united, paired’, and in Koine Greek ‘true comrade… “yoke-fellow”’. The presence of σών as a prefix on compound words denotes association or assistance, particularly in Pauline writings. The terms are associated with the

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672 Peterman, *Paul’s Gift from Philippi*, 126.
676 “συνεργός,” BDAG, 969. Italic original.
679 “σύζυγος,” BDAG, 954. Italic original.
propagation of the gospel and would more likely be referring to a *societas* than friendship.

Another shortcoming in Sampley’s argument is observed by G. H. R Horsley, who notes that Sampley did not validate his claim that the Greek term *κοινωνία* and its cognates were equivalent to the Latin term *societas*.\(^{681}\) This point will be investigated below and must be satisfactorily resolved if one is to argue that the Philippian congregation took the form of a *societas* proposal. The evidence supporting the term *κοινωνία* as associated with a *societas* will be based on Ogereau’s research, which focuses on the words *κοινωνέω*, *κοινωνός*, and *κοινωνία* and their cognates, and seeks to ‘illustrate their possible socio-economic connotation(s) and various usage(s) in a broad range of contexts’.\(^ {682}\) This thesis will only be concerned with *κοινωνία* and *κοινωνέω* as employed in Philippians.

### 6.3. *Κοινωνέω* and *Κοινωνία* and their Cognates

This section will analyse the work of Ogereau’s recent study of *κοινωνία* and its cognates. The breadth of Ogereau’s research is illustrated in his use of several papyri databases such as DDDBP, APIS, HGV, PHI,\(^ {683}\) EDH,\(^ {684}\) the indices of *AE* and SEG as well as from the TLG database.\(^ {685}\) The analyses of *κοινωνία* and *κοινωνέω* will be based on Ogereau’s results and conclusions, which will be critically evaluated in their application.

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\(^{682}\) Ogereau, *Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians*, 151.

\(^{683}\) These databases can be viewed at http://papyri.info/

\(^{684}\) http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/home/

\(^{685}\) Ogereau, *Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians*, 151.
6.3.1. Κοινωνέω Inscriptions

The majority of the inscriptive evidence for κοινωνέω and its cognates are found from the fourth-century BCE to the second-century CE in partitive genitive constructions. The meaning expressed is the participation, or sharing in common, or the purpose for which the association was formed, which included religious festivals and other civic activities. There are also contexts where κοινωνέω and its cognates are used to refer to other civic institutions or non-civic services such as ‘common funds or treasuries... a crime... human nature... a professional activity... a service or facility...or a tomb’.  

Early usage in inscriptions reveals evidence that κοινωνέω and its cognates may have political connotations. It could refer to participation in the πολιτεία of a city such as being given the rights of citizenship. Ogereau gives the example of an inscription found in Sparta and Euboia: καὶ τὰρ ἐπιροικίας τὰρ ἐν Σπάρται καὶ ἐν Εὔβοιαι κοιναν καὶ τὰν θεαρίαν (450 BCE), ‘and they may join the colonies of Sparta and Euboia and receive embassy.’ Another instance of κοινωνέω in reference to the political arena is found in an inscription at Dyme in Achaia (dated to 300 BCE), the verb κοινωνέω refers to the rights of citizenship.  

The use of κοινωνέω and its cognates in the political sphere is seen in what appears to have been a political and military alliance between Rome and the city of Mytilene. The inscription is dated to 129 BCE:

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686 Ibid., 152.
687 Ibid., 152-153.
688 Ibid., 353. Accusative of θεαρία (θεωρία in Ionic spelling) referred to political emissaries or ambassadors. Or someone viewing games or the theatre. Both of these activities are tied in with the civic activities of a πολιτεία. See “θεωρία θεαρία”, LSJ: 797.
689 Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 153-155. See for other inscriptions, including those referring to other cities.
δὲ καὶ διὰ τὴν οὖσαν αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τῆς [ἀρ]|| χῆς πρὸς Ῥωμαίους εὐνοιάν τε καὶ
φιλίαν καὶ διὰ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς συμμαχίαν κοινωνοῦντος τοῦ
συνεστῶτος αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ πολέμου.690

[α]nd also on account of his enduring goodwill and friendship towards the
Romans from the beginning, and on account of his alliance with them, when
he joined them in the Asian war.691

Other writers nearer to the first-century CE also used κοινωνέω and its cognates in
reference to an agreement, partnership or undertaking connected to the political sphere.
Diodorus Siculus used the infinitive of κοινωνέω in this way when describing a man
named Arbaces who endeavoured to persuade the Babylonians to join a
military/political conflict:

And the conclusion of the matter was that he formed a conspiracy with
Belesys, whereby he should himself move the Medes and Persians to revolt
while the latter should persuade the Babylonians to join the undertaking
[κοινωνήσαι] and should secure the help of the commander of the Arabs.692

In another reference κοινωνέω refers to the political sphere in the ancient world with
regards to joining a venture to found a colony:

Of the fifty boys…their descendants, they say, being honoured even to the
present day, and seven in Thespiae, where they are called demouchi, and
where their descendents, they say, were the chief men of the city until recent
times. All the other Thespiadae and many more who wished to join
[κοινωνεῖν] the founding of the colony Iolaüs.693

The fact that historians from around the first century CE used κοινωνέω when referring to
political activities and a sense of an agreement or undertaking shows it can refer to
agreements with no formal written contract.

690 SEG 3.710 (= IG XII Sup 116). Cited in ibid., 359.
691 Translation found in ibid.
692 Diodorus of Sicily, History 2.24.5. (Oldfather, LCL). See also 2.24.6 for a similar usage of
κοινωνέω.
693 Diodorus of Sicily, History 4.29.4-5. (Oldfather, LCL).
6.3.2. Κοινωνία Inscriptions

Ogereau observes that the noun κοινωνία in literary inscriptions is used in similar contexts to κοινωνέω, such as in the political sphere, participation in contests, in sacrifices, and the holding of assizes (a court that administers the civil and criminal law), or in the Panhellenion; that is, the council of noble representatives from Greek cities established by Hadrian in 130-132 CE. 694 A κοινωνία could also refer to a marriage, identify a cultic association, or possibly a community. 695 In a civic context, it sometimes refers to a political alliance or a union, which is a political partnership or community. 696 Thus it can be seen that κοινωνία can denote partnerships or allegiances that have a strong civic connection.

Ogereau also found that the noun was used in partnerships in a non-civic context referring to various kinds of business partnerships. Though Ogereau concedes that κοινωνία rarely referred to business partnerships or commercial organisations, there are some examples where κοινωνία did refer to business partnerships; for instance, a group of livestock owners identified as a κοινωνία in Crete, gathered together and separated the sheep, pigs, and cattle on properties with clearly marked boundaries. The livestock farmers formed a seasonal κοινωνία and/or employed shepherds to care for their animals together, sharing the gains and losses. 697

There is also mention from pottery fragments of a κοινωνία that was a small business formed by two individuals who have common labourers (κοινῆς ἐργασίας) and

694 Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 169.
695 Ibid., 169-170.
696 See example ibid., 170. See the Greek portion of Res gest. divi Aug. 5.32. The term κοινωνία used with a meaning of political friendship or alliance of friendship.
697 Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 173-174.
company meetings (κοινάς συνέδρους).\textsuperscript{698} Similarly, an economic partnership described as a κοινωνία existed between an individual and the city of Thisbae in Boeotia, dated 170 BCE:

\begin{quote}
(VII) Ὡσαύτως περὶ ὧν οἱ αὐτοὶ Θισβεῖς ἐνεφάνισαν περὶ σῖτου καὶ ἐλ[A]ου ἐαυτοῖς κοινωνίαν πρὸς Γναῖον Πανδοσίνου γεγονέναι, περὶ τοῦ τοῦ πράγματος, ἐὰν κρίτας λαβεῖν βούλωνται, τούτοις κρίτας δο[ῦ]ναι ἐδοξεῖν.
\end{quote}

Similarly, the same Thisbaeans have declared that a partnership … has been established between them and Cn. Pandosinus concerning (the provision of?) grain and oil, on this matter it has been decided that judges are to be appointed for them, if they wish so.\textsuperscript{699}

Thus we have an economic agreement that is not just between individuals, but between a group and an individual, which otherwise had been a problem for the identification of a societas between the Philippians and Paul, as is contended by Horsley.\textsuperscript{700}

6.3.3. Κοινωνέω and Κοινωνία in Papyri

Ogereau’s research includes papyrus evidence that gives his work greater substance. By increasing the number of sources, he provides a wider socio-economic context for how κοινωνία and κοινωνέω were used. In contrast to the inscriptive evidence, κοινωνέω in the papyri is quite rare. Ogereau notes that the earliest known appearance is the tax revenue law of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and is dated 258/9 BCE. It is associated with tax-farmers, who are denoted as κοινωνὸι and, in one instance, they are identified as a group that partnered with a chief contractor.\textsuperscript{701} Many of the other examples in papyri are

\textsuperscript{698} Ibid., 176-177.
\textsuperscript{699} Ibid., 379.
\textsuperscript{700} Horsley, \textit{New Docs} 3, 19.
\textsuperscript{701} Ogereau, \textit{Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians}, 183.
from the second-century CE and later. These include a partnership between two men and another to joint lease an olive grove, dated 144 CE:

\[
10 ἐπὶ [ὅψ]ας τοὺς ἐπικιμέτως
\]

10 ἐπὶ [ὅψ]ας τοὺς ἐπικιμέτως\]

We wish to partner with you, each one of us according to a third [share], in the harvest of dates and olives of the [present] 7th (year) [only], which are to become mature in the coming 8th (year).

Another reference is found in a private letter from one partner who wishes not to associate with the same person in another partnership (date unsure, possibly from the third-century CE):

\[γινω[σ]ιν σε θέλω, ὅτι πάντα, ὅσα ἔχω, ἕξω, λήμνα πέπραξα.
15 ἵνα μὴ ἔγινε δευτέρου· ὅσον κοινωνήσω, ὡς ἐδώσα τὴν ἀνάγκην προστρέψε τοὺς κοπεῖς ἐργά[ζε]σται ἐπὶ τὴν ἀνάγκην ἀντιθέων.\]

I want you to know that as much timber as I have, I have sold (it), so that I may not associate with you a second time, knowing the necessity to urge the cutters to work since they (?) received their pay.

What is clear in these examples within business contexts is that κοινωνεύω and its cognates do in fact include commercial partnerships of varying kinds.

In papyri sources, Ogereau found that κοινωνία is frequently associated with the prepositions ἐπί, ἀπό, κατά, denoting ‘joint-ownership or joint exploration (through a lease or partnership)’. This could include property, land, house (or part thereof),

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702 Ibid., 392. See http://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb;16;13009dupl#to-app-choice01. II. 7-14 of SB XVI 13009.
703 Translation Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 392.
704 See http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.lond;2;197 P.Lond. II 197 V.
See specific link, http://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de/hgv/31211. See also Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 395.
705 Translation ibid., 395.
706 For more examples of κοινωνεύω in papyri see ibid., 391-401.
707 Ibid., 199.
animals, a workshop and even slaves. A large amount of papyri evidence cited by
Ogereau is associated with land or property leases and marriage contracts; for instance,
a papyrus dated 132 CE includes how expenditures related to cultivation of land will be
shared between them:

ἐπί τό με τελέσαι τοῦ ἐνελκουμένου σοι φόρου ἢ ἐνελκουσθησομένου
15 τὸ ἡμισὺ, ἐμοῦ κατ’ ἱσον σοι [π]άσας τὰς δαπάνας κ(αὶ) σπέρματα κ(αὶ)
ἐργα κ(αὶ) [α] τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ἀνεμποδίστως ποιησομένου κατὰ τὸ ἡμισὺ.

(I agree) to pay to you half of all the tribute that is imposed or shall be
imposed, sharing with you equally all the expenditures, seeds, labour, and all
other (costs), without hindrance. (Let) the partnership (be) effective.

In some papyri, κοινωνία is used by one of the individuals in reference to an agreement
to be a partner in the venture.

Further evidence that κοινωνία was used to refer to business dealings is seen in a
receipt for the rent of a lease of land, dated 255-256 CE:

ἀπέσχον [παρ’ ὑμῶν τὸ ἐκφορίον] ὑπ(έρ) ὑπ

I received from you the payment for my arouras which is cultivated in
partnership by the village of Tanis for the current second year.

It is interesting to note that ἀπέσχον is the aorist verb of ἀπέχω found in Phil 4:18. The
presence of ἀπέχω with κοινωνία is decisive in support of the translation as ‘I have
received full payment’, which Sampley argues is a proof of a societas. The fact that

709 Translation from Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 463-464.
710 See ibid., 463.
712 Translation from Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 468.
713 Sampley, Pauline Partnership in Christ, 57.
ἀπέχω is found in reference with a κοινωνία partnership means his claim cannot be dismissed entirely.

6.3.4. A Societas Evangelii at Philippi

Thus far we have seen that both κοινωνία and κοινωνέω were used in the ancient world to denote various partnerships. We have given selected examples of Ogereau’s inscriptions and papyri evidence, to reveal strong evidence that κοινωνία commonly referred to various types of partnerships – political, commercial and so forth – which from a Roman and Greek legal perspective would be viewed as a type of societas.⁷¹⁴ Though Ogereau agrees with the general criticism that Sampley did not have enough hard evidence to demonstrate κοινωνία and its cognates as the equivalent of societas in Latin, his study has demonstrated that κοινωνία can be understood as an equivalent word for a societas.

Ogereau observes that Sampley’s thesis of a societas Christii needs to be nuanced by identifying what type of societas Paul had in mind.⁷¹⁵ Sampley’s suggestion that Paul’s converts formed a ‘consensual societas’ that was not for financial profit or reliant on blood ties⁷¹⁶ is somewhat vague, and based on Cicero’s defence of the comedian Q. Roscius, the legal sources: Gaius’s Institutes, Justinian’s Codex and Digest to support his claim that κοινωνία was a technical term for societas.⁷¹⁷

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⁷¹⁴ E. M. Harris, “The Liability of Business Partners in Athenian Law: The Dispute between Lycon and Megacleides ([Dem.] 52.20-1),” *CQ* 39 (1989): 339. Edward M. Harris notes that only an individual could be perused in a court of law by a plaintiff from the κοινωνία a violation of the agreement. Athenian law still recognised a κοινωνία as an agreement that was binding. Even though a κοινωνία and societas were not necessarily perceived in the same way by the Greeks it did indicate that a κοινωνία was a socio-economic partnership that was recognised under Greek law.


The accurate description of the Philippian’s κοινωνία with Paul provides a clear purpose and explanation of how Paul used it as a framework to form the identity of the Philippians. There are four types of societas that lie within the consensual societas framework and are identified by Ogereau:

1) Societas unius rei (cf. Justinian, Inst. 3.25.6; Dig. 17.2.5 pr.): A partnership formed for either a profit or non-profit objective or a course of action, that could include the purchase of a property (Dig. 17.2.52.12-13), management of an estate or shop (cf. Cicero, Quinct.), or the training and profit taking of a slave (Cicero, Rosc. com.).

2) Societas alicuius negotiationis (cf. Gaius, Inst. 3.148; Justinian, Inst. 3.25 pr.): a business partnership or enterprise. These included societates argentariorum (Dig. 2.14.25. pr., 2.14.27. pr., 4.8.34; Seneca, Rhet. Her. 2.13.19), societates publicanorum/vectigalis (tax farming partnerships; cf. Dig. 17.2.5).

3) Societas omnium/universorum bonorum quae ex quaestu veniunt (cf. Dig. 17.2.7): A partnership that included all non-specific business dealings. This could include sharing the revenues of the purchase, sale, letting, or hiring being done by the partnership. Ogereau notes that this is the default societas when its purpose is unclear.

4) Societas omnium/universorum bonorum (cf. Gaius, Inst. 3.148; Justinian, Inst. 3.25 pr.; Dig. 17.2.1.1, 17.2.1.3.1). In this partnership all assets were held in common amongst the members and it was not considered to be a common societas in classical times.718

Ogereau demonstrates that the type of societas which describes the relationship between Paul and his converts is that of societas unius rei because the κοινωνία at Philippi would have been not-for-profit.719 The objective of the societas unius rei was

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718 Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 337-338.
719 Ibid., 338.
the proclamation of the gospel, thus Paul’s Κοινωνία would be more accurately described as a societas evangelii.\textsuperscript{720}

A Κοινωνία in the first-century CE, whether involving a written contract or oral agreement, in Greek or Latin, did not make a difference from a Roman perspective because societas was referred to as ius gentium (law of nations).\textsuperscript{721} The ius gentium were the norms that governed civilised society as understood by the Romans. It was considered to be part of the ius naturale (natural law) of reason; from this the Romans believed that ius civile was derived. The ius gentium stood between the two laws.\textsuperscript{722}

For Paul, the formation of such a group would not only give them a common goal of spreading the gospel, but it would also be likely to give an individual a positive self-image. The knowledge that they contributed to a common goal that was continuing to grow (cf. Phil 1:12), would give the individuals in Κοινωνία a common goal that would be psychologically significant, encouraging further commitment to the Κοινωνία and over other groups. Belonging to a Κοινωνία, though, would not create a sufficiently strong psychological bond for the Philippians to acquire a new social identity, because a societas was essentially the sharing of various resources, whether money, property, skills, labour, or a combination of these, put towards a common goal.\textsuperscript{723}

Furthermore, a societas could only exist and pursue its common goal whilst there was agreement among the socii (members). Termination of the societas could occur when one partner announced his or her withdrawal, or with the death of a partner.\textsuperscript{724} It is

\textsuperscript{720} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{721} Ibid., 329.
\textsuperscript{722} G. Mousourakis, A Legal History of Rome (London: Routledge, 2007), 122-123. Cicero, however, notes that where ius civile of different political communities exist in the same location, then the laws are to be considered as ius gentium.
\textsuperscript{724} Ibid., 455-456.
unlikely that Paul would attempt to form the social identity of the Philippians solely on such a precarious agreement. Instead, belonging to a κοινωνία was an initial bond that began the process of group formation. This process would ultimately culminate in his converts at Philippi understanding themselves as citizens of a new civic community.

Importantly, what has emerged from our study of Ogereau’s work is that a κοινωνία referred to both civic and commercial partnerships. From the use of civic language in the letter we see that, in Paul’s thinking, he considered his κοινωνία to be part of a larger civic community of citizens, whose common goal was the propagation of the gospel.

It is our contention that the Philippians knew themselves to be part of a societas. The deliberate formation of a societas highlights the importance to the individual of his or her contribution to the goal of the group. Thus, an individual is more likely to be attracted to, and remain in, a group where the members see themselves and others in the same group in positive terms. By the formation of a societas Paul hoped to reduce inter-group bias amongst the Philippians and increased social cohesion. The result hoped for by Paul would have been a distinct group at Philippi with a common goal, the living out of the gospel.

The formation of a societas evangelii by Paul with the Philippians was a means by which he contrasted those who shared with him a common in-group identity from those who did not. Another possible benefit would be that it increased social cohesion amongst the in-group. Furthermore, members of the Philippian κοινωνία would be considered equal, in that they all contributed something to the group’s common goal regardless of their financial or social circumstances.\(^{725}\) Paul hoped that this would

\(^{725}\) Sampley, “Societas Christi,” 159.
decrease in-group biases against those who were previously considered to be out-group members of the κοινωνία before their conversion, due to their ethnicity, social or economic status. Thus, forming a societas evangeli was a way of combating honour-seeking behaviours that were otherwise entrenched within the Roman social context at Philippi.

6.4. Philippians 1:1-2

We now turn to a detailed exegesis on Philippians 1:1-11. The main methodology used in this section is SIT’s group comparison, and SCT’s re-categorisation, in 1:1-2. This section shows that the formation of a κοινωνία provides a common goal for the Philippians and provides them with a positive self-image. Paul also shows that, in order for a positive image to be effective, he needed to show sensitivity to some of the Philippians’ pre-conversion honour status.

6.4.1. The Building of Identity

It is argued throughout this thesis that Paul is sensitive to the Philippians’ Roman socio-political context. In the opening verses of the letter, it is seen that Paul did not require them to reject everything from their past identities. Gordon Fee observes that only in Philippians does Paul acknowledge those with offices, at the beginning of the letter, separate from the other recipients.726

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726 See G. D. Fee, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 66, n.43.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Paul’s self designated title</th>
<th>Recipients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romans 1:1, 7a</td>
<td>Παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος</td>
<td>πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ἄρῳ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corinthians 1:1, 2</td>
<td>Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος</td>
<td>τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὕσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, σὺν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ἄνωμα τοῦ κυρίου Ἠμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Corinthians 1:1</td>
<td>Παῦλος ἀπόστολος</td>
<td>τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὕσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ σὺν τοῖς ἁγίοις πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Αχαίᾳ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatians 1:1, 2</td>
<td>Παῦλος ἀπόστολος</td>
<td>ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians 1</td>
<td>Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος δοῦλοι</td>
<td>πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Thessalonians 1:1a</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικεῖων ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philemon 1</td>
<td>δέσμιος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ</td>
<td>ὁ ἀδελφὸς Φιλήμων τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ συνεργῷ ἡμῶν</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The acknowledgment of the status of the ἐπισκόποι καὶ διακόνοις (Phil 1:1) in the greeting can be explained sociologically: by acknowledging those with titles or offices such as overseers/supervisors with authority\textsuperscript{727} it has the effect of reducing inter subgroup bias within the ἐκκλησία.

It is argued in this thesis that the titles of ἐπισκόποις and διακόνοις represent offices found in religious and volunteer associations.\textsuperscript{728} Richard Ascough argues that the office of the ἐπισκόποις had a supervisory function which included financial responsibilities.\textsuperscript{729}

\textsuperscript{727} Reumann, Philippians, 62-63.
\textsuperscript{728} P. A. Harland, Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations, 182. Philip Harland has shown that there are crossovers in the titles used between Christians and volunteer associations.
\textsuperscript{729} Ascough, Paul’s Macedonian Associations, 81.
He notes that although the role of the ἐπισκόποις was clear, the specific function of the office could vary across associations.\textsuperscript{730} The office of διακόνοις also had a range of functions attached to it. The office could refer to those who wait on tables, or those dedicated to serving the gods, and sometimes referred to those who served as, or with, priests or priestesses.\textsuperscript{731} Some NT scholars,\textsuperscript{732} however, consider that here Paul is referring exclusively to early church offices amongst Paul’s ἐκκλησία. Fee suggests, for instance, that these two titles refer to Euodia and Syntyche, whom Paul will address later in the letter.\textsuperscript{733}

It is also possible that Paul was referring to positions within the community from an earlier time, but it is unclear how they functioned at Philippi.\textsuperscript{734} It is unlikely that first generation converts would understand ἐπισκόποις and διακόνοις as established ecclesial terms. It would be more likely that second and third generation converts would do so.

Though Paul did not exert his apostleship on his converts, he acknowledged the status of those who have office amongst the Philippians. The reduction of inter-group bias between converts allows for individuals and groups from different ethnic and social sub-groups to act as one social unit,\textsuperscript{735} without entirely withdrawing from their socio-political context at Philippi. Recognising the status from another member’s previous

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[730]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[731]{Ibid., 82.}
\footnotetext[733]{Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 69.}
\footnotetext[735]{See other examples in Chapter 3.3.2. It is possible that within the in-group some were experiencing ‘status inconsistency’, causing disunity. See Meeks, \textit{The First Urban Christians}, 22-23.}
\end{footnotes}
sub-group enables the group to function within the context to which they belong, by allowing for some of the structures that give a positive identity to remain and by allowing for a dual identity to be formed.\textsuperscript{736}

Paul states elsewhere as to ‘remain in your call’ (1 Cor 7:17-20). Philippians and other NT writings (Acts 16:14-34; 2 Cor 8:1-2) provide a social and ethnic profile of the ἐκκλησία that shows a range of people from different sub-groups were involved.\textsuperscript{737}

6.4.2. Philippians 1:3-11

Scholars suggest various reasons why Paul wrote to his converts: disunity,\textsuperscript{738} to strengthen bonds between Paul and the Philippians,\textsuperscript{739} political steadfastness in the face of opposition,\textsuperscript{740} consolation,\textsuperscript{741} suffering,\textsuperscript{742} humility,\textsuperscript{743} false teachers, concern by Paul’s friends for his welfare, friendship/partnership in the gospel,\textsuperscript{744} and to thank the Philippians for their κοινωνία in the gospel.\textsuperscript{745} This thesis argues that Paul primarily wrote to the Philippian converts to form and maintain their identity as a civic community of citizens of heaven.

If Paul’s goal was to form the Philippians’ identity, then he needed them to be unified, to see themselves at a psychological level as having a common in-group identity, acting in cohesion with a new world view and behaviours. So Paul sets about

\textsuperscript{737} de Vos, Church and Community Conflicts, 254-260.
\textsuperscript{739} Alexander, “Hellenistic Letter-Forms and the Structure of Philippians”.
\textsuperscript{740} Geoffrion, Rhetorical Purpose, 53-81.
\textsuperscript{741} Holloway, Consolation in Philippians, 87ff.
\textsuperscript{742} Bloomquist, The Function of Suffering in Philippians, 140-197.
\textsuperscript{743} Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 110ff.
\textsuperscript{744} G. W. Hansen, The Letter to the Philippians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 8-11.
\textsuperscript{745} Ogereau, Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians, 245-256.
maintaining his bond with his converts on a cognitive and emotional level by his concern, love, honour, and positive evaluation of them in the thanksgiving.

The Hellenistic convention of thanksgivings had multiple purposes, one of these was to bestow honour on the recipients.\textsuperscript{746} In his letters Paul often thanks (εὐχαριστέω) his God and benefactor for the χάρις given to his emerging congregations (1 Cor 1:4) and other Christ movements (Rom 1:8). He honours his congregations that exhibit πίστις (faithfulness) and especially those that demonstrate other χάριτες such as ἀγάπη (love) or ἔλπίς (hope) (1 Thess 1:3:6-9; Phlm 3-5).\textsuperscript{747} In the thanksgiving to the Philippians, the main verb is εὐχαριστῶ followed by a dative noun of direction τῷ θεῷ μου, so the thanksgiving is on the basis of the faithful service of their κοινωνία.

In the two ἐπὶ clauses in verses 3 and 5, Paul praised and honoured his converts. The first ἐπὶ clause is temporal and denotes that, whenever Paul remembers them, he gave thanks to his God for all of them with χάρα (joy), which not only shows his emotions for them but also that Paul is remembering the faithful service of the Philippians: ‘Paul is thankful because of the good recollections he has of the Philippians’.\textsuperscript{748} The tone of honour and the expression of joy are continued in the second ἐπὶ clause. This is a causal clause and gives the reason for Paul’s joy and gratefulness to God, which is ἐπὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἡμέρας ἕχει τοῦ νῦν. Paul’s thanksgiving was not just that the Philippians partnered with him in the propagation of the gospel, but they continued to support him. Peter O’Brien

\textsuperscript{746} P. Schubert, Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings, BZNW 20 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1939), 148.

\textsuperscript{747} Harrison, Paul’s Language of Grace, 269.

\textsuperscript{748} Reed, Discourse Analysis of Philippians, 201. This entire sentence is italicised in the original, for emphasis.
argues that this was not just with finances but in a wider sense, noting that κοινωνία and εἰς with its accusative object found together in Rom 15:26 and 2 Cor 9:13 also denote an activity in process was being implied.\(^\text{749}\) The implication for the letter to the Philippians then is that the partnership also involved co-operation such as labour or other skills that would further the propagation of the gospel and would be expected to be expressed by members of a κοινωνία.\(^\text{750}\) Thus, in the opening five verses Paul not only honours his God and thereby demonstrates gratitude to his benefactor,\(^\text{751}\) he also bestows honour on his partners in the gospel.

Some scholars\(^\text{752}\) argue that the ἐπὶ clause in verse 3 should be understood as a causal clause, and that the pronoun ὑμῶν is a subjective genitive rather than an objective genitive. Instead of a temporal clause with ὑμῶν as an objective genitive, a causal rendering would be ‘I thank God because of your remembrance of me’. Witherington argues that taking the ἐπὶ clause as causal makes more sense because it is unnecessary for Paul to mention to the Philippians that he is thankful for them.\(^\text{753}\) Further, translating the ἐπὶ clause in verse 3 as causal makes better sense of verses 4 and 5 because it gives the reason for his thanksgiving.\(^\text{754}\) Note that Fee summaries the difficulties facing exegetes with interpreting the clause as: 1) usually, the adverb is followed by the pronoun but in verse 3 they are in reverse order; 2) the usual preposition περί (concerning/for) is not used but, instead ἐπὶ (on/at), which can also be translated as ‘on


\(^{750}\) Ogereau, *Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians*, 254.

\(^{751}\) Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 269.


\(^{753}\) Ibid.

the basis of’ or ‘on every occasion of’; which results in 3) either Paul thanking his God for ‘every remembrance of you’ or ‘because of your every remembrance’; both are possible.755

Although the ἐπὶ clause in verse 3 could be causal, Fee points out that, with the exception of 1 Corinthians 1:4 and 2 Corinthians 9:15, Paul uses the preposition ἐπὶ to indicate ‘because of’ (see Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 1:14; 1 Thess 2:13). The preposition περί with the genitive was often used with the intended meaning of ‘for’. It is possible that ἐπὶ with a dative was used to express the reason for Paul’s gratefulness but it does not mean that he did so here.756 Although reading the ἐπὶ clause in verse 3 as causal is possible because it seemingly provides a better translation, the linguistic evidence does not support this. In BDAG, when μνεία refers to ‘remembrance or memory’, it takes an object in the genitive case.757 Furthermore, in every other accepted letter of Paul, he thanks his God for the recipients in that he ‘remembers’ them.758 For these reasons, I maintain that the ἐπὶ clause in verse 3 is temporal and the pronoun ὑμῶν is an objective genitive.759

Paul seeks to increase the positive emotional bond of his converts towards him by the fourfold use of πᾶς and πάντοτε in vv 3 and 4 (πάση - πάντοτε - πάση - πάντων), which convey the fact that he thinks of them as a whole, not wanting any one of them to think or feel excluded, especially since there is some disunity amongst them (4:2).760 The thanksgiving is also used by Paul to show the Philippians that he sees them in a

756 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 19.
757 BDAG “μνεία”, 654.
758 Fee, Philippians, 79. Fee notes that the only exception to this is Philemon.
759 See a summary by Ibid, 79 n.37.
positive light because they have not abandoned him while he is in chains. Yet Paul wants them to know that he is well aware of the strain and embarrassment that his situation could have had on his relationship with the Philippians. Indeed, he would be aware that it was not uncommon for family members and friends to desert those who had been imprisoned from fear of being associated with someone who is shamed. Paul’s partners and converts, however, are considered to be the in-group. He confirms this with a positive assessment as he considers it right (δίκαιος) to have the opinion (φρονέω) that his God is the one who is at work in them.

