



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

Does the Apocalypse of Peter help to determine the date of 2 Peter?

Citation for published version:

Foster, P 2019, Does the Apocalypse of Peter help to determine the date of 2 Peter? in J Frey, M Den Dulk & JG Van Der Watt (eds), *2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Towards a New Perspective*. Biblical Interpretation , vol. 174, Brill, Leiden, pp. 217-260. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004399549_010

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1163/9789004399549_010](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004399549_010)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Early version, also known as pre-print

Published In:

2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



DOES THE *APOCALYPSE OF PETER* HELP TO DETERMINE THE DATE OF *2 PETER*?

PAUL FOSTER

1. *Introduction*

Jörg Frey has produced what can only be described as a splendid and magisterial commentary on Jude and 2 Peter. Specifically, in relation to 2 Peter, which will be the focus of the discussion in what follows, he has presented a ground-breaking treatment of that text. In particular, he offers lucid exegetical insights, a sympathetic reading of the theology of the epistle, and a fresh historical and contextual placement of this enigmatic writing.¹ His introduction and commentary on this writing will be consulted for generations to come, and scholars and interested readers alike will draw from his deep learning and insights with much profit. There is indeed much to praise, but nothing more so than the evident commitment to open enquiry and a desire to be guided solely by the weight of textual and contextual evidence wherever that may lead. This is, therefore, a model of scholarship from a person whom I regard both as a good friend and a leading researcher within the field of New Testament studies. In the same vein, Jörg Frey's Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament,² published in this volume, exemplify that same spirit of irenic, evidence-based scholarship, which is something to which all scholars should aspire.

In these lectures, Frey presents three carefully articulated new perspectives on the letter. In turn these are first, the literary relations that 2 Peter might share with other texts – with special focus on the relationship with the *Apocalypse of Peter*; second, a fresh exploration of the eschatology of the epistle which is a central topic of concern for the author; and third, consideration of the ethics of the letter with particular focus on the interplay with soteriology, since this has often been a source of criticism in relation to the author's thought.³ In this discussion here, it is the first of these three foci that will be examined. To orient readers to what will be presented, it will be argued that Frey's suggestion (following Grünstäudl⁴) that 2 Peter is literarily dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter* cannot be upheld when one considers the textual and contextual evidence that is being presented in favour of that supposition. Although arguing counter to Frey's own conclusion in regard to this matter, it must be acknowledged that Frey has opened up a fascinating possibility that deserves careful and considered investigation. It is hoped that the tone of this investigation may emulate that reasoned and measured scholarship, which is the hallmark of Jörg Frey's own meticulous research.

With great care Frey seeks a new historical contextualization in which to situate the composition, polemics, and theological response presented in 2 Peter. While he notes various literary connections and dependencies, he states 'there is only one writing of the 2nd century for which we can assume a literary connection with 2 Peter – the *Apocalypse of Peter*.'⁵ To advance this position, Frey presents five observations which together provide evidence for the position that there is a case of literary dependency between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of*

¹ J. Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, THzNT 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015).

² J. Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, delivered Thursday 7 April 2016.

³ The thought of the letter has been characterized as 'un-Christian in spirit.' See E.A. Abbott, 'Appendix V: The Second Epistle to St. Peter Contrasted with the Gospel of John', in *From Letter to Spirit: An Attempt to Reach Through Varying Voices the Abiding Word* (London: A&C Black, 1903) 443-467, here 447.

⁴ W. Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes* (WUNT II.353; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

⁵ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, 9.

Peter, and, of equal importance for his case, that this evidence also establishes the temporal priority of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in regards to 2 Peter. Each of these five arguments will be considered in detail and in turn. Thus the textual parallels will be considered where they are the basis of certain of the five points, or alternatively when a more conceptual argument is being suggested then the logical weight of the inferential hypothesis being advanced will be subjected to close examination. Furthermore, while these points are laid out with great clarity in his Radboud Prestige Lectures the discussion will also draw upon places in his commentary where those points are made in greater depth or with different nuance,⁶ as well as referring to the seminal discussion in Wolfgang Grünstäudl's monograph,⁷ which Frey praises and acknowledges as the origin of his own position concerning the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. However, before turning to Frey's five points that he views as being in favour of the literary dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it is helpful first to consider previous discussions of the dating of 2 Peter, then especially to consider the way in which the *Apocalypse of Peter* has been utilised to provide a datum for dating 2 Peter.

2. Scholarly Discussion of the Dating of 2 Peter

If the range of proposed dates for 2 Peter is any guide, then establishing the date of this letter is one of the most vexed dating problems involving any of the writings that were later gathered to form the New Testament. For instance, in regard to Galatians, while there is dispute regarding when to date this letter, the range of options regularly suggested is relative narrow. Typically, those who hold to the so-called southern Galatian hypothesis have tended to date the letter early,⁸ those who espouse the northern Galatian hypothesis date it later – but often less than a decade later.⁹ There are, however, certain others who hold to the southern Galatian hypothesis, but adopt a later date closer to that typically held by proponents of the northern Galatian hypothesis.¹⁰ There are also other scholars support a northern Galatian destination for the letter, along with a relatively early date.¹¹ The date range in question usually involves dates between 48-58 C.E. In relation to the gospels the dating range is often wider than is the case with the authentic Pauline epistles, but typically it is restricted to a few decades. The Gospel of Mark is a case in point. Although not a widely adopted position, it has been suggested that Mark was written in the early 40s in response to the Caligula crisis.¹²

⁶ Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 170-173.

⁷ Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, esp. 97-147.

⁸ Co-ordinating the two visits mentioned in Galatians with the first two visits in Acts (Acts 9:26-30; 11:30//12:25) usually is taken to imply an early date and a southern Galatian destination. Therefore, both Bruce and Longenecker suggest a dating prior to the Apostolic Council of Acts 15, with a date of composition around 48 C.E. See F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on Galatians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 55; R.N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Dallas: Word, 1990) lxxxviii.

