Christ's Torah: The Making of the New Testament in the 2nd Century

Introduction

To this day, the New Testament belongs to the domain of colleagues who have been trained within and for the special discipline of “New Testament studies”. They hold doctorates in this field and are members of departments, societies and study groups that carry this title. Compared to scholars of early Christianity and Patristics of which there exist just over 1.000 worldwide, the number of New Testament scholars exceeds 8,000 people around the globe. The New Testament is a collection of writings that comprises 27 books and is currently available in Greek in the worldwide authoritative 28th edition of the “Novum Testamentum Graece”, edited by Nestle-Aland. It contains about 138,000 words,[[1]](#footnote-1) hence its length is at the upper end of an average novel,[[2]](#footnote-2) which can still be read easily in one piece.

According to the majority of New Testament scholars today, the development of the collection is placed in the 2nd century, but most of its 27 books and especially the four Gospels are taken to have been written during the 1st century.[[3]](#footnote-3) The make up of this collection of first century Christian writings clearly distinguishes these from all other writings that originated in early Christianity and which are commonly dated to the second century and, therefore, are seen as belonging to patristic literature. The latter begins with the so-called Apostolic Fathers, a collection designation which, although it only dates from the 17th century, is well-established as a name for the most important Christian writings of the 2nd century that are regarded as orthodox, such as the letters of Ignatius, the letters of Clement of Rome, etc.[[4]](#footnote-4) Following New Testament scholarship the late Josef Ratzinger, as Pope Benedict XVI, divided the early years of Christianity into two periods, on the one hand the beginnings of Christianity with the Apostles and on the other hand the beginnings of the Church with the Apostolic Fathers, when he elaborated:

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"In the past months we have reflected on the figures of the individual Apostles and on the first witnesses of the Christian faith whom the New Testament writings mention. Now we turn our attention to the Apostolic Fathers, that is, the first and second generation of the Church after the Apostles. And so we can see how the journey of the Church begins in history".[[5]](#footnote-5)

However, in the meantime much movement has come into the dating of the individual writings of the New Testament. As far as the question of the time of composition and mutual relationships of the four Gospels contained in the New Testament is concerned,[[6]](#footnote-6) it has recently been reckoned that the addition of the so-called Gospel of Marcion from the middle of the second century could possibly lead to completely new insights in the assessment of these relationships.[[7]](#footnote-7) The origin of the Acts of the Apostles is increasingly being shifted from the 1st to the 2nd century,[[8]](#footnote-8) the so-called Pastoral Epistles (1-2Tim, Tit)[[9]](#footnote-9) and 2 Peter have recently been dated with good arguments to the 2nd century,[[10]](#footnote-10) and for the Apocalypse of John the late reign of the Emperor Hadrian (Emperor from 117-138) has been suggested with weighty reasons.[[11]](#footnote-11)

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However, most of New Testament scholars continue to follow the rough outline of the origin of the early Christian writings as presented here in tabular form:[[12]](#footnote-12)

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| --- | --- |
| Year CE | Sources |
| ca. 30/33 | Oral message of Jesus of Nazareth and the risen Christ |
| ca. 40 -50 | Letters of Paul |
| ca. 60 - 80/90 | Mk (ca. 70), Matt (after 70), Lk (before 90)[[13]](#footnote-13) |
| ca. 90 -100 | Acts,[[14]](#footnote-14) Catholic Epistles,[[15]](#footnote-15) Jn, Rev |
| ca. 100 -200 | The Apostolic Fathers |

If I were to follow this chronologicy and the associated structure of the origin of the early Christian writings together with the displinary split between New Testament studies and early Christian history, I should not and could not have written the book presented here. For my training and my *venia legendi* (the German academic precondition for teaching a specific subject at university level) cover church history, but not the New Testament. The fact that I have recently been asked by my own Department of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College London to contribute to New Testament courses is either limited to contributing sources that are considered later, such as the Gospel of Marcion, or is due to the staff shortages of an underfunded university landscape in Britain.