6.5. Divine Agency

SIT focuses on the social-scientific aspects of group identity formation, rather than ascribing group formation to the action of any supernatural being. Yet for Paul, cooperation in the propagation of the gospel was the indication of divine activity amongst his converts. The joy and gratitude displayed by Paul indicated that he placed considerable value on the mission given to him (1:3-5) and on the partnership with his converts (1:7-8). He considered (φρονεῖν) the Philippians as his co-workers συγκοινωνοῦσι μου, who shared in the grace of God with him. That his coverts are members of the κοινωνία is understood by Paul to be not merely a human decision but also the result of the work of his God. By identifying the κοινωνία as those in whom God has been at work in (ὁ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἐργὼν ἀγαθὸν) and will continue to do so until the day of Christ Jesus, he defined them as belonging to a common in-group identity. It would also confirm among the Philippians that their participation in the

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κοινωνία was a divine act that was creating in them a new social identity. Thus, it would have been seen by the Philippians as divine favour from God.

By establishing a κοινωνία, Paul enabled his converts to self-categorise as belonging to the same in-group. His prayer in verse 9 uses words that encourage them to have greater insight through cognitive processes. Only after being filled with the fruit of righteousness would they have greater ἐπίγνωσις (knowledge) and ἀίσθησις (perception) that had been put δοκιμάζειν (to test). The meaning of δοκιμάζειν relates to ‘think’ or ‘learn’, which indicates that his converts were to think through the insights and knowledge that they had received, and to assure them that their ability to discern will increase.

Furthermore, Paul assured them that this divine activity was at work in their lives was at work and was one of co-operation; this assurance is found throughout the letter; occurrences of εὐαγγέλιον emphasise a co-operation in proclaiming of the gospel: 1:5, 1:12-18, 27c; between Paul and Timothy 2:22; and between Paul and his other co-workers 4:3.765 There are, however, negative examples of preachers, whom Paul identifies as having characteristics of an out-group member, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Paul’s converts are positively portrayed as those who have been prepared for the day of Christ (1:6, 10) when the work of Paul’s God that had already started will be completed.766 Paul’s belief that his God was at work in the Philippians’ conversion highlights a shortcoming of SIT, SCT and social-scientific studies on conversion. SIT and SCT provides psychological explanations about why

763 L & N, 27.48-27.54. See also Domain 30 ‘Think’, 30.98, 30.114.
764 The perfect tense verb πεπληρωμένοι suggests that they are already in possession of some knowledge and perception.
765 Peterlin, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 57.
766 Reumann, Philippians, 129.
individuals might join or remain in a social group but it does not attribute reasons or have an explanation of the intervention of external entities such as a supernatural being.

6.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been demonstrated that Paul used the familiar commercial and political structure of κοινωνία that served more than one purpose. It has been seen that from a Greco-Roman perspective, Paul had formed a κοινωνία with his converts that would have had a legal basis in Roman law comparable to that of a societas. The formation of a κοινωνία gave Paul the financial means and resources that he needed in order to propagate the gospel. Furthermore, the κοινωνία with its egalitarian structure would have countered the relationship Paul and the Philippians had from becoming a patron-client one which at Roman Philippi was common.

Though a κοινωνία is not a partnership with strong cognitive and emotional bonds, the common goal of the propagation of the gospel would help to enable self-categorisation as a common in-group identity. Paul construed conversion primarily in terms of group identity that was enhanced by the means of a common goal, that of propagating the gospel. The common goal enabled Paul to re-categorise into κοινωνία and συγκοινωνίας as a way of reinforcing their common in-group identity. Furthermore, the positive assessment of his in-group gave both the individual and the group a positive image. This not only encouraged the converts to see themselves as members of the κοινωνία, but also would have produced social cohesion between the converts who came from various socio-political groups.

The use of SIT and SCT has also highlighted the fact that Paul was, in some way, sensitive to some of the social values that were salient to the Philippians’ previous social identity. The fact that he recognised the officials of his ἐκκλησία suggests that
Paul knew some aspects of identity required recognition, to provide social cohesion within a socially and ethnically diverse group.
Chapter Seven: Philippians 1:12-30

7.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, Paul’s positive assessment of the Philippians had the goal of persuading and influencing their actions by creating goodwill and receptivity amongst them all. The tone of Paul’s thanksgiving demonstrated to his κοινωνία that he saw them as sharing a common in-group identity, which included him.

This chapter argues that Paul understood conversion to be a cognitive and emotional shift for the Philippian believers, away from their previous social identities. Though he positively assessed the Philippians, it will be argued in this chapter that Paul attributed positive motivations to those whom he considered to share a common in-group identity, and he did so in a stereotypical fashion. Conversely, he stereotyped his opponents as having negative motivations as proof that they had not adopted the common in-group identity’s world view nor its values.

SIT’s notion that group comparison is the basis for the creation of social identity elucidates how Paul created a superordinate group (see Chapter 3.3 and 3.3.1.) whom he identified as citizens of heaven and the gospel. This chapter demonstrates how in Philippians 1:12-30 Paul’s use of the notion of citizenship was closely associated with the goal of the κοινωνία, that of living out the gospel. The exhortation to ‘live as worthy citizens of the gospel’ in verse 27 was an appeal to the superordinate identity, as citizens of heaven and the gospel, to act in concord. It is also argued that the social conditions which made citizenship at Philippi salient to Paul’s converts was opposition in the public sphere. The Philippians’ citizenship is an inter-group comparison used by Paul to evoke salience in the face of those who were opposing them in the common goal of the κοινωνία.
7.2. The Gospel and Group Identity

In this section SIT’s notion of group comparison is used to highlight Paul’s thought concerning who he considered had the right motivations for propagation of his Messiah’s gospel. The contrast between two groups of preachers and their motives was used to create a positive image for the Philippians. The effect of the positive assessment was to help the converts who were preaching from goodwill and love to realise that their membership is in the κοινωνία. The result helped the converts’ loyalty and willingness to identify with the group’s behaviours. It also indicated to Paul that they have deliberately acknowledged the new world view along with their membership in the κοινωνία.

7.2.1. Philippians 1:12-18c

It is difficult to know if the opponent preachers to whom Paul refers in this section are part of the Philippian κοινωνία or preachers from other Christ groups. The partitive genitive τῶν ἀδελφῶν in 1:14 suggests that Paul was referring to some preacher opponents that had influence in his congregations, and whom he considered as personal enemies. Jerry Sumney states that these opponents are located where Paul is imprisoned but Sumney does not give a specific location. Other scholars argue that Paul was most likely referring to the believers in Rome where he had both supporters and opponents. Gerald Hawthorne and Davorin Peterlin, however, argue that in the

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768 Ibid.
letter to the Philippians, Paul refers to more than one group whom he considered opponents (Phil 1:27-28, 3:18-19). As was argued in Chapter Four, Philippi was a city where honour-seeking behaviours were pervasive. Thus, it is not inconceivable that Paul was also addressing some of the believers at Philippi who might cause disunity. Though Paul attributed negative emotional motivations to the opponent preachers in Philippians 1:15a, 17, he stopped short of identifying them with non-believers. Further, Paul did not create intra-group bias by stating that they are not citizens but recognised that not all have categorised themselves with what might be described as having a common in-group identity at Philippi. It is possible that some of the Philippians were indignant, believing that Paul’s imprisonment had brought shame on them and the κοινωνία. Paul, however, was not ashamed of his situation (Phil 1:20) nor did he believe his partners at Philippi should be.

Paul’s concern was that the effects of any possible disunity might, in SIT terms, inhibit the re-categorising process of identity (see Chapter 3.3.2). Paul reassured them that the common goal of the κοινωνία was not dissolved by his imprisonment but quite the opposite. In verse 12, the Philippians were reassured that their common goal had not suffered by his imprisonment. On the contrary, his circumstance had the unexpected effect of furthering the gospel amongst the Praetorian Guard and others:

Γινώσκειν δὲ ύμᾶς βούλομαι, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι τὰ κατ’ ἐμὲ μᾶλλον εἰς προκοπὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐλήλυθεν.

The adverb μᾶλλον is used as a ‘marker of an alternative to something’, highlighting

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772 Wansink, Chained in Christ, 133. It also demonstrates that the opponents had internalised the world view and values of the dominant Roman culture (see 3.2).
773 Ibid.
774 “μᾶλλον” BDAG, 614.
the fact that some might not have expected this result of his imprisonment. Paul’s use of
the perfect tense verb ἐλήλυθεν also reassures the Philippians that the continuing affects
of his imprisonment have been for the προκοπή (progress) of the gospel.775 Paul
sharpened the perception of the converts so that they might perceive his circumstances
as progressing the gospel;776 thus his circumstances are positive rather than negative.
The positive effect of the unexpected progression of the gospel encouraged many of
Paul’s colleagues to proclaim further the gospel in the public sphere at Philippi. In verse
14, Paul highlights this by the use of a perfect tense verb πεποιθότας (having been made
confident). The preachers referred to here were those who demonstrated that they held
the world view and behaviours of the superordinate group that he hoped to form.777
Rather than his chains being seen as a symbol of shame, they have produced a positive
result in the progression of the gospel (1:14a).

The ὥστε clause in verse 13 elaborates on what the advancement of the gospel
looks like to both Paul’s converts and outsiders. Fee argues that the clause is elliptical
and that the word order of τοὺς δεσμοὺς μου φανεροὺς ἐν Χριστῷ should be translated ‘so
that my chains have been manifest [as being] in Christ’.778 The implication is that the
situation is the result of divine intervention: although Paul is chained, the gospel has
become known among the gentile Praetorian Guard and other Romans who deal with
imperial matters.779 Paul’s chains also imply that he believed that his situation was not
inconsistent with that of Christ’s, which he will refer to later in the letter (2:5-8); he is

775 L & N 13.57.
776 Fowl, Philippians, 37.
777 It also demonstrates that the opponents had internalised the world view and values of the dominant
Roman culture (see 3.2).
778 Fee, Philippians, 112 n.29.
779 Ibid., 114.
sharing in the same convictions and destiny of Christ.\textsuperscript{780} Thus, Paul had a positive outlook about his situation, believing that he is appointed to defend the gospel (1:16, 20).

7.2.2. Conversion and the Emotions

The letter to the Philippians exhibits a range of words that indicate an emotional state that is linked to a mental process.\textsuperscript{781} It was argued in Chapter Three that SCT illustrates an individual’s self-perception, including one’s emotions and mental processes (refer to Chapter 3.3.1). According to SIT, the individual attaches emotional significance to the group of which he or she considers himself or herself to be a member, affects attitudes towards in-group and out-group members (see Chapter 3.3). Furthermore, emotions are connected to cognition and are influenced by the social morals/ethics of an individual’s social context.\textsuperscript{782} It could also be argued that this would apply to groups who have an emotional attachment to a person or common goal (see Chapter 3.3.1). This point is further underscored in Philippians 2, where Paul hoped that the Philippians would ‘think the same thing’, having ‘one mind’ or ‘one soul’ (Phil 2:2). Paul wanted the Philippians to have ‘a common affection, desire, passion, sentiment for living together in harmony’\textsuperscript{783} Thus the use of words referring to the psychological processes in


\textsuperscript{781} Reed, \textit{Discourse Analysis of Philippians}, 303-307. See also references from L & N, and BDAG above.

\textsuperscript{782} The working definition of emotion in this thesis is based on a study by Martha Nussbaum who argues that emotions involve one’s cognition and perception of an event. Nussbaum defines emotions as: 1) judgements and perceptions about an object, 2) having an intentional object, 3) beliefs held about the object that enables the identity of the emotion, 4) having beliefs and perceptions that give value to an object, which is ‘invested with value or importance’. Emotions, therefore, are not just happenings or heartfelt emotions, as described by James. Rather, they are cognitive and are recognised by the one making the judgements based on personal values and beliefs. This definition also highlights the fact that emotions are indicative of motivations behind one’s thinking and actions. M. Nussbaum, \textit{Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 24-30.

\textsuperscript{783} Hawthorne and Martin, \textit{Philippians}, 86.
Philippians 1:15-16 suggests that Paul thought conversion involved the perception of an alternate reality, in contrast to the dominant one (see Chapter 3). This new perception involved exhibiting new behaviours, such as the sharing of a common goal and a rejection of the self-seeking behaviours from the surrounding culture.

What is important for this thesis is not the specific identity of the opponents, but how Paul has stereotyped them in negative terms. The pre-conversion emotions, unlike the individualistic and subjective inner psychological conflict described by William James, are understood by Paul to be indicative of conversion. The idea of emotions as indicative of an inner psychological conflict searching for a solution to a plight, or an experience that would a clear conscience (Refer to Chapter 2.2.2), is not found in Philippians. Conversion is, nonetheless, a psychological event that impacts the cognition and emotions, recognised by the one converting, and evidenced in a new world view and values.

The comparison of emotions by Paul of the two groups of preachers highlighted their different motives and behaviours; the negative motives and behaviours of his opponents and the positive ones that Paul ascribed to himself and other preachers.\textsuperscript{784} Those to whom he attributed positive emotions have, in Paul’s thinking, self-categorised as members of the κοινωνία, and have positive motives attributed to them. Those to whom Paul attributed negative emotions are those who continued to exhibit behaviours that were motivated from honour-seeking exhibited in civic politics. The exact identities of his opponents are not revealed, but it was possible that they come from his own converts.\textsuperscript{785} If Paul was referring to outsiders, then in verse 15 the term ἄλλος would be

\textsuperscript{784} Watson, “A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians”, 63.
\textsuperscript{785} For brief discussion on the possible identity of the opposition groups see Hellerman, Philippians, 48-49.
expected, but the two indefinite pronouns τινὲς in the nominative case that he refers back to τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν in verse 14.\textsuperscript{786}

A τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν,
B τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι’ εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν.

B’ οἱ μὲν ἐξ ἀγάπης, εἰδότες ὅτι εἰς ἀπολογίαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κεῖμαι,
A’ οἱ δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν, οὐχ ἄγνως, οἴρμενοι ἀληθείᾳ ἐγείρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου.

A Though some preach because of envy and strife,
B but others because of goodwill preach Christ
B’ on the one hand there are those who preach from love, because they know that I am appointed for the defence of the gospel
A’ on the other hand, there are those who from selfish ambition are proclaiming Christ, not sincerely, thinking to increase my suffering in my bonds.

The μὲν followed by the δὲ illustrates that Paul was deliberately contrasting the groups.\textsuperscript{787} The presence of the enclitic pronouns τινὲς further demonstrates that there are two groups doing the same activity but with different motives.\textsuperscript{788} The contrast has been arranged in a chiastic structure which makes it impossible to miss.\textsuperscript{789} The opponents are described as of demonstrating hostility and rivalry, seen in his use of the terms φθόνος, ἔρις, and ἐριθεία. Even though Louw and Nida classify these words under different semantic domains, their overlapping meaning as they are related to categories of behavioural conduct that involve interpersonal relations.\textsuperscript{790}

\textsuperscript{786} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 118, n.5.
\textsuperscript{787} “μὲν” BDAG, 630.
\textsuperscript{788} Reumann, \textit{Philippians}, 175.
\textsuperscript{789} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 118.
\textsuperscript{790} Definitions based on the categories from L & N, vol 1 Domain 33 ‘Communication,’ 388; Domain 39 ‘Hostility, Strife,’ 492; Domain 88 ‘Moral and Ethical Qualities and Related Behavior,’ 742.
Emotions cannot be understood apart from their cultural context and hence the significance of the terms used by Paul for his opponents needs some investigation. In verse 15 the prepositional phrase of διὰ with the terms φθόνος and ἐρίς (in the accusative case) shows that Paul had his opponents’ motives in mind as this grammatical construct indicates that it is the result of or something that happens ‘because of’. Conclusions about the terms φθόνος, ἐρίς, and ἐριθεία often refer to emotions of rivalry from a Western Judaeo-Christian perspective rather than a Greco-Roman one. In NT studies the term ἐρίς is associated with a difference of opinion that results in ‘strife, discord, contention’ and ‘conflict resulting from rivalry and discord’, especially in regards to a position on a certain matter. A similar semantic meaning is given for ἐριθεία, ‘strife, contentiousness, selfishness, selfish ambition’ in relation to the political arena. Louw and Nida use the terms ‘hostility, being against’ and ‘selfish ambition, rivalry, resentful’. The noun φθόνος is translated in either terms of ‘envy’ or ‘jealousy’. Here, Paul used φθόνος, ἐρίς, and ἐριθεία to refer to those who did not share in the common in-group identity. He used the same terms elsewhere to describe persons who he believed did not share a common in-group identity. The opponents, therefore, are

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791 “διὰ” BDAG, 225. L & N, 90.44.
793 “ἐρίς” BDAG, 392.
794 L & N, 33.447, 39.22. Though the word is found in two different domains, 33 Communication, and 39 Hostility, Strife both domains imply inter-relational overlaps.
795 “ἐριθεία” BDAG, 392.
796 L & N, 39.7, 88.167. Both these domains are related to personal and interpersonal behaviours. Domain 88 specifically denotes the ethical behaviour that would mean ἐριθεία is understood to be selfish ambition, rivalry or resentfulness. It can however also refer to feelings of hostility and opposition. The preferred rendering of the noun is the latter as there are those who oppose Paul because they are indignant to because of his imprisonment.
797 “φθόνος” BDAG, 1054. L & N., 88.160. It is further noted that there is a state of ‘ill will’ due to someone having an advantage that produces envy or jealousy.
798 G. Walter Hansen has a similar conclusion and notes that Paul used φθόνος and ἐρίς to denote those he believed to be competitive. Idem, The Letter to the Philippians, 72. The term φθόνος see Rom 1:29 and
those who according to Paul had not self-categorised with the same values as other members of the κοινωνία. Rather, they continued to act without the new world view of Paul and his Messiah.

The term φθόνος ‘envy’ is treated in Aristotle’s treatise on Rhetoric along with the term νεμεσάν νεμεσάν, ‘indignation’.799 David Konstan notes that Aristotle understands νεμεσάν as describing pain felt by one because someone else is appearing to succeed undeservedly. It is the opposite of the emotion pity, which is pain felt by someone, or for someone, who experiences destructive pain or harm that is considered to be undeserved.800 He argues that φθόνος carries a similar meaning to νεμεσάν even though Aristotle distinguishes the two terms. The difference is that φθόνος describes pain felt because one’s social equal is providing something that will give him or her an advantage, rather than that they are undeserving of it; thus it is the pain felt in respect to those who consider each other as equals.801 Aristotle observed:

For these men will be envious [φθονήσοισι] who have, or seem to have, others “like” them. I mean like in birth, relationship, age, moral habit, reputation, and possessions.802

Φθόνος is a negative emotion that was considered to be suffered by οἱ μικρόψυχοι (small-minded people).803 According to Dio Chrysostom’s Discourses (cf. 77/78) envy and jealousy (φθόνος and ζηλοτυπία) came from competition within a πόλις. Dio frames his discourse on envy and jealousy concerning those competing with others in the same

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800 Ibid., 112.
801 Ibid.
802 Arsitotle Rhet. 2.9.10.1-2. (Freese, LCL).
803 Arsitotle Rhet. 2.9.10.3. (Freese, LCL).
trade to be seen as not advantageous to those craftspeople.\textsuperscript{804} Paul was describing the behaviours that he saw his opponents exhibiting (see Chapter 3.3, especially Internaisation). The language used by Paul is found in negative behaviours associated with the πόλις. Thus Paul’s use of political language is further evidence that Roman elite behaviours and attitudes at Philippi were replicated by the non-elites.

This suggests that in status-conscious Philippi, Paul’s imprisonment was a sensitive issue amongst some of his converts. Furthermore, it would seem that the association of someone in bonds had produced some ill-will amongst some of the Philippians. The perception of shame in the common in-group identity was most likely too much to bear for some and resulted with behaviours as reflected by φθόνος, ἔρις, and ἐριθεία. Such behaviour demonstrated that some converts maintained their social identity of their former socio-political groups. For these converts, the common goal of the κοινωνία did not have the same salience and manifested in opposition to Paul’s defence in that they suppose it will increase what they perceived to be his suffering (θλῆψις).

In contrast to their opponents, those who preach from their goodwill and love do so in the knowledge that they had advanced the gospel. This group represents those who perceived themselves as having a common in-group identity with Paul. Again, the motives are highlighted by Paul through use of a διὰ prepositional phrase in the accusative case (δι᾽ εὐδοκίαν) (1:15b). In verse 16b the causal adverbial perfect participle εἰδώτες is followed by a ὅτι clause. This construction further highlights that Paul considered those who supported him as having the correct perception of him and

\textsuperscript{804} Dio Chrysostom, Invid. 77.5-6, 14.
his circumstance; a ὅτι clause generally is preceded by a verb of perception.805

Furthermore, this group is described as what SIT calls positive distinction. Paul described them with positive terms and the motives and perception resulting from divine activity. (1:6) Conversion then, as understood by Paul, was the transformation of individuals who re-categorised and adopted a new common in-group identity, different from their old social groups, which resulted because of the work of his God.

7.3. Worthy Citizenship of a New Πόλις

In order to unify the Philippians into a superordinate group, Paul used a concept that would be viewed as having greater salience than their other previous social identities. As argued in Chapter Four, the possession of citizenship was at the core of Roman identity. This thesis argues that Paul used the notion ‘citizenship of heaven’ as the basis for his converts’ new identity and status.

7.3.1. Philippians 1:18d-26

Though there are opponents both inside and outside the group and therefore some disunity amongst them, Paul sought to unify them as a superordinate group of citizens (1:27, 3:20). Roman citizenship involved loyalty to its interests, which resulted in the propagation of a Roman world view. This is especially seen in the centrality of the Julio-Claudian Caesars in the imperial cults. It is not argued that Paul had Roman citizenship in mind here; rather, he used it as a conceptual framework for the converts’ social identity and behaviour, as they spread the gospel in the public sphere of Philippi.

The use of political language also points to the type of community that he was developing, namely one that transcended the civic community at Philippi.

Verses 18d to 30 are further divided into two distinguishable units of thought; verses 18d-26 and 27-30. In verses 18d-20 Paul reassured them that he will see them again, as he is confident that he will be released from his bonds through their united request to God. The placement of the plural personal pronoun in verse 19 is emphatic: διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως, and points to their prayer which provides Paul’s fresh experience of his God’s Spirit (ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος). Furthermore, the absence of the adjective πᾶς, which was present earlier in the chapter, suggests that he is now addressing those who have re-categorised themselves and now share a common in-group identity. Paul had previously identified them as the ones among whom his God was working, confident that the κοινωνία will reciprocate and supply the needs for his defence (1:19). Thus his positive assessment of his favoured in-group provides reassurance to those who might have consternation about his imprisonment and the possibility he might be executed for the defence of his and their gospel.

In verses 24 and 25, Paul is confident that he and the κοινωνία have further ministry to continue once he is released and returned to them. He also indicated that on an emotional and cognitive level, he considered himself to be part of the κοινωνία. Paul was πεποιθως (persuaded) (1:25) that he should stay and aid the growth of his converts. They have placed their trust and allegiance with his Messiah in an environment where loyalty to the world view which endorsed Augustus’ symbolic universe was particularly strong (see Chapter Five). In a city such as Philippi, which saw itself as being the place

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806 Hellerman, Philippians, 60.  
807 Thurston and Ryan, Philippians and Philemon, 62-63.
where the new world order of Augustus was birthed, a competing allegiance would be seen as subversive and not in the interests of Rome. Paul’s imprisonment for a gospel that was subversive to the narrative of Philippi could well be a point of conflict in the public sphere.

7.3.2. Philippians 1:27-30

Verses 27 - 30 form a discrete unit that constitutes a change of subject matter in that Paul has moved from his own circumstances (1:18d-26) to that of his converts.\(^808\) The main verb of the unit is the imperative πολιτεύεσθε, an exhortation that was to govern the entire lives of his converts.\(^809\) The notion that citizenship is the main proposition of Paul’s deliberative rhetoric will be developed further in Chapter Nine below where it is incorporated with other issues facing his converts.\(^810\) Rather than just exhorting his converts to a new code of ethics, he wanted them to act from a position of perceiving themselves as citizens. This included a new world view that impacted their social identity, because they now had a higher allegiance to the Messiah, rather than to Caesar.

The term πολιτεύεσθε has been the topic of discussion among interpreters of Philippians, especially regarding the identity of the audience and the ethical implications. The impact of being addressed as citizens in connection to one’s social identity, however, has received relatively little attention. Much of the scholarly opinion has been influenced by articles of Raymond Brewer\(^811\) and Ernest Miller.\(^812\) Brewer argues that the Roman context of Philippi should be the main factor taken into

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\(^808\) Hawthorne and Martin, *Philippians*, 66.
\(^809\) Fee, *Philippians*, 161-162.
\(^810\) Watson, “A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians,” 79.
consideration when understanding its meaning, thus πολιτεύεσθε means ‘conduct relative to some law of life – political, moral, social, or religious – is signified’. 813 Furthermore, Brewer argues that Paul referred to the discharging of obligations as a citizen of Philippi as a ‘Christian’ at Philippi ought to do in public life but without succumbing to ‘patriotic pressure’ over one’s obligations to Caesar. 814 Paul’s audience, therefore, comprises those holding Roman citizenship amongst the congregation. Miller, on the other hand, argues that πολιτεύεσθε was a reference to the Philippians as the ‘new Israel’ rather than referring to a law of life. He argues that the historical Jewish meaning is found in the Maccabean corpus of the LXX, where πολιτέυωμαι referred to the obligation of Jews to live out the torah over and above any civic obligations. 815 It is, however, unlikely that Paul was referring to either those with Roman citizenship or a Jewish ethnicity. Nothing was mentioned about exercising one’s obligations as a citizen of Philippi, and the lack of quotes from the LXX suggests that his audience was not seeking to live out the torah. Instead, his choice of πολιτεύεσθε indicated that far more is being asked of the Philippians than a new ethical behaviour. Paul hoped that by using the imperative πολιτεύεσθε that his converts would see themselves as an in-group with a positive self-identity. For if Paul was merely referring to habits or customs, then we would expect to find the term he usually uses – περιπατέω, 816 as he does elsewhere in Philippians (3:17, 18).

Rather, Paul built on the fact that Roman citizenship could provide a positive self-image, reminding the converts that they were citizens of a new society, one with a world

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814 Ibid., 83.
815 Miller, “Πολιτεύεσθε in Philippians 1.27,” 86-87.
816 Rom 6:4, 8:4, 13:13, 14:15; 1 Cor 3:3, 7:17; 2 Cor 4:2, 5:7, 10:2, 3, 12:18; Gal 5:16; 1 Thess 2:12, 4:1, 4:12.
view and values different from the Roman dominated one. As with the preacher opponents, those in the out-group of this new civic community have a world view of the dominant Roman reality. The political connotations of πολιτεύεσθε would be unmistakable in Roman Philippi where citizenship was part of the boasting found in many prominent public inscriptions. As it was noted in Chapter Five, the city of Philippi, as found in the Acts narrative, was where Paul established an ἐκκλησία in which there is confrontation between Paul and the Roman officials (see Chapter 5.8).

7.3.3. Paul and the Roman Authorities

The author of Acts highlighted the Roman political context of Philippi, even though Paul had established other ἐκκλησίαι in other Roman colonies. In Acts the term στρατηγοί is used on five occasions in chapter sixteen (16:20, 22, 35, 36, 38). It identified the magistrates of the colony along with the offices of δεσμοφύλαξ (16:23, 27, 36) and ῥαβδοχός (16:35, 38). This is the only place where the author uses these titles in Acts, suggesting sensitivity to honorific titles that characterised the colony.817

Another important point, taken from the Acts narrative, is that only at Philippi does Paul not use his Roman citizenship to his advantage to avoid humiliation by being beaten and flogged (16:22-23). Such a humiliation for a Roman citizen was considered to be ‘un-Roman’ because a citizen would try to preserve both self and dignity at the first opportunity and assert his or her legal and social status.818 Later in Acts, Paul used his status as a citizen of Tarsus (21:39) and his status as a Roman citizen to his advantage (22:25-29). It is possible, however, that Paul (and Silas) did not use their

817 Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 112.
status as citizens for both theological reasons and contextual concerns. Rapske argues that if Paul was to use his status as a Roman citizen to his advantage, this would have had a negative impact on his converts:

…the self-defence of an early citizenship claim would probably have been construed by the magistrates and populace as an assertion of commitment to the primacy of Roman, over against Jewish (i.e., Christian), customs. The signals sent would also have put the church at risk of dissolution if the new Philippian converts did not possess the Roman franchise. At the least, there would have been uncertainty surrounding Paul’s commitment to his message. Converts might wonder whether only those suitably protected (i.e., by Roman citizenship) should become believers in Christ and they might think it disingenuous for Paul and Silas to ask others to suffer what they themselves were able to avoid. 819

By not revealing their Roman citizenship until being released, Paul and Silas prevented any unwanted entanglement or connection between the gospel and Roman citizenship in both the Roman officials’ minds and their converts. 820 Thus it could be argued that Paul wanted to emphasise to his converts that the κοινωνία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου has customs and values from the heavenly commonwealth, grounded in a new world view and exemplified by the self-humiliation of the Messiah (2:5-8).

7.4. New Identity as New Citizenship

The exhortation for his converts to μόνον ἄξιως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύσθε is a call for all of them to exercise their citizenship in the public life and space in the colony of Philippi. 821 The basis of the exhortation is that they already possess citizenship. Fee correctly connects verse 27a to 3:17-20 in his rendering, ‘live in the Roman colony of Philippi as worthy citizens of your heavenly homeland’. 822 The

819 Ibid., 134.
820 For a similar conclusion see Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 116.
821 Reumann, Philippians, 285.
822 Fee, Philippians, 162.
political language was used to encourage the salient identity of citizenship in his converts, as they responded to those who were causing their suffering. It is, therefore, also a comparison between two different socio-political groups. Paul was referring to two different behaviours exhibited by two different groups of citizens. The κοινωνία are his in-group, who had a new perception of reality compared to the Roman citizens of Philippi. Paul did not want the new status as citizens to be misconstrued by his converts, in that he had started to mimic the behaviours of elites.