⁹ Classic articulation of the northern Galatian hypothesis is found in Lightfoot's commentary, J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, tenth ed. (London: Macmillan, 1890) 36-56. However, it should be noted that more

¹⁰ Dunn argues for a south Galatian destination and 'a date as late as the mid-50s.' See J.D.G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* BNTC (London: A&C Black, 1993) 8.

¹¹ In favour of this position de Boer argues that Barnabas was not present when Paul founded the Galatian churches, so this observation 'supports the "North Galatia" hypothesis.' However, in relation to date he states, 'it is probable that Galatians was written somewhat later than 1 Thessalonians, as Paul's second surviving letter whose authenticity is undisputed. A likely date for the letter to the Galatians is thus 51 C.E.' M.C. de Boer, *Galatians*, NTL (Louisville: WJK, 2011) 5, 11.

¹² Crossley suggests that the events of the Caligula crisis that occurred around 40 C.E. may be in view especially in Mk 13, and may be determinative for the composition of the gospel as a whole. He states that the weight of evidence suggests 'A date for Mark between the mid to late thirties and the mid forties.' J.G. Crossley, *The*

More representative is the divide between scholars as to whether to date Mark prior to the destruction of Jerusalem,¹³ or subsequent to the fall of the city.¹⁴ Leaving aside rarely supported idea that Mark's gospel reflects the Caligula crisis, the vast majority of New Testament scholars tend to date it somewhere between 65-75 C.E. Which is again within the range of a single decade.¹⁵

In contrast, the range of dates proposed for 2 Peter spans a far greater period of time. For those who assume the letter is a genuine writing of the apostle, the letter is typically dated to the 60s. For instance, Bigg holds that 'the Epistle is really the work of St. Peter, but that a different amanuensis [in comparison with 1 Peter] was used.'¹⁶ Furthermore, following Zahn, he comes to the position that the letter 'was probably sent from Antioch shortly before the time when St. Peter went to Rome (60-63), to Jewish Churches in Palestine.'¹⁷ Bigg mentions, but does not necessarily follow Zahn's assumption that the letter known as 2 Peter was written before the work known as 1 Peter.¹⁸ On the other hand, among those who hold non-Petrine authorship, the date of the epistle can range from shortly after the death of Peter (admittedly, itself an unknown date) until some time in the late second century. Therefore, linking 2 Peter to any specific context or circumstances is problematic and remains highly contested even among recent commentators.

Writing slightly after Bigg, Mayor came to a different position regarding the probable date of 2 Peter. First, he set forth the external evidence of the citation of the letter by early Christian writers, which would in turn demonstrate the existence of epistle. Mayor's examination of such citations suggested that they do not demonstrate attestation of the letter prior to Clement of Alexandria at the earliest. Mayor next turned to analysing the internal features of the letter to gain clues to the date of composition. His first piece of textual evidence is 2 Pet 3:4 concerning 'the passing away of the first generation of Christians.'¹⁹ From this piece of evidence alone he concludes that the date of the letter cannot be earlier than 90 C.E. The second piece of evidence involves the reference to a collection of Pauline writings in 2 Pet 3:16, both referred to as *γραφαί*, and which have been in circulation for sufficient time to be misinterpreted. Thus he concludes that, '125 A.D. is about the earliest possible date for 2 Peter'. Then he continues by opening up the possibility of a later date, '[i]f the consideration of these various arguments leads us to postpone the date of 2 P. to the second quarter of the Second Century, it of course compels us to reconsider our interpretation of the resemblances noticed between 2 P. and any writings prior to 150.'²⁰ That observation leads Mayor to make a detailed comparison between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which will be considered in the following section.

Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity, JSNTSS 266 (London: T&T Clark – a Continuum Imprint, 2004) 208.

¹³ Typical of this view, Adela Collins states, 'Since the "desolating sacrifice" and the destruction of the temple seem to belong to the future from the point of view of the evangelist, the Gospel was probably written before 70 CE.' A.Y. Collins, *Mark*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 14.

¹⁴ See J.S. Kloppenborg, 'Evocatio Deorum and the Date of Mark', *JBL* 124/3 (2005) 419-450

¹⁵ For the date range of 65-75 C.E. encapsulating the central range of scholarly opinions see M.D. Hooker, *The Gospel according to Saint Mark*, BNTC (London: A&C Black, 1991) 8.

¹⁶ C. Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Jude and St. Peter*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901) 242.

¹⁷ Bigg, *Epistles of St. Jude and St. Peter*, 247.

¹⁸ However, it does not appear to be the case that Bigg completely rules out the possibility of reversing the order of the two Petrine epistles. For whereas he dates 2 Peter to 60-63 C.E., he offers a wider date range for 1 Peter. He states that, 'it seems the most likely supposition that the First Epistle of St. Peter was written between A.D. 58 and A.D. 64.' Bigg, *Epistles of St. Jude and St. Peter*, 247. This wider range of dates leaves open the possibility that 1 Peter was written after 2 Peter.

¹⁹ J.B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907) cxxv.

²⁰ Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxvii.