Despite the contemporary existance of a separation between New Testament scholarship and Church History (or Early Church History, also called Patristics – the scholarship on the Church Fathers), it may come as a surprise to some readers that this split is a rather modern phenomenon. Martin Hengel, who had combined both fields in his own person, once wrote that the separate subject of New Testament scholarship was indeed a young discipline,[[16]](#footnote-16) and pointed out that the first chairs for this subject were established as late as the last third of the 19th century.[[17]](#footnote-17) But even after that, there were still great scholars who combined both "subjects" in their teaching and research at the beginning of the 20th century, for example, the Protestant Hans Lietzmann (1875-1972)[[18]](#footnote-18) or the Catholic Franz-Josef Dölger.[[19]](#footnote-19) The recently deceased American New Testament scholar Larry Hurtado emphasised in his inaugural lecture at the University of Edinburgh in 1999 that until well into the 20th century it was "scholars of the Old Testament and of systematic theology",[[20]](#footnote-20) and, as Hengel had also emphasised, "above all church historians" who had taught the New Testament in the faculties.[[21]](#footnote-21) Even at my own institution of King's College London, the professor of church history in the 1920s, Claude Jenkins, taught and researched not only medieval and Reformation/post-Reformation topics, but also patristic and New Testament texts,[[22]](#footnote-22) and when, a little later in the 1930s, Randolph Vincent Greenwood Tasker had to teach patristics, he was already looking back on years as Lecturer in New Testament exegesis at King's, a specialist connection he had maintained until after the Second World War, when he was appointed professor in both fields.[[23]](#footnote-23) The appointment to the same position was no different for Robert Victor Sellers,[[24]](#footnote-24) who was appointed Professor of Biblical and Historical Theology in 1948.

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The separation of New Testament scholarship and church history is ultimately the result of a contemporary phenomenon of the late 19th century, in which Romanticism and modernism wrestled with each other, but both traditionalist and historical-critical attempts had fundamentally clung to the distinction, already present in the philosopher Immanuel Kant, between the inaccessible divine and the uninspired secular. Historians had to deal with the realia, the New Testament belonged as a canon of inspired writings in the framework to be protected by the churches.[[25]](#footnote-25) New Testament scholarship was an expression and representative of the latter and had to move within this institutional framework.

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Certainly, as the annual conferences of the international "Society of Biblical Literature", based in the United States, testify, this discipline has moved far outside this framework and has developed methodologically in particular, but even if contemporary representatives of the discipline try to go beyond the framework of the canon of 27 writings in order to overcome the systematic narrowing of a canonical discipline, many still adhere to the fundamental distribution of the fields of activity of scholarship into those of New Testament scholars and those of Patristics. Nevertheless, as early as 1988, the French-speaking Swiss New Testament scholar François Bovon had the foresight to see researchers of Patristics and the New Testament working hand in hand, wanting, on the one side, a scholarly integration of several disciplines and, on the other, especially the commentators and exegetes of the New Testament to take a more self-critical view of their own presuppositions.[[26]](#footnote-26)

From my own preoccupations in recent years, it has become clear to me that none of the dating of writings listed above - with the exception of the Pauline epistles, which represent a special topic and problem to be addressed - is tenable, and therefore the wall built on the older dating between the two disciplines as well as that between their source bases, "the New Testament and the void Testament",[[27]](#footnote-27) i.e. between the canonical and non-canonical writings, is crumbling.[[28]](#footnote-28) More important than this deconstruction, however, is to re-open the old field of reading all canonical Christian writings of the New Testament in the light of the events of the 2nd century, the time, when they have been gathered, most of them written and all of them substantially redacted and revised.

It has long been seen and it is accepted knowledge, as indicated, that the New Testament as a collection did not come into being until the end of the 2nd century. More problematic is the answer to the question of how this collection came about.[[29]](#footnote-29) Was it a slow, organic process in which texts written in many places by the most diverse authors were handed down in different versions and read in the most diverse congregations, growing together to form a book which then became tangible in its first contours in Irenaeus of Lyons in the last third of the 2nd century? The latter theory was first put forward by Irenaeus himself[[30]](#footnote-30) - followed by older research[[31]](#footnote-31) - or were seen as writings deliberately selected and compiled in an editorial decision by an individual or a group of editors,[[32]](#footnote-32) revised for this purpose and partly harmonised with one another, and supplemented with writings and new chapters specially prepared for this editorial work?[[33]](#footnote-33) The latter theory was first put forward by David Trobisch in his Heidelberg Habilitation and published in parts and taken up in particular by Matthias Klinghardt.[[34]](#footnote-34)