The re-categorisation of the Philippians as citizens was intended to enable a new social identity to be formed as they propagated the gospel. The new citizenship, however, caused opposition from the wider culture as they interacted in the public arena. In the Greco-Roman world, those who held citizenship were expected to act as one group and to στήκετε (stand fast) in a common purpose (1:27). As citizens of the heavenly commonwealth, they were to stand fast together in the face of opposition as would be expected of citizens.\(^{823}\) Timothy Geoffrion argues that the converts would have understood πολιτεύσετε as a call to loyalty. Standing firm would be expected as the civic duty of citizens against their opposition, especially those of a colony with strong military history and political connections.\(^{824}\) Thus, it is not unreasonable nor unexpected that a military metaphor is also being used alongside citizenship as the Roman army was made up from citizens.\(^{825}\)

Paul needed to address the immediate problem of the suffering experienced by his converts as they engaged in the propagation of the gospel in the public context. They were to respond by being unified and in concord with one another. They were to stand

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\(^{823}\) Paul uses στήκεω elsewhere with the meaning stand firm in either faith 1 Cor 16:13; against other teachings Gal 5:1; in the Lord Phil 4:1; 1 Thess 3:8.


firm ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ, which is a theme throughout the letter, because this
would reinforce the identity of the converts as a body of citizens. As Roman citizens
were expected to act in the interests of Rome, likewise the Philippians were to act in the
interests of the heavenly commonwealth or more importantly, its Messiah.

Paul established the ‘us’ boundaries of the superordinate group in the political
motif of citizenship. He wants them to continue spreading the gospel in the public
sphere in the midst of the Philippians’ socio-political groups. The participle
συναθλοῦντες refers back to the verb στήκετε and carries with it a continuous aspect,
meaning as you ‘continue to struggle along together’ (1:27d). The use of στήκω and
συναθλέω in connection with the political sphere (3:20-4:3) further suggests that Paul
was creating an alternative civic community, centred on a different σωτήρ than the
official narrative at Philippi.

The use of political terms would have also reinforced the significance of the
converts’ community as more than simply a voluntary association or κοινωνία, but a new
civic community of citizens. If this fledging civic community is to survive then it must
be united and require allegiance from its members. The genitive τοῦ εὐαγγελίου is to be
understood as a genitive of apposition to τῇ πίστει, a dative of advantage. This
could mean that what is being referred to is either faith as the content of the gospel, or
faith with the implication of allegiance that arises from living out the gospel.

826 The terms ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι and μιᾷ ψυχῇ will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, as these
terms are concerned with concord.
827 Fee, Philippians, 167.
828 M. Bockmuehl, The Epistle to the Philippians, ed. H. Chadwick; vol. XI (Peabody: Hendrickson,
829 Ibid.
Furthermore, for Paul, it is important that the Philippians stay united by maintaining their common in-group identity and common aim. The construction τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγώνα (the same struggle) in verse 30 refers back to the athletic imagery of συναθλοῦντες for the gospel,830 which reinforced the need for the Philippians to stand together with each other and Paul in the face of public opposition.

Because Paul identified his converts as citizens of heaven, he could make a contrast between their values and the world view exemplified by Roman citizenship. It will be seen in Chapter Seven that the world view underpinning Roman citizenship required behaviours in opposition to the gospel, and were therefore portrayed negatively. By identifying his opponents as τῶν ἀντικειμένων without any other qualification, he stereotyped them, highlighting the differences among his converts and those who belonged to out-groups. Standing united against a common opponent would also strengthen the in-group’s psychological bonds and reduce bias between members of the subgroups groups within the κοινωνία. An individual would perceive himself or herself as sharing a common in-group identity and having a superordinate social identity as a citizen. Paul proceeds in the next two chapters of Philippians to show what it means to have one’s identity formed by being a citizen.

Calling his converts citizens Paul categorises them, in his mind, as the favoured in-group. It also gave a positive appraisal of his converts that enabled them to have a positive evaluation of themselves as a group. Thus, the converts could self-categorise in a positive way, which would also encourage loyalty to the group. The positive value of being called a citizen would be especially salient for those in the group who had never possessed the status, rights, and privileges of citizenship. Paul also used negative

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830Oakes, Philippians, 80.
stereotyping of his and their opponents’ behaviour that were a ἔνδειξις (omen or sign)\(^{831}\) of their destruction, even though their opponents were unable to see it. Conversely, the converts are positively assessed for their faithfulness to the gospel. It is most likely that the antecedent of ἔνδειξις is the dative noun τὴν πιστεῖ (1:27), which infers that their ‘standing fast’ is also being faithful to the gospel.\(^{832}\)

Paul’s positive evaluation of his in-group encouraged them not be intimidated by their opponents. He used the rhetoric of consolation in order to stir his converts from any despondency that they might be experiencing, due to Paul’s or their own ordeal. Holloway identifies the key features of how Paul achieved this. First, being unified and steadfast in the face of opposition will ultimately result in their salvation, and the destruction of their opponents. Second, their suffering is divinely ordained (ὑμῖν ἐχάρισθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ) and associates them as belonging to the same socio-political group of Paul and of their new κύριος. Third, they share in the same suffering as Paul who suffered for service to his Messiah.\(^{833}\) Though the converts belong to the socio-political context of Philippi, they were also part of a new civic community that had an alternative world view. Thus the experiencing of opposition and suffering was also evidence that they were already seen as having an allegiance to a new patron who was above Caesar.

The issue for Paul’s converts was one of suffering due to a conflict between their new citizenship and the old allegiances to previous socio-political groups. These previous socio-political groups\(^{834}\) would have been, what SIT calls, superordinate

\(^{831}\) “ἔνδειξις” BDAG, 332.
\(^{832}\) Sumney, Philippians, 37. For discussion of the rendering of this verse in regards to the pronoun ἥτις and ἔνδειξις see Reumann, Philippians, 269-271.
\(^{833}\) Adapted from Holloway, Consolation in Philippians, 116.
\(^{834}\) See Chapter 5.3 and 5.4.
groups. Instead, they have now either been categorised into a sub-group or out-group, thus they have lost salience in regards to their social identity. This theme of suffering is woven throughout the letter. There have been several explanations as to the exact identity of the groups that are causing the sufferings, and there is no consensus on the matter. The main contenders are: Jewish missionaries (cf. 3:2-3), false Christian teachers and pagans, including one’s own family. The evidence from Acts 16:20-24, 35-39 and from archaeological evidence of Philippi, however, indicates that Jewish missionaries were unlikely to be the problem because there is no evidence of established synagogues until the third century CE. Although Lydia is described as a σεβόμενη τὸν θεόν (a woman who worships God) in the Acts narrative (16:14), this is not evidence of an established Jewish community at Philippi during Paul’s time. Indeed, the fact Paul found Lydia by the river suggests no established Jewish community. Rather, it has been suggested that when Paul refers to Jewish missionaries in Philippians 3, he was most likely warning his converts in case such missionaries appear in Philippi.

Paul’s language suggests that the opponents were from the immediate context of Philippi, because there is no mention of outsiders coming into the city causing the ordeal. Furthermore, his use of the relative pronoun ὁἷον (1:30b) refers ‘to being similar to something or belonging to a class, of what sort (such)’. This indicates that the Philippians were going through a problem similar to that which Paul was facing, one that involved conflict with the Roman authorities. The Philippians would have

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836 For a brief discussion on the two positions see, Oakes, Philippians, 84-89.
837 With a focus on women at Philippi see, Portefaix, Sisters Rejoice, 195-200.
838 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 181-182. Witherington argues that Paul is referring to Jewish believers in chapter 3. The identity of the Jewish believers is believed to be those whose agenda was to enforce Jewish customs on Gentile believers such as circumcision, Sabbath observation, and kosher laws.
839 “ὁἷος” BDAG, 701.
840 Hellerman, Philippians, 87.
membership in socio-political groups, and various sub-groups, that (in SIT terms) were once salient to their previous identity. In living out the gospel at Philippi (1:27a), it would seem that they were now acting in ways considered to be subversive to Roman customs and other socio-political groups that were once salient to their identities.

It was quite likely that the converts’ behaviours were seen by the Romans as subversive to the well-being of the city. For instance, if the converts had withdrawn from participation in civic assemblies expressing allegiance and devotion to civic and Roman gods, and to the public honouring of Caesar as lord, then there is the possibility of social exclusion. There could also have been the possibility of economic marginalisation in various sub-groups such as by volunteer associations to which they belonged. If converts were to withdraw from offerings in honour and worship to the association’s gods, then this could be seen as offending the association’s patron god.841

7.4.1. The Loyal Citizens

The notion of πολιτεύεσθε also carries with it political/military connotations of a citizen’s obligation of allegiance in the face of suffering. It is likely that Paul perceived his ill-treatment by the Roman authorities at Philippi as akin to the suffering faced by his converts, whose loyalty is now brought into question by the dominant Roman culture.842 His use of political terminology suggests that his converts knew that part of being a citizen entailed remaining loyal to one’s allegiances, even in the face of suffering. Geoffrion notes that ‘in the Greco-Roman political context, potential suffering on behalf of one’s state and ruler is assumed in one’s pledge of loyalty’.843

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841 Ibid., 87. See also Zerbe, Citizenship, 19.
842 Fee, Philippians, 167.
843 Geoffrion, Rhetorical Purpose, 71.
Suffering for the gospel, therefore, was re-categorised by Paul as a positive example of citizenship. This would have strengthened the psychological bonds among the converts with the hope that they would act as a united group in remaining loyal to their Messiah. Those standing firm would regard themselves as having had made this world view and its values salient for their identity. It is highly probable that the gospel was perceived as suspect, in that those who are in the κοινωνία considered that their ruler is saviour and lord above Caesar.

Philippi was connected to the victory of Augustus and was linked with the commencement of a new reality of the good news of Augustus’ reign. Paul’s good news that his (Jewish) God’s victorious Messiah has ushered in a new age would be perceived as competing directly with the Pax Augusta propaganda’s claim of Caesar as lord and saviour. Furthermore, Philippi was proud of its connection to Augustus and his household, which would cause the authorities to be suspicious and sensitive to ‘saviours’ contradictory to the Caesars. Concern for status-conscious authorities did not deter Paul or erode his confidence in the final victory of his gospel and God. Gregory Bloomquist, for instance, highlights Paul’s confidence despite suffering, in his choice of words found in verse 12 to the end of chapter 1. Paul’s imprisonment had given him πείθω (confidence) for further proclamation (1:14) and confidence that it was necessary for him to remain with them (1:25). Further, Paul rejoiced because he thought that it would result in his salvation, χαρήσομαι (1:18b), ὅτι ἐν οὐδὲν ἀποβηθεὶς εἰς σωτηρίαν (1:19) … ὅτι ἐν οὐδὲν ἀποβηθεὶς εἰς σωτηρίαν (1:19) … ὃς πάντως καὶ νῦν μεγαλυθῆσαι

844 Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug. 1.2.
845 Bloomquist, The Function of Suffering in Philippians, 149.
Paul’s confidence and certainty was exemplified in that he knew (οἶδα) (1:19, 25) that he was divinely appointed to defend the gospel (1:16).

Paul’s confidence and portrayal that his God and the gospel will be victorious, had turned suffering and opposition into a positive, particularly for his converts. More than once he reminded his converts to have confidence that divine agency was at work to make them ready for the ‘day of Christ’ (1:6, 10). This notion of divine agency as ordaining their suffering was indicated by Paul’s use of the passive verb ἐχαρίσθη ‘it has been given’.847 This ἐχαρίσθη was to believe/trust and to suffer on behalf of their Messiah. The thrust of Philippians 1 was not the content of the gospel but on living out the gospel at Roman Philippi. Conversion then, is the individual’s recognition that they have membership of a group whose perception of reality and values differ from their old ones. Thus salvation is not just in trust in the Messiah, but also sharing in the sufferings, that were brought about by living life in accordance with his gospel.848

7.5. Conclusion

The common goal of κοινωνία was the proclamation of Paul’s gospel and it gave the group a purpose and an identity as a distinct group. The application of SIT indicates that Paul used stereotypes to re-categorise those who have taken on an alternate world view. In stereotypical fashion, he attributed to those whom he considered to be true converts positive emotions and motives, because they knew the real reason for Paul’s imprisonment. Those who shared this common in-group identity demonstrated it by

846 Ibid., 154.
848 Fee, Philippians, 171-172.
their actions, which indicated to Paul that they had embraced the same world view and values. Conversely, those who were attributed with negative motives/emotions demonstrated that they did not share in the common in-group identity and so, in Paul’s mind, remained unconverted to his gospel; their motives and behaviours replicated those that are analogous to the Roman context at Philippi. Those who are stereotyped as having positive motives were Paul’s favoured in-group. The positive assessment had the goal of creating a positive image for them and for the new civic community, creating further cohesion. The purpose of this cohesion was to unify the Philippians believers because Paul’s imprisonment had caused consternation among some of his converts. Paul's reassurance to his converts demonstrates that psychologically he considered himself and them to have a common in-group identity.

The exhortation to act as citizens (of heaven) is a deliberate use of political terminology with the purpose of unifying his converts in the face of suffering caused by opposition. Public opposition to the propagation of the gospel provided salient conditions that Paul used with the intention of forming their new social identity as citizens. The use of SIT highlights that the status of citizenship, implied by the imperative to act as one, had a positive impact on Paul’s converts. Those who previously possessed no citizenship, came to understand themselves as belonging to a socio-political group, which improved their self-image. Moreover, the psychological expectations from citizens would be sufficient for Paul’s favoured in-group to form bonds, which would have made a superordinate group of citizens. The notion of citizenship would have provided its members with salience over their other previous sub-groups.
Chapter Eight: Philippians 2:1-30

8.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I use SCT’s notion of re-categorisation into a new common in-group identity, thereby replacing old social identities of the Philippians, to highlight how Paul countered the dominant Roman world view with a new one. Paul’s exhortation to be worthy citizens of the gospel connected conversion to a new social identity, which is the result of the Philippians being re-categorised into a new superordinate group. Paul used the notion of citizenship as a framework to replace the converts’ previous social identity.

This chapter also explores the new loyalty and allegiance to the Messiah that was attached to their new citizenship. As was discussed in Chapter Four, oaths of allegiance were part of the conceptual machinery that legitimised Augustus’ symbolic universe. This had an impact on the converts at Philippi, as it is highly likely that many of them had taken oaths of allegiance to the Caesars. This chapter elucidates that Paul expected his converts to act like loyal citizens of heaven as they lived out the gospel.

The subversive actions of the Messiah would have caused some of his converts to waiver in their loyalty to the superordinate group. Paul, however, used both the common goal and the experience of his converts as an appeal to concord and allegiance to his Messiah. Paul’s appeal to concord, and his positive assessments of Epaphroditus and Timothy, the prototypical converts/leaders, aims to maintain the converts’ unity and loyalty to him and the Messiah.

849 As per Chapter Seven.
8.2. Common Experience as Citizens

Paul appealed to the Philippians shared experience of the divine agency to further strengthen the bond between his converts. Furthermore, though he continued his positive assessment of his in-group, they were also exhorted to act in ways that were worthy of their membership as a citizen of the heavenly commonwealth.

8.2.1. Philippians 2:1-4

In Philippians 1, Paul exhorted his converts to act as worthy citizens of heaven in the face of public opposition (1:27-30). Then in 2:1-4 he shifted his focus to the converts’ attitudes towards one another and the influence of divine agency in their lives. The οὖν in 2:1 continues Paul’s thought from 1:27-30 on what it means to be a worthy citizen. The three conditional εἰ τις and one εἴ τι form a single complex sentence that serve as an introduction to the following section in verses 5-11. The use of οὖν followed by the four clauses with nouns that indicate Paul’s thinking on conversion is the result of divine agency, which was seen in the converts’ common experience resulting in concord amongst the converts.

Paul used the three instances of the conditional clauses to highlight the attitudes and behaviours that he believed constituted worthy citizenship. In verse 1, Paul sought to encourage the Philippians by reminding them that their foundation as a civic community was ultimately established by God. The nouns παράκλησις and

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850 Moisés Silva includes 1:27-30 and 2:1-4 as one unit of Paul’s thought. Silva, Philippians, 85. See also Fee, Philippians, 177.
851 Sumney, Philippians, 39-40.
852 Louw and Nida note that οὖν is a marker of ‘the conclusion of a process of reasoning’ L & N, 89.50.
853 Reumann, Philippians, 321.
παραμύθιον have similar meanings as either ‘encouragement’ or ‘comfort’, though both are possible. According to Timothy J. Harris, more important to the translation of the Greek words is the fact that they culminate and draw on relational terms that work together to lay a foundation for what follows. Ben Witherington argues that the verse is used rhetorically as an exhortation based on their experiences of Christ in order to persuade them to have concord ‘as Christian citizens in Philippi’.

The εἰ τις clauses refer to the Philippians’ experiences of divine activity amongst them. Though Paul’s focus was on their common life as citizens under the Messiah (εἰ τις ὁ ἐν παράκλησι ἐν Χριστῷ), he did not believe that it was only a human decision to form a new civic community with a common goal, but that it was the result of the πνεῦμα of his God. As was seen in the previous chapter, the term κοινωνία, in documentary sources, also indicated that the partnership was sometimes formed in a political community. Thus, an implication of κοινωνία πνεύματος was notions of allegiance to a common in-group identity and its common goal. This notion is further seen in Paul’s exhortation to concord in verse 2, which was expected by citizens in the oaths of loyalty to the Caesars, as discussed below.

Further evidence of the divine activity amongst the Philippians was given by Paul in his use of σπλάγχνον and οἰκτιρμός. These nouns do not refer to the Philippians’ possession of them, rather these are expressed emotions from God towards the converts. Both σπλάγχνον and οἰκτιρμός denote divine mercy and compassion in the NT. Οἰκτιρμός in Paul’s letters appears in Rom 12:1, (cf. 9:15) and 2 Cor 1:3. The term

855 Harris, “The Subversion of Status,” 349.
856 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 120.
857 Reumann, Philippians, 319.
σπλάγχνον and its cognate σπλαγχνίζομαι refer to the attitude of Jesus in displaying
divine compassion, (see Matt 9:36; 14:14; Mk 1:41; 9:22; Lk 7:13). Thus, the basis of
the Philippians’ concord centres on God’s compassion and mercy for them.

8.2.2. Citizens of Concord

Paul’s exhortation was for the Philippians to live in concord with one another. The
cognitive aspect of the exhortation is clear from Paul’s language. The Philippians are τὸ
αὐτὸ φρονῆτε (think the same) and τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες (having the same love) for
each other that does not look to one’s own advantage (cf. 2:4). The verb φρονέω is used
ten times by Paul in Philippians. It denotes ‘to think’ in an intellectual sense that
included a person’s emotions, attitudes, and will. As Gordon Fee notes, Paul wanted
his converts to have the ‘same mindset’, which will be further explained in 2:6-11 as
being the same as their new κύριος: ‘The emphasis is thus on the Philippians’ unity of
purpose and disposition, unity with regard to the gospel and their heavenly
citizenship’.

Paul continued to elaborate on what it means to be a worthy citizen of the gospel
in 2:2, in his exhortation to concord. Citizenship was a socio-political institution that,
on a psychological level, would have created a positive identity, and a greater salience
of belonging to the κοινωνία. It would also have decreased the likelihood of a possible
conflict by those whose previous superordinate identity which included those who

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858 Hellerman, Philippians, 96.
859 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 86.
860 Fee, Philippians, 185.
861 For a helpful discussion of concord in the πόλις see Winter, Seek the Welfare of the City, 82-104.
possessed Roman citizenship. If Paul’s aim is for the Philippians to perceive themselves as a superordinate group of citizens of heaven, then he would need them to self-categorise by sharing the same values as other members (see Chapter 3.3.1 and 3.3.2).

One possible reason for creating a civic community was that some of them possessed Roman citizenship. Some of the converts might have inherited their Roman citizenship from descendants of veterans, or be the descendants of a freedman or freedwoman of the Imperial household, who upon emancipation were bestowed citizenship. It is likely, therefore, that the converts were a mix of citizens and non-citizens. Furthermore, the notion that Paul was creating a new civic community around the gospel and its Messiah is evidenced by the use of political terms used to stereotype his opponents in 1:15-17. This suggests that some of the opponents might have possessed Roman citizenship, or at the very least were portraying behaviours found in Roman political life. This would explain why Paul used the notion of citizenship rather than his usual language of περιπατέω to address his converts’ ethical conduct.

The unity described by Paul has notions resembling the political concord described by Dio Chrysostom, which further demonstrates that Paul was creating a κοινωνία that included the civic notions of loyalty and allegiance. The imperative verb πληρώσατε in 2:2 is the main verb of a long sentence that included emotional appeals for concord and unity, common themes in deliberative rhetoric. Thus, he went on further to answer the primary question of the letter: ‘What is a manner of life worthy of the gospel?’

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862 Oakes, Philippians, 66.
863 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 111.
864 Watson, “A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians,” 60.
The appeal to concord as citizens would have had an impact on the Philippians at
a psychological level. Dio Chrysostom referred to citizenship as ethical behaviour that
was accompanied by emotions and rational thinking. In his thirty-ninth Oration on
concord to Nicaea, Dio described δυνομα (concord), amongst other things, as reflecting
ἀρετή (virtue), πολιτείαν νόμιμον (orderly government), honour good citizens and
dishonour those whom are considered to be base.\textsuperscript{865} Furthermore, Dio greatly rejoiced
that they desired the same things and have one heart and mind:

Even as I myself rejoice at the present moment to find you all wearing the
same costume, speaking the same language, and desiring things. Indeed what
spectacle is more enchanting than a city with singleness of purpose, and
what sound is more awe-inspiring than its harmonious voice?....To whom are
blessings sweeter that to those who are of one heart and mind?\textsuperscript{866}

Concord among citizens was honourable and associated with the demand for allegiance
to socio-political customs. Thus it was a category that superseded all other sub-group
categories, which individuals perceived themselves as having membership. The notion
of citizenship of a πόλις referred to what would be (in SIT terms) a superordinate one,
suggesting that citizenship would have greater salient features for the individual’s social
identity than other social groups such as voluntary associations.

Dio also spoke of the obligations and honours of the citizen that showed its
psychological impact on individuals:

For it is quite sufficient for a reasonable human being to be loved
[ἀγαπᾶσθαι] by his own fellow citizens.… For one word spoken out of
goodwill [εὐονια] and friendship [φιλία] is worth all the gold and crowns
[στέφανοι] and everything else deemed splendid that men possess.\textsuperscript{867}

\textsuperscript{865} Dio Chrysostom, Nicae. 39.2. (Crosby, LCL).
\textsuperscript{866} Dio Chrysostom, Nicae. 39.3. (Crosby, LCL).
\textsuperscript{867} Dio Chrysostom, Grat. 44.2. (Crosby, LCL).
Though it was honourable to be loved by one’s fellow citizens, Dio also believed that the good citizen was patriotic to the homeland even in exile:

I myself have loved such a fatherland so greatly that I would not have chosen either Athens or Argos or Sparta, the foremost and most distinguished of the Greek cities, as my native land in preference to Prusa… yet I never accepted such a proposal even by so much as a single word, but I did not even acquire a house or a plot of ground anywhere else, so that I might have nothing to suggest a home-land anywhere but here.\(^{868}\)

Dio is referring to his native city of Prusa when he was in exile. The implication is that a citizen remains loyal to one’s homeland even though there are periods of exile or absence.

Furthermore, the importance of concord among a city’s citizens in the Greco-Roman world was that it supported the ideological view of the cosmic order.\(^{869}\) Dio combated discord and factionalism by reaffirming that concord was identified with solidarity with the hierarchy of social order:

If a man should wish to delve into its origin, he must trace its very beginning to the greatest of divine things. For the same manifestation is both friendship and reconciliation and kinship, and it embraces all these. Furthermore, what but concord unites the elements? Again, that through which all the greatest things are persevered is concord.\(^{870}\)

In the same speech, concord was used to support the social hierarchy of the family:

take our households – although their safety depends not only on the like-mindedness [ὅμοφροσύνη] of the master and mistress but also on the obedience of the servants, yet both the bickering of master and mistress and the wickedness of the servants have wrecked [ἀπώλεσεν] many households.\(^{871}\)

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\(^{868}\) Dio Chrysostom, *Grat.* 44.6. (Crosby, LCL).


\(^{870}\) Dio Chrysostom, *Nicom.* 38.11. (Crosby, LCL).

\(^{871}\) Dio Chrysostom, *Nicom.* 38.15. (Crosby, LCL).
Thus the importance of concord between citizens would have been well known amongst the Philippians. It would be even more significant after their conversion as they are now citizens of a commonwealth (3:20).

Just as concord was desired amongst the citizens and appraised with positive consequences, discord amongst the citizens of a πόλις was avoided wherever possible. In his thirty-fourth Oration, directed to the citizens of Tarsus, Dio argued that discord was a disease that infected the entire body and caused alienation:

just as with certain incurable and distressing diseases which are accustomed to pervade the whole body, exempting no member of it from their inroads, so this state of discord, this almost complete estrangement of one from another, has invaded your entire body politic.\(^{872}\)

Dio’s concern was that once discord infected one part then every part will eventually be affected, bringing disorder to the entirety of the public life of the πόλις. Likewise, Paul considered the threat of ἔρις (discord or factionalism) as coming from preachers motivated by envy and jealousy, which is why Paul used such negative motivations to describe his opponents.

Paul’s use of the hapax legomenon compound noun σύμψυχος further emphasised that his converts’ concord will complete his joy. Not that Paul was demanding joy from the Philippians because they failed in their duty to give him joy, but his encouragement to continue in concord was for their advantage, also brought encouragement to him.\(^{873}\)

The meaning given to σύμψυχος is ‘harmonious’ by both Louw and Nida, and BDAG.\(^{874}\) Witherington concludes that σύμψυχος and having the same love (τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες) explain each other and refer to what it means to live a life worthy of the

\(^{872}\) Dio Chrysostom, 2 Tars. 34.20. (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL). See also Nicom. 38.12.


gospel by having ‘one life principle or a common life’. The repetition of the notion τὸ ἐν φρονοῦντες emphasise that Paul wanted the Philippians to self-categorise as those who have a common in-group identity.

Paul perceived the threat of discord as ἐριθεία (selfish ambition) and κενοδοξία (conceit) (2:3). The presence of discord would have threatened cohesion amongst the Philippians and their self-categorising into a common in-group identity as citizens of heaven and partners in the gospel. As noted above, it is likely that Paul used political language because of the presence of descendents of veterans or colonists amongst his converts. It is also conceivable that ambitious local patrons would have expected their friends and clients to support their interests and such advancement would lead to rivalry and factions. The reference to negative ethical behaviours and conduct suggests that some amongst them did not consider their heavenly citizenship as salient with other sub-groups with respect to identities (see Chapter 3.3.1).

8.2.3. Conversion as Loyalty

Paul's converts would have come from socio-political groups, in which loyalty to patrons and ideology were embedded in rituals and relational networks. It will be seen below that Paul construed conversion as exhibiting loyal behaviours to the Messiah. These new behaviours were the result of a re-mapped symbolic universe embedded in the narrative of the actions of the Messiah.

875 Witherington, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, 121.
876 Both these words are found in Domain 88 ‘Moral and Ethical Qualities and Related Behavior’ in L & N, 88.167, 88.221.
In his first work on conversion, Crook focuses on the notion of loyalty as an important part of the patron-client relationship in the Greco-Roman world. Loyalty was expected in patron-client relationships especially in political and social contexts. Crook further argues that loyalty does not necessarily mean exclusivity; rather loyalty of a client is defined as fulfilment of expected behaviour:

loyalty can be exclusive, but it is mostly a positive action directed towards one’s patron(s). Client loyalty is about being committed to actions and conduct that increase the honour of one’s patron.

The importance of Crook’s work for the study of conversion is that the nature of loyalty in the Greco-Roman world was embedded in the relational obligations of both the patron and client. Though the obligations of each party differed, both were to show loyalty to one another; the nature of loyalty being primarily exhibited in loyal behaviour. Rather than just an internal virtue, it included emotional attachment, even though there might be feelings of hostility from one side of the relationship towards the other. Thus, loyalty is primarily understood to be an action that might or might not reflect what one felt. This definition is helpful for two reasons. The first is that loyalty is connected primarily with behaviour, especially with regard to one’s obligations rather than emotions. Second, it is quite possible that some amongst the Philippians struggled with divided loyalties due to oaths previously taken, thus Paul’s use of political terminology was a deliberate attempt to evoke loyal behaviour to the Messiah.

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879 Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 216.
880 Ibid., 203-204.
881 See examples in ibid., 204-208.
In chapter 1, Paul’s converts were exhorted to stand firm in unity as worthy citizens of the gospel (τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) (1:27). There the term πίστις was used to mean either the content of the gospel or faith produced by the gospel. Another dimension of πίστις that needs to be included, is that of loyalty. Crook argues that πίστις and πιστός in the NT do not merely mean ‘trust’ or ‘faith’ but also have the notion of loyalty to a benefactor/patron.\textsuperscript{882} He further argues that the concept of loyalty to God was not a foreign concept in Paul’s thinking. For instance, in the first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul praised his converts because they had turned from their old gods to become loyal to his God (1 Thess 1:8-9), and were remaining loyal to the teachings he had given them (1 Thess 4:1). Though the word πίστις is not explicitly mentioned in 1 Thess 4:1, there is the implication that loyalty is indicated by the context. This expectation of loyalty to Paul’s gospel is also seen in Galatians as his converts had changed εἰς ἄλλον εὐαγγέλιον (1:6-7).\textsuperscript{883}

Divided loyalties would have had a psychological impact on the unity of the Philippians and it was a possible reason why the converts needed to be reminded to have the ‘same mindset’. Although there is no direct evidence that Paul required his converts to take an oath of loyalty to his God and Messiah, we do see the expectation of loyalty in Philippians. Earlier in the letter Paul took an oath before his God (1:8). The political framework of loyalty oaths would have been well understood at the veteran

\textsuperscript{882} For a fuller discussion on the connections see Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 209-214. See also New Docs 3. #10.