Perceived as a relevant factor in dating 2 Peter, Kelly speaks of a ‘luxuriant crop of pseudo-Petrine literature which sprang up around the memory of the Prince of the apostles.’²¹ This literary creativity undertaken in the name of Peter is seen as the product of the second century, with both 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* being part of this output of written works. Moreover, Kelly sees the two texts related, with the *Apocalypse* drawing on the Epistle. Hence he states,

2 Peter was studied and used by the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and is probably the earliest of the group (just as it is certainly much the finest in quality), although it may possibly be contemporary with the *Preaching*.²²

On this basis Kelly comes down in favour of an early second century date, stating that the relevant data concur with a date of 100-110 C.E. He also accepts the suggestion of Egypt as a likely place of composition.²³ This is also based on the reception of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter*, ‘which is probably of Egyptian provenance.’²⁴

Bauckham presents wide ranging literary evidence for dating 2 Peter, describing (i) documents known to 2 Peter;²⁵ (ii) documents roughly contemporary with 2 Peter;²⁶ and (iii) documents dependent on 2 Peter.²⁷ Bauckham also argues that the comment in 2 Pet 3:4 concerning the fathers falling asleep provides strong evidence of the date of the epistle. Here, ‘the fathers’ are understood to be ‘the generation of the apostles’, and hence would include ‘people born no later than c. A.D. 10’.²⁸ From this Bauckham states, ‘[t]hus 3:4 alone enables us to date 2 Peter with considerable probability c. A.D. 80-90.’²⁹ The confidence and precision that is derived from this small textual detail is impressive, however, others may not think such a detail will bear the weight Bauckham places upon it. Harrington, presumably following Bauckham, also draws on 2 Pet 3:4 as a reference to ‘the passing of the apostles and their generation of Christians’ and thus dates the letter to ‘the very late first century or early second century C.E.’³⁰

Davids proposes a very broad range of possible dates for the composition of letter, stating regardless of one’s position on authorship it must have been written between A.D. 64-110. Here the latter date is determined on the basis of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He states, ‘we can say that it is absolutely clear that 2 Peter was written before A.D. 140 and most likely before A.D. 110 since that is the probable range of dates within which the *Apocalypse of Peter* was written, a work that borrows from 2 Peter.’³¹ Two things are striking about this statement. First, given the level of circumspection concerning the date of 2 Peter there is an almost reverse confidence in the date of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Second, it is observable that Bauckham’s arguments from his commentary have been accepted wholesale – in terms of the date of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and direction of literary dependence for the two works, and as a concomitant the implications that he draws in regard to the dating of 2 Peter. However,

²¹ J.N.D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, BNTC (London: A&C Black, 1969) 236.

²² Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 236.

²³ Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 237.

²⁴ Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 236.

²⁵ The first set of documents are dated between 50-80 C.E. and include the Pauline letters, Jude, 1 Peter, and a Jewish apocalypse used in 2 Pet 3. R.J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco: Word, 1983) 157.

²⁶ The second set of documents, dated between 80-100 C.E. are viewed as contemporary compositions. This set includes *The Shepherd of Hermas*, *1 Clement*, and *2 Clement*. The dating of *2 Clement* does not reflect the scholarly consensus. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 157.

²⁷ Documents dependent on 2 Peter are listed as the *Apocalypse of Peter* (c. 110-140 C.E.), and the *Acts of Peter* (c. 180 C.E.). Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 157.

²⁸ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158.

²⁹ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158.

³⁰ D.P. Senior and D.J. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, Sacra Pagina 15 (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2003) 237.

³¹ P.H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 131.

Bauckham's more specific dating of the *Apocalypse* to the Bar Kokhba revolt is not discussed.³²

Donelson provides little basis for the dating he ascribes to letter, apart from the dating of the Bodmer papyrus (P⁷²). Here he repeats the standard dating to the third century, although that datum has been recently questioned. Hence in relation to date he states, '[i]t could have been written any time in the second century. Most commentators think the first half of that century would be more likely than the second half. Sometime between 120 and 150 C.E. would be a good guess, but it is only a guess.'³³

Recently, Grünstäudl has argued for the literary dependence of 2 Peter not only upon the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but also on the writings of Justin Martyr. In particular, he argues that 2 Peter is dependent upon Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, with the key parallels being found between Justin, *Dial.* 81.1-3; 82.1-3 and 2 Pet 1:18, 21-2:1; 3:8, 13.³⁴ The key elements revolve around the shared phrases 'there will be a new heaven and a new earth' (*Dial.* 81.1) and 'we are looking for new heaven and a new earth' (2 Pet 3:13), and Justin's statement that 'the day of the Lord is as a thousand years' (*Dial.* 81.3) and the Petrine comment 'one day with the Lord is as a thousand years' (2 Pet 3:8). Not only are there a few differences in the phraseology, but more significantly these are both memorable and stock phrases. However, based on these parallels, Grünstäudl comes to the following conclusion.

In Verbund mit der Annahme, 2 Petr sei im alexandrinischen Umfeld des Clemens entstanden, bildet 2 Petr überdies gewissermaßen einen Brüchentext zwischen Justin und Clemens, respective Rom und Alexandrien, ohne das seine Bekanntschaft mit Justin im Alexandrien der zweiten Hälfte des zweiten Jahrhunderts angesichts der Rezeptionsgeschichte von Justins Werken und des Befundes bei Clemens zu überraschen brauchte.³⁵

Grünstäudl dating of 2 Peter to the second half of the second century was also suggested by earlier scholars, although not advanced with such detailed analysis. For instance, Knopf proposed the similar date range of 150-180 C.E.³⁶

Lastly, in this representative rather than exhaustive survey, Jörg Frey comes to the following position on the date of 2 Peter. He provides no absolute date, but instead situates the dating of the epistle based on literary and conceptual relations.

Ob 2Petr - wie Grünstäudl vermutet - auch noch Justin kennt und dann frühestens um 160 n. Chr. zu datieren wäre, ist zweifelhaft, doch bleibt eine Zeitspanne um die Mitte des 2. Jh.s (140 - 160 n. Chr.) als wahrscheinlichster Zeitraum der Entstehung des Schreibens. Die Wahrnehmung sachlicher und sprachlicher Parallelen in Texten der Apostolischen Väter (v. a. Hermas, 2Clem) und die Tatsache dass eine positive Bezeugung bei den Autoren des späten 2. Jh.s (einschließlich Clemens) noch fehlt, bestätigen dies. Eine wesentlich frühere Ansetzung empfiehlt sich nicht.³⁷

In particular, the relationship to the *Apocalypse of Peter* is key to Frey case for dating 2 Peter sometime around the middle of the second century. In the Radboud lectures, Frey states that '2 Peter comes after the *Apocalypse of Peter* and reacts to it.'³⁸ Even more significantly he states that 'Second Peter draws on certain elements of the *Apocalypse*, but it does so in a critical distance.'³⁹ This 'critical distance' is temporal in nature, and thus is another indicator of a date no earlier than the middle of the second century.