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Trobisch and Klinghardt differ slightly on the question of anonymity of editorship. Trobisch suggested that Polycarp of Smyrna was the editor of the New Testament, but that he had let the text go out anonymously in order to "suggest" an early date of origin of the collection "while Paul was still alive". Klinghardt refines this view and speaks of the "self-invisibilisation of the editor", whereby this "respectable forger" left behind a "hidden trace" which he "only slightly conceal[ed]".[[35]](#footnote-35) In contrast to the development paradigm, Trobisch and Klinghardt "assume (that) as early as the second century ... ... in addition to the Gospels and Pauline Epistles, the Catholic Epistles also formed a recognisable historical unit (the so-called "Praxapostolos") with the Acts of the Apostles".[[36]](#footnote-36) This explanation of a specific publication of the New Testament is gaining increasing attention in research and teaching today.[[37]](#footnote-37) However, there are also weighty objections, such as "the absence of any early Christian memory of such a comprehensive undertaking" as the edition and publication of a New Testament, which "must be astonishing".[[38]](#footnote-38) Would it not have been possible for "at least the more educated early Christian theologians" to "decipher" the only slightly concealed editor? And how could "the logistically as well as economically highly challenging collection, edition and distribution of such an enormous work ... have been carried out in secret, so to speak", especially in what was then still a very small world of Christian scholars?[[39]](#footnote-39)

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Another way of describing this emergence links the older model with the younger one in some respects. It was recently proposed by Wolfgang Grünstäudl and outlined as a "dynamic, multi-layered development" of mutual links.[[40]](#footnote-40) Especially 2 Peter, which he has examined in particular, serves him as a "node of a multi-layered intertextual network".[[41]](#footnote-41) In Trobisch's hypothesis, too, 2 Peter plays a prominent role because of the multiple links to other texts: 2 Peter 1:20-21 refers to written prophecy, 2 Peter 3:1 to another Epistle of Peter, 2 Peter 3:14-16 to Pauline epistles.[[42]](#footnote-42) Grünstäudl concludes from this that the 2 Peter fits "well into the development paradigm",[[43]](#footnote-43) but also points out that he reckons with writings deliberately compiled as a collection. For with the "emphasis on the reliability of (written) prophecy and the hermeneutical remarks on the Pauline Epistles", for example, "topics are addressed that play an important role in the large-scale church debate with Marcion's theology",[[44]](#footnote-44) which thus speak for the fact that the church New Testament can certainly be seen as a reaction to an older collection of Marcion to which the latter gave the specific title “New Testament”.

Grünstäudl adds:

"Although these elements, which in 2 Peter are initially in the service of an eschatological debate, can certainly not be taken as sufficient evidence for an anti-Marcionite orientation of 2 Peter, they do then, if one assumes a corresponding dating of 2 Peter for other reasons and takes into account that a controversial-theological text does not have to presuppose only one counter-front, invite a reading of 2 Peter that takes a look at the Marcionite challenge ad experimentum."[[45]](#footnote-45)

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As the further explanations in the present study will show, I continue on this track of a critical reading of the two alternative models as outlined by Grünstäudl and attempt to clarify the network mesh of the various actors and their respective contributions to the development of the New Testament. The further course of the study will show that Marcion (of Sinope in northern Asia Minor), who was brought up by Grünstäudl, does indeed play an important role. In addition, the first witnesses and actors known to us will be called upon, who can give us clues as to the network connections to which the creation of the New Testament seems to be tied: they include above all the great teachers of the second century: Irenaeus of Lyons, Polycarp of Smyrna, Papias of Hierapolis, Ignatius of Antioch and Dionysius of Corinth. The fact that Justin Martyr, who also taught in Rome in the second century, is only briefly touched upon is due to the fact that although he has knowledge of the later canonical Gospels, he makes less use of them than of the "Memoirs of the Apostles", which he often cites. Likewise, at no point does he explicitly refer to the Pauline epistles, nor does he cite the Acts of the Apostles.

The focus on individual teachers and their mutual references is immediately linked to the methodological question: Is the formation of the New Testament to be thought structurally within a process of spiritual history of horizontally mediated effects and part of liturgical practices? Or does the New Testament as a collection rather go back to certain authors, specific individuals, who, although not isolated, nevertheless interacted in a determining way, exposed to mutual impulses, entangled reading and reception processes? Does their "thinking" thus have the effect of "an intellectual history deliberately pursued as such"?[[46]](#footnote-46) Grünstäudl has already indicated that the two perspectives on the emergence of the New Testament do not have to be mutually exclusive.