\textsuperscript{883} Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 213. The terms πίστις and πιστός are described as having the meaning of faithfulness, trustworthiness among their other associated meanings, and implies the notion of loyalty. L & N, 31.87, 88. “πίστις” BDAG, 818. “πιστός” BDAG, 820. In Ancient Greek, the semantic range of both “πίστις,” The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek:1669. And “πιστός,” The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek: 1669.
colony of Philippi. Moreover, loyalty oaths were directed to the ruler; in particular the one who had brought the world under his patronage and reign (see Chapter 4.3.2).

The notion of political loyalty cannot be underestimated when reading Philippians. Joseph Fantin argues that oaths provided a cognitive environment that bound all citizens to the emperor because oaths were part of any official declaration. Oaths of loyalty might well have been taken as a demonstration of honour to Caesar, particularly oaths taken in the imperial cult. Thus the type of loyalty that Paul was exhorting the Philippians to was what George Fletcher calls the ‘enthusiastic dimension of loyalty’, which seeks to actively perform acts and public acts in order to demonstrate one’s loyalty.

8.2.4. The Mindset of Loyalty

This thesis argues that the content of the gospel being proclaimed at Philippi, that of a new lord, would bring Paul’s in-group’s loyalty into question not just from their local patrons’ interests, but also from the Julio-Claudian household’s interests. The living Caesar was considered to hold the position of supreme lord with no superior. Thus in the Roman context of Philippi, the notion of the believers standing firm and faithfully in the gospel (τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) (1:27d) would indicate that loyalty was being implied by Paul to his gospel and Messiah, who is κύριος over the whole world (2:6-11).

If the converts were to have a new allegiance to the Messiah then Paul had to legitimise a new symbolic universe for the ἐκκλησία. This changing of their mindset was


to a different reality. The parallel structure of verses in Phil 2:3–4 demonstrates that Paul was advocating an alternate reality, which would have been considered subversive to the behaviours between patrons and clients at Roman Philippi. In verse 3 the use of ἀλλὰ has the notion of replacing or correcting what was previously stated:

A μηδὲν κατ’ ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν

ἀλλὰ

B τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ

ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι

ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν

A’ μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἐκαστὸς σκοποῦντες

ἀλλὰ

B’ [καὶ] τὰ ἐτέρων ἐκαστοί.

A Do nothing according to selfish ambition or [act] according to empty glory

but

B with humility estimating one another better than yourselves

A’ not just considering your own interests

but

B’ but the interests of others.

The structure shows not A but B: A) avoid selfish ambition and conceit; B) but in humility, consider each other as above oneself: A’) look out not just for your rights; B’) but those of each other.886 Rather than replicating Roman behaviour in seeking honour to increase one’s own honour over others (See Chapter 4.4.1), Paul wanted them to follow their new lord’s action of τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ (2:3, cf. 2:8). The noun is a dative that denotes a motivating cause, ‘with humility’,887 a radical and subversive notion in itself, to inform them of how they are to ἡγούμενοι ‘estimate’ other in-group members.

886 Adapted from Bockmuehl, The Epistle to the Philippians, 109-110.
887 “ταπεινοφροσύνη”, BDAG, 989.
It is possible that Paul had both ideals in mind here as he wanted them to see themselves as having a common in-group identity with motivations and actions that demonstrate that their allegiance is aligned to the an alternative reality. This would indicate that his appeal was for them to think about their behaviour in light of their common citizenship and κύριος.

8.3. A New Symbolic Universe

According to the propaganda, ‘the Deified Augustus …placed the whole world under the sovereignty of the Roman people’. Participation in the imperial cult reinforced the notion of the new reality (symbolic universe) of the ‘Golden Age’ of Pax Augusta as ‘good news’. This is the crucial content of the symbolic universe that Paul sought to challenge in the Philippians 2:5-11, to which we now turn.

8.3.1. Philippians 2:5-11

In contrast to the Pax Augusta narrative, this thesis argues that Paul was creating a new civic community that had at the centre a new κύριος and patron. Though Paul did not specifically mention the current Caesar, or the Julio-Claudian household, it will be seen that Paul’s interpretation of the actions of the self-humiliated Christ provided a counter-imperial cognitive framework for his converts’ identity formation into a new civic community. Paul well understood the connection between the Caesars and the πόλις, given that Tarsus was considered to be a friend of Augustus:

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888 Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug., 1.1. (Shipley, LCL).
For, men of Tarsus, it has come to pass that you are foremost among your people, not merely because your city is the greatest of all the cities of Cilicia... but also because you beyond all others gained the friendly support of the second Caesar.889

In verses 5 to 11 Paul was comparing two leaders who symbolise different realities. In this section, he began to ‘re-map’ the symbolic universe in the minds of his converts and supplant it with the new reality of his Messiah, to whom their loyalty was owed.890 The result for his converts was that they were to see themselves as having a common ingroup identity distinct from the dominant culture.

The relative clause, δ χαὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, in verse 5 has been understood by scholars in two quite different ways, depending on one’s understanding of ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. How this is interpreted depends on the choice of verb required to make sense of the clause, which in turn determines how verses 6-11 are understood.

Some scholars argue that the relative clause refers to ‘having the mindset or attitude, which was also in Christ Jesus’ and so supply the imperfect verb ἦν. The adverbial modifier δ χαὶ thus refers back to τοῦτο φρονεῖτε, which in turn refers back to what Paul said in 2:1-4.891 Furthermore, Constantine Campbell argues that the adverbial χαὶ suggests a parallelism between ἐν ὑμῖν (2:15a) and ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.892 The ἐν υμῖν in this reading is locative and should be translated as ‘in yourselves’ or ‘in each of you’893 and refers to the ‘manner of life’ that the Philippians were to practise.894

889 Dio Chrysostom, 2 Tars. 34.7. (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL).
890 Peter Oakes argues a similar point but his comparison in 2:5-11 is one of the authority of the emperors to that or Christ’s. See Oakes, Philippians, 147-174.
892 C. R. Campbell, Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 106.
893 Ibid.
894 Sumney, Philippians, 45.
Other scholars argue that ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ should be interpreted as referring to the believer’s union with Christ. These scholars argue that the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in Paul’s thinking had a technical meaning with ecclesial and soteriological connotations. Gerald Hawthorne notes that Paul’s usual meaning of ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ is that of ‘incorporation in Christ’. It is also argued that the verb φρονεῖτε is required to elucidate Paul’s meaning, which is understood as: ‘it is the way you also think in Jesus Christ’. Accordingly, it is argued that in Phil 2:5a ἐν ὑμῖν should be interpreted as ‘among yourselves’ or possibly ‘toward one another’, and thereby highlights the communal nature of Paul’s use of ἐν Χριστῷ in Philippians.

As I have consistently argued in this thesis, the socio-political context of Philippi needs to be taken into account for exegesis. For this reason I support the former position, namely, that Paul was referring to having the same behaviour exhibited by Jesus (which Paul then further elucidates in verses 6 to 11). Paul I suggest uses the Messiah’s mindset of obedience as a type of exemplary behaviour, in the analogous way that both Hellenistic kings and Roman emperors were considered to be ethical examples for their subjects, in which their moral qualities were demonstrated in how they ruled their realm. Although a ruler’s acts could not be replicated by others precisely, his acts were nevertheless considered as an ethical example. In the alternative

896 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 108.
898 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 108.
899 Ibid.
900 Fee, Philippians, 201. Fowl, Philippians, 90.
901 Oakes, Philippians, 190.
902 Ibid.
interpretation, however, in which the verb φρονεῖτε is replicated in the clause, such a call to imitate the ethical behaviour of the Messiah is absent.\footnote{Witherington, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Philippians}, 138.}

Paul exhorted them with an imperative φρονεῖτε, with the goal that his converts will have the ‘same mindset’ as Christ Jesus (2:5). The use of this particular verb further demonstrates that the converts’ behaviours and allegiances are to derive from careful thought.\footnote{“φρονέω” BDAG, 1066.} Moreover, they are to choose carefully what reality they are to give allegiance to because

gods of the Greco-Roman world were woven into the fabric of social and civic life …Caesar himself, was a living example of the uniting of the divine and human spheres.\footnote{Wright, \textit{Paul}, 60.}

Thus the political ideology of the supremacy attributed to the Julio-Claudian Caesars would be well known by his converts, which is why Paul needed them to think through their allegiance carefully.

Though there has been much written on verses 5 to 11, most of it presupposes that these verses constitute a theological hymn.\footnote{For an extensive bibliography of the material that has been written on verses 2:5-11, see Hawthorne and Martin, \textit{Philippians}, 92-98. R. Alan Streett argues that Phil 2:6-11 should be viewed as an anti-imperial hymn. There is no evidence that Paul intended that 2:6-11 was a hymn to be used in a meal at Philippi as Streett argues. See R. A. Streett, \textit{Subversive Meals: An Analysis of the Lord's Supper Under Roman Domination During the First Century} (Eugene: Wipf & Stock 2013), 223-231.} In the hymn, the cognitive framework used by Paul was one of comparison between two κύριοι and patrons. The Philippians would have well understood the patronage and lordship of the Caesars, as the presence of the Caesars was found everywhere in the Empire in a variety of forums.\footnote{For a recent study of pervasiveness of the Roman Emperors in the context of the fledging Christ movement see Fantin, \textit{The Lord of the Entire World}. J. K. Hardin, \textit{Galatians and the Imperial Cult}. See above in Chapter 3.3.4.}

Roman citizenship had at its head the Emperor, who was the Empire’s σωτήρ and κύριος and this reality undergirded the ideology of the imperial cult and the entire
Empire. Even though Paul focused on the actions of the Messiah and God in these verses, the implication is that it was subversive to the dominant culture. For Paul, the two κύριοι and patrons symbolise two different realities: the Julio-Claudian Caesars, vis-à-vis the Messiah, who is the real κύριος and in fact patron of the whole world.

8.3.2. Re-mapping the Symbolic Universe Part I

The acceptance of the propaganda of the Golden Age embedded in *Pax Augusta* meant the acceptance of Roman political ideology. Paul’s converts, however, are to see themselves as living under the reign and patronage of a superior κύριος, who received his superiority for very different reasons than of the Caesars. Verses 6-8 and 9-11 are two parts of what Fee calls the ‘narrative about Christ’. In the first part, Paul illustrated how the Messiah’s mindset was expressed as one ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων and in the second part as the result of the Messiah’s mindset, exhibited in his humiliation, led to his exaltation.

Hellerman observes that verse 6-8 follows a downward progression of positions in social status of the Greco-Roman world:

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911 Ibid., 195-196.
Hellerman’s argument is that the self-humiliating action ran counter to the *cursus honorum*, as implemented by Augustus. According to Hellerman, the Messiah intentionally embarks on a *cursus pudorum* (course of shame).\(^9^\)\(^1\)\(^2\)

### Status Level One (v. 6)

Paul’s comparison began in verse 6a; the Messiah ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. Stephen Fowl argues that the μορφή of God has its roots in the LXX, Philo, and Josephus, who connect it to the δόξα of God, a visible manifestation of God.\(^9^\)\(^1\)\(^4\) Hellerman builds on this argument by connecting the μορφῇ θεοῦ as referring to Christ’s status as having equality with God in regards to power and status, rather than being God before his incarnation.\(^9^\)\(^1\)\(^5\) He goes on to argue that although the noun μορφή can describe essence or nature, it is unlikely that his converts at Philippi understood this as the referent. The term μορφῇ θεοῦ conceptually parallels τὸ εἶναι ἵσα θεῷ, which would be understood as

\(^9^\)\(^1\)\(^2\) Taken from Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*, 130.

\(^9^\)\(^1\)\(^3\) This section is adapted from ibid. The term *purdor* is the Latin word for *shame* or a *sense of shame* in regards to one’s public behaviour or for one’s position amongst peers. For instance, if an elite were to come into poverty then *pudor* is shame felt because of poverty. See Charlton and Short, “pūdor,” *A Latin Dictionary*, 1486.

\(^9^\)\(^1\)\(^4\) Fowl, *Philippians*, 92.

the Caesars’ power and position of a god and not his nature as one. The infinitive clause τὸ ἔχειν ἵσα θεῷ therefore repeats what is meant: that the Messiah was in the ‘form’ of God, that of position and power. Hellerman’s conclusion is compelling because Paul’s comparison was between the two rulers, who represented two different realities. The presence of the infinitive verb εἶμι and participle of ὑπάρχω, however, does discount that their nature was also implied by Paul.

Paul portrayed the Messiah as a counter-type to the honour-seeking earthly Caesars. The term ἵσα θεῷ was used in the imperial cult to refer to the emperor, who appeared in the ‘forms of gods’, and was believed to be ἴσοθεος (equal with gods). For instance, the Jewish philosopher Philo described Gaius Caligula’s dressing up as a god as θεῷ μορφή. Conversely, the Messiah chose the status of humility over honour, and did not choose equal status with God. The Messiah, unlike the Caesars, did not exploit his equality with God to his advantage (σὺς ἄρπαγμὸν ἐγνήσας), thus the manner in which the Messiah exercised his equality with God was not an exploitation of his divine status.

The Messiah did not expect grand festivals and ceremonies like those found in the imperial cult. The Caesar’s status as god also reinforced his status as supreme benefactor/patron, to whom loyalty was due. Participation in the imperial cult and its festivals was a way that would demonstrate loyalty. Thus the social and psychological pressure to participate in the ceremonies and festivals that reinforced the supremacy of

916 Ibid., 786ff.
917 Tellbe, Paul Between Synagogue and State, 256.
918 Philo. Leg. 110
the emperor would be significant. Against this socio-political context, Paul argues that the Messiah was owed the greatest loyalty (2:11). Though he had been humiliated by a shameful death by the Romans, his lordship had been bestowed on him as κύριος over the whole world by God.

**Status Level Two (v. 7)**

The contrastive conjunction ἀλλά in verse 7 signals that Paul was elaborating on what it meant to be equal with God in verse 6. Fee notes that too much has been made about what the verb κενόω means, which has come about because some scholars have thought that there needs to be a genitive qualifier for the accusative reflexive pronoun ἑαυτόν. The thinking behind this is that Christ needed to be emptied of something. This is not necessarily so, rather that the Messiah’s emptying of himself was the act of the μορφὴν δούλου. The indicative aorist verb ἐκένωσεν highlights the Messiah’s voluntarily relinquishing of his high status and the downward descent into a cursus pudorum.

The proceeding two aorist participle clauses explicate what Paul meant by his Messiah voluntarily emptying. The clauses μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν and ἐν ὀμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος should be taken together to make explicit what it meant for the Messiah to empty himself. The voluntarily movement downwards has been somewhat theologised, having its roots in the OT. Many scholars think that the allusion to the δούλος is referring to the servant figure in Isaiah 42-53 due to the similar terminology.

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920 S. E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 2010), 55-56. Steven Runge argues that ἀλλά is a global marker of contrast, introducing a correction of the expectation in what was said in the previous verse.


922 Ibid. See also Reumann, *Philippians*, 367.

used.\textsuperscript{924} There have been, however, two objections raised to this allusion from the LXX. First, according to Hellerman Paul did not use the suffering servant imagery for the Messiah elsewhere in his writings. Second, there is a different expression used for the servant in LXX of Isaiah 42, Ἰακώβ ὁ παῖς μου ἀντιλήμψομαι αὐτοῦ Ἰσραήλ ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς μου προσεδέξατο αὐτὸν (Isa 42:1a) rather than μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν. Hellerman notes, what is in view here was Paul’s use of the δούλος in the context of his converts, living in a society preoccupied with honour and status.\textsuperscript{925} Even if Paul had the Suffering Servant in mind because of his emersion in Hebrew scriptures, the converts socio-political shaping would make it unlikely that such an allusion would be perceived by them.

Nonetheless, James Ware argues that 2:5-11 is an allusion to the Suffering Servant found in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. He outlines the similarities that he believes demonstrate a direct connection is grammatically and thematically plausible.\textsuperscript{926} Below is an adaptation from Ware’s comparisons of the Greek Philippians text and the Hebrew Scriptures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philippians</th>
<th>Isaiah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:6-7 μορφὴ θεοῦ/μορφήν δούλου</td>
<td>53:2a لناتراه ‘he had no form’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:7 ἐν ὀμοιώματι ἄνθρωπων/σχήματι εὕρεθείς ὡς ἄνθρωπος</td>
<td>52:14 מאיו מקראות והומראמקברמאד ‘…above man’s form and his form above sons of men’ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄνθρωπων (LXX) ‘From men’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:7 μορφὴν δούλου</td>
<td>52:13 and 53:11 יעבדי ‘my servant’ 53:11 δουλεύοντα 53:3 τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον\textsuperscript{927}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:7 ἐκαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν</td>
<td>53:12 ὁ υἱὸς λήμνας ‘he emptied [his] soul out unto death’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{924} For a recent discussion and comparison of Phil 2:5-11 with the Isaiah suffering servant see, Ware, \textit{Paul and the Mission of the Church}, 224-236. See also R. Bauckham, \textit{God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament} (Paternoster Press, 1998), 45-61.

\textsuperscript{925} Hellerman, \textit{Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi}, 136.

\textsuperscript{926} See outline in Ware, \textit{Paul and the Mission of the Church}, 225-226.

\textsuperscript{927} Reference of LXX found in \textit{Loci Citati Vel Allegati} of the NA\textsuperscript{28}, 860.
The presence of the theme of the Suffering Servant seems to be thematically plausible. Furthermore, he argues that his conclusions are validated because in Second Temple Judaism the Suffering Servant was a source of exegetical focus and reflection. Ware’s comparisons, however, are made almost entirely with the Masoretic Text, though he does include the work from Aquila of Sinope, whose translation of the LXX shares more words in common with the Greek text of Philippians 2:6-11. Notwithstanding this, the lack of a verbal connection between Isaiah 53 in the LXX and the Philippians text means that caution is needed when he concludes that the connection is too great to be accidental, and it makes it impossible to resist the conclusion that Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a focus of sustained exegetical reflection in the Christ hymn.

Ware’s conclusion that Isaiah’s servant is referred to in Philippians 2 assumes that the first converts at Philippi were mostly god fearers, or possibly that there was a member of the in-group who had taught new converts on the Suffering Servant. He gives little to no attention to the socio-political context of Philippi where Paul is contrasting two leaders that symbolise different realities. Furthermore, if Paul, or another

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928 Ware, *Paul and the Mission of the Church*, 226.
929 Ibid.
930 The lack of consideration for the socio-political context of Roman Philippi is indicative of Ware’s concern for Paul’s thought on mission and Gentile conversion as a whole, rather than how Paul has created a new social identity for non-Jewish converts. See ibid., 23ff. As my supervisor Dr Matthew Anstey, however, pointed out to me, authors often allude to other texts even though they know that the audience would not perceive it. It is possible that Paul was referring to the Suffering Servant in Isaiah.
teacher, had taught them about the Suffering Servant it is hard to see how those amongst
the Philippians, who were not god fearers, would understand its significance. Also, why
use a vague thematic allusion here when there are clearer linguistic connections to the
LXX Isaiah 45:23 in verses 10 and 11?

In the exegesis of this text we need to consider the socio-political context and on
what the first-century CE hearers would have understood by Paul’s terminology. The
Philippians’ social identity came from a variety of sub-groups that would have held to
the Roman world view. The Messiah’s voluntary self-humiliation in becoming a slave
would have confronted many in the status-seeking environment at Philippi. The Christ
movement at Philippi included slaves (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας) (4:22), who would
understand the subversive comparison being made.

As seen in Chapter Four, Roman law discriminated against slaves and favoured
Roman citizens. In Roman law legal personality was only given to those who possessed
libertas and civitas. Even freedmen, who had gained citizenship, were restricted in the
type of public office held, what order within Roman society that they could be promoted
to and in the severity of punishment received for criminal acts (Refer to Chapter 3.5.1).
The voluntary downward humiliation to the status of a slave was quite the opposite to
the power and prestige of the Caesars’ position of honour, worship, and authority as a
god.
Status Level Three (v. 8)

Paul hoped to re-map the symbolic universe of the Philippians by redefining and replacing earlier held notions of who is the true κύριος. The third level of the Messiah’s self-humiliation continues in verse 8. Though he was equal with God, he became a human being who lost his libertas (3:7). The main verb in verse 8 (ἐταπείνωσεν) expresses the final climax of the Messiah’s voluntary self-humiliation. The Messiah submitted his will to that of a master, though no master is explicitly named. Paul saw all humans as being under bondage of slavery. Thus, the Messiah’s taking the ‘form’ of a slave was arguably a reference to his incarnation, which meant that he became subject to all the things that humans experience.

In verse 8, there are two clauses which demonstrate that the converts’ new κύριος and patron was quite different from the Philippians’ old one. Paul addressed the converts’ notions of power relations between a κύριος and patron, and his clients. The participle clause γενόμενος ὑπῆκοος μέχρι θανάτου provides transition and is dependent on the preceding finite verb ἐταπείνωσεν. The participle γενόμενος in the clause is one of manner and indicates the Messiah humbled himself though obedience. The preposition μέχρι indicates the extent of the Messiah’s obedience up to the point of death and not the object of his death. The Messiah demonstrated the extent of his humiliation in that his obedience extended ‘to the point of death’. In the Greco-Roman world, obedience was perceived as being in a state of humiliation to someone who

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931 Peter Oakes argues that ‘Paul replaces the emperor with Christ as the new decisive power’. See Oakes, “Re-mapping the Universe,” 319.
932 Silva, Philippians, 107.
933 Fowl, Philippians, 97.
934 Sumney, Philippians, 47- 48.
935 Fowl, Philippians, 97.
possessed a higher status and was not associated with the power wielded by the supreme κύριος and patron at Philippi.

Jon E. Lendon observes that there is a lack of reference to obedience in literature amongst the aristocrats in the ancient world. Roman elites did not see themselves as servants of others, as this was below their status. Even the emperors had to be tactful in phrasing their directives as suggestions or advice to their grand officials, rather than as orders. The Messiah’s obedience in serving others countered the boasting of the achievements of the Caesars, the elites, and some non-elites at Philippi. The obedience that Paul referred to was to the point of death – death on a cross. The Messiah died shamefully without any honour at the hands of Roman political power, as crucifixion was used to punish slaves and suppress rebellion.

The ‘same mindset’ that Paul wanted his converts to exhibit was to be in line with a new κύριος and patron. His Messiah’s radical example of humility and obedience would be considered to express an alternative world view that had profoundly different values than those exhibited in its political institutions. The extent to which the Messiah’s humiliation would have been considered subversive by the dominant culture was seen in opposition to the converts’ propagation of the gospel (1:27-29). The new behaviours that came from having a re-mapped symbolic universe was an expression of loyalty to a new κύριος and patron. In the social-political context of Roman Philippi, the Messiah has reached the nadir of the cursus pudorum:

there would be no reason for them to follow Jesus and every reason to accommodate themselves instead to the colony’s social values. Paul, however, assures his readers of a further reality which, he trusts, will compel

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937 See in particular *Res gest. divi Aug.*, 1-3.
those who hear his story fully to embrace his Jesus and to summarily reject prevailing cultural norms.\textsuperscript{939}

Paul has tried to keep the Philippians loyal and maintained their common in-group identity by emphasising their common experiences and reality (see also 2:1). It is possible, however, that some exhibited disloyal behaviours towards the in-group because they perceived the actions of the Messiah to be subversive, which could have resulted in some members perceiving that having a common in-group identity with Paul did not provide them with a positive image.

8.3.3. Re-mapping the Symbolic Universe Part II (2:9-11)

According to SIT, loyalty to an in-group is more likely if it provides one with a positive self-identity and a sense of common traits (κοινωνία). Paul argued that the Philippians had a positive identity by claiming that their Messiah was the supreme κύριος and patron over all other contenders.

The notion that the the Messiah had been given favour by God continued the comparison between two different κύριοι and patrons. Part two of the Messiah’s narrative (2:9-11) marked a change in direction and status of the Messiah, and is introduced by διό, which is an inferential conjunction, ‘therefore’ or ‘for this reason’.\textsuperscript{940} Along with καὶ (also) this clearly indicated a change in direction to where the intervention of God is to be seen.\textsuperscript{941} God intervened by freely bestowing (χαρίζομαι) favour\textsuperscript{942} upon the Messiah. There is debate about whether this was a reward for obedience, which is seen at odds by scholars with God’s unearned grace, or whether the

\textsuperscript{939} Hellerman, \textit{Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi}, 148. \\
\textsuperscript{940} “διό” BDAG, 250. \\
\textsuperscript{941} Hawthorne and Martin, \textit{Philippians}, 124. \\
\textsuperscript{942} L & N, 57.102. See also “χαρίζομαι” BDAG, 1078.
Messiah was exemplifying the biblical principle that God will exalt the one who humbles him or herself. Neither of these positions are creditable premises for exegesis of this passage, because neither take the socio-political context fully into account.\(^{943}\)

What needs to be taken into consideration for the exegesis of verse 9 is found in the immediate context at Philippi. As was seen in Chapter Five, the publication of one’s honour achievements was pervasive at Philippi. Just as important was the honour status of the bestower. For instance, the inscription found on the tombstone of the veteran Tiberius Claudius Maximus boasted of achievements and positions held as a soldier. Included in the inscription was the award given to him by none other than the deified Tiberius for bravery in battle.\(^{944}\) The local resident Caius Iulius Maximus Mucianus of Philippi also boasted that he had been honoured by the divine (Antoninus) Pius.\(^{945}\) In contrast, the Messiah had not sought honour or authority from God; rather he demonstrated his loyalty to God by his obedience, in self-humiliation for the sake of others. God therefore bestowed favour and honour by raising him in his exaltation to a position that is higher than any other.\(^{946}\) For Paul, his God was the only one who could give such an honour (cf. Rom 13:1). The giving of honour by God to the Messiah would certainly have highlighted the Messiah’s loyalty.

Augustus portrayed himself as the inaugurator of a Roman Golden Age and also the *pater familias* over the entire Roman people, which was perpetuated by other Julio-Claudian Caesars through the socio-political institutions at Philippi. Oakes has raised some doubts about the degree of participation in the civic activities of the imperial cult, as participation in the imperial cult was not generally obligatory among the non-elite

\(^{943}\) For a discussion and brief summary of the different positions see Silva, *Philippians*, 108-112.


\(^{945}\) Pilhofer, 240/L465.

\(^{946}\) G. Bertram, “ὑψώ,” *TDNT* 8:609.
population.947 Yet Oakes concedes that if one was seen to have made an oath of loyalty to the emperor then the obligation to attend and participate in imperial civic activities would be a reality.948 Moreover, from our study of the inscriptions and numismatic evidence at Philippi, it was almost certain that both citizens and non-citizens would have demonstrated their loyalty by attending civic activities associated with the emerging imperial cult. The Philippians’ previous sub-groups’ participation in the imperial veneration and its civic festivals would have cognitively reinforced the reality of the Caesar’s status as a god and his right to rule.

Paul countered that his gospel had a different κύριος and σωτήρ to whom everyone will one day bend their knee.949 The gospel of Paul’s Messiah would have been considered subversive to Roman political ideology in his exaltation above all others τὸ ὀνόμα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὀνόμα (2:9). Names in the ancient world not only distinguished between people but also said something about his or her nature or inner being.950 The term ὀνόμα also had the meaning ‘reputation’,951 the threefold repetition of ὀνόμα, and the context in which it appears indicated that reputation was what Paul had in mind.952 In verses 9-10, the Messiah’s honour is restored in his resurrection.

Re-categorisation for the Philippians into a new civic community of citizens involved a new act of confession to the authority of a greater κύριος and patron. Paul’s use of a ἵνα purpose clause indicated his God’s favour on the Messiah and it also pointed forward to verse 11. The new world view was accompanied by a confession or oath that the whole world will publically acknowledge as the κύριος. The restored

947 Oakes, “Re-mapping the Universe,” 312.
948 Ibid., 314.
949 Wright, Paul, 69.
950 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 126.
951 L & N, 33.265.
952 Hellerman, Philippians, 120.
honour of the Messiah resulted in positive status for those who have already aligned their loyalty to him. Dieter Georgi argues that the Messiah’s exaltation must be seen in the political context:

the description of Jesus’ exaltation and entrance into heaven must have suggested the events surrounding the decrease of a princeps and his heavenly assumption and apotheosis by resolution of the Roman senate, ratified in heaven.953

The exaltation of the Messiah to the position of κύριος also meant he is the supreme patron over the whole world (κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός). This notion was potentially a dangerous one for the Philippians because expressions of loyalty to another ruler may well have been banned. As Cassius noted:

the seers were forbidden to prophesy to any person alone or to prophesy regarding death even if others should be present…. He [Augustus] also issued a proclamation to the subject nations forbidding them to bestow any honours upon a person assigned to govern them either during his term of office or within sixty days after his departure.954

From the above inscription it is not hard to see how both the population at Philippi and Paul’s converts would understand that this new gospel message and Messiah involved a new allegiance, above that to Caesar.

Paul continued with the notion of loyalty and homage using the ἵνα purpose clause in verses 10-11 πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ... καὶ πᾶσα γλώσσα ἐξοµολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. These verses have been recognised in NA28 as allusions to Isaiah 45:23 ἐµοὶ κάµψει πᾶν γόνυ καὶ ἐξοµολογήσεται πᾶσα γλώσσα τῷ θεῷ (LXX). In Isaiah, every knee will bow to God and confess publically that Israel’s God is righteous in his glory

953 D. Georgi, Theocracy in Paul’s Praxis and Theology, 73. (Italics original). Oakes rightly argues that the Christ’s death inaugurated his enthronement rather than being his deification after this death. See Oakes, Philippians, 133.
954 Dio Cass. Hist. 56.25.5-6. (Cary, LCL).
(45:24). Israel’s God took an oath\(^{955}\) (κατ᾽ έμαυτοῦ ὁμνύω; 45:23a) that he will vindicate and glorify all those in Israel who separate themselves to him (45:25). Paul, however, reworded this as an allusion to his Messiah, in that πᾶσα γλώσσα will confess his Messiah as κύριος. Isaiah 45 has a greater verbal parallel than Ware’s possible allusion to Isaiah 53:4, 8 in Phil 2:8a.\(^{956}\) As there were no established synagogues at Philippi, one possibility is that Paul had taught them from this passage in Isaiah to show that their loyalty would result in their vindication just as God vindicated the Messiah’s loyalty in his resurrection. Nonetheless, when Paul declared that πᾶσα γλώσσα will have to publically confess ὅτι κύριος Ἡσυχριστὸς because part of the Messiah’s vindication is that he is κύριος, this included Caesar no less.