³² See R. Bauckham, 'The *Apocalypse of Peter*: A Jewish Christian *Apocalypse* from the time of Bar Kokhba', in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 160-258.

³³ L.R. Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude – A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: WJK, 2010) 209.

³⁴ Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 206-226, esp. 207.

³⁵ Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 293.

³⁶ R. Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (KEK 10; Göttingen, 1912) 257.

³⁷ Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 186-187.

³⁸ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, 15.

³⁹ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, 15.

This brief survey has shown that dates in the range 60-180 C.E., and in some cases even later, have been suggested as plausible possibilities for the time of composition of the letter. Although only touched upon in this section, the relationship between 2 Peter the *Apocalypse of Peter* has been pivotal in a number of the suggestions about the date of the epistle. So now it is helpful to consider in greater detail the role the *Apocalypse of Peter* has played in attempts to secure the date of 2 Peter.

3. *The Apocalypse of Peter and the Dating of 2 Peter*

The contention of Jörg Frey, both in his commentary and Radboud lectures, that there exists a literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* that assists in dating 2 Peter, is not without precedent. The relationship between these two texts has been discussed in detail in the important set of studies by Richard Bauckham, although he comes to markedly different conclusions to those advanced by Frey. While Bauckham provides a relatively recent and commendably comprehensive discussion of that relationship, the initial investigation of the link between the two texts commenced soon after the discovery of the Akhmîm Greek fragment (P.Cair. 10759) of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was published. Building on those initial observations, implications were drawn in relation to the dating of 2 Peter. It is helpful to trace briefly those discussions in order to ascertain the basis of the arguments currently being advanced, and to understand precisely what is new in the recent proposals suggested by Grünstäudl and Frey.

The *editio princeps* of the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was published in 1892 by U. Bouriant, under the auspices of the *Mission archéologique française au Caire*.⁴⁰ For Bouriant the discovery of two Greek fragments of 1 Enoch, in the same codex that housed the fragment the *Apocalypse of Peter*, was the more important textual find within the contents of the small parchment book. However, when the *editio princeps* was published far greater attention, especially in English language scholarship, was focused upon the first text contained in the codex, the *Gospel of Peter*.⁴¹ The discussion of both the *Gospel* and the *Apocalypse of Peter* received a more balanced reception in French,⁴² and in German⁴³ scholarship. Yet, even in continental scholarship the focus of attention fell more heavily upon the *Gospel of Peter*, rather than on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Notwithstanding this imbalance in English language publications, some important studies appeared which centred on the study of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.⁴⁴ In fact it was the earliest publication that appeared after the *editio princeps*, which immediately noted the possible parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter.

⁴⁰ U. Bouriant, 'Fragments du texte grec du livre d'Énoch et de quelques écrits attribués à saint Pierre', dans *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire* (t. IX, fasc. 1; Paris: Ernest Leroux 1892).

⁴¹ For instance, see H.B. Swete, *The Akhmîm Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of St Peter* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893).

⁴² A. Lods, 'L'Évangile et l'Apocalypse de Pierre avec le texte grec du livre d'Hénoch. Text publiés en fac-similé, par l'héliogravure d'après les photographies du manuscrit de Gizéh' dans *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire* (t. IX, fasc. 3; Paris: Ernest Leroux 1893) 217-231, 322-335. The page numbers are often cited as 217-235. This is fully understandable because page 322 follows page 231 without any intervening or lost material. The change to numbers in the three-hundred range is presumably due to an error in typesetting.

⁴³ A. Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus* (TU IX, 2, J. C. Hinrichs: Leipzig 1893).

⁴⁴ See M.R. James' contribution in the joint volume J.A. Robinson & M.R. James, *The Gospel according to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter: Two Lectures on the Newly Recovered Fragments together with the Greek Texts* (London: C.J. Clay and Sons, 1892).

3.1 M.R. James: Listing Possible Parallels

The first published treatment that drew attention to the similarities was that of M.R. James in 1892.⁴⁵ He listed fifteen passages from 2 Peter that possible found parallels with twelve passages contained in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. At this stage James adopted a non-committed approach to explaining these similarities. He stated,

What the bearing of these resemblances may be upon the vexed question of the authenticity of 2 Peter, I will not take it upon myself to determine; only it must be remembered that three explanations of them are possible. Either the author of the *Apocalypse* designedly copied the Epistle (as S. Jude may also have done), or the *Apocalypse* and Epistle are products of one and the same school, or the resemblances do not exist.⁴⁶

It is striking that James does not even entertain as one of his possibilities, at this stage, the option that it may have been 2 Peter that was dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The reason for this is unclear. Maybe it was felt that the New Testament letter *must* be prior to the *Apocalypse of Peter*, or maybe that the developed treatment of the fate of the dead in the *Apocalypse* was seen as being a later product. Hence, it is simply not possible to fathom the basis on which James did not consider that option as a viable possibility. Furthermore, when he stated as a third possibility that ‘the resemblances do not exist’, that was obviously a shorthand for saying that they do not establish a relationship, literary or otherwise, between the two texts.