Regardless of which solution one leans towards, even if one wants to continue to adhere to the older hypothesis, which is held by fewer and fewer researchers, that the writings of the New Testament organically grew together into a collection in the second century, in the following I want to invite as many readers as possible to engage with the somewhat more complex explanation. On the basis thus developed, I will finally invite you in chapter three to the thought experiment - which in my eyes, however, comes closer to historical reality than the older models - of reading these writings, above all the Gospels, against the background of the second century, or more precisely, place them into the time after the second Jewish war (132-135 C.E.), which is also known as the Bar Kokhba revolt, that is, as literature that was written in the years 135 AD up to Irenaeus of Lyon around the year 177 and collected as such.

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We will look at the emergence of the New Testament as a collection along the four collection units as we find them in the oldest full manuscripts of the New Testament, the Codex Sinaiticus, the Codex Vaticanus (both presumably 4th century), and the Codex Alexandrinus, the Codex Bezae and the Codex Washingtonianus (presumably all 5th century), and the Codex Alexandrinus, the Codex Bezae and the Codex Washing- tonianus (presumably all 5th century), and in some papyri (P74, 022, 016 et al.),[[47]](#footnote-47) without forgetting that in older papyri the books are initially attested individually. These four sub-collections are: 1. the Gospels, 2. the so-called Praxapostolos (Acts and canonical letters), 3. the letters of Paul, and 4. Revelation.

While I have already examined this collection of writings from the point of view of how they represent the history of the beginnings of Christianity,[[48]](#footnote-48) in the following I will question the collections of writings with regard to their time of origin. In the course of the investigation, the question will often arise organically as to which of the historical scenarios seems to be the more plausible, the setting of the 1st century or the middle and second half of the 2nd century. As is already the case in higher mathematics, historical scholarship is also dependent on considerations of greater probability and perspective. As New Testament scholars have impressed upon me, research in this field tends to be sceptical of new insights because of its extreme "overloading", asking whether everything has not already been said. I want to prepare for the fact, however, that much of what follows has indeed not yet been seen, or not yet seen in this perspective, which led to the judgement of another reader of the draft text of this book to state: "It was a fantastic read. I especially like the parts comparing the different versions (of the Gospels), which is very convincing if you accept the general concept."[[49]](#footnote-49)

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Once again, I would like to thank a wealth of colleagues who contributed to the creation of this book, beginning with those colleagues who critically read the book in its German draft form, Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Jan N. Bremmer and my revered teacher Reinhard M. Hübner (Munich/Eichstätt). Likewise, I thank my other teacher Adolf Martin Ritter (Heidelberg), who during his life has continued to accompany me attentively and correcting me in discussions and reviews, and finally the two professional colleagues who have inspired me most strongly for years in the topics dealt with here, Matthias Klinghardt and David Trobisch, without whose suggestions many new insights of this book would not have emerged. I am also grateful to the anonymous peer reviewers who have made me correct some of the mistakes, left in the German text. As in the meantime I have taken early retirement from my Department of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College London, I would like to publish this book as a special thank you to my colleagues and friends, especially New Testament scholar and researcher of Philo of Alexandria, Qumran and the Second Jewish Temple period, Joan Taylor, Pauline specialist and sociologist of early Christianity, Eddie Adams, then also my patristic and Byzantine colleague with whom I shared our small office, Yannis Papadokiannakis, and my medievalist colleague, the researcher of early Franciscans, Lydia Schumacher. I would also like to thank the fellows at the Max Weber College in Erfurt, in whose midst I have been able to participate in the lively interdisciplinary dialogue for years now, first and foremost Bettina Hollstein, my late wife Jutta Vinzent, Jörg Rüpke, Hartmut Rosa, Emiliano Urciuoli, Dietmar Mieth, as well as all the members of the Meister Eckhart Research Centre. Finally, I would like to thank all those who, with their enquiries about my previous books, invited me to talk and lecture, discussed with me orally and in writing, and warmed up, sometimes even heated up, to new insights into a subject that is often perceived as rather dusty and lacking in innovation. This book is also intended as a continuation of these conversations. Finally I would like to thank the entire team of Routledge who have taken on this project from the German publisher Herder and allowed me to do some revisions and updatings of what hopefully will become an invitation to further debates.