The bowing of the knee and confession to this new reality is the end result of the ἵνα purpose clause. Either voluntarily or under compulsion all will acknowledge this, even the emperor. This conclusion is supported by the text, where the author of Isaiah used the future indicative verb ἐξομολογήσεται, indicating that the worship of God will occur by those who willingly do so (Is 45:23), and by those who will be put to shame because they have separated themselves from God (Is 45:24b). Part of Isaiah 45:23 is also found in Romans 14:11.\(^{957}\) In Romans 14, Paul used ἐξορκίζειν to express loyalty, which suggests he understood the LXX passage in this sense. An explanation for why he used a subjunctive form in Philippians 2 ἐξομολογήσηται is that it is controlled by the ἵνα, which in NT times was used to indicate a future time.\(^{958}\) The context in Romans is

\(^{955}\) Paul used a verse from the LXX where the God of Israel swears an oath.

\(^{956}\) Refer to the table in 8.3.2.

\(^{957}\) At Romans 14:11 the NA\(^{28}\) also cites Isa 45:23, 49:18; Jer 22:24; Ezek 5:11 as other places in the LXX that have a similar formula.

\(^{958}\) BDF, § 369 [2]. Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 129.
that God is the judge of all,\textsuperscript{959} which suggests that oaths or confessions were related to worship in Paul’s thinking.

The political significance of Paul’s declaration, κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός as a reference to the authority of his Messiah over the emperor would not be lost on the Philippians. Indeed it is most likely that people in the first-century Greco-Roman world would think Paul’s claim as a challenge to world authority of the emperor.\textsuperscript{960} Paul’s claim that his Messiah was κύριος over ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων can be contrasted to Augustus’ claim of bringing the world under his control.\textsuperscript{961} Paul went on to say later that his Messiah was σωτήρ (3:20), which was part of the language of the imperial propaganda and Pax Augusta. It would therefore be considered to be a challenge to the dominant imperial world view at Philippi of the Julio-Claudian right to rule and as the instigators of a Golden Age.

The supplanting of Caesar’s authority would have been seen by those in the public sphere as disloyalty and a threat to the order and stability attributed to Caesar himself. Central to Roman identity was citizenship, which was expressed by the practice of Roman customs.

Furthermore, Philippi’s continual military connections to the Julio-Claudian household already fostered a cognitive and emotional attachment to Roman ideology. The connection would certainly have provided a positive social identity of self and others who belonged to this group, based on the shared common goals with other Roman citizens. Loyalty oaths, and the accompanying blessings and curses, were generational, and it is likely that some of the Philippians were struggling with

\textsuperscript{959} C. E. B. Cranfield, Romans: Volume 2: 9-16, ICC vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 710.
\textsuperscript{960} Oakes, Philippians, 149.
\textsuperscript{961} Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug., 4.34.
conflicting loyalties due to previous oaths to Caesar either by themselves or by their families.

In contrast, the Messiah’s so called *cursus pudorum* would have been considered subversive and provided a negative image of having a common in-group identity to some of the Philippians. This would mean that some perceived the gospel as not providing a positive social identity, and this could have caused some to waiver in loyalty. Paul, however, proclaims that although his Messiah has suffered a shameful death, he was vindicated and exalted by one whom Paul considers to be the highest authority in the universe, his God (2:9).

8.3.4. Philippians 2:12-18

The new loyalty did not mean that Paul expected his converts to withdraw from society or become anti-imperial. Rather, conversion in Paul’s thinking required a new social identity formed by having membership in a new socio-political community, and the Philippians were, in SIT terms, to consider their previous socio-political groups as a sub-group. Though they may still belong to other sub-groups at Philippi, such as associations, they were to be loyal to the values and world view of the *κοινωνία* and its gospel.

Paul opened the next section with the conjunction ὥστε, which connects it with the previous section of 1:27-2:11.962 Paul’s close relationship with his converts is further seen in the use of ἀγαπητοί μου. The converts are not just ἀδελφοί (Phil 1:12, 14; 3:1, 13, 17; 4:1, 8, 21) but they are Paul’s ἀγαπητοί (beloved).963 Further, he was

pointing out to his converts three important points about their relationship. The first was that of their long term relationship, second their common loyalty and obedience to the Messiah and his gospel, and third the repeated theme of the efficacy of divine activity amongst his converts.964

The notion of being worthy citizens, loyal to the gospel and its Messiah included loyalty to Paul himself. In 2:12, Paul’s positive assessment of the Philippians in the vocative ἀγαπητόι μου (my brothers) addressed those whom he considered to be his in-group and therefore Paul’s use of καθὼς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε is a reference about his in-group’s appropriate response to him and the Messiah.965 Obedience or loyalty was based on the premise that they are all citizens of heaven and the gospel and thus loyalty to one another and the gospel is worthy conduct. Furthermore, Timothy and Epaphroditus were portrayed as prototypical converts and leaders (see Chapter 8.4 below). These individuals embody the qualities of the in-group that Paul wanted the rest of his converts to also emulate.

In order to further the self-categorisation process, the Philippians are to work out their salvation as a community. The term κατεργάζεσθε means ‘to cause a state or condition, bring about, produce, create’.966 The in-group are exhorted to think through the salvation that they had received, as the recipients of divine grace and activity (1:6, 28-29). Exhorting them to think through their salvation as a group would further tighten the relational bonds among them, as they recognise that they were a group which held many common traits (2:12c-13).967 The socio-political context of this passage focused

964 Fee, Philippians, 230-231.  
966 “κατεργάζομαι” BDAG, 531.  
967 The plural imperative κατεργάζεσθε indicates that Paul intended for them to work this out as community.
on the implication of the gospel, not as a “saved” relationship with God, but what salvation means for life with one another, in Roman Philippi, and in relation to their apostle, Paul’.968

Paul further facilitated their self-categorisation process by highlighting their favourable position with his God compared to other groups (2:13-15). Paul sought to give a positive image as the converts’ unity was under threat from those outside the group. The reiteration in verse 13 of divine activity carried with it a positive assessment of the in-group, as he reiterated their status as the recipients of divine activity from divine εὐδοκία.969 The impact of continually assessing the in-group in a positive light cannot be underestimated, as they were experiencing opposition for loyalty to the gospel and its Messiah (1:15-16, 28).

Paul’s comparison further strengthened the psychological bonds among the Philippians. The plural imperatival verb ποιεῖτε in verse 14 reiterated the importance of concord in everything amongst his converts. The notion of concord is again addressed by their common membership and behaviours of the same in-group, which would have increased the likelihood of loyalty. Thus the exhortation to do everything without argument and complaining was made in order to maintain harmony in the κοινωνία, as fellow citizens.

The ἣνα is a purpose clause in verse 15, indicating that the divine activity among them had the goal of producing a positive status for the Philippians. The positive assessment attributed to them positive qualities, such as being: ἀμεμπτοι (blameless), ἀχέραιοι (pure), ἀμωμα (unblemished) children. Paul told those in his in-group that φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστήρες live in the midst of their culture. They were also those who

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968 Reumann, Philippians, 409.
969 Bockmuehl, The Epistle to the Philippians, 154.
remained loyal to the gospel because they faced opposition. The positive assessment of his in-group in verse 15 enabled his converts to maintain a positive image of the in-group who also shared the same mind set and allegiance to the same κύριος and patron.

In contrast, those whose mind set was dominated by Roman culture and did not share in-group membership were referred to as a γενεάς σκολιάς καὶ διεστραμμένης (2:15b). Scholars have noted that 15b is a possible allusion to Deut 32:5. In the LXX description, Israel is μωμητά (to be blamed) as they are the γενεά σκολιά καὶ διεστραμμένη (Deut 32:5). In Philippians, this is attributed to those in out-groups at Philippi who opposed the Philippians as they propagated the gospel (1:28-29) rather than the people of God. Some have argued that this was an attempt by Paul to include the Philippians in the eschatological people of God. This, however, is questionable, as there is no citation of Deut 32:5 in the NA. Nevertheless, the lack of a citation in the NA is not in itself a reason to discount this. It is possible that Paul had reworked Deuteronomy 32:5 to the Philippians, as a teaching or sermon at a prior time.

In verse 16, Paul further linked the Philippians’ common goal and their social identity. Ware argues that the participle form of the verb ἐπέχω should be translated to ‘hold…forth’. This is plausible because when ἐπέχω takes its object in either the dative or accusative, as is the case here (λόγον), it often has the meaning of ‘hold out’. Furthermore, Ware notes that the use of the preposition ἐπί as a prefix has the sense of ‘to’, as in hold out/forth to something. This would further support that opposition to

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970 Reumann, Philippians, 412.
971 D. K. Williams, Enemies of the Cross of Christ: The Terminology of the Cross and Conflict in Philippians, JSNTSup 223 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic 2002), 139.
972 Reumann, Philippians, 412.
973 Ware, Paul and the Mission of the Church, 256ff.
975 Ware, Paul and the Mission of the Church, 259-260.
the Philippians was due to their propagation of the gospel, rather than a withdrawing from society at Philippi. The Philippians are those who hold forth the gospel, which further gave the group a positive distinction through Paul’s God.

The Philippians were provided with a further positive dimension to their identity by Paul’s boasting and assurance of God’s positive judgement to come. The converts were his καύχημα (boast), in whom he takes pride (2:16). In fact, they were the evidence that on the day of Christ they will prove he had not run in vain. His boasting in them was further evidence that his God approved of his in-group at Philippi, as Paul’s boasting was to the glory of God, for his divine work of power and grace among them, despite the difficulties they faced.976

Paul depicted himself as one who imitated the values of the in-group. The image in verse 17, of a sacrifice (σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ), highlighted that Paul’s imprisonment was in suffering for the gospel. Gerald Hawthorne states that Paul is ‘picturesquely referring to his sufferings as an apostle’.977 Paul’s image of his life is as a sacrifice, yet he also acknowledged the converts’ suffering and service to his God. Paul’s used the noun λειτουργία along with its qualifier τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν as a subjective genitive which is rendered ‘service of your faith’ indicating the converts’ participation in the propagation of the gospel. Thus the service that Philippians undertake came from their πίστεις and their faithfulness to the propagation of gospel.978 As a result, the form πίστεως as subjective genitive is preferred over an objective genitive because λειτουργία will be used in 2:30 in reference to an acceptable gift. Near the end of the letter, θυσίαν δέκτην was also used to describe the Philippians’ gift as an acceptable sacrifice.979 Thus,

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976 Hansen, The Letter to the Philippians, 185.
977 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 149.
978 Silva, Philippians, 129.
979 Ibid. Although Fee believes either could possible. See Fee, Philippians, 254-255.
it appears that those who support Paul in his propagation of the gospel are those he
considered to share group membership, especially in the κοινωνία.

Paul also revealed that he has a strong emotional bond with converts in that he
rejoices for them and with them and expects that they will reciprocate this joy (2:18).
This last sentence is somewhat awkward in construction and according to Fee is
redundant.\textsuperscript{980} The redundancy of the sentence perhaps suggests the strength of the
emotional bond of joy between Paul and his converts as they both experienced
opposition and suffering for the propagation of the gospel.

8.4. Paul’s Ideal Converts and Leaders
In this section SIT’s notion of prototype group members is applied to highlight those
whom Paul considered to be ideal converts and leaders amongst the Philippians. In the
following chapter, the prototypical convert and leader will be more fully explored in
relationship to the ideal citizen of heaven. Paul singled out Timothy and, to a lesser
extent, Epaphroditus as those who embodied the qualities of group membership. In
doing this, according to SIT, Paul was furthering the re-categorisation process by
creating a sense of commonality among the different subgroups. Also, because
prototypes were an embodiment of ethical behaviour for a superordinate group, they
also provide the superordinate group with expected behaviours.

\textsuperscript{980} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 256.
8.4.1. Philippians 2:19-30

Paul presented Timothy as someone who is more than just a co-worker in the gospel. Timothy (and Epaphroditus) were examples of what it means to live as citizens of the gospel. They were modals highlighted by Paul to motivate the Philippians to do the same. The development marker δὲ in verse 19 signals that Paul was moving to address another point. He described Timothy as being unique in that he was ἴσοψυχος, which has the meaning, ‘of like soul/mind’. Timothy was one who exemplified what it meant to be part of Paul’s in-group. Paul had a positive appraisal of Timothy, and their relationship was likened to a father and son (2:22) and that of a servant of the Messiah and the gospel (1:1; 2:22).

Furthermore, Paul portrayed Timothy in a positive light to his converts because Timothy was sincere and concerned for them (γνησίως τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν μεριμνήσει) (2:20). Timothy was contrasted with those who seek personal advantage in that he was loyal to Paul and by implication, to his gospel and Messiah. His loyalty had been proven by his track record, working closely with Paul. Thus, for Paul, Timothy was a convert who lived as a citizen of heaven and the gospel because he was not like the other preachers, who were seeking their own advantage (1:15-17, 2:21). His loyalty in service to Paul and the gospel was something to be respected and imitated by the in-group. The term δοκιμή carries with it the notion that Timothy acted honourably because he had proven his worth. Honour, therefore, had been redefined, not in self-seeking behaviours but in exhibiting self-giving service to the propagation of the gospel.

982 “ἴσοψυχος” BDAG, 481.
983 Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 167.
985 “δοκιμή” BDAG, 256.
Another prototypical convert/leader was Epaphroditus, also portrayed as one who exhibited the qualities of a worthy citizen. Paul described him in positive terms as τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην μου and also a λειτουργὸν to Paul (2:25).

Furthermore, Epaphroditus was the recipient of divine mercy, though he was close to death, because he recovered from his illness (2:27b, 30). Epaphroditus was also a prototypical convert because he risked his life in the propagation of the gospel. Thus his service was an example of self-giving rather than self-seeking. In Paul’s mind the correct response to the Philippians’ apostle was that he was to be received with joy and to be highly honoured (ἐντιμὸς; 2:29). Both Timothy and Epaphroditus have demonstrated their commitment and loyalty, not only to Paul, but also to the κοινωνία.

8.5. Conclusion

SCT’s notion of re-categorisation has shed light on how Paul continued to transform his converts into a new civic community. In continuity with Philippians 1, Paul instructed his converts in what it meant to act as a worthy citizen of the gospel. Those whom Paul considered to be worthy citizens were those whose mindset was centred on the gospel and the Messiah. Though Paul exhorted all the Philippians, it is clear that not all of them exhibited the loyalty evidenced by ethical behaviours.

The new ethical behaviours were based on a new reality that came from a re-mapping of their symbolic universe. In order to re-map the symbolic universe of his converts, Paul drew upon the familiar notions and civic frameworks found within the πόλις in the first-century CE. His exhortation to unity is expressed in notions of concord, which was to be understood as a call to be loyal to the in-group. As argued in this thesis, conversion includes cognitive change in one’s world view (see Chapter Seven). Thus
Paul’s exhortation to the Philippians was to have them to re-evaluate their allegiances in light of an alternate reality. Though Paul did not urge his converts to renounce all loyalties to their previous sub-group identities, he did remind them that they now had a greater loyalty that superseded all others.

In Paul’s thinking, his Messiah and the Caesar represented two very different ‘realities’. The obedience of the Messiah was considered to be a humiliation to a position below the status of Augustus and Roman elites. The Philippians were experiencing opposition because their gospel was subversive to the dominant Roman world view at Philippi. Due to the subversive message of the gospel, Paul needed to use the obligations connected with citizenship in order to maintain the loyalty of his converts and to counter the threat of disloyalty.

The converts were to be loyal to the κοινωνία and its message and to a κύριος and patron, which makes them an out-group to the dominant culture. The Messiah’s voluntarily shunning of his status resulted in his exaltation to a position above all others. Those of the Philippians who were loyal to the Messiah were those who had a changed world view and social values and were aligned with the vindicated κύριος and patron.
Chapter Nine: Philippians 3:1-21

9.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter it was seen that conversion is understood to be a change of world view, whereby the Philippians exhorted to have their symbolic universe re-mapped to a new reality. The purpose of Philippians 2:1-18 was to remind them that their ultimate loyalty was to a new κύριος and patron. In this chapter, SIT will be applied to Philippians 3 with particular attention to the contrast between salient old identity markers and new salient ones.

Though Paul did not consider himself as abandoning his Jewish identity, he had relegated his Jewish identity markers, which were previously superordinate, in the language of SIT, to a sub-group identity, with lower salience. Similarly, Paul as the prototypical leader sought to convince the Philippians to consider their previous social identity markers from their pre- conversion superordinate group as now makers of a sub-group, and that their new social identity was to come from the new civic community, built around the Messiah and the gospel.

SIT will also highlight that the Philippians common destiny was something that identified them as his in-group. Paul continued with the theme of living as a worthy citizen of the gospel. Those who imitated the Messiah’s self-humiliation and concomitant lower social status will also share in his vindication. Though their situation might be seen in a negative light by some of the Philippians, Paul assured them that in the eschatological judgement to come, they will be vindicated and glorified just as the Messiah was.
Paul countered certain notions associated with Roman citizenship, and even his Jewish identity, that he believed had their foundations on ‘earthly things’ (3:19). According to Paul, his God had founded a new civic community at Philippi, one which had values that would be considered subversive to the world view and values of the dominant culture at Roman Philippi.

Paul opened with the adverbial use of τὸ λοιπόν, which signals a transition to new material, but with some connection to what has been said previously, and so is translated as ‘furthermore’.986 This connects with what was said in Philippians 2 in regards to who he thought was a worthy citizen of the gospel. He sought to increase the salience of the individual converts in the new community by encouraging them to have the same emotional response to their situation as he did. The term χαρά Paul used throughout the letter, not to denote ‘superficial cheerfulness’ but rather as an emotion expressing the reality of the hardship of their circumstance.987 The response to χαίρετε in their circumstance is used nine times with four of these being in the present tense imperative, (2:18; 3:1; 4:4[x2]) four times (1:18[x2]; 2:17; 4:10) in the indicative, and once in the subjunctive (2:28), χαίρω is used for rejoicing in their κύριος whilst in adverse circumstances. Regardless of their perceived reality they are to rejoice because expressing χαρά in the midst of opposition is another sign of divine agency at work amongst them.988

Paul had also created a psychological bond of loyalty to the gospel and his κύριος, σωτήρ, and patron amongst the Philippians and this enabled them to face opposition.

987 Hellerman, Philippians, 168.
The expression of their loyalty, grounded in commitment to a greater κόσμος, advocated ethical behaviour according with their common citizenship and the gospel. The two different leaders in 2:6-11 represented different realities, even though Paul did not specifically refer to a Caesar in his comparison. Were he to do so, then this could prove dangerous for both the writer and the addressees, as prison letters were monitored by the authorities.\textsuperscript{989} As was seen in the oaths of allegiance formulas, the one making the oath swore to look out for Caesar's interests which would have included the reporting of any plots or schemes against Caesar. Thus Paul had to write carefully so that he and his converts were not seen as being disloyal to Caesar or to Rome – but the implication would be clear.

9.2.1. Salient Group Identity Markers

In previous chapters it has already been highlighted how Paul stereotyped out-groups by using negative categories. Their ethical behaviours were considered as unbefitting for citizens of the gospel. Those who preach the gospel but do not imitate the Messiah are identified as not sharing the common in-group identity, and therefore have an unconverted world view and values (1:15a, 17, 28). This contrast was based on Paul’s conformity to the story of his Messiah in 2:6-11 and how it was to impact on the identity of the Philippians.\textsuperscript{990}

\textsuperscript{989} A. Standhartinger, “Letters from Prison as Hidden Transcripts: What it Tells Us about the People at Philippi” in \textit{The People beside Paul: The Philippian Assembly and History from Below}, ed. J. A. Marchal (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 124ff. The debate about Paul’s letters containing or were ‘hidden transcript’ is a current debate that is beyond the scope of this thesis. It is, however, sufficient to say that Paul’s letter to his converts would have been monitored especially as he was about to defend himself in court. For current works see Harrison, \textit{Paul and the Imperial Authorities}, 28-33. C. Heilig, \textit{Hidden Criticism?: The Methodology and Plausibility of the Search for a Counter-Impperial Subtext in Paul}, WUNT 2 392 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015). Contra S. Kim, \textit{Christ and Caesar: The Gospel and the Roman Empire in the Writings of Paul and Luke} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2008), esp. 32-33. J. M. G. Barclay, \textit{Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews}, 379-383.

\textsuperscript{990} Oakes, \textit{Philippians}, 126-127.
The contrast was also used by Paul to help the Philippians re-categorise themselves into an in-group. Paul continued to provide the Philippians with a positive image as true worshippers of God and by doing that, he gave the Philippians a positive distinction, compared to those he claimed placed confidence in the flesh. Paul exhorted his converts to consider the differences between themselves and other groups with the threefold use of the present tense imperative βλέπετε. The verb could be either an admonition, meaning ‘watch out for’, or have a weakened meaning as a cautionary example ‘consider or to keep your eyes on’. Some commentators argue that the context and the threefold use of βλέπετε favours the rendering ‘watch out for’. G. D. Kilpatrick argues that when βλέπω is used with an accusative object the translation should be ‘beware of’. Kilpatrick’s argument is a nuanced translation of the usual rendering of βλέπω. Both BDAG and Louw and Nida, (see below) specify that βλέπω refers to sight, observation, notice, attention (by looking at), or awareness, and denotes information received and considered through the senses, especially the eyes.

For this reason, I argue that ‘consider’ with the sense of ‘look out for’ those who advocate practices that are contrary to affirmations found in Christ Jesus, is the preferred translation of βλέπω. Though the threefold repetition in 3:2 suggests that there are polemic intentions, the rendering ‘consider’ accords with the letter’s focus on imitating Paul and the world view he was hoping his converts would adopt (Phil 3:17, 4:9).

991 L & N, 27.58.
992 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 174. See also “βλέπω” BDAG, 179.
995 Kilpatrick, “BLEPETE, Philippians 3 2,” 146-147.
Furthermore, Paul was about to compare his old identity makers with his new ones. It was likely that he wanted his converts to do the same. Though Louw and Nida categorise βλέπω in Phil 3:2 as a warning in the semantic domain of ‘Learn’ (Domain 27), they also acknowledge that the domain is related to ‘Think’ (Domain 30). Domain 27 is ‘the acquisition of information’ and Domain 30 is ‘essentially the processing and manipulation of information often leading to a decision or choice’ that has βλέπω as ‘to think about, to consider’.

The focus of the threefold βλέπετε clauses have as objects the κύνας (dogs), the κακοὺς ἐργάτας (evil workers), and the κατατομήν (mutilation), and are stereotyped as a ‘type making the virtues and vices of people who stand for the people themselves’. Rather than the three groups referring to actual extant opponents at Philippi, Paul was warning them to watch out for such people. It would also inform the Philippians to look out for types of groups, or individuals who claim to be part of the Christ movement, but do not show the same beliefs and behaviours.

The groups Paul mentioned are his opponents and once again he has portrayed those who oppose him with negative stereotypes. The presence of the definite article with the nouns used (τοὺς κύνας, τὴν κατατομήν) indicates that Paul had particular groups in mind. The term κακός was used in both Greco-Roman society and by the Jews in a negative way in that they considered dogs ‘low life’ scavengers. The Jews sometimes used it to label those who they considered to be unclean, thus as a pejorative for the Gentiles. It most likely referred to Judaizers, who were Jewish believers that

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998 L & N, 30.1.
999 Watson, “A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians,” 73.
1000 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 182.
1001 Fee, Philippians, 295.
promoted circumcision for Gentile believers, but who were put in an unclean category. The word play on the noun περιτομή, which is to cut around (περι) is in contrast to κατατομή that is to cut into pieces (κατα). The emphatic contrast between the groups is seen in verse 3.

The κακοὺς ἔργατας builds upon τοὺς κόνας, and most likely refers to the other missionaries, possibly from 1:15-17. In 2 Cor 11:13 Paul uses ἔργατης to refer to other workers who are his opponents (ψευδαπόστολοι and ἐργάται δόλαιοι), and contrasted their motives and actions to his. It is unlikely that these pejoratives were aimed at Jews, or Jewish believers, who still circumcised their sons. Rather he was referring to the aggressive ‘missionaries’ who founded a social identity in Jewish customs, and who compelled Gentiles to be circumcised, in order for them to ‘become part of the eschatological people of God’, like those in Galatians (Gal 2ff.). The contrast found in verses 1 to 3 was indicative of deliberative rhetoric, where Paul was trying to ensure that they would not side with the Judaizers, if, or when, they show up in the future. For this reason, rather than drawing upon any of his former identity markers, which included his Roman ones such as citizenship, Paul drew upon his Jewish ones, which Paul uses his ethnic Jewish identity markers that would have given him a greater status than the Jewish-Christian missionaries in his converts estimation.

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1002 See for further discussion ibid., 294-295, n 38.
1003 Ibid., 296. See also Reumann, Philippians, 462-463.
1005 Sumney, Philippians, 71.
1006 Hellerman, Philippians, 172.
1007 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 191.
With respect to this interpretation, Wolfgang Schenk argues that Paul’s use of the first and second person pronouns in verses 2 and 3 had a rhetorical function.\(^{1008}\) The use of imperative second person verbs in verse 2 reinforced what he wanted the converts to consider.\(^{1009}\) Paul’s use of ἡμεῖς did not necessarily refer to him and the Philippians as an in-group. Schenk argues that Paul used a plural pronoun elsewhere in Philippians referring to groups of believers who were not part of the Philippian congregation (3:17). Schenk further argues that Paul used ἡμεῖς to refer to the position held by his opponents who believed that circumcision constituted the people of God, the same position that he once held.\(^{1010}\) This is plausible because Paul went on to contrast his old identity markers with his new ones. Thus, in Paul stating ἔσμεν ἡ περιτομή it is possible that he was referring to himself and those Jews who had become believers in the Messiah.\(^{1011}\)

The substantival present tense participle λατρεύοντες comes from the verb λατρεύω and is associated with both physical work and with religious activities in both Greek general cultural usage and in the LXX. In the LXX, the verb is often associated with cultic worship, especially with sacrifice in the Pentateuch.\(^{1012}\) The term is also used in the LXX in relation to exclusive service and devotion or loyalty to Israel’s God over other gods (e.g. Deut 7:4, 6; 8:19). The demand on Israel is to not offer worship to these gods because of an inner attitude of faithfulness in the worship of God (Deut 10:12).\(^{1013}\)

The Philippians were not only citizens of heaven, they were the true servant worshippers along with Paul, but who were not required to have the physical ethnic identity marker of circumcision. A more appropriate backdrop to these verses is the

\(^{1008}\) W. Schenk, *Die Philippbereihen des Paulus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984), 253-255.

\(^{1009}\) Ibid., 254.

\(^{1010}\) Ibid., 273.

\(^{1011}\) I thank Dr Timothy J. Harris for this insight.


socio-political context at Philippi. Loyalty at Philippi was, most likely, demonstrated by oaths allegiance and participation in the civic activities of the imperial cult.

Participation in the imperial cult demonstrated an appropriate response and behaviour to their patron; their ultimate loyalty was to Rome and the Caesars. For the Philippians, loyalty to the Messiah did not mean to become withdrawn from life in the civic sphere. Rather they were to embody the values and identity of their new superordinate group, expressing loyal behaviours that are aligned with their new world view, formed by the Messiah’s self-humiliation (2:6-11).

9.2.2. Paul’s Conversion and New Identity

Scholars of the NT have long acknowledged that Philippians 3 is Paul’s own account of his conversion. In these studies, Philippians 3 is discussed as part of Paul’s overall thought on his conversion. Thus Romans 7, Galatians 1, and various passages in 1 Corinthians1014 are included in the discussion of Paul’s self-understanding of conversion. It is certainly a valid endeavour to understand Paul’s overall thought on conversion by comparing and contrasting these passages, as insights into the differences can highlight how Paul construed his conversion in a variety of contexts. Nevertheless, synthesising Paul’s overall thought on conversion tends to minimise the fact that he chose to use different metaphors or concepts to suit different specific socio-political contexts.

The lack of consideration for the socio-political context, for instance, is seen in Gaventa’s argument that in Philippians 3, Paul was defending his work in the gospel and refuting claims by his opponents that he has been disloyal to Israel.1015 It is difficult

1014 See Chapter 2.5.1.
1015 Gaventa, From Darkness to Light, 29.
to see why Paul would use Roman Philippi as a place to demonstrate this, given its lack of Jewish presence. Furthermore, who at Philippi would make such an allegation?

Similarly, Chester argues that in Philippians 3:4-12, Paul was contrasting how he understood the notions of sin, righteousness, and the Law from his former life in Judaism, with his post-conversion life. Paul’s thinking on conversion is based mostly in theological categories of righteousness that included both forensic righteousness under the Law, which was based on his ascribed and achieved status as a Jew. It also includes a participatory righteousness that is one of being found in Christ (εὑρέθω ἐν αὐτῷ) with righteousness from God (τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαίωσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει) (3:9). The righteousness that he now has in Christ redefined his understanding of the Law:

Paul can retrospectively see that the one sin he can name resulted from his devotion to Judaism and his zeal for the law. Evil had come forth from good, so demonstrating that, as a Jew, he too had been under the power of sin. Chester argues that Paul’s pre-conversion view of the Law meant that he was unable to perceive his unrecognised sin, which meant he was under the power of sin, as the Gentiles were. Thus the human plight is the burden and ‘enslavement to the power of sin’. Though Paul did redefine what he considered true Jewish identity to be, it is hard to know how much the Philippians would have understood or were even concerned with these distinctively Jewish categories of righteousness.