However, in a publication twenty years later James entertained a slightly fuller range of options, and also was willing to state his own position on the matter. In his commentary on 2 Peter and Jude, after presenting sixteen passages drawn from 2 Peter that might be paralleled in the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* he stated,

In view of these passages it has been held that the two writings come from the same hand, or one is under an obligation to the other. To me it seems safest to class them together as works composed in the same circle but not necessarily by the same author, and as perhaps containing expansions of teaching which tradition – possibly trustworthy – had handed down as coming from the Apostle.⁴⁷

Thus James considers four possibilities, three of which he rejects. First, he dismisses the supposition that there was common authorship of both writings (see section 3.3, W. Sanday). However, in distinction from his earlier where he only entertained the possibility that the *Apocalypse* copied from 2 Peter, in his commentary (while stated in an opaque fashion) he appears to be open to the possibility of either text copying from the other, although he does not support either of these options. The reason for not adopting direct literary dependency is not stated, but presumably it is because the parallels are not found to be extensive or sufficiently strong. Instead he adopts the position that the two writings are, as he described it in his initial publication, ‘products of one and the same school’, but in his commentary as ‘works composed in the same circle’. These statements appear to represent the same position stated in different terms.

3.2 Adolf von Harnack: The Dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*

Writing shortly after James in 1893, Harnack likewise noted a number of possible parallels between the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter. In total he listed sixteen passages from 2 Peter that might exhibit parallels with the *Apocalypse*.⁴⁸ At that stage he made the following observation on the kinship between the two writings, but as he

⁴⁵ Robinson & James, *The Gospel according to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter*, 52-53.

⁴⁶ Robinson & James, *The Gospel according to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter*, 53.

⁴⁷ M.R. James, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the Epistle General of Jude* (Cambridge: CUP, 1912) xxviii.

⁴⁸ A. von Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus* (TU IX, 2, J. C. Hinrichs: Leipzig 1893) 87-88.

stated at this point he chose to leave aside a discussion of the direction and nature of the relationship.

Dagegen sind, wie gezeigt worden, der 2. Brief und die Apokalypse blutsverwandt (wie die Verwandtschaft zu deuten ist, lasse ich dahingestellt). Schon bevor das Apokalypsenfragment aufgefunden worden ist, habe ich darauf hingedeutet, dass in Alexandrian Clemens die Apokalypse benutzt, aber nicht den 2. Brief, Origenes dagegen diesen benutzt, aber jene nicht. Die Geschichte der beiden, innerlich zusammengehörenden Schriften ist noch genauer zu studiren.⁴⁹

However, it was not until later that he proposed that it was in fact 2 Peter that was dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*.⁵⁰ This position was adopted by several other German scholars,⁵¹ but it did not gain widespread support in English-speaking scholarship.⁵²

3.3 W. Sanday: Two texts with a Common Author

In his Bampton lectures of 1893, delivered shortly after the initial publication of the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Sanday presented his understanding of the relationship of that text to 2 Peter in order to comment on the authorship of the epistle. Drawing upon the parallels proposed by James, Sanday states that ‘[t]he resemblances are so marked as I think to prove that the two writings are nearly connected.’⁵³ He mentions two possibilities that he rejects: ‘that the writer of the Apocalypse may have imitated the Epistle or that both may be affected by some common influence.’⁵⁴ Without presenting any textual comparisons or arguments for arriving at his own conclusion, Sanday states his preferred explanation by saying that it is ‘on the whole more probable that the writings are both by the same hand.’⁵⁵ Despite the lack of argumentation, Sanday’s position has been frequently discussed in the subsequent literature, yet it gained few adherents.

3.4 A.E. Simms: The Dependence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter

Writing in *The Expositor* in 1898, Ernest Simms examined the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He framed his discussion by stating that ‘[t]he discovery of the “Apocalypse” has introduced a new element into the 2 Peter controversy.’⁵⁶ Although Simms does not explicitly define the nature of ‘controversy’ that he mentions in his opening sentence, it appears not primarily to be the dating of the epistle but rather the question of its apostolic authorship. Consequently, in order to support Petrine authorship an early date is required, rather than a second century date. Simms lays out three possibilities that he sees as arising from points of similarity in language between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. These are that, ‘the two works proceed from the same hand, or the writer of the Epistle borrowed from the Apocalypse, or the author of the Apocalypse is indebted to the Epistle.’⁵⁷

⁴⁹ Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*, 89.

⁵⁰ A. von Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897) 471-472.

⁵¹ A. Jülicher, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (trans from 2nd German edition, 1900, by J.P. Ward; London: Smith, Elder, 1904) 239; H. Weinel, ‘Die Offenbarung des Petrus’, in E. Hennecke (ed.), *Handbuch zu den Neutestamentlichen Apokryphen* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1904) 212 (although not in the 1924 edition of this work); G. Hollmann, ‘Der Brief Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus’, in J. Weiss (ed.), *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2 (2nd edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907) 573; R. Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (KEK; 7th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912) 255.

⁵² For example, one of the few English-speaking scholars who adopted this viewpoint see J. Moffatt, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (3rd edition; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1918) 367.

⁵³ W. Sanday, *Inspiration: Eight Lectures on the Early History and Origin of the Doctrine of Biblical Inspiration*, Being the Bampton Lectures for 1893 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893) 347.

⁵⁴ Sanday, *Inspiration*, 347.

⁵⁵ Sanday, *Inspiration*, 348.

⁵⁶ A.E. Simms, ‘Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter’, *The Expositor* 5/8 (1898) 460-471, here 460.

⁵⁷ Simms, ‘Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter’, 460.

Simms states that only the final proposal is consonant with Petrine authorship. What is perhaps more interesting is the clear presentation of the three alternative hypothesis that have tended to define much of the discussion.