After a turbulent two years in which after an over ten years struggle with ovarian cancer my wife passed away, I would especially like to express my thanks, first to my late wife for being a role model in how to fight a disease like this and how to detach oneself and let go from your partner, your children, and your life, encouraging each of us to appreciate every day and to move on, saddened, but enriched by this experience with greatest gratitude.

Erfurt and San Miguel de Abona Markus Vinzent

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1. Because of the disputed variants, the figure varies slightly, cf. the figure of 137,328 for the Nestle-Aland edition: M. Ritter, Statistische Beobachtungen und Besonderheiten zur Bibel (2018). The figure of 138,020 is given for the Analytical Greek New Testament (AGNT) edition: F. Just, New Testament Statistics (2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A. Goldberg. (2021). "Auf die Länge kommt es an, oder: Wie lang sollte Ihr Buch sein? – Ein Leitfaden." Retrieved 30.01.2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. J.K. Elliott writes that "they were composed and originally written down ['published' if you wish] in the first century", J.K. Elliott, New Testament textual criticism : the application of thoroughgoing principles : essays on manuscripts and textual variation (2011), 13. Cf. already the position in the 19th century: H.W.J. Thiersch, Versuch zur Herstellung des historischen Standpuncts für die Kritik der neutestamentlichen Schriften. Eine Streitschrift Gegen die Kritiker (1845), 75. The dating is based almost exclusively on internal reasons, to these are added external witnesses like the Epistles of Ignatius, which are repeatedly dated as authentic writings to the time around 110, and the so-called Didache, a catechetical writing, which is also placed in the first century, and the Epistle of Polycarp for which an early dating is proposed for around the year 120, see for example I. Broer and H.-U. Weidemann, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (2016). However, it must be admitted that all these datings are now highly controversial and are rejected with good reasons by a growing number of scholars. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The attribution of writings to the so-called Apostolic Fathers varies, cf. B.D. Ehrman, The Apostolic Fathers (2003); J.B. Lightfoot, J.R. Harmer and M.W. Holmes, The Apostolic Fathers: Greek texts and English translations (2007); W. Pratscher, Die Apostolischen Väter. Eine Einleitung (2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. J. Ratzinger, Generalaudienz (2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See, for example, the recent debate about the dublets in the canonical Gospels and their “micro-conflations”, cf. J.S. Kloppenborg, Macro-Conflation, Micro-Conflation, Harmonization and the Compositional Practices of the Synoptic Writers (2019); E. Eve, Relating the Gospels: Memory, Imitation and the Farrer Hypothesis (2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. I. Broer and H.-U. Weidemann, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. K. Backhaus, Zur Datierung der Apostelgeschichte. Ein Ordnungsversuch im chronologischen Chaos (2019); C.E. Hemer, The Book of Acts in the setting of Hellenistic history (1989), 367-410. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. M. Theobald, Israel-Vergessenheit in den Pastoralbriefen. Ein neuer Vorschlag zu ihrer historisch-theologischen Verortung im 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Ignatius-Briefe (2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. W. Grünstäudl, Ein apokryphes Petrusbild im Neuen Testament. Zur Konstruktion apostolischere Autorität in OffbPetr und 2 Petr (2019); W. Grünstäudl, Geschätzt und bezweifelt. Der zweite Petrusbrief im kanongeschichtlichen Paradigmenstreit (2018); W. Grünstäudl, Der zweite Brief des Petrus. Eine Herausforderung für tolerante Geister (2018); R. Bauckham, 2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter (1998); R. Bauckham, 2 Peter: An Account of Research (1988); E.E. Ring, The Meaning and Significance of 2 Peter 3:15b-17. Dissertation (1954). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. T. Witulski, Die Johannesoffenbarung und Kaiser Hadrian. Studien zur Datierung der neutestamentlichen Apokalpyse (2007); T. Witulski, Iustinus und die Johannesoffenbarung die Rezeption der Apokalypse durch den Apologeten in ihrer Relevanz für deren Datierung (2016); T. Witulski, Christus, die sieben Sterne und die sieben „Gemeindeengel“. Zeitgeschichtliche Bemerkungen zu einer Motivdisposition in Offb 1,20; 2f. = Christ, the seven stars and the seven angels of the church: historical commentary on motif arrangement in Rev 1:20; 2-3 (2019/2020); T. Witulski, Tempus tempus praecedit - Eckpunkte einer spatialen Konstruktion von relativer und absoluter Zeit in der Apokalypse des Johannes (2018); T. Witulski, Der erste 'apokalyptische Reiter' (Apk 6,1-2) und der Reiter auf dem weißen Pferd (Apk 19,11-16.19-21). Ein Beispiel von polemischem Parallelismus innerhalb der Apokalypse des Johannes (2017); T. Witulski, Die vier apokalyptischen Reiter Apk 6,1-8. Ein Versuch ihrer zeitgeschichtlichen (Neu-)Interpretation (2015); L. Arcari, D. Tripaldi and T. Witulski, Discussion of Thomas Witulski's works on dating the Revelation (2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See, for example, already A. Jülicher, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (1894); A.v. Harnack, Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius 2. Theil Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius 1. Band Die Chronologie der Litteratur bis Irenäus: nebst einleitenden Untersuchungen (1897), 717-722. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. On the different suggestions of dating these writings, see M. Vinzent, Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels (2014). On Mk and its dating to the years 40 to 145, see ibid. 161-163, on Matt and its dating to the years 40 to 145, see ibid. 174-175, on Lk and its dating to the years 55 to 145, see ibid. 181-183. Even the most recent introductions to the New Testament offer no picture different to the above graphic, according to which the canonical Gospels are generally dated to the years between 70 and 100, see M. Ebner, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (2020); I. Broer and H.-U. Weidemann, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. K. Backhaus, Zur Datierung der Apostelgeschichte. Ein Ordnungsversuch im chronologischen Chaos (2019); K. Backhaus, Markion und die Apostelgeschichte. Ein Beitrag zum Werden des Kanons (2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. For the dating of 1Petr in the years 81-90, see R. Feldmeier, Der erste Brief des Petrus (2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. M. Hengel, M.F. Bird and J. Maston, Earliest Christian History: History, Literature, and Theology. Essays from the Tyndale Fellowship in Honor of Martin Hengel (2012), 459-471. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ibid. 459. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. W. Kinzig, Hans Lietzmann (1875–1942) (2003); W. Kinzig, Evangelische Patristiker und christliche Archäologen im "Dritten Reich" drei Fallstudien: Hans Lietzmann, Hans von Soden, Hermann Wolfgang Beyer (2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. With further lit. M. Vinzent, Writing the history of early Christianity: From reception to retrospection (2019), 85-89. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. L. Hurtado, Beyond the Interlude? Developments and Directions in New Testament Textual Criticism (1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. M. Hengel, M.F. Bird and J. Maston, Earliest Christian History: History, Literature, and Theology. Essays from the Tyndale Fellowship in Honor of Martin Hengel (2012), 459. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See, for example, C. Jenkins and K.D. Mackenzie, Episcopacy ancient and modern (1930). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See R.V.G. Tasker, The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians : an introduction and commentary (1983); R.V.G. Tasker, The Narrow Way (1952); R.V.G. Tasker, The Biblical Doctrine of the Wrath of God (1951); R.V.G. Tasker, The Old Testament in the New Testament (1946); R.V.G. Tasker, Ed. The City of God, etc. (John Healey's translation, with a selection from Vives' commentaries. Edited by R. V. G. Tasker. Introduction by Sir Ernest Barker.) (1945). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Sellers became known for his two books: R.V. Sellers, Two ancient Christologies: A study in the Christological thought of the schools of Alexandria and Antioch in the early history of Christian doctrine : Pub. for the Church Historical Society (1940); R.V. Sellers, Eustathius of Antioch and his place in the early history of Christian doctrine (1928). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. See S. Alkier, Urchristentum. Zur Geschichte und Theologie einer exegetischen Disziplin (1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. F.o. Bovon, The Synoptic Gospels and the noncanonical acts of the apostles (1988), 35-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. C. Colpe, Tatian "aus Assyrien", Marcion "aus Sinope" und die Gegner der "aus Rom" schreibenden Autoren der beiden Petrusbriefe und des 1. Clemensbriefes (1998), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. I have made a start with M. Vinzent, Christ's Resurrection in Early Christianity and the Making of the New Testament (2011); M. Vinzent, Resetting the Origins of Christianity. A New Theory of Sources and Beginnings (2023); E.-M. Becker and M. Vinzent, Marcion and the Dating of Mark and the Synoptic Gospels (2018); M. Vinzent, Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels (2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. S. Alkier, Die Entstehung des Kanons: Geschichtlicher Prozess oder gezielte Publizistik? Eine Einführung zur Kontroverse (2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. M. Oeming, Das Hervorwachsen des Verbindlichen aus der Geschichte des Gottesvolkes. Grundzüge einer prozessual-soziologischen Kanon-Theorie (2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. See on this M. Vinzent, The Influence of Marcion on the Formation of the New Testament Canon (forthcoming); C.F.D. Moule, The birth of the new testament (1962). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. So already A.v. Harnack, Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius 2. Theil Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius 1. Band Die Chronologie der Litteratur bis Irenäus: nebst einleitenden Untersuchungen (1897), 681-884; F.C. Burkitt, Two Lectures on the Gospels (1901), 17-18. Harnack assumed an official Roman undertaking, based on the fact that in manuscripts the general title “Euangelion” can be found, while the four canonical Gospels were called, Gospel according to Mt …, then, because the Canon Muratori presented the four Gospels in a fixed order and Irenaeus spoke of a fourfold gospel – all hints for Harnack that an influential publication of this collection existed. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. M. Klinghardt, Die Veröffentlichung der christlichen Bibel und der Kanon (2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. D. Trobisch, The First Edition of the New Testament (2000); D. Trobisch, Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: Eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel (1996); D. Trobisch, Die Paulusbriefe und die Anfänge der christlichen Publizistik (2010); D. Trobisch, Paul's letter collection. Tracing the origins (1994); D. Trobisch, Das Neue Testament als literaturgeschichtliches Problem (2010); G. Theißen, Literaturgeschichte und Literaturästhetik. Zu D. Trobisch: Das Neue Testament als literaturgeschichtliches Phänomen (2011); J. Heilmann, Die These einer *editio princeps* des Neuen Testaments im Spiegel der Forschungsdiskussion der letzten zwei Jahrzehnte (2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. M. Klinghardt, Inspiration und Fälschung. Die Transzendenzkonstitution der christlichen Bibel (2013), 349. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. W. Grünstäudl, Geschätzt und bezweifelt. Der zweite Petrusbrief im kanongeschichtlichen Paradigmenstreit (2018), 61. For the term “Praxapostolos”, see D. Trobisch, Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: Eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel (1996), 38. This term is used, as our oldest New Testament manuscripts display one of the four sub-groups in which the 27 books of the New Testment collection are present in codices, the combination of Acts and the Catholic Epistles. Even though the term is only used later in Byzantine times, it makes sense to make use of this term for this specific sub-group of the New Testament collection, see D.C. Parker, An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and their Texts (2010), 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See M. Ebner, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (2020). More reluctant is I. Broer and H.-U. Weidemann, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (2016), 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. W. Grünstäudl, Geschätzt und bezweifelt. Der zweite Petrusbrief im kanongeschichtlichen Paradgomenstreit (2018), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ibid. 61. 81-88. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. There are even more references, for example 2 Peter 1:14 refers to Jn 21:18-19, then to other texts which are not explicitly mentioned like the Apocalypse of Peter, mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, Ecl. 41,1 and the Canon Muratori 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. W. Grünstäudl, Geschätzt und bezweifelt. Der zweite Petrusbrief im kanongeschichtlichen Paradgomenstreit (2018), 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Ibid. 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Ibid. The anti-marcionite character of 2 Peter is supported by the discussion of this letter in Adam., Dial. 56-58; 80 with the Marcionite Megethius. Adamantius not only insists that 2 Peter is consistent with Paul (Dial. 80), but he also refers to a saying (Dial. 58) which he introduces as a saying of Christ by which the scriptoral reliability of 2 Peter is underpinned, see for this W. Grünstäudl, "On Slavery": A Possible *Herrenwort* in 2 Pet 2:19 (2013), 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. See for this differentiation C. Colpe, Tatian "aus Assyrien", Marcion "aus Sinope" und die Gegner der "aus Rom" schreibenden Autoren der beiden Petrusbriefe und des 1. Clemensbriefes (1998), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. For a precise list of the witnesses see W. Grünstäudl, Geschätzt und bezweifelt. Der zweite Petrusbrief im kanongeschichtlichen Paradigmenstreit (2018), 74-81. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. M. Vinzent, Resetting the Origins of Christianity. A New Theory of Sources and Beginnings (2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Jan N. Bremmer, email to me of 23.6.2021. Thankfully, despite this praise, Jan has never been reluctant with criticism. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)