Crook’s comments on Philippians 3 are more sensitive to the socio-political context and are less concerned with theological categories. Crook identifies Philippians 3 as a ‘patronal synkrisis’, which was a means of honouring and expressing gratitude to one’s patron in the form of hymns, confessions, and speeches of praise. The role this

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1016 Chester, Conversion at Corinth, 172ff.
1017 Ibid., 182.
1018 Ibid.
1019 Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion, 117.
plays in conversion has its precedence in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius where Lucius is given a benefaction of healing by the god Isis. The benefaction is his salvation to which he responds appropriately in loyalty and devotion.\textsuperscript{1020} Thus Crook argues that Paul’s description of his former Jewish identity, though a positive one, and though not usually described by the client in a patronal *synkrisis*, is how Philippians 3:4b-11 should be interpreted. He further argues that Gal 1:11-17 is also a patronal *synkrisis*, though Gal 1:11-17 lacks the same detailed honour and identity credentials found in Philippians 3. After examining both passages together, Crook concludes that Paul’s new call by his benefactor and God through a revelation has ‘changed his sense and expression of loyalty’.\textsuperscript{1021}

Post-conversion Paul did not perceive himself as having left his original Jewish identity, but he did believe that a change had occurred, which enabled other non-Jewish groups to participate as full members of God’s people. Paul’s stated Jewish identity in 3:5-6 is what SIT would identify as salient features of his previous superordinate group, which he relegated into a sub-group.\textsuperscript{1022} This did not mean that he did consider himself not to be a Jew, but that its social identity markers did not separate him from non-Jewish believers at Philippi, because in that context they were not salient to his identity (see also 1 Cor 9:20).\textsuperscript{1023}

Likewise the non-Jewish Philippians had previously self-categorised as belonging to their respective superordinate groups such as god-fearer, Roman, Greek, Thracian and so forth. Like Paul, they were to relegate their ethnic and or socio-political groups into a sub-group, thus providing less salience to the Philippians’ precedent social

\textsuperscript{1020} Ibid., 122-124.
\textsuperscript{1021} Ibid., 182.
\textsuperscript{1022} A similar conclusion is also made by Witherington, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*, 34.
\textsuperscript{1023} Unlike in Romans 11:1-10. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 293.
identity. Paul and the Philippian’s previous sub-groups remain as sub-groups, which meant that there was some connection with their previous social identity.\textsuperscript{1024} Their citizenship of heaven and the gospel, however, was something that they should consider to have the greatest salience. The result was the re-categorisation at a corporate level as a social identity, which then also reduced previous intergroup biases. Because the converts did not come from homogeneous common in-group identities at Philippi, they needed to self-categorise as a citizen of heaven at a personal level, whereby each individual personally acknowledged their membership in the group.

9.2.3. Paul the Prototypical Leader

SIT’s notion of the prototype leader will be applied to Paul for two reasons. The first is that he has based his identity by following in the footsteps of his κύριος in his self-humiliation. Paul exhibited the thinking and attitude of the Messiah described in 2:6-11. Second, his imitation of the Messiah provided the Philippians with a practical example of someone who had self-categorised as a citizen of heaven. He also went on to use in-group and out-group comparison to provide a positive distinction for the Philippians, whom he has already positively assessed as the true worshippers of his God.

Paul acknowledged that both he and they had reason to place confidence in previous social identity markers. The concessive conjoining particle καίπερ is used with a participle in 3:4 to intensify what was previously said in verse 3c καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες.\textsuperscript{1025} In this section, the autobiographical nature of what followed is highlighted by a change from plural pronouns which referred to the Philippians to single


\textsuperscript{1025} Reumann, Philippians, 466.
pronouns (ἐγώ), verbs, and participles when referring to himself. Paul did not return to using plural verbs until 3:15, 16 and then returned to the singular in his exhortation to his converts to imitate him in 3:17.

9.2.4. Old Social Identity Markers Versus New Ones

The perfect participle of πείθω is used to indicate the basis of Paul’s boasting in 3:3-4, namely ἐν σαρκί. Until this point, Paul associated πείθω with a positive meaning ‘to have (complete) confidence in’: in the actions of his God, or Messiah (1:6, 25; 2:24), and of others having confidence in the gospel (1:14). In Philippians Paul’s boastings (καύχημα and καυχάομαι) also had a positive meaning, even though boasting could be viewed in Greek literature as negative. Boasting, however, was legitimate in rhetorical contexts in favourable comparison, but not ὑβρὶς (wanton violence). The noun καύχημα and its cognates were used throughout the letter and carried a positive sense, either directly or indirectly referring to the actions of the Messiah. The participle form of καυχάομαι in 3:3 refers to boasting in the Messiah who is his confidence. In 3:3-4, however, πείθω referred to misplaced confidence in old social identity markers, namely ἐν σαρκί. The noun σάρξ is used here to describe ‘everything external in man that he could glory in … “flesh” everything that is outside Christ’. There is also a reference to circumcision of the flesh (3:2c), as advocated by his opponents in the

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1026 Louw and Nida note that the perfect stem carries with it the notion of ‘to rely on’ or ‘to trust in’, 31.82.
1028 ὑβρὶς” LSJ: 1841. See also Harris, “The Subversion of Status,” 211-213.
1029 Silva, Philippians, 149.
ἐκκλησία throughout Galatia as being opposed to the Spirit (Rom 8:5-8; Gal 5:16-21).1030

The salience of one’s social identity can vary in different contexts (see Chapter 3.3.1). Though Paul was a Jew with Jewish identity markers, he was in a Roman context at Philippi, which meant that his Jewish identity was less salient. Nonetheless, Paul went on to list his old social identity markers that placed in him a position of honour within Judaism before his conversion. Verses 4-6 reveal that he saw himself within Judaism as a prototypical leader. The socio-political backdrop to Paul’s list in verses 5 and 6 influenced how he framed his pre-conversion social identity markers as a *cursus honorum*, where he uses the Roman *cursus* ideology to highlight Jewish reasons for boasting.1031

The pride associated with honour-related status and personal accomplishment was pervasive at Roman Philippi. Scholars have long noted that Paul’s list in 3:5-6 are honour-related forms of status. The first four are *ascribed honour*, which is honour inherited from birth, and included: immediate family; parents (especially the father); ancestors (genealogies); tribe or clan; language, or specific dialect; city of origin, and region of origin. One’s *acquired honour* was bestowed because of achievement and included: nurture, training, and education, accomplishments and character, including both physical development and virtues. The virtues usually belonged to a particular philosophical school, where exhibiting specific virtuous behaviours brought honour to the individual, trade or profession and voluntary associations.1032 Thus in verses 5 and 6, Paul paraded his Jewish honour list in a *cursus*-like formation:

1030 Ibid.
1031 Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi*, 123.
1032 For a more comprehensive list see D. C. Duling, “‘Whatever Gain I Had...’: Ethnicity and Paul’s Self-Identification in Philippians 3:5-6,” in *Fabrics of Discourse: Essays in Honor of Vernon K. Robbins*, 285.
περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος
ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ
[ἐκ] φυλῆς Βενιαμίν
Ἐβραῖος ἐξ Ἐβραίων
κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος
κατὰ ἤλθος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν
κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ - γενόμενος ἀμεμπτος. 1033

Circumcised on the eighth day
of the people of Israel
of the tribe of Benjamin
a Hebrew of the Hebrews
according to the law a Pharisee
according to zeal a persecutor of the church
according to righteousness in the law was blameless.

Though this passage contains similar elements with the two autobiographical accounts mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11 and Galatians 1, Paul is not defending either the gospel or his apostleship at Philippi. In 2 Corinthians he affirmed the salience of his Jewish identity, as an apostle (2 Cor 11:22-23a), and in Galatians, his zeal for the traditions of Judaism was his reason for persecution of the ἐκκλησία.

The first four references belong in the semantic domain of membership in a group related by social or blood ties. The first status that Paul mentioned is περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος. The noun περιτομῇ is located in the semantic domain of ‘Religious Activities’ associated with ethnic identity (Gen 17:10-12). 1034 The next phrase indicated that Paul was from the γένος of Israel, which connected him to his eponymous ancestor, whose ‘name called forth a social political reality’ (Gen 32:28). 1035 Paul used γένος to

1033 Taken from Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 124.
1035 Duling, “‘Whatever Gain I Had...’,” 238.
describe belonging to his own people in Gal 1:14 (ἐν τῷ γένει μου) and 2 Cor 11:26 (κινδύνοις ἐκ γένους).

Paul continued with his honour related status associated with his origins with his φυλή (tribe), which is of a nation, such as the Twelve Tribes of Israel, a large socio-political group. Paul also associated status as a member of God’s people in their language Ἑβραῖος. The term is often used by Jews to identify themselves, especially in contrast to other nations.

The latter three honour statuses in verse 6 are in a participle clause that commences with the preposition κατὰ and were acquired honour. The honour status marker of membership in the Pharisees was how Paul previously defined, and preserved ethnicity with, a particular interpretation of the torah. It was Paul’s interpretation of the torah and consequently what it meant to be a Jew in his social context that led him to persecute the ἐκκλησία. For Paul, having membership with the Pharisees held great salience for his social identity, because though he was a Jew of honourable origins, the Pharisees’ interpretation of the torah and their world view was the guide to his actions.

Paul paraded his Jewish honour status purposefully in a manner and framework that the Philippians would recognise as a cursus honorum. Paul’s list was similar in structure to the inscriptions found at Philippi, in which ascribed honour was displayed before acquired honour. Many elites at Philippi displayed their origins in a similar structure that included the familial lineage and Roman citizenship:

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1036 L & N, 10.2, 11.56.
1037 “Ἑβραῖος” BDAG, 269-270.
1038 Duling, ““Whatever Gain I Had...”” 239-240.
1039 For an excellent synthesis on how Philippians 3:4-12 can be applied to the interpretation of Romans 7:7-25 see Chester, Conversion at Corinth, 183-195.
1040 Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi, 125.
... für Burrenus Firmus, den Sohn des Tiberius, aus der Tribus Voltinia, den praefectus fabrum, (gestorben im Alter von) zwanzig Jahren und vier Monaten [und ...] für Firminia, ... Jahre ... alt, (hat) Burrenus, der Sohn des Tiberius, zweimal Militärtribun, Präfekt der ... Kohorte ....

... For Burrenus Firmus, son of Tiberius, of the tribe Voltinia, the praefectus fabrum. Aged 20 years and 4 months [and ...] Firminia ... aged ... old, … Burrenus, the son of Tiberius, twice Military Tribune, prefect of the Cohort ....

The above gravestone inscription is dated from the first-century CE. The first pieces of information refer to ascribed honour as the name is followed by family origins, and then the advertisement of Roman citizenship. Attributed honour statuses followed, which in this case were the offices and rank held in the army. This structure was also used for honorific inscriptions for elites in public offices:

[... Varin] iō [- f(ilio)]
[V(oltinia) M]acedo [ni],
aed(ili)], q(uaestori), IIvir(o) i(ure) d(icundo) Ph[ilip-]
[pis], munerari[o II].
[pup] illae Vari [niae]
[M] acedonia et Pro [cula]
[p]atri ex testa(mento) eiusmod [f(aciendum) c(uraverunt)].

Für ... Varinius Macedo, den Sohn des ..., aus der Tribus Voltinia, den Ädil, den Quästor, den Duumvir iure dicundo in Philippi, der zweimal Spiele gestiftet hat. Die Mündel Varinia Macedonuo und Varinia Procula haben (den Stein) für ihren Vater aufgrund seines Testaments setzen lassen.

For Varinius Macedo, Son of ..., of the tribe Voltinia, the aedile, the Quastor, the duumvir iure dicundo in Philippi, who twice paid for Games. (His) wards Varinia Macedonuo and Varinia Procula have had (this Stone) placed for their Father for his testament/legacy.

1041 Pilhofer, 046/L043.
1042 Pilhofer, 253/L447.
Though Varinius’ father’s name is missing from the inscription, it was once present. This inscription was found at the Macellum, just south of the Forum. The public prominence of inscriptions such as these at Philippi meant it is likely that Paul would have been familiar with these types of inscriptions and their significance to a person’s identity during his time at Philippi.

The possession of Roman citizenship further crystallised one’s identity as a Roman especially for those who lived in the provinces. The parallels between the status symbols of important Roman citizens and Paul’s list are seen below:

\[
\begin{align*}
toga (\text{virilis}) & \leftrightarrow \textit{περιτομὴ ὑκταήμερος} \\
civis Romanus & \leftrightarrow \textit{ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ} \\
tribu Voltinia & \leftrightarrow \textit{φυλῆς Βενιαμίν} \\
Cai filius & \leftrightarrow \textit{Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων}.
\end{align*}
\]

The giving of the toga held great symbolic significance because it could only be worn by adult Roman citizens. The assumption of the toga was the formal enrolment into the citizen tribe and was part of the identity of being Roman. The publicising of membership in the tribe of Voltinia guaranteed the rights of Roman citizenship. Likewise, Paul’s reference to his tribe as Benjamin was a guarantee of his descent \( \text{ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ} \). Though Pilhofer’s arguments have not convinced everyone, the public prominence and similar structure found in honorific inscriptions at Philippi, makes it quite likely that the Philippians would have made the connection between Paul’s honour statuses and those of Roman citizens.

The argument put forward by Pilhofer regarding the likelihood of the immediate socio-political context as being the background for Paul’s honour list is convincing.

\begin{footnotes}
1044 Ibid., 126.
\end{footnotes}
Paul made it clear to the Philippians that his previous Jewish honour status, where he self-categorised according to his ethnicity as a Jew, and to a particular type of Jewish identity, was salient to his identity. He went on to argue that he considered those things as now not salient to his social identity as a member of the multi-ethnic Christ movement.

9.2.5. Paul’s Self-Categorisation Experience

In this section SIT will highlight how in Philippians 3:7-12 Paul, as the prototypical leader, has rejected previous status and social identity markers and has self-categorised with his Messiah. Conversion as a completely new identity is not just the old being replaced by the new. As was seen in Paul’s acknowledgement of the ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις in chapter 1, there are certain salient categories from one’s previous superordinate group that were preserved. One of Paul’s previous salient categories was that he considered himself to be δικαιος (righteous; 3:6), which he continued to argue he still possessed, the difference, however, was that Paul had put aside something that was a source of honour. He now based his identity on his Messiah, ‘Paul’s very way of telling the story indicates the humiliation of pride, a following in the Messiah-pattern sketched in Philippians 2:6-11’.¹⁰⁴⁸ Thus he considered the Messiah’s cursus pudorum as a template for his life, and for the Christ movement.

It can be seen in Paul’s thinking that conversion involves a cognitive shift from one world view to another. The purpose of a prototype leader is to enable cohesion amongst the Philippians. Cohesion was needed to enable them to self-categorise as


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members of the Christ movement. In 3:7-8, Paul used the verb ἡγέομαι three times. One of the uses of ἡγέομαι identified by BDAG is that it highlights engagement with an intellectual process, ‘think, consider, regard’. Thus Paul’s comparing what he had gained and lost was the result of an intellectual process.

Paul used the commercial accounting terms of κέρδος and ζημία, in two finely balanced clauses in verse 7:

[Ἀλλα] ἂτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἡγημαὶ διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν.

But whatever was gain to me these things I had I consider a loss because of Christ.

The ἀλλά is used to indicate the contrast with what was said in verses 5-6. The relative pronoun ἂτινα refers back to the honour related statuses in 3:5-6. The use of the perfect verb ἡγημαί indicates that Paul viewed what he considered his past honour related statuses from a new perspective. The two accusatives in the clauses in 3:7, ταῦτα and ζημία, underscore that all things he mentioned before were a significant loss. The emphatic positions of the accusatives, ταῦτα at front of the first clause and ζημία at the end of the second clause make it clear that Paul’s thinking was changed by his encounter with the Messiah.

In 3:8, Paul informed the Philippians that what he gained under his previous social identity gave him honour and identity, yet it was now ζημία and σκύβαλον. BDAG notes that σκύβαλον is used with crudity in the Greek, thus an idiomatic rendering of ‘[i]t’s all

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1049 “ἡγέομαι” BDAG, 434.
1050 See Sumney, Philippians, 77.
1051 BDF, § 157 [3]. The verb ἡγέομαι takes two objects in the accusative and has the notion of ‘regard’.
1052 Fee, Philippians, 316.
crap” is conveyed. Paul uses these nouns with the perfect passive verb ἡγεμαί to refer to a past event that had implications for the present, emphasising the cognitive aspect of his conversion. This point was further highlighted by his switching back to the present tense verb ἡγεμαί and this switch suggests he was making a distinction between the past and present. Paul, however, did not finish with the renunciation of his previous honourable status as worthless. The ἵνα followed by the subjunctive aorist verb κερδήσω (3:8c) is a purpose clause, indicating what he had gained was in contrast to his former life, which he elaborated on further in verse 9a καὶ εὑρέθω ἐν αὐτῷ. The righteousness that once added to his ascribed honour, was replaced by one from God, on the basis of faith, and as this thesis argues – loyalty. Conversion as a change of allegiance would have a psychological impact on him. Paul’s statement of κυρίου μου in verse 8 indicated that for him knowing his Messiah was an ‘all-consuming passion’.

In 3:9 the participle clause highlights how Paul had re-categorised how he understood the term δικαιοσύνη, not as coming from his ethnicity but from having a new allegiance to his God’s Messiah. It is possible that ἔχων could be either concessive or causal of manner. The participle of manner best suits Paul’s purpose as this indicated how the action is accomplished, and also what preceded it. Paul previously mentioned that the purpose is that he ‘might gain Christ’ and ‘to be found in him’. The construction of verse 9b-c can be laid out in a chiastic structure:

1053 ἔχων BDAG, 932. See also F. Lang, “ἔχων,” TDNT 7: 445-446.
1054 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 189-190.
1055 Fee, Philippians, 320. See also Silva, Philippians, 158-159.
1056 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 203.
1057 Reumann, Philippians, 493.
1058 BDF § 418 [5].
Not having my righteousness from the law but through faith in Christ righteousness from God on the basis of faith.

The chiastic structure highlights the contrast between Paul’s understanding of his δικαιοσύνη status prior to his conversion to that of his post-conversion. The δικαιοσύνη from the Law that he classed as being his righteousness is seen as having been salient to his previous social identity. The second mention of δικαιοσύνη stands in contrast.

The word ἀλλὰ is often used to contrast or replace a pre-existing idea or notion, and is highlighted by repetition, but in slightly different language in order to reinforce the point. Paul contrasted his righteousness before his conversion with the one that he now has from his God, after his conversion. The righteousness that he had came from having allegiance to the Messiah. The righteousness that Paul now has is not from his honour status or the torah which he was loyal to in his pre-conversion life, but because he has become loyal to his Messiah. The prepositional clause ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει

1059 Reumann, Philippians, 498.
1061 Fee, Philippians, 326.
refers to a convert’s faith and is anaphoric to πίστεως and would therefore have the same meaning of ‘faith’.  

The prepositional clause διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ has received much scholarly attention and cannot be fully addressed here. It centres on whether Χριστοῦ is interpreted as a subjective genitive or objective genitive. If Χριστοῦ is a subjective genitive, then the translation would be ‘faithfulness of Christ’ as the emphasis is on Χριστοῦ, as expressing the notion of πίστεως. Proponents of the subjective genitive point out that Paul contrasted his previous notions of ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην with the one that he received from God. Thus it refers to how Paul received righteousness from God not by his faithfulness to the torah, but was accomplished by the faithfulness of Christ. This interpretation links the concept of being faithful found in 2:5-11, to Paul’s imitation of the Messiah’s obedience, rather than associating it with ethnicity. Furthermore, if it referred to the objective genitive then διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ would be redundant.

The arguments for the objective genitive are quite strong, as nowhere in Paul’s letters does he use Jesus as the subject of the verb πιστεύω, though there are others who were described as such (Rom 4:3, 10:9,10; Gal 3:6). Also, Paul never explicitly mentioned Jesus’ faithfulness (πιστός), though he did use πιστός in referring to ‘God’ (1Cor 1:9, 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18), and other prototype leaders in the Christ movement (1

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1064 Commentators of Philippians in favour of this position include: Sumney, Philippians, 80-81. Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 204-205.
1065 Sumney, Philippians, 80. Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 205.
1066 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 205.
Another point in favour of the objective genitive, is that elsewhere in Philippians Paul used \( \pi\sigma\tau\iota \) when he was referring to ‘faith in Christ’, or for either his, or the Philippians’ faith (1:25, 2:17, 3:9), or faith in the gospel (1:27, 29). It would be unlikely that Paul would switch his use without giving more explanation, or by using \( \pi\sigma\tau\omicron\acute{\omicron} \) to make his meaning clear in the context. As Fee argues, it would be difficult too for the Philippians to ‘possibly have caught on to such a radical shift of subject and object’. Though both sides of the debate have strong arguments for their conclusions, the objective genitive is slightly favoured over the subjective genitive. In my view Fee’s argument on the ‘radical shift’ for Paul’s audience is compelling, as is the way Paul used \( \pi\sigma\tau\iota \) in the letter.

What has not been emphasised in the debate is the loyalty and allegiance aspects of \( \pi\sigma\tau\iota \) and \( \pi\sigma\tau\omicron\acute{\omicron} \). The aspect of allegiance would have been heard by his converts, especially in the socio-political environment at Philippi. Furthermore, as previously noted, loyalty was an expected behaviour, to be exhibited by citizens to their rulers, gods, and patrons. Paul’s assessment of his life in Judaism was a positive one and there is no evidence that Paul believed that he was being disloyal to his Jewish identity. The self-description found in Philippians 3 made up Paul’s previous identity to varying degrees of importance. Nonetheless the \( \delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\tau\omicron\nu\eta \) of his post-conversion status means being faithful to what his God has done in the Messiah event. As William Campbell notes regarding Paul’s list:

Rather than regarding these as each comprising distinct identities, such components could be described as sub-identities in a nested hierarchy of identity of which being in Christ is the primary. Paul shares with gentiles in Christ the primary identity marker which is faith in Christ.\(^{1069}\)

\(^{1067}\) Fee, *Philippians*, 325 n.44.

\(^{1068}\) Ibid., 325 n.45. See also Hansen, *The Letter to the Philippians*, 241-242.

Thus, for Paul faith in the Messiah was not just having a trust, but having loyalty to his God. It was this sort of ‘faith’ that was the basis for having membership in the new community of citizens. The old social identity markers brought honour and esteem. Paul, however, considered those things to be useless when compared with being known by his Messiah.

Paul had intentionally self-categorised to a status lower than his life before his conversion, as he continued to imitate his Messiah. He also expected that the Philippians would imitate him, by exhibiting behaviours that demonstrated they had self-categorised of the in-group of converts (3:17).

Chester queries as to how in a society so pre-occupied with the maintenance of honour, Paul’s gospel of the humiliated Messiah, whom he has imitated, would ever be credible, or gain a hearing amongst the populace of the πολίς. Cynics, however, were accused of shamelessness, yet were widespread in the cities, thus, a message that is subverisive to the honour-seeking would have been completely foreign to the Philippians. Furthermore, the argument of this thesis is that Paul was using the cognitive and emotional referential framework of Roman citizenship. This would have enabled the Philippians to re-categorise and to have a common in-group identity with a positive image and a positive distinction. Aside from the Philippians’ socio-political context, Roman citizenship was a beneficial framework used by Paul, because it differed from other citizenships in being more open to other ‘ethnic’ groups. Mary Beard argues that even from the time of Romulus what distinguished Roman political culture was an ‘extraordinary openness and willingness to incorporate outsiders, which

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1070 Chester, Conversion at Corinth, 35-36. See esp. n 114.
1071 I thank Zeba Crook for making this point in his feedback.
set it apart from every other ancient Western society that we know’, whereas, ethnicity and loyalty to the πόλις was a more important factor for Greek citizenship.

Trebilco moreover argues that Roman citizenship could be more accommodating than assumed by scholars. His research reveals that ethnic groups such as the Jews were quite active in civic life in the cities of Asia Minor. He concludes that Jews could possess Roman citizenship yet could have an exemption to practice traditional Jewish rites. But he is cautious as to how far this exemption extended and how many Jewish Roman citizens could claim this exemption. This did not discount the fact that the possession of Roman citizenship included loyalty to Rome, Caesar, and the furthering of Roman interests, even if they had no requirement to worship the city’s gods, such as was a requirement of a Greek city.

9.2.6. Conversion as Experience

Paul went on further to describe what it meant to be converted as seen in the experiential and emotional descriptions, along with cognitive ones in verses 10-16. For Paul, to know his Messiah was further conveyed by his description of his experiencing him in the present, even though resurrection is in the future. In 3:10 Paul expresses what he experienced and what he believed was to come:

\[ \text{ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω καὶ εὑρέθω ἐν αὐτῷ... [so that] τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν. κτλ.} \]

in order that I might gain Christ and be found in him... [so that] to be known by him.

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1074 Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*, 167-185.
1075 See ibid., 172-173.
The articulated infinitive τοῦ γνῶναι in verse 10 denotes two things. First it is a purpose clause that has its antecedent in the ἵνα clause in v8c. Second is that ‘to know him’ is the goal of Paul’s story of gain and loss.¹⁰⁷⁷

Paul had relegated his previous honour statuses to the ‘rubbish heap’ but he believed that to know his Messiah was to experience him, and participate in similar experiences:

καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ
καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ,
συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ

even the power of his resurrection
and partner in his sufferings
being transformed by his death.

It is interesting to note that, in NA²⁸, the definite articles in brackets are absent from P46. Jerry L. Sumney argues on the basis of the absence of the articles in the earliest manuscripts, even though they are present in the majority of later witnesses, is suggestive of insertion by later scribes. It is possible that they thought there was need to create symmetry with the preceding phrases, which a later copyist did not think required correction. If the definite articles were not original, then the first καὶ is epexegetical and would signal that what comes after explains what was previously mentioned.¹⁰⁷⁸

The above point indicates that Paul’s eschatological thought was grounded in the experience of his revelation (cf. Gal 1:11-12). Eschatology in Philippians was the experience of divine agency, in both the present and future for him and the Philippians. Paul has had the experience of knowing his Messiah this side of the judgement by

¹⁰⁷⁷ Fee, Philippians, 326-327.
¹⁰⁷⁸ Sumney, Philippians, 81.
participation (1:6; 3:10), and in prospect in the future judgement (1:6, 10; 2:16; 3:11-14). In 3:11-16 Paul went on to say that he has not yet reached his goal of having full knowledge of his Messiah, but that he will know this in the future. Paul connected with what he said before with ὑπερ, which is a Greek idiom that indicates Paul was further underscoring the connection with what was previously said.\textsuperscript{1079} Paul has in the present experienced knowing his Messiah but he is also aware that there is a fuller experience to come.

The event where his Messiah was revealed had great significance for Paul in the past and is supported by the use of the verbs of λαμβάνω (aorist) and the strengthened form of καταλαμβάνω (aorist and perfect). The aorist ἔλαβον is constative which means that Paul was viewing his conversion experience in a summative fashion.\textsuperscript{1080} The two forms of καταλαμβάνω have the meaning of grasping something or of comprehension.\textsuperscript{1081} In 3:12 he referred to his encounter with his Messiah, and his salvation experience κατελήμφην υπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ]; Christ laid hands on Paul and he heard the ‘upward call’ (3:14), which changed the direction of his life.\textsuperscript{1082} The construction ἐφ᾽ ὃ introduces a consecutive clause and is the direct object of the indicative verbs καταλαμβάνω. Paul plays on two forms of the same verb, καταλάβω, ‘I might comprehend or grasp’ and κατελήμφην, ‘I was grasped or apprehended’.\textsuperscript{1083} The consecutive clause also implies that Paul describes his conversion as an experience mediated to him by his Messiah directly but also connects it with the propagation of the

\textsuperscript{1079} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 342.
\textsuperscript{1080} Hawthorne and Martin, \textit{Philippians}, 206.
\textsuperscript{1081} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1082} Ibid., 208.
\textsuperscript{1083} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 346, n. 31. See also Hawthorne and Martin, \textit{Philippians}, 207.
gospel; the experience of being grasped by the Messiah is also for the purpose of furthering Paul’s mission.

The language and notions found in this section demonstrate that Paul considered conversion to be both cognitive and emotional/experiential, although the sharing in the sufferings such as the humiliation of the Messiah, in a culture concerned with maintaining one’s honour, might not have been seen in a positive light by all his converts.

This personal experience of the Messiah continued to be thought through by Paul. He addressed his audience with the vocative ἀδελφοί, while he was narrating his experience, to inform them that he had not attained the full experience of his Messiah. The present tense verb λογίζομαι refers to a belief that is from a cognitive reflection upon his experience. Thus, what is also evident in Paul’s eschatological thought was the ongoing nature of divine activity that will only be completed on the ‘Day of Christ’. The notion of his God’s continuing activity amongst the converts is seen throughout the letter (1:6; 2:12c, 15).

Though Paul understood that he was yet to have a fuller experience of his Messiah, he knew that he was to forget the things of the past and reach out to what is new (3:13). The forgetting of the past is congruent with his thoughts on the previous honour statuses that were his previous social identity markers (3:4-6) and what he considered to be confidence in the flesh (πεποίθησιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί). Thus Paul was not leaving behind his Jewish identity in toto, but rather the particular expression of Jewish identity he adhered to prior to his encounter with the Messiah. This highlights that

\[\text{footnote 1084}\] λογίζομαι BDAG, 598.
\[\text{footnote 1085}\] Fowl, Philippians, 161. Rom 9:3; Gal 2:15.
Paul had subjugated previous ethnic identities into a sub-group which itself has been transformed by the coming of the Messiah.

Paul had portrayed himself as having the essential qualities of the in-group, as he included himself as one of the τέλειοι (mature) (3:15). The revelation and experience that he has received was one that he wanted the Philippians to experience. Another aim of representing himself as a prototypical leader was so that other less prototypical members of the Philippians would follow his example. If there were any who differed from Paul’s experience or opinion, then God is able to reveal the rightness of what Paul has said.

The imagery of a runner who is reaching out for the goal or prize that he is yet to attain is connected to the upward calling from his God: ‘God’s call upward leads to the prize – Christ, acceptance at the final judgement, and (the crown of) life’.1086 Thus there is a more complete knowledge of his Messiah that will come at the resurrection in the future but the ‘upward calling’ is continued in verses 17 to 19 and particularly in verse 20 where Paul mentions the commonwealth ‘in heaven’ (ἐν οὐρανοῖς; 3:20).

9.3. The Philippians’ New Citizenship

The Philippians’ new citizenship was a re-categorisation into a common in-group identity, based on imitating Paul, who continued to assure the Philippians that they will be vindicated for their loyalty to him and the gospel. The positive distinction of their new citizenship also meant that they would be more likely to remain loyal to the in-group. The positive distinction was that the Philippians have honour by possessing the status of citizens and also fulfilling the obligations belonging to it. Once again, Paul

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used group comparison that highlighted differences in ethical behaviour between his
converts and believers from other Christ movements, and non-believers at Philippi. This
is borne out in Philippians 3:17-21.