Simms notes that Clement of Alexandria provides the earliest external attestation for the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and then catalogues what he views as other secure references to the text in early Christian sources. He then proceeds to construct his argument on three fronts. First he rejects M.R. James' contention that a significant number of later Christian writings are indebted to the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In this way he creates an impression of the limited popularity and circulation of the work. Elements that James sees in early Christian works as having been derived from the *Apocalypse of Peter* are instead seen as part of the common stock of images drawn. Hence he states,

By the time Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Aristophanes, Plato, Vergil, and hosts of others had contributed their descriptions of the other world, there existed among the Greeks and Romans a well-defined stereotyped picture of Elysium and Tartarus. A common stock of materials was to hand whereon all artists might draw. In Elysium there would be brilliant light, flowers, foliage, fragrance and inhabitants to match; in Tartarus, darkness, fire, squalor and mud, stock crimes, stock punishments. These would appear in some shape or other in every such piece of literature, so that in the process of time a writer would not be directly indebted to another for his description.⁵⁸

Having suggested the limited circulation of the text, he then turns to his second argument concerning the textual affinities of 2 Peter.

Here he engages in a count of various verbal features. He notes that there are 153 words in common between 1 Peter and 2 Peter, but only 100 words in common between 1 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. From this enumeration he draws the conclusion that, '[t]his shows somewhat greater relative closeness, *on the score of words*, between 1 Peter and 2 Peter than between 1 Peter and the Fragment [i.e. the *Apocalypse of Peter*].'⁵⁹ It is strange, however, that he has not provided a count of the words shared between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In this section of the argument he also notes that of the 57 NT *hapax legomena* [which he calls *hapax eiremena*] contained in 2 Peter, 24 are not found in the classical authors. Whereas for the *Apocalypse of Peter* of the 45 *hapax legomena* only 2 are not found in classical authors. It is also noted for 1 Peter that of the 65 *hapax legomena*, 27 are not found in classical authors.⁶⁰ These arguments are intended to highlight the verbal affinities between 1 Peter and 2 Peter, while creating a sense of linguistic distance between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

The final argument concerns the literary parallels adduced by M.R. James between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Simms briefly works through fourteen literary parallels between the two works that were suggested. His opening comment informs readers of his perspective: '[a] microscopic study of any piece of literature will cause us to fancy resemblances where they do not always exist.'⁶¹ His conclusion to this third argument is stronger still, stating that the resemblances between the two texts are not as great as imagined, that the two works differ radically in tone, style, language and morale, and that the author of the the *Apocalypse of Peter* has attempted to appropriate Petrine authority to legitimize his own work.

By contrast, and as part of the overall conclusion, the affinities between 1 Peter and 2 Peter are seen as being sufficiently significant to suggest common authorship. However, in relation to the *Apocalypse of Peter* Simm states,

The explanation is, that the author of the Epistle wrote when this Apocalypse was not yet in existence; he had written no such work nor had had any such vision.

⁵⁸ Simms, 'Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', 462.

⁵⁹ Simms, 'Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', 465.

⁶⁰ For further details, see Simms, 'Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', 465.

⁶¹ Simms, 'Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', 466.

Thus the early date of the Apocalypse provides an earlier date for Second Peter.⁶²

Simms argument appears to be relatively successful on two fronts. First, he shows that some of the imagery in the *Apocalypse of Peter* is common to wider Greco-Roman writings concerning the underworld and post-mortem punishments. Second, he has demonstrated that a number, but not all of James' parallels were extremely slight. However, the value of his discussion of shared words perhaps carries far less weight than Simms ascribed to it. Furthermore, his final statement is perplexing. He makes reference to the 'early date of the Apocalypse', but it is hard to see how a date much earlier than Clement of Alexandria's citation of the text has been established on the basis of the evidence that Simms presented. Therefore, even if Simms is correct that the *Apocalypse of Peter* post-dates 2 Peter, the latter text could still be composed in the second century any time prior to the writings of Clement of Alexandria.

3.5 F. Chase: Two Texts from the Same School

Another significant discussion of the relationship between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter was conducted by Frederic Chase, in a discussion that is sometimes overlooked perhaps due to its location in a multi-volume reference work.⁶³ Chase draws largely on the parallels adduced by James and then sets out five possibilities to explain the data. His five options may be quoted in a summarized form:

1. The coincidences may be boldly put aside as chance resemblances without significance.
2. Did the writer of the *Apocalypse* borrow from 2 P?
3. Did the writer of 2 P borrow from the *Apocalypse*?
4. Are the two documents the work of one writer?
5. Are the two documents the work of two writers who belonged to the same school, whose thoughts moved in the same directions, and to whom the same expressions and words had grown familiar?⁶⁴

Interestingly, only the first option is not framed as an open question and Chase dismissively puts it aside, commenting '[t]his view hardly needs discussion' and '[i]t can scarcely be held by a serious critic'.⁶⁵ The second view is also swiftly rejected since, according to Chase, the shared phrases appear naturally in the *Apocalypse* and do not have the feel of source material, some of the shared phrases are repeated in the *Apocalypse* thus suggesting they were the author's own formulations, and none of the 'strange and remarkable phrases of 2 P'⁶⁶ are replicated by the *Apocalypse*. In relation to the third view, Chase comments that it 'appears to be a quite possible one'.⁶⁷ The fourth view, the position advanced by Sanday, is discussed at length but rejected primarily on the basis of 'the literary style of the two documents', with the *Apocalypse* adjudged to be 'simple and natural in style'⁶⁸ in contrast to 2 Peter. No direct comment is offered in relation to the fifth view. Instead Chase states that '[a]mong the five possible explanations the choice seems to lie between (3) and (5)'.⁶⁹

The precise reasons why Chase rejects the theory that 2 Peter was literarily dependent upon the *Apocalypse of Peter*, in favour of the view that both originate from the same 'school' is not entirely clear. He draws attention to a similarity not only in words and definitely marked ideas, but more generically in looser 'general conceptions'. Presumably this similarity of mind-set is seen not as the result of literary borrowing, but arising from

⁶² Simms, 'Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', 471.

⁶³ F.H. Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', in J. Hastings (ed.), *A Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1900) 796-818, especially 814-816.

⁶⁴ Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', 815-816.

⁶⁵ Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', 815.

⁶⁶ Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', 815.

⁶⁷ Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', 815.