9.3.1. Philippians 3:17-21

In 3:17 the Philippians were exhorted to be imitators of Paul. The genitive personal
pronoun μου is an objective genitive of the verb συμμιμηταί, and emphasised the ‘of
me’ of how they are to imitate him together. Concord was needed because Paul
viewed the dominant Roman culture’s world view, identity markers, and ethical
behaviours as a threat to the new social identity of the Philippians. The purpose of the
exhortation was twofold: there are examples of those who are enemies of the cross who
reject knowing his Messiah by experiencing humiliation and suffering, and his converts
own allegiance to the Messiah and their citizenship.

The Philippians were exhorted to σκοπεῖτε (pay careful attention to look (out) for,
otice the behaviours of those who had self-categorised as members of the in-group.
The positive assessment of these examples gave a positive image of prototypical
members. They are those who belong to ἡμᾶς, and included Epaphroditus, Timothy, and
other associates of Paul (1:14, cf. 4:2-3). The noun τύπος is used elsewhere in Paul’s
letters to denote groups of believers who are examples to others, either as negative
eamples (cf. Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 10:6), or positive ones (cf. Rom 6:17; 1 Thess 1:7).

1087 Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 217.
1088 Holloway, Consolation in Philippians, 143.
1089 “σκοπέω” BDAG, 931.
1090 A. T. Lincoln, Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in
Paul’s Thought with Special Reference to his Eschatology, SNTSMS 43 (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 1981), 95. See also Hansen, The Letter to the Philippians, 263. Though Hansen calls
Epaphroditus and Timothy ‘archetypes’
The re-categorisation process was further facilitated by positive distinction, in the contrasting of the fate of different out-groups. Paul’s exhortation to observe those who were good examples in 3:17 came with a warning concerning those who did not live the same life that Paul and his associates lived (3:18-19). This group was in contrast to ἡμᾶς, who were citizens of heaven and awaiting a ‘saviour’. The imperative σκοπεῖτε might be contrasted with the warnings given in 3:2. Out-groups were stereotyped in a negative portrait on the ground of ethics, rather than only on ideology, or theology. This notion is seen in that Paul returned to his usual term περιπατέω when referring to ethical behaviours, especially in regards ‘to live as Christians’.

In 3:19, Paul reminded the Philippians that the ‘enemies of the cross’ were those who did not conform to the pattern that Paul had modelled for the Philippians. The specific identity of the opponents has in the past been the subject of debate among commentators of Philippians. From the context the group cannot be specifically identified. It is unlikely, however, that Paul was referring to Jew or Gentile unbelievers, or his less committed converts from amongst the Philippians. Perhaps some were former members of the in-group. The emotional language of πολλάκις ἔλεγον ὑμῖν, νῦν δὲ καὶ χλαίων λέγω, would most likely have referred to those whom Paul believed denied the cross, and therefore, misrepresented the gospel.

This out-group is further contrasted by Paul’s characterisation in negative terms of those ἰν δὲ θεῖς ἡ κυκλία (3:19b). This group is the opposite of those who are mature (3:15) as they have abandoned the mindset exemplified in the Messiah. Elsewhere in

\[1092\] Fee, *Philippians*, 367.
\[1093\] Ibid., 370.
\[1094\] For a short description of the various views see Hellerman, *Philippians*, 215-216.
\[1095\] Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 230.
Paul’s letters, the noun ἡ κοιλία is used to describe those who do not serve the Messiah, but were false teachers who served their own appetites (τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ, Rom 16:18b). It could have also been a reference to the Judaizers, but this is unlikely as Paul had relegated the salience of his previous social identity markers into a sub-group, rather than stereotyping them as immoral. In Greco-Roman literature, the noun can refer to either gluttony, or sexual immorality, such as found in having sexual activity after a banquet.\footnote{Reumann, \textit{Philippians}, 571-572.}

Paul then followed up by a further negative characterisation of those of whose ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ ἁισχύνῃ αὐτῶν. Craig deVos argues that ἁισχύνη is used in the LXX as a euphemism of idolatry (Hos 9:10; Jer 3:24-25), thus gluttony, sexual immorality, and idolatry are possibilities.\footnote{de Vos, \textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 273.} These negative characterisations have led some to believe that there was a ‘libertine’ group of itinerant teachers, who took justification by faith to a ‘libertine conclusion’.\footnote{Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 375.} Though this is possible, there are no references to such a group in the rest of the letter, so therefore it remains a hypothesis. It is clear that the behaviours exhibited by this group were indicative of a mindset on earthly things, rather than imitating Paul and others like him.

In 3:20 there is a repetition of the emphatic construction ἡμῶν γὰρ found in verse 3:3, where he categorised his in-group as the true worshippers of God. Paul’s converts are the ones who are citizens of heaven (3:20a). The noun πολίτευμα is a hapax legomenon in Pauline literature, but can be found widely in other Greco-Roman writers, particularly in Dionysius of Halicarnassus.\footnote{In TLG the noun πολίτευμα is found 94 times in Dionysius Hal. \textit{Ant. rom}.} Andrew Lincoln argues that πολίτευμα is
best understood as meaning ‘commonwealth or state’. The term πολίτευμα, however, can also mean ‘rights of a citizen’, ‘political administration’ or ‘association of citizens’ who live outside their native land or ‘way of life’. Pilhofer notes that Roman notions of πολίτευμα included the idea of citizenship, ‘Das lateinische civitas bezeichnet sowohl das Bürgerrecht als auch den Staat; und ebenso verhält es sich mit den griechischen Termini πολίτευμα und πολιτεία’ (The Latin word civitas describes both the civil law and that of the state, and the same holds for the Greek terms πολίτευμα and πολιτεία). Recently, J. Daniel Hays suggests that Paul’s notion of the Philippians as citizens is part of a multi-ethnic identity being created by Paul. Hays believes that Paul is not merely dismantling the social divide between Jews and Gentiles, but that he was creating a new ethnic identity for all who are ‘the new followers of Christ’. The fact that Paul used the notion of a common citizenship, rather than belonging to an ethnic group represented by historical prototypes Abraham, Moses, or any other Jewish historical figures, further indicates that conversion at Philippi entailed belonging to a new civic community, with the Messiah as its κύριος and σωτήρ.

This means that the notion of citizenship used by Paul would be understood by the Philippians, namely, that they were a colony whose commonwealth and citizenship rights were elsewhere. The significance for them having their ‘state’ or ‘commonwealth’ in another location (ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει) meant that their ultimate allegiance was to another state and σωτήρ. This contrast suggests that Paul’s opponents

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1101 Lincoln, Paradise Now and Not Yet, 101.
1105 Ibid.
in 3:18-19 were those who had not self-categorised, or who thought that imitating Paul gave them and the group a lack of positive distinction. Thus, they had not changed their world view, values, and ultimate allegiance.

In the accepted letters of Paul this is the only occurrence of the noun σωτήρ. The rarity of Paul’s use of this term along with the political terminology in 3:20 suggests that he is aware of the political implications of his statement, though the title σωτήρ could be used in reference to philosophers and the gods, as well the Caesars. It would be difficult to believe that the Philippians would hear the word σωτήρ, and not equate it to Caesar, to whom one’s allegiance rested. Paul had attributed σωτήρ to their new patron and lord would have made an unmistakable contrast to Caesar for the Philippians.

Oakes has identified several verbal and conceptual links between Philippians 2 and 3. For instance, Paul’s portrait of the humiliated Messiah in 2:5-11 resonates with Caesars’ position of honour and power. The converts having heard the exaltation and worship language in 2:9-11 would surely hear the final clause of 3:21, τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δόνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξει αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, in contrast to the Caesar’s earthly rule. This is further emphasised by the verbal repetition of universal submission found in 2:11 in the words κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν (3:20). Furthermore, Paul notes the concepts connected to the terms ταπεινώ and ταπείνωσις that referred to the state of the Messiah, himself, and the Philippians (2:8 and 3:21). The Messiah’s humble state was

1107 Oakes, Philippians, 138-139.
1108 For discussion see Oakes, Philippians, 147ff.
1109 Ibid., 147.
reversed at his resurrection. Likewise Paul and the Philippians, who are loyal citizens of heaven, will be vindicated and have their humble status reversed at the Parousia.

Though Paul drew upon Imperial ideology in regard to salvation, in the here and now of their circumstance, there was also an eschatological dimension to the destiny of the Philippians. The destiny for Paul and his converts was that of the eschatological reversal of status, like that of their Messiah.\textsuperscript{1110} The reversal will be for those who exhibit behaviour of worthy citizens of heaven and the gospel, who will have their allegiance vindicated at the Parousia. The reference to the Parousia is when the bodies of the in-group will be transformed into the glory of his likeness (3:21), which is in contrast to those in out-groups, whose fate will be of destruction (1:28; 3:19). The verb \textit{μετασχηματιζω} in its active sense has the meaning ‘to express something in an another than the expected or customary form’.\textsuperscript{1111} The personal pronoun ἡμῶν in the relative clause δς μετασχηματισει τδ σώμα τής ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν refers to the singular τδ σώμα, and is to be taken in a collective sense. Paul was not referring to the body itself as being ‘lowly’, much less a condemnation upon it (as in ‘our vile body’ KJV); rather he was referring to the location of their present suffering.\textsuperscript{1112}

The future of the Philippians will be vindication because they have divine approval. In 3:21b Paul assures them that they will be vindicated and will share in the resurrection of the Messiah. The adjective σύμμορφον meaning ‘similar form’\textsuperscript{1113} found in 3:21b is in apposition to τδ σώμα in verse 21a. The term σύμμορφον is also connected to τδ σώματι that is a dative of association.\textsuperscript{1114} Thus the two genitives τής ταπεινώσεως

\textsuperscript{1110} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 380.

\textsuperscript{1111} J. Schneider, “\textit{μετασχηματίζω},” \textit{TDNT} 7: 958.

\textsuperscript{1112} Fee, \textit{Philippians}, 382 n. 28.

\textsuperscript{1113} “σύμμορφος” BDAG, 958.

\textsuperscript{1114} BDF, § 194 [2].
ἡμῶν (3:21a) and τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ (3:21b) are both genitives of attribute modifying τὸ σῶμα.\textsuperscript{1115}

The Philippians and Paul are experiencing ‘here and now’ eschatology, as the body was their present experience of humiliation, but they will in the future experience glory by the means of the Messiah’s resurrected body, which ‘is his body that models the coming existence for Christians’.\textsuperscript{1116} The glory was in contrast to their opponents’, whose glory is in their shame and who were destined for destruction (3:19).

9.4. Conclusion

Paul, as the prototypical leader sought to encourage the Philippians to make salient their social identity as citizens of heaven by the example of his life, which was an imitation of his Messiah’s. The voluntarily act of living below one’s honour status in the Roman world presented a challenge to Paul, his converts, and his gospel, because he proclaimed it in a society that sought to either promote and maintain one’s honour and reputation.

Paul as their leader gave a common perspective of an alternate reality and how it affected the re-categorisation process facing the Philippians. He achieved this by addressing the salience of his previous social identity markers from his Jewish identity, which he relegated to a sub-group, when he was amongst the Philippians. For Paul, what had become salient to his social identity included two notions. The first was that he had a righteousness that was not based on his former in-group but by having faith in, and being loyal to, his Messiah. Second, it was being seized by and knowing his

\textsuperscript{1116} Sumney, \textit{Philippians}, 96.
Messiah, demonstrated by sharing in sufferings similar to that experienced by the Messiah. Thus, an individual’s ethnicity was no longer a barrier because all of them had a common in-group identity as citizens.

This thesis argues that Paul used the notion of citizenship of heaven as a framework for his converts and that this gave and maintained honour. This enabled the individual to self-categorise as having membership in the κοινωνία. The notion of citizenship created a positive social identity and distinction for the Philippians, especially for those who had not possessed citizenship. Paul also highlighted the Philippians’ future honour when he contrasted the common destiny of those loyal to his practice of the gospel, and of those who did not, thus creating ‘us and them’. The fate of those whom he considered to be in out-groups was destruction. The citizens of heaven, who imitate Paul in his rejection of the dominant culture’s honour values, though they were in a state of humiliation now, will one day share in the glory of their Messiah.
Chapter Ten: Philippians 4:1-23

10.1. Introduction

In this chapter the theme of what is meant to be worthy citizens of heaven and the gospel will be brought to a conclusion. Paul construed conversion as a new citizenship of heaven and the gospel. Conversion required imitation of Paul and by doing so demonstrated that the Philippians had self-categorised as citizens of heaven and the gospel. The new citizenship meant that the Philippians had each made a decision to have membership in Paul’s κοινωνία.

SIT’s notion of the prototype leader and team member highlights that Paul continued to encourage other, less committed members to become more committed. Discord threatened the Philippians because of disagreement between two prototypical converts/leaders. Paul sought to address the lack of concord by reminding them of the existing allegiances and common in-group identity.

The exhortations in Philippians 4 include repetitions of several concepts from Philippians 1 that related to the converts’ new world view and values. The formation of a new civic community, which included a κοινωνία, had created psychological bonds between Paul and his converts at Philippi. The psychological bonds were manifest in new behavioural expressions that demonstrated their self-categorisation into a socio-political group. This demonstrated to Paul and the greater population at Philippi that they had a new social identity.

10.2. Worthy Citizens and Leaders

In Philippians 4:1-9 Paul’s final exhortation to the Philippians was a repetition of what he had said earlier in regard to acting as worthy citizens of the gospel (1:27). Paul used his position in the group to establish authority and empathy amongst the converts,
which enabled him to address the conflict between Euodia and Syntyche. The conflict between the two women was a threat to the κοινωνία, cohesion, and concord of the Philippians.

10.2.1. Philippians 4:1-9

Paul opened this section with ὥστε to indicate that what came next was a conclusion following on from 3:17-21. The repetition in 4:1c of the imperative verb στήκω, also found in 1:27, supports the notion that Paul had the same subject matter in mind, namely addressing what it meant to possess citizenship of heaven.1117 Furthermore, Duane Watson argues that the reiteration of several topics was a way to address disunity and conflict amongst the Philippians by proposing an action to counter it.1118 The method involved ‘briefly touching on each point by way of summation and of proposing a line of action.’1119

Themes from Philippians 1 and 2 were reiterated by Paul in Philippians 4. Themes such as the notion of στήκετε (1:27), along with the topos of χαρὰ (1:4, 24) and ἀγαπητοί (2:12). In 4:2-3, there is the repetition of μιᾷ ψυχῇ found in Paul’s exhortation for Euodia and Syntyche to τῷ αὐτῷ φρονεῖν ἐν κυρίῳ. Further parallels with Philippians 1 and 2 are seen in the topos1120 of ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνῆδησάν. In 4:2 there is a reiteration of συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου also found in 1:27. The topos of χαίρετε in verse 4 is a repeated theme found throughout the letter, as well the topos of

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1118 Watson, “A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians,” 76.
1119 Ibid., 76-77.
1120 The definition of the rhetorical use of the term topos is found in Watson, “A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians,” 63, n. 37.
ἐπιτεκτές (forbearance), which summarises several topos from 1:27-30. These include the notions of standing firm, striving, and struggling. The themes of joy and the assurance of divine favour from their God, who is their benefactor and who is amongst them, are reiterated in this final chapter of the letter. These themes are clearly ones that the Philippians were exhorted to reflect where their loyalties lay. Further, it also demonstrates that Paul believed that his gospel would impact the Philippians psychologically.

The psychological impact that Paul sought to achieve was the formation of a new social identity, not ‘you’ and ‘me’, but ‘us’. This was partially accomplished by being an example of the in-group’s expected behaviours, which Paul addressed in Philippians 3, but it was also accomplished by Paul providing them with an alternate perspective of ethical behaviours (Phil 2:5-11). Paul, the prototype leader, worked to lead the Philippians to further the interests of the gospel, rather than for any self-interest. The aim was to motivate some amongst the Philippians to be more committed to the in-group, specifically those who were less prototypical members of the in-group and its common goal.

10.2.2. The Positive Distinction of the Philippians

The Philippians were referred to as Paul’s joy and crown and a source of pride that his work was not for nothing (cf. 2:16). Paul’s continual positive assessment, indicated by reiterating his affection for them, was meant to give a positive distinctiveness to the converts. Furthermore, the assurance that Paul had worked for the Philippians’ benefit to emphasise his preference for the κοινωνία over other groups within the Christ

1121 Ibid., 77.
movements (1:15-17; 3:18b-19). The positive assessment of his converts was described in the same way as those in the ἐκκλησία at Thessalonica, namely, as his hope, joy, and crown (cf. 1 Thess 2:19). His crown in 1 Corinthians 9:25 was not a perishable one but imperishable, resulting from his work in the gospel. The imagery could be a reference to a crown received by a victorious athlete at games, but it is also possible that it had political and military symbolism attached to it.

In the socio-political context of the Philippians, Paul was reiterating what it meant to be worthy citizens, which would have been especially because of the city’s historical association with the Roman military. In the military and political sphere, a στέφανος (crown) symbolised a reward given after a military triumph, or as a display of honour for a political leader’s contribution to the πόλις.1122 For those in the military and political offices, it was considered to be something that added to their esteem and honour.1123 Demosthenes was decorated for his services with political honours in the theatre:

you decorated [στεφανωσάντων] me for my services …although the decoration [στεφάνου] was proclaimed in the theatre, so that this is the second proclamation of my name there.1124

Paul’s honour and boast was in the Philippian converts because they were the fruit of his labour.1125 The reward for his labour is his στέφανος, which was a symbol of his acquired honour. What was honourable to Paul was that his mission to the Philippians was a demonstration of his Messiah’s self-giving (see block quote in Chapter 7.3.4. See also Chapter 8.3.2).

1122 See Geoffrion, *Rhetorical Purpose*, 206-207.
1123 Ibid., 207.
1124 Demosthenes, *De Corona* 83. (Vince and Vince, LCL).
The self-giving behaviour exhibited by Paul was the same behaviour he exhorted Euodia and Syntyche to exhibit (4:2). Though scholars have focused on the social status and ethnicity of these two women, it is not known exactly what specific leadership position in the ἐκκλησία they held. Women at Philippi, as elsewhere, were active in associations and had leadership roles. Thus it can be surmised that they held leadership positions, which suggests they could be seen as prototypical leaders and converts. If they were not, then it would be hard to see why Paul would have specifically named them. Portefaix argues that it was likely that a dispute between the women on how the gospel was to be interpreted and propagated was the issue. Paul acknowledged and identified that they both struggled along with him for the gospel (ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ συνήθλησάν μοι). Further evidence for Portefaix’s conclusion can be seen in that Paul exhorted them to ‘think the same in Christ’ (φρόνεω), which he used in the imperatival form in 2:5, exhorting the Philippians to have concord amongst themselves. This reiteration of the exhortation suggests that he thought the common goal of the κοινωνία had strayed into self-interest through discord.

Though Paul was concerned with the discord between the two leaders, he still assessed them in a positive light and the Philippians were encouraged to do the same. Paul’s exhortation to both women showed that he was not taking sides in the dispute, rather he was trying to maintain friendly relations with all of the Philippians. In 4:3 there is a noticeable change in the language used by Paul in the use of the vocative. He entreated/requested the Philippians collectively and directly as γνήσιε σύζυγε or faithful

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1127 Portefaix, Sisters Rejoice, 138.

1128 Fee, Philippians, 392.
fellow workers. Louw and Nida note that the term σύζυγος differs in meaning from συνεργός in that it infers a greater sharing of responsibility and closer relationship.\(^{1129}\)

Though I contend that Paul was referring to the Philippians as a whole, opinion is divided among scholars as to the identity of γνήσιε σύζυγε. Both nouns, γνήσιε σύζυγε (loyal yokefellow), are singular, masculine, vocatives that are argued to indicate an individual was being referred to by Paul. The suggested identity of the individual includes Timothy, Epaphroditus, Lydia, Paul’s wife, the overseers mentioned in Phil 1:1, and the husband or brother of Euodia or Syntyche.\(^{1130}\) Fee even argues that Paul was referring to Luke.\(^{1131}\) It has also been suggested that σύζυγε is the name of the individual.\(^{1132}\) It is, however, impossible to know with certainty if Paul was referring to an individual at all. Philippians 4:3 is Paul’s only use of σύζυγε and thus we have no other instance in his letters with which to compare it with. Following Hawthorne and Martin, I argue that Paul was most likely referring to the entire Philippians congregation, who he saw as a whole, and who have been loyal to him and his apostolic mission (Phil 1:5-6).\(^{1133}\) Furthermore, as was demonstrated in section 6.3.2, it was quite possible that Paul had a κοινωνία with the Philippians as a group because a κοινωνία partnership could exist between an individual and a group. The two leaders had struggled alongside Paul for the gospel, thus they were workers who were advancing the common goal of the group. The verb συναθλέω indicates that the two women ‘contend/struggle along with’\(^{1134}\) Paul in his efforts to propagate the gospel. The dative

\(^{1129}\) L & N, 42.45 n. 6, 42.44.
\(^{1130}\) Both Hawthorne and Reumann provide a discussion the possible identity of γνήσιε σύζυγε. Reumann, Philippians, 628-630. Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 242.
\(^{1131}\) Fee, Philippians, 394-395.
\(^{1132}\) For a list of scholars see Reumann, Philippians, 608.
\(^{1133}\) Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 242.
\(^{1134}\) “συναθλέω,” BDAG, 964.
prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ is indicating that they struggled with Paul to advance the gospel.1135 Paul had used the participial form of συναθλέω to exhort the Philippians to be worthy citizens of the gospel in 1:27; the verb’s reiteration here further indicates that propagation of the gospel in the midst of opposition indicated what it meant to be a worthy citizen. Though amongst the leaders there was disagreement about how to propagate the gospel, they had worked alongside Paul and were still worthy citizens, to be held in esteem.

Stowers identifies a connection between political friendships and Paul’s notion of a civic community that was alternative to the socio-political πόλις.1136 Friendship as found in the πόλις is a theme that appears throughout the letter. As has been observed, Paul used affectionate language ἐπιθυμέω (1:8; 2:26). He also held the converts in his heart (1:7) and had the compassion of Christ for them (1:8). Friendship in the πόλις also included being in the presence of each other, which also appears in the letter (1:27b; 2:12).1137 The other notion that appears throughout Philippians is that of ὁμονοια, being of the same mind. Stowers notes that the philosophers believed friendship and ὁμονοια were needed to have an ideal commonwealth.1138 Dio also linked these two notions in his criticism of factionalism within the πόλις:

For in keeping with that concept the term ‘city’ would be applied… to an organization that is governed by the sanest and noblest form of kingship, to one that is actually under royal governance in accordance with the law, in complete friendship [φιλίας] and concord [ὁμονοιας].1139

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1137 Ibid., 112.
1139 Dio Chrysostom, Borysth. 36.31 (Vince, LCL).
In this section, Paul linked a notion akin to ὀμόνοια in other parts of the letter by the use of φρονέω. This links to the exhortation to Euodia and Syntyche (4:2) and to the entire in-group in 2:5 in relation to thinking like Christ.

Timothy J. Harris argues that ὀμόνοια is once again being alluded to in Paul’s exhortation to Syntyche and Euodia and is linked back to Paul’s warning against rivalry, envy, and factionalism in 1:17-18 and 2:2. He further argues that ὀμόνοια is prior to κοινωνία and friendship as a commitment to ‘the construction and maintenance of a “social world” agreed upon by those who are committed to living by such an agreed outlook.’

10.2.3. Thinking as New Citizens of Heaven

Paul was concerned that the Philippians behave as citizens of heaven and the gospel, contrasting them to out-groups. In 4:4-7, he not only showed concern for the Philippians’ personal peace, joy, and prayers, but also their response to their current situation. This is particularly true in regard to expressing the emotion of joy. Fee’s argument that the joy mentioned here occurred in the face of opposition is convincing, especially as Paul reiterates other themes from chapters 1 and 2 to emphasise his point. The present tense plural imperatives of χαίρετε have a continuous aspect, along with the adverb πάντοτε, underscoring that this joy was not an outburst of sporadic emotion, but one that characterised the citizen of heaven and the gospel.

1140 Harris, “The Subversion of Status,” 386.
1141 Ibid., 387.
1142 Fee, Philippians, 404-405.
1143 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 245.

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The emotion of joy was to be characteristic of the Philippians because they knew that their Messiah was near to them. The reiteration of their forbearance in the face of public opposition was to be faced with divine reassurance of his God’s presence (4:5). The use of the aorist passive imperative γνωσθήτω ‘be known’ with the nominative noun τὸ ἐπιεικές, rather than used in the active sense of γινώσκω, meant that he expected forbearance to be characteristic. This was in contrast to what they experienced from those who opposed them, as described in 1:28, who are labelled τῶν ἀντικειμένων. The noun ἀντικείμενοι was used in verse 28 to contrast negatively and characterise their opponents as having a hostile attitude, which had corresponding actions against them.\(^\text{1144}\)

In chapter 1 Paul informed the Philippians that the opposition and suffering experienced was not only divinely appointed but also helped them to self-categorise as having a common in-group identity because of their shared experience (1:28-29). The suffering experienced from their propagation of the gospel also created the conditions for their citizenship to become salient to their social identity. Their suffering was a sign of their opponents’ destruction and also the divine assurance of their salvation. Paul reassured them that ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς, a predicate clause referring to the parousia to the future eschatological judgement. It is, however, also most likely that ‘the Lord is near’ pertains to their immediate circumstances, whereby Paul was referring not just to the parousia, but to the notion that ‘the Lord’ is ever present.\(^\text{1145}\) This is supported by the exhortation not to worry about their circumstance of suffering and opposition. Though their circumstance was divinely ordained, they were still to offer up prayer and requests in thanksgiving to their benefactor God concerning their circumstances. Reed notes

\(^{1144}\) L & N, 39.1. 
\(^{1145}\) Fee, Philippians, 407.
Paul’s exhortation was ‘not a timeless, theological exhortation but one occasioned by the threatening circumstances facing the Philippians’.

Paul reminded them that ἡ εἰρήνη (the peace) amongst them surpasses all understanding, at the cognitive level of the νοῦς (mind), and that it will guard them in their καρδία (heart). Both νοῦς and καρδία are found under the ‘Psychological Faculties’ in Louw and Nida, which again highlights that in Paul’s mind conversion involved both a change at a psychological level, yet was also the result of divine activity. The ‘peace’ of God was another positive assessment from both Paul and his God on the new civic community and would have enabled positive distinctiveness to be grasped on a psychological level. He did not say that their prayers will be answered, delivering them from their present circumstances, but that they will have the peace of God. Though Augustus had brought peace to the Empire and the world, it is unlikely that Paul is implicitly contrasting Caesar and Christ here. The presence and peace of God, rather, is a reiteration that they will have salvation from God in the future (1:28c). He was, moreover, assuring them that they had divine favour, hoping that the Philippians would see this as giving them a positive distinction, and consequently they did not need to fear or worry.

Paul continued to emphasise the cognitive side to conversion in verses 8 and 9. He exhorted them to continue imitating him. The six ὅσα clauses and two εἴτις clauses make up what is known as a polyasndeton, which ‘produces the impression of extensiveness and abundance by means of an exhaustive summary.’ The list is dependent on ταῦτα and the verb λογίζεσθε, thus it is ‘these things’ that he wants his

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1146 Reed, Discourse Analysis of Philippians, 270.
1148 BDF, § 460 [3].
converts to think carefully about and ‘pay close attention to’. NT scholars have noticed that though Paul’s list of ‘virtues’ does not have an exact equivalent amongst the philosophical schools of his time, it followed the same structure and form.

It has generally been accepted that Paul was not referring to a set of Jewish virtues in the LXX, but primarily to Hellenistic ones. The list related to the civic and moral life as citizens of heaven and the gospel, rather than being general moral exhortations. Therefore the list was a reiteration of what it meant to be worthy citizens, in the face of public suffering and opposition. John Reumann observes that the rhetorical purpose of the list was to point out the characteristics of a person in civic life. Reumann’s list is not detailed, but it offers insight into how the qualities could be seen in a civic community’s life: the term ἀληθῆ is ‘honest in fact’, not ‘deceptive’; σεμνά refers to those who act in ways that are worthy of respect; when Paul used δίκαιος he was referring to the Hellenistic virtue of justice rather than the doctrine of ‘justification by faith’; ἀγνά could refer to ‘domestic purity’, which could include sexual chastity in the household as well as general conduct; the rare word προσφιλῆ is used to suggest whatever is ‘lovely’; the term εὔφημα has the meaning of being spoken well of, or appealing; the word ἀρετή refers to ‘moral excellence’, that are ethical virtues acquired by practice, rather than referring to an emotion; the last term used is ἐπαίνος and has the notion of ‘praise, such as might be singled out in the polis for civic honor’.

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1150 Hawthorne and Martin, *Philippians*, 250. For an extensive list of publications dedicated to the connection between Paul and schools of philosophy see Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 186-187 n. 67.
1151 Both Fee and Bockmuehl believe that Paul was influenced by the Jewish Hellenistic ‘Book of Wisdom’. This however is unlikely as it cannot be known if the Philippian converts had knowledge of it. See Fee, *Philippians*, 416ff. Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 250-251.
1153 Ibid.
Though this list was not directly in contrast to Paul’s earlier attributed and acquired honour list in 3:5-6, he was certainly exhorting them to live in harmony with one another, rather than the seeking of honour for personal gain. Paul exhorted his converts to exhibit behaviours that characterise a citizen of heaven and the gospel. It is interesting to note that none of these characteristics is based in ethnicity, but in having membership in a civic community, as lived out in civic life. The rejection of honour for personal gain at Roman Philippi was achieved by imitating Paul, who imitated his Messiah. If the Philippians continued to remain loyal to their civic community, then they were to exhibit the qualities and characteristics displayed in Paul. The consequence of this was that they would experience divine peace amongst themselves.

10.3. Philippians 4:10-18

Philippians 4:10-18 strengthens the argument of this thesis that Paul sought to form a new social identity of the Philippians as citizens of heaven and the gospel by building an alternative to the civic society at Roman Philippi. After Paul had made his case for what he thought was beneficial for being worthy citizens of heaven and the gospel, he then sought to persuade the Philippians by eliciting ‘pathos’ with the goal of increasing ‘their adherence in belief and practice to the matters of the exhortation’. He desired that the fledgling civic community needed to have concord, a community that had a distinct social identity which came from its allegiance to his Messiah.

As was seen in Chapter Five, a κοινωνία could be more than just a business partnership, as was the case amongst the Philippians. The weaknesses of Sampley, and his critics’ arguments, will not be rehearsed here, but commentators have acknowledged

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the financial terminology used by Paul points to a financial relationship with the
Philippians.\textsuperscript{1155} The vocabulary in this section is also reminiscent of 1:5-7. The
Philippians’ aid to him during his imprisonment (4:14) is paralleled in 1:7, where the
converts are \textit{τοῦ εὐαγγελίου συγκοινωνοὺς μου τῆς χάριτος πάντας ὑμᾶς δοῦνας}. Paul also
acknowledged that they have been in partnership with him since day one (1:5, 4:15). He
further commended them for entering into \textit{κοινωνία} with him (1:5; 4:15b). Ware rightly
observes that \textit{τὸ δῶμα} (the gift) referred to in verse 17 was for Paul’s advancing the
gospel, thus the context of the gift giving was for the mission of the \textit{κοινωνία}.\textsuperscript{1156}
Furthermore, Paul connected the propagation of the gospel with citizenship, not just friendship; their agreement would be more appropriately labelled a \textit{societas evangelii}.

As Paul neared the end of the letter he reminded them that their conversion included the participation in their common mission. Though a \textit{societas evangelii} in and of itself would not be a sufficient psychological bond for the converts to order their social identity around, Paul connected it to their citizenship (1:12-20, 1:27-2:18; 3:1-4:9). As has been argued in the thesis, the category of citizenship would have salience for their social identity. From the start of the letter Paul thanked God for them, and their participation (1:3-5). He had also written to the converts in regard to what was brought to him by Epaphroditus on their behalf (4:18). According to Ogereau, Paul’s outburst of joy in 4:10, after he received the gift, was a demonstration that he ‘could not hide his “satisfaction” and “pride in the Philippians”’.\textsuperscript{1157} The strong emotional bond exhibited clearly demonstrates that he considered that he and the Philippians shared a membership

\textsuperscript{1155} Ascough, \textit{Paul’s Macedonian Associations}, 118-122.
\textsuperscript{1156} Ware, \textit{Paul and the Mission of the Church}, 169-170.
\textsuperscript{1157} Ogereau, \textit{Paul’s Koinonia with the Philippians}, 267.
and gained salience from their common identity as citizens of heaven and the gospel and that they belonged to a new civic community at Philippi.

Paul was thus creating an alternate civic community which required a higher allegiance centred on the mission of its Messiah. This is further supported by his use of Φιλιππήσιος in its vocative form Φιλιππήσιοι in 4:15. The term used is from the Latin Philippenses from the colony’s title Colonia Augusta Iulia Philippensis.\(^{1158}\) The term would have been used to address the citizens of a Roman colony.\(^{1159}\) This did not mean that the converts were Roman citizens, though there might be some descendants of veterans present, rather this was an emphatic positive assessment of the Philippians as citizens of heaven. It is likely that Paul used Φιλιππήσιοι in order to dignify their status as a civic community.\(^{1160}\) The postpositive δὲ functioned as a transition from the previous sentence. This is followed by an adverbial καὶ with a personal pronoun ὑμεῖς; the pronoun emphasising the second person plural verb ἀδετε, thus the translation ‘you yourselves’ is appropriate. Fee is correct in noting that this construction, along with the vocative had the effect on the converts to ‘sit up and take note of what I am about to say’.\(^{1161}\)

Paul’s positive assessment of the Philippians’ concord meant that they had a new world view and values, embedded in the community centred on the Messiah. He has used the concept of having membership as citizens of heaven as a way to create concord and loyalty. The Philippians’ κοινωνία with Paul demanded more than mere financial

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\(^{1158}\) Oakes, Philippians, 67.

\(^{1159}\) Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 269.


\(^{1161}\) Fee, Philippians, 439 n.10.
support, rather it meant they were contributing to the propagation of their civic community at Philippi.

10.4. Philippians 4:19-23

Paul repeated the notion of divine favour, which in SIT terms would provide a positive distinction upon the in-group continued from 4:17-18 and related to τὸ δῆμος and the propagation of the gospel. Because the Philippians had partnered with Paul in his evangelism, his God will supply them with what they need. Furthermore, he assured them that they had divine approval for their κοινωνία with Paul, as their ‘gift’ is described in religious language as being ‘pleasing to God’.

The context of these verses is that of suffering and opposition, in which Paul reminded them that their God was also a benefactor (τῷ δὲ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἡμῶν). In Philippians 1:3 he had thanked his benefactor God for them, and reaffirmed that his God was their benefactor too. It is also possible that there is a connection between Paul referring to his God as πατρὶ ἡμῶν in contrast to Caesar. In Italy and the colonies Caesar was also given the title ‘Father of my Country’.1162 But by contrasting the two rulers, Paul furthered the re-categorisation process by reminding them that they are to view his God as their new ‘father’ whose benefaction they were now recipients of. This would have presumably greatly impacted the Philippians on a psychological level, as it would have given the group positive distinction.

1162 Augustus, Res gest. divi Aug.6.35 (Shipley, LCL).
10.5. Conclusion

Paul as a prototypical leader and convert sought to continue with the formation of the social identity of the Philippians into a civic community. This was done by exhorting those who he considered to be prototypical leaders/converts to unity. The repetition of this theme by Paul is poignant because it undergirded their κοινωνία and citizenship. It further demonstrated that Paul understood the power of political ideology for his converts. In order to increase the concord, Paul assessed his converts in positive terms and encouraged them to do likewise, which in turn would create a positive image for the group and individual converts. They were given positive distinction by Paul and his God, who will give them a positive judgement in the eschatological judgement to come.

We have also seen that the Philippians’ positive social identity was bound to their participation in the propagation of the gospel. Though a κοινωνία would not have created a sufficiently strong psychological bond to form a social identity, participation in it associated it with worthy citizenship. Paul’s use of the socio-political frameworks of κοινωνία and citizenship enabled him to re-categorise the Philippians into a socio-political group that had a positive social identity. His exhortation to unity was based on the belief that they had a common world view and associated behaviours, which meant that the Philippians as individuals had self-categorised as members of the new civic community.

The list of virtues are not only general exhortations to be practised for their new lives as believers, rather they are actions of a citizen group confronting opposition. Paul addressed the same conflict in Philippians 1:15 and 27-30. Though there were different groups who were opposing the Philippians, he expected them to stand firm in the face of their opponents, as was expected from those who possessed citizenship of heaven.
Chapter Eleven: Conclusion

In this thesis I have set out to demonstrate that Pauline conversion is both cognitive and emotional, and therefore psychological. Furthermore I have argued that conversion involved the acquisition of a new social identity (in SIT terms) and was understood as primarily belonging to a new socio-political group. Belonging to a new social group involves a psychological transformation of world view, which was the internalisation of a new symbolic universe. The evidence that an individual had internalised the new world view comes with the decision to identify with the new group’s loyalties, beliefs, and values.

I have also argued that the socio-political institution of Roman citizenship was the primary framework used by Paul to form the social identity of the Philippian believers. The notion that the Philippians were citizens of heaven and its gospel provided Paul’s converts with an identity that was counter to and even subversive over against the symbolic universe created by Pax Augusta. The possession of a new citizenship meant that the Philippian converts had a new status and set of obligations towards Paul and his Messiah. This provided the Philippians with a positive image which imparted a sense of loyalty to the new in-group when it encountered opposition to its message.

In Chapter Two we evaluated sociological and psychological studies on conversion which have influenced NT conversion studies, particularly that of Pauline conversion. Many of the definitions and meanings that undergird these studies are based on modern western psychological assumptions that primarily focus on the individual and demonstrate the enduring influence of William James and his psychological analysis of conversion, which was a person seeking a ‘solution’ to their ‘plight’. It was found that James’s psychological analysis of the individual as having a divided soul that was seeking an end to inner turmoil as the prerequisite for conversion is not a sufficient framework for the analysis of NT conversion.
The publication that initially moved NT studies on conversion away from James’s definitions and spurred on the social-scientific study of NT conversion is Krister Stendahl’s “The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West”. Stendahl’s basic thesis was that Paul was not looking to clear his guilt-riddled conscience. This opened the study of conversion to be understood in its socio-political context. Early social-scientific studies on Pauline conversion argued that conversion as understood by James was methodologically problematic, and were typically foisted on ancient people and cultures. Though such approaches here sought to understand Paul’s conversion from his own letters, their methodologies were not nuanced enough, resulting in inadequate conclusions about Pauline conversion.

In more recent studies of conversion, two scholars in particular have sought to understand NT conversion in its first-century CE context. Both Stephen Chester and Zeba Crook rightly argue that conversion was fundamentally about undergoing a change to a new social group. They understand that conversion needed to be studied from the emic perspective of the converts. Crook’s research has been particularly fruitful for this thesis, as he seeks to understand conversion from the Greco-Roman point of view of interpersonal relationships and personhood. His later work also adds further nuance to the meaning of NT conversion in being better understood as disaffiliation and affiliation.

In Chapter Three, the methodologies of Berger and SIT were outlined and a justification given for their selection. Berger’s theory has been used extensively in social-scientific NT studies; its basic preposition is that social worlds are constructed by humans, and that humans are both the producers of such, and influenced by such. This remains insightful and useful. It is useful for studying the ancient Mediterranean world
because the pervasiveness of social and civic activities was used in order to promote, reinforce, and maintain particular world view and social values. Thus this theory provides a framework to understand how the Romans used social and civic activities to maintain their control over the empire. It also sheds light on the social institutions that influenced social behaviours.

SIT was used because conversion was a social phenomenon, involving individuals and groups who had existing social identities. The group dimension is pivotal for providing a social identity and is a necessary part of this thesis, as ancient persons identified themselves primarily in group terms and comparisons. Furthermore, SIT provides a framework for understanding how individuals in such a collectivist society construct, to a certain point, their social identity from existing social groups and structures in their socio-political contexts. The individual who is making in-group and out-group comparisons, in order to evaluate whether a certain group will provide a positive image and distinction, provides an explanation of how one might choose to join or remain part of Paul’s in-group of citizens. Furthermore, inter-group comparison and evaluation provides an explanation as to why individuals choose to have membership in a particular in-group and why they remain loyal.

SCT provides an explanation for conversion understood as a personal decision to self-categorise, and even re-categorise oneself into a particular social identity. By reducing bias, Paul enlarged the in-group that enabled this process to occur. More importantly, the notion of SCT gives an insight into how individuals cognitively perceive themselves and the other social groups which they belonged. An individual’s self-concept of identity is ordered according to whether the group gives a positive image to the individual. This was used in my exegesis of Philippians to show that Paul used citizenship to create a positive of the in-group, so that it would be considered by the
Philippians (in SCT terms) as a superordinate group, which provided a guide to the individual or group behavioural norms.

Furthermore, the inclusion of the emotions in the formation and maintenance of a social identity allowed for a more nuanced approach to conversion than early studies of NT conversion. Individuals will cognitively order and evaluate their social environment through the positive or negative image that it provides. In stereotyping of groups with positive or negative emotions and motivations Paul identified those who he considered in-group. Those he attributed with positive emotions were thought by Paul to have internalised the new world view and values, showing that they shared the common in-group identity. Conversely, those who were out-group members had negative emotions attributed to them, demonstrating they had yet to internalise the new world view and values of the gospel.

By applying Berger’s theory in Chapter Four, we addressed several concepts central to the argument that conversion involved a new citizenship. Augustus’ ascent to power and the implementation of Pax Augusta was accomplished with the extensive use of propaganda. Augustus used his status as the adopted son of Julius Caesar, who had been deified, to shore up his claim of his right to rule. His mastery with propaganda through the dissemination of coins and patron-client relationships was the conceptual machinery used to legitimise his rule. It also won support for his quest and gave him the power to eliminate those he believed to be his opponents.

Augustus maintained and furthered his power by defining what it meant to be a Roman through the revival of many Roman customs that had fallen away. At the core of Roman identity was full Roman citizenship and customs, for to be Roman, one had to have citizenship that gave one legal personhood and status. Augustus furthered
cemented his patronage over the elites at the political level by initiating a *cursus honorum*, which encouraged behaviours that were embedded in the social value of honour.

Chapter Four also revealed that Augustus took advantage of the existing socio-political institutions to secure loyalty. The use of oaths of allegiance had become centred on obedience to, and the welfare of, Caesar. Oaths to the Caesars were part of Augustus’ conceptual machinery and were taken throughout the cities of the empire, and sometimes by whole populations, both citizens and non-citizens. The oath was a social institution that maintained loyalty and was expected of Roman citizens.

Augustus also took advantage of the traditional practice of Greek cities of honouring their living rulers as gods. The honouring of the Roman rulers was incorporated into their civic and religious life in imperial cults. The imperial cults were also used to perpetuate Augustus’ narrative that he was lord and saviour of the Empire and had initiated a Golden Age. These notions were celebrated and incorporated with other civic festivals of the cities, which meant that the inhabitants were regularly reminded of the benefactions of the Caesars and their obligation to them. Furthermore, Roman civic institutions provided Roman citizens and non-Romans living outside of Rome a way to exhibit loyalty, piety, and honour to the Caesars.

The study of *Pax Augusta* was also important because it provided the larger socio-political context of Roman Philippi. The importance of the city was seen in its connection with the defeat of Julius Caesar’s assassins. The numismatic and inscription evidence from Philippi demonstrated its connection with the Julio-Claudian household, held in great esteem.

In Chapter Five it was clearly demonstrated that Philippi was thoroughly Roman in its world view, attitudes and behaviours. From the many honorific inscriptions, it
was seen how the Roman veterans and settlers became the city’s elites and were involved in the political sphere of Philippi. Furthermore, it was seen that for many of Philippi’s elite, Roman citizenship was part of their identity, often prominently displayed on honorific inscriptions and on gravestones.

The inscriptional evidence also gave a clear picture of how Philippi derived honour and esteem, being connected to the Julio-Claudian line. The pervasiveness of the emerging imperial cult at Philippi demonstrated the devotion to the Julio-Claudian household, evidenced by the presence of several offices of priests and other cult officials. Furthermore, the presence of *seviri Augustales*, who were full Roman citizens, highlighted the importance that the cult held in the honour reputation of the city. The Romanness of Philippi was also seen in the behaviours of the veterans, who had carried into civic life much of their identity and social networks from the military. This included their public boasting, and in the display of a personal *cursus*, which enhanced not only one’s personal honour reputation and esteem, but also that of the family.

The practices of the elite had trickled down to non-Roman sections of the population. This was seen in boasting and gaining of esteem through honorific inscriptions, and the replicating of a *cursus honorum* by some in the non-elite population. Thus it was concluded that although Philippi was constituted by several ethnic groups, the city was thoroughly Roman in its values and world view. The inscriptional evidence also revealed that Roman values had trickled down and influenced the behaviours of some women at Philippi, especially women who held leadership roles in voluntary associations. The evidence also indicated that they had some economic independence in that they were able to make their own offerings to the gods. Furthermore, they demonstrated their status as benefactors and patrons through
the funding of building projects. This meant that some women at Philippi had positions of influence, which had an impact on Paul’s κοινωνία.

Chapter Six covered the first eleven verses of Philippians 1, and focused on the κοινωνία as being the equivalent of a consensual societas as a development by Julien Ogereau of Paul Sampley’s original proposal. Ogereau’s research presented fresh, comprehensive, and compelling evidence that the κοινωνία at Philippi would have been perceived by the Romans as a societas. Ogereau’s work demonstrates the existing objections by NT scholars about the possibility of a societas between Paul and the Philippians cannot be sustained. Ogereau found that κοινωνία was used in an inscription to refer to a business contractual agreement made between an individual and another party, which makes a societas between Paul and the Philippians plausible. His argument calling for the κοινωνία to be understood as a societas evangelii highlights the purpose of the agreement, namely the spread of the gospel.

Paul used the notion of societas evangelii to give a common goal to the group, which would help to unite them in purpose. Furthermore, it was used by Paul to counter the honour seeking culture at Philippi. The egalitarian nature of a societas meant that all members of the agreement were expected to provide something towards the venture, so that no one could be considered to be a patron over others.

Just as important for this thesis was that κοινωνία and its cognates were identified in agreements that were political in nature. It was used for participation in the πολιτεία of a city, as being given the rights of citizenship, as well as for political and military alliances. Thus, it is unlikely that Paul used κοινωνία without knowing its political connotation, especially as he purposely used other terms associated with the political
sphere. This understanding of κοινωνία would have reinforced that he saw conversion would impact on a civic level.

In Chapter Seven, Philippians 1:12-30 was examined to show that Paul was seeking to create a new social identity of the κοινωνία. Again Paul used group comparison in a stereotyped fashion to highlight motivations. He attributed positive emotions and motives to those whom he considered to be his converts and who shared a common in-group identity. Conversely, those who were indignant or shamed by Paul’s imprisonment, but still engaged in the propagation of the gospel, were portrayed as having negative motives and with behaviours that characterised those engaged in political discord. The application of SIT highlighted that the contrast was used to give a positive image to the Philippians, with the goal of enabling them to psychologically see themselves as one group, sharing the same values and world view.

Group comparison also highlighted that Paul’s construction of the Philippians’ social identity was created from opposition on two fronts; one from other Christ movements and the other from Philippi’s socio-political context. The imperative to act as worthy citizens of the gospel signified to his converts that they belonged (in SIT terms) to a superordinate group. Thus conversion was a social identity that was formed and maintained in a civic context. As the Philippians were propagating the gospel, they faced opposition in the public sphere. The public opposition triggered the salience of their social identity as citizens of the gospel. Thus worthy citizenship is found in staying loyal to the in-group’s goal, and with behaviours that were indicative of such citizens, that of concord and loyalty.

Paul in his exhortation to stand firm does infer that he believed loyalty to the gospel was foremost. Citizens were expected to demonstrate their loyalty to their ruler
and ethnic customs. Here Paul was exhorting his converts to be loyal to the gospel, especially as the gospel represented a different ruler.

The notion of loyalty was further explored in Chapter Eight as Paul reiterated what it meant to be a worthy citizen of the gospel. In Philippians 2, he sought to reorientate the symbolic universe of the Philippians. This could only be successful if the Philippians self-categorised as citizens who were in concord and loyal to the gospel and its κύριος. The concentration of the verbs that referred to the cognitive faculties demonstrated that Paul understood that conversion was a transformation in the Philippians’ thinking about their reality.

SCT’s notion of re-categorisation has shed light on how Paul continued to form his converts into a new civic community. The theme that the Philippians were to have the same mindset points to its importance in Paul’s mind. The dominant world view regarding the power and authority of the Caesars, which was reinforced by the socio-political institutions, was challenged with a world view based on the values of a new κύριος. The exhortation and the use of cognitive verbs indicated that the Philippians must evaluate their allegiances in light of the gospel. Loyalty was defined as the exhibiting of the appropriate behaviours to one’s patron, reinforced by oath taking to the Emperor. Those who had pledged their loyalty to Caesar were obligated to protect actively and further his interests. Loyalty to the furthering of the common goal of the κοινωνία and its Messiah was the behaviour which Paul considered as exhibiting one’s faithfulness or loyalty to the in-group.

In Philippians 2, the actions of the Messiah was shown to be counter to the Roman social value of honour, which meant that his message would have been considered subversive. Thus it was necessary for Paul to use the civic framework of citizenship, in order to enable the Philippians to self-categorise as loyal citizens, whose κύριος and
patron was the Messiah. This was not a call to renounce totally all past and present loyalties to the converts’ previous sub-group identities, but Paul did expect that their first loyalty was to the new superordinate group and its ruler.

Conversion at Philippi meant remaining loyal to the κοινωνία, its κύριος, and patron. The comparison between the Messiah and the Caesars was of two rulers who represented different socio-political realities. The imperial cult promoted that the welfare of the empire was bound up in the Caesars, to whom one’s loyalty was required. By identifying with the Messiah they would share in the common destiny of the Messiah, which was his exaltation and vindication.

SIT also provides insight into why Paul singled out Timothy and Epaphroditus as prototypical leaders/converts. They are examples of faithful converts and co-workers in the gospel that were to be followed, and hence were used by Paul to encourage those who might have been less committed members, struggling with the breaking of past loyalties. The positive assessment of them by Paul was an attempt to provide a positive image to counter any negative self-image among the converts.

In Chapter Nine it was seen that the citizenship of heaven was a motif of conversion that was being loyal to a new superordinate group which held salience over other social identities. Moreover, all previous social identities are to be categorised as sub-identities. Paul, as the prototypical leader, showed how he had relegated his Jewish identity into a sub-group identity, especially in the presence of non-Jews (cf. 1 Cor 7:17-24, Gal 3:28-29). This did not mean that he considered he had left his Jewish identity, rather he remained in what he considered to be true Jewish identity, in the post-messiah event. Thus, conversion was not necessarily a total rejection of one’s previous
social identity, but one’s social identity was now in knowing the Messiah and to participate in the propagation of his gospel.

It was also seen that Paul used group comparisons in order to demonstrate that the Philippians had a common destiny and social identity. The common eschatological destiny of Paul and the Philippians was going to be the positive judgement of his God on the day of judgement. The notion of citizenship would also have given the Philippians a positive distinction to their new social identity, particularly for those who had not possessed any citizenship at Philippi. Conversely, the eschatological fate of the out-groups, which included members of other Christ movements who did not share the common in-group identity, would be destruction. This indicates that Paul viewed conversion as having the same world view, values, and loyalty to the Messiah as he did. Thus those in the Christ movements who did not have the same outlook as Paul were not true converts.

Chapter Ten examined Philippians 4, where the notion of the prototypical leader/convert and a repetition of several themes from earlier in Philippians are found. Paul’s positive evaluation of the converts as his crown continued to inform the Philippians that they were his in-group, which would have given the Philippians a positive distinction. Though there was a dispute between two prototypical leaders, possibly about how the κοινωνία was to propagate the gospel, Paul maintained the positive image of the Philippians as he tried to avoid discord amongst them at any cost. He does this by directly addressing the leaders Syntyche and Euodia. Rather than taking sides or criticising them, he praises them for their work in spreading the gospel, urging them to have the same mind of Christ (Phil 2:5).

The positive assessment of the Philippians continued with the assurance of divine favour in the eschatological judgement to come. In the meantime, the Philippians were
to act as worthy citizens of heaven and the gospel. The list of virtues found in Philippians 4 is not simply a general list of practice, but articulated how they were to conduct their civic life in the face of opposition to the gospel. The use of the verb λογίζεσθε in regard to their conduct in the public sphere at Philippi showed that, in Paul’s mind, conversion entailed a significant and purposeful cognitive process.

Though this has been a social-scientific study of conversion, Paul’s understanding was that conversion was due to divine agency. The proof of conversion was seen in his God’s activity, to move the Philippians into action in many ways. The evidence of divine activity amongst them, and hence that they were true converts, was in their support of Paul in his propagation of the gospel. It was seen in the suffering from opposition as they propagated the gospel in the public sphere at Philippi. Furthermore, they were to be his imitators, as he was an imitator of his Messiah. Thus, those who Paul believed to be true converts were those who had their world view aligned with the Messiah’s voluntary embracing of a humble status.

Though the reason why conversion happens in the NT cannot be fully explained, this does not mean that we are bereft of social or psychological explanations of the phenomenon. This study of the Philippian converts has not sought to claim the definitive reasons why someone might choose to convert, rather, the use of SIT and SCT has highlighted ways in which Paul used citizenship to replace his converts’ previous social identities, which were heavily influenced by Roman ideology. Paul’s aim was to form a new social identity in order to create a new civic community around his Messiah and the gospel.
Conversion and Paul

The close examination of conversion in Philippians was a deliberate choice, because with the exceptions of Chester and Crook, the study of Pauline conversion has in broad terms focused on Paul’s thought on the topic. That is, scholars have tried to capture Pauline thought on conversion without taking into consideration the local socio-political context. For instance, one point that is often ignored in NT conversion studies is the lack of established synagogues at Philippi during Paul’s time. The synagogues, according to Acts, were the locations where Paul would reason with god fearers and Jews. From the lack of Paul’s use of Israel’s historical patriarchs, and the absence of direct LXX quotations in Philippians, it can be inferred that he did not see covenant as the only motif that could describe inclusion into God’s people. It could also be argued that covenant was not the only basis for how he understood his God’s actions in the Christ event. The political language and motifs in Philippians suggests that Paul’s overall thought on conversion was not just expressed in one concept.

This thesis has also demonstrated that Paul’s missional hermeneutic was thoroughly contextual. He contextualised his gospel in a way that was sensitive to its socio-political environment. The Romanised colony of Philippi dictated that Paul use concepts and notions which were not explicitly covenantal. Paul was not restricted in his mission to the Gentiles to using only Israel’s historical narrative in order to convince the Philippians to become Christ followers. Rather, he was able to use a framework that he hoped would enable the Philippians to acquire a new social identity. Paul not only showed that he was sensitive to the honour-seeking attitudes and behaviours that were pervasive in the Philippians’ context, he used the framework of citizenship, which was embedded in honour, with the aim of enabling his converts to act as one psychological group. Though Paul used Roman citizenship as a template for the heavenly citizenship,
Paul reframed the preconceived notions of citizenship for his converts, by honouring those who exhibited loyal behaviours to his Messiah.

Paul’s use of the framework of oaths show that he understood what would have been psychologically significant for influencing his converts’ behaviours. The importance of oath taking in the Greco-Roman world highlighted that a new loyalty, expressed to a new patron, would have been a significant factor in acquiring a new social identity. By calling those who imitate him ‘citizens of heaven’, he sought to strengthen loyal behaviours to the new in-group that he wished to form.

In using SIT and SCT, this thesis has provided a new reading in which Paul was concerned with his converts’ identity formation throughout the entire letter. There has been much research focusing on Philippians 2 and 3 in regard to Christian conversion. But there is little attention given to how Paul’s partnership with the Philippians and the propagation of the gospel have shaped their identity in the context of the first-century Greco-Roman world. SIT and SCT provide new insights into NT conversion because it highlights that Paul considered conversion as a new social identity, which included an active participation in the propagation of the gospel. NT conversion, rather than being a private affair of the individual, was about belonging to a new social in-group and exhibiting the behaviours and values of the new group. The implication is conversion and a new social identity are inextricably connected in Pauline conversion.

Paul’s willingness to take a status below what was considered honourable in the first-century has implications for the Christian witness. Paul acted in accordance with the values of his Messiah. Paul’s exhortations in Philippians to imitate him as he imitates the Messiah counters any notion of triumphalism in Christian witness. According to Paul, the message and the messenger cannot be separated from the
possession of a changed perspective on appropriate ethical behaviour, while undergoing the experience of suffering. Indeed from our examination of Philippians, suffering because of the gospel was expected.

The notion of suffering has implications for missional theology because suffering is a domain of Paul’s God, both as the one who experiences it and the one who bestows it. For Paul those who are true converts are those who are willing to experience the loss of status, with the result of identifying with him and his Messiah. Thus for Paul it seems to be the case that one cannot know or be known by God if one is unwilling to accept a lower social status. The nature of Paul’s God is not in the power to rule through the use of propaganda and force, but in humility and obedience.

Though Paul’s God ordains the suffering of the loss of status, according to Paul, one day converts will be rewarded. Those who suffer loss of honour and status for the propagation of the gospel will, in Paul’s eschatological thought, be vindicated on the Day of Judgement. The theological implication is that conversion involved conformity and allegiance to a greater κύριος and σωτήρ than Caesar. Thus, in Paul’s mind, remaining loyal to the propagation of the gospel will one day be rewarded.

This thesis also demonstrates that conversion was not the total abandonment of a previous social identity. SIT and SCT have highlighted how Paul used a re-worked framework of Roman citizenship to produce social cohesion and encouraged the Philippians to act as a psychological unit. Even though the Philippian converts would have come from diverse socio-political groups, the notion of a superordinate group that could encompass these groups is utilised. Although Paul required the Philippians’ identity to be understood in the framework of citizenship, he did not expect them to abandon their previous identity, as he considered himself to be a Jew but amongst the Philippians.
Future Explorations

A future direction for social-scientific studies on NT conversion is the ‘city by city’ approach, because it reveals nuances that are often brushed over in Pauline thought as a whole. SIT has highlighted that identity is not static but can be made up from various social roles that are culturally defined. It has also shown that conversion is a psychological happening but one not based on the individual who is seeking a solution to their plight. It is affiliating to a new socio-political group that provides an new world view and ethical behaviours, requiring a disaffiliation from a previous socio-political group.

A future area for research for the Christ movements as entailing membership of a superordinate group, could be done by building upon Paul Trebilco’s *Self-designations and Group Identity in the New Testament*. SIT is a heuristic tool to use on Trebilco’s analysis of several significant words that the Christ movements used to describe themselves as groups. SIT and SCT could be applied to highlight how these categories impacted on a new social identity in Pauline Christ movements, which would further elucidate how Paul nuanced them to form a Christ movement’s identity in a particular location.

The study of oaths has been fruitful because it offers an explanation as to why some members of the Christ movement at Philippi might be less committed to the in-group. An issue that would have affected many of the converts was that they had taken oaths of allegiance to the Caesars before their conversion to a new lord and saviour. Thus, conversion was not an inner psychological happening only for Paul’s converts, but included ties of loyalty to one’s previous affiliations. In such cases, an individual’s new allegiances needed to be thought through.
This thesis has been focused on political language and motifs throughout Philippians. The methodologies chosen were used as heuristic tools in order to highlight the socio-political structures and language used by Paul for the creation of a new social identity. This means that the burgeoning field of study into the Christ movement identity as being a new ethnicity was not included, yet this remains a fruitful approach for Pauline studies on conversion.

The list of virtues are not just general exhortations to be practised for their new lives as believers, rather they are actions of a citizen group confronting opposition. Paul addressed the same conflict in Philippians 1:15 and 27-30. Though there were different groups who were opposing the Philippians, he expected them to stand firm in the face of their opponents, as was expected from those who possessed citizenship of heaven.

This thesis has argued throughout that in Philippians Paul construed conversion as a transformation of a socio-political identity. Conversion was not just a decision endeavouring to rectify an inner psychological turmoil of the individual, rather it was the individual who had decided to incorporate a new world view by incorporating a new socio-political group’s values and beliefs. It was a personal transformation that someone underwent because they had internalised a new symbolic universe at a cognitive and emotional level, which in turn was exhibited in new ethical behaviours. According to Paul, this is not merely a human phenomenon but one that was the result of his God working in the lives of Jews and Gentiles.
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