⁶⁸ Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', 815.

⁶⁹ Chase, 'Peter, Second Epistle of', 816.

writing both texts in the same context where similar ideas were in circulation. It may be asked whether the ideas in 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* are so distinctive that they must have arisen in the same narrow community or ‘school’, rather than simply reflecting the thought world of the numerically small nascent Christian movement.

3.6 J.B. Mayor: The Use of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter*

Writing less than a decade after Simms’ discussion, Mayor notes a closer resemblance between 2 Peter and the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* than exists between 2 Peter and the putative parallels to the writings of Josephus, Philo, and a decree of Stratonicea. He regards the latter possibility as ‘due in the main to commonplaces of rhetorical study, set prefatory phrases, and the like.’⁷⁰ In regard to the potential parallel between the transfiguration scene in the synoptic tradition and the mountain top revelatory scene in the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, after noting a few points of contact Major observes a number of substantive differences. He states,

The time is apparently after the Resurrection. It is the Twelve and not the Three to whom the vision is manifested. There is no voice from heaven. The two saints are anonymous, so that the passage might seem to be rather a working up of the appearance of the saints mentioned in Mt. 27⁵³ than the Transfiguration of the Lord.⁷¹

However, drawing upon various of the other parallels suggested by James,⁷² Mayor considered several of these as reflecting some type of relation between the two writings.⁷³ He discusses two possible explanations. The first is the theory of Sanday, ‘that the two writings are both by the same hand.’⁷⁴ In response Mayor catalogues differences in language, content, and tone.⁷⁵ Consequently, he rejects Sanday’s theory, and in the process rejects the notion that the author of 2 Peter drew upon the *Apocalypse*: ‘[i]t appears to me therefore very improbable that the author of our Epistle wrote the *Apocalypse*, and I doubt very much whether he was in any way indebted to it.’⁷⁶ However, due to some similar phrases and shared ideas, Mayor considered it likely the the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was familiar with 2 Peter. This observation is not used to establish the date of 2 Peter, since in Mayor’s commentary the probable date of the letter, the second quarter of the second century, had been argued primarily on the basis of internal evidence, rather than on the basis of literary dependencies.

3.7 F. Spitta: Reinforcing the Case for the Dependence of the *Apocalypse* on 2 Peter

Writing in 1911, Spitta reinforced Simms’ position that it is the *Apocalypse of Peter* that is dependent upon 2 Peter.⁷⁷ Spitta considered a number of possible parallels, apparently drawing primarily on those cases mentioned by Harnack. After consideration of these textual comparisons Spitta came to the slightly exasperated and terse conclusion that,

Wie man bei dieser Sachlage nachweisen will, nicht die Apokalypse sei von dem Brief beeinflusst, sondern umgekehrt der Brief von der Apokalypse, ist mir unfäßlich. ... Der Brief ist älter als die Apokalypse. So warden den auch die sonstigen Berührungen beider Schriften miteinander auf

⁷⁰ Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxx.

⁷¹ Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxxi.

⁷² Robinson & James, *The Gospel according to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter*, 52.

⁷³ Mayor stated ‘[t]hese resemblances of subject and language seem too marked to be accidental.’ Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxxii.

⁷⁴ Sanday, *Inspiration*, 348.

⁷⁵ In relation to the description of the underworld in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, he comments, ‘[i]t seems to me that the whole tone of this has much more resemblance to the puerility of the *Erotica Scriptores* than it has to the dignified and serious tone of 2 Peter.’ Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxxii.

⁷⁶ Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxxiii-ccxxxiv.

⁷⁷ F. Spitta, ‘Die Petrusapokalypse und der zweite Petrusbrief’, *ZNW* 12 (1911) 237-242.

Abhängigkeit der Apokalypse von dem Briefe zurückgehen, wo sie nicht in gemeinsam benutzter Literatur oder religiöser Ausdrucksweise ihren Grund haben.⁷⁸

Bauckham, commenting on Spitta's study, adjudges that it 'was out of date as soon as it appeared, because the publication (in 1910) and recognition (in 1911) of the Ethiopic text of the Apocalypse of Peter should have put the question of the Ethiopic text of the Apocalypse of Peter and 2 Peter in a quite new light.'⁷⁹ In many ways this criticism is unduly harsh, and perhaps not entirely warranted, especially since after analysing the relationship on the basis of the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* Bauckham comes to basically the same conclusion as Spitta. If Bauckham is correct that the Ethiopic version more closely represents the original text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* than the Akhmîm Greek fragment, then he appears to have grounded the position of Simms and Spitta on a larger and earlier textual basis. There may be some examples in the Greek fragment that are due to later redactional activity, but this does not fatally undermine the case argued by Simms and Spitta as Bauckham suggests. What is more obvious is that the discussion of the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, as Buchholz and Bauckham both observe, 'ground virtually to a halt'⁸⁰ after the publication of Spitta's article.

3.8 D.D. Buchholz: The Need to Consider the Ethiopic Version

The published form of Buchholz doctoral dissertation is one of the most important works dealing with the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He provides an important survey of the history of research up to that date,⁸¹ but without specific focus on the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Although he does not provide his own analysis of this issue, in relation to the unpublished dissertation of D.H. Schmidt,⁸² where the author found no significant links between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter, Buchholz comments, 'he has ignored some of the basic connections between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter.' This suggests that Buchholz considered the parallels to be sufficiently strong to support a relationship between the two texts, but he does not state his own position on the nature of that relationship. However, he offers a *desideratum* that has been noted and taken up by others since he stated it. He comments that,

A thorough investigation of the relationship of the Ethiopic text to 2 Peter is much to be desired. A few brief remarks on this subject are made by M.R. James, but these are rather offhandedly dismissed by D.E. Schmidt in his study on the Peter Writings. The desired investigation is still awaited.⁸³

Since issuing that plea, others have taken up the challenge to study the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse* in relation to possible textual parallels contained in 2 Peter.

3.9 R. Bauckham: The Dependence of the Ethiopic Version of the *Apocalypse* on 2 Peter

Richard Bauckham refocused attention on the question of the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* exploring the implications and the evidence for the dating of both texts. Bauckham's contribution has in many ways become the reference point over the last three decades for many commentators writing on 2 Peter when they turn to the question of the date of the epistle. Although initially writing independently of Buchholz, Bauckham likewise notes the necessity of basing an examination of the relationship between 2 Peter and

⁷⁸ Spitta, 'Die Petrusapokalypse und der zweite Petrusbrief', 240-241.

⁷⁹ R. Bauckham, '2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', in R. Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovT Supps 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 290-303, here 291.

⁸⁰ D.D. Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 94-95.

⁸¹ Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 82-118.

⁸² D.H. Schmidt, 'The Petrine Writings: Their Redactors and Their Relationships', Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois, 1972).

⁸³ Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 96-97.

the *Apocalypse of Peter* on the Ethiopic version of the latter text. Thus he states, ‘E [the Ethiopic] must be judged substantially a reproduction of the original Apocalypse of Peter, while A is a secondary, edited version.’⁸⁴ Here Bauckham is, as he acknowledges, largely dependent on the arguments of James⁸⁵ and Prümm.⁸⁶ Bauckham contends that the Ethiopic version contains the whole of the Apocalypse of Peter, and that it is substantially identical with the original form of the *Apocalypse*.⁸⁷ Alongside this, however, that the Ethiopic is ‘a careless translation’⁸⁸ and that in regard to details the Ethiopic ‘is not always reliable, because ... the translation is poor and the text sometimes corrupt.’⁸⁹ Notwithstanding this Bauckham relies on the Ethiopic for identification of parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter.

Elsewhere, when Bauckham discusses specific parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter he identifies twenty-six possible items of correspondence. Of these twenty-six parallels fifteen depend on the Ethiopic text, six on the Akhmîm text, and five on the Rainer fragment – with four of the Rainer parallels also being found in the Ethiopic text, thus increasing the parallels with the Ethiopic to nineteen items.⁹⁰ Among these twenty-six parallels he finds eight to be ‘impressive’, of which five are with the Rainer fragment (four of which also occur in the Ethiopic) and the further three are derived uniquely from the Ethiopic. It is striking that none of the parallels that Bauckham considers as decisive are derived from the Akhmîm text, which was the basis on which the parallelism with 2 Peter was first proposed. Bauckham articulates his conclusion as follows:

My own reconstruction of the evidence gives weight to the hitherto unnoticed parallels between R and 2 Peter, as well as between E and 2 Peter, and concludes that the best evidence for a literary relationship is a series of correspondences which occur in close proximity in both works (in E 14 = R and 2 Pet. 1:14-15; and in E 15-17 = A 4-20 and 2 Pet. 1:16-18). These parallels are good evidence for a literary relationship when considered not as isolated points of contact but as a group of parallels. The direction of literary dependence is best indicated by the two transfiguration accounts, where dependence of the Apocalypse of Peter on 2 Peter is much more plausible than the opposite relationship.⁹¹

However, many of these ‘impressive’ parallels, especially in the transfiguration account, depend on a single word or short snippet of phrasing found in the Ethiopic, a text that Bauckham notes that in its details is ‘poor’ and ‘sometimes corrupt’. These appear to be precisely the types of details where a later scribe might assimilate the wording to a known text-form, and hence these correspondences may not be found in the original form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. This concern is only reinforced by the fact that the Akhmîm text in its account of mountain top epiphany (not a transfiguration story) is significantly divergent and shorter. Here it appears that the Ethiopic version has not only expanded the narrative at this point, but has also aligned it with the transfiguration account by introducing references to Moses and Elijah and a host of details derived from the synoptic tradition.

In terms of fixing the date for 2 Peter, Bauckham achieves this on the basis of his conclusion that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on the epistle. In regards to the former he argues that it ‘derives from Palestinian Jewish Christianity during the Bar Kokhba war of

⁸⁴ R.J. Bauckham, ‘The Apocalypse of Peter: Account of Research’, in Hildegard Temporini und Wolfgang Haase (eds), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II, 16-27 Bd, Principat. [Religion], herausgegeben von Wolfgang Haase. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988) II.25.6, 4712-4750, here 4718.

⁸⁵ M.R. James, ‘A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter’ *JTS* 12 (1910-1911) 36-54, 157, 362-383, 573-583.

⁸⁶ K. Prümm, ‘De genuine Apocalypsis Petri textu: Examen testium iam notorum et novi fragmenti Raineriana’, *Biblica* 10 (1929) 62-80.

⁸⁷ Bauckham, ‘The Apocalypse of Peter: Account of Research’, 4716.

⁸⁸ Bauckham, ‘The Apocalypse of Peter: Account of Research’, 4717.

⁸⁹ Bauckham, ‘The Apocalypse of Peter: Account of Research’, 4718.

⁹⁰ Bauckham, ‘2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter’, 294-302.

⁹¹ Bauckham, ‘The Apocalypse of Peter: Account of Research’, 4723.

132-135 C.E.⁹² Without interacting with the details of his argument, it is fair to say that most scholars who have considered the textual evidence contained in the *Apocalypse of Peter* are not convinced that the level of specific reference that Bauckham attributes to details in the text is persuasive for linking it to the Bar Kokhba revolt. However, for Bauckham, given that he confidently dates the *Apocalypse of Peter* to 132-135 C.E., this provided the *terminus ad quem* for the epistle. Elsewhere, based on the reference to the fathers falling asleep in 2 Pet 3:4, Bauckham finds strong evidence for the epistle being written some time between 80-90 C.E.⁹³ On Bauckham's reconstruction, this position is consistent with the fact that 2 Peter was in circulation and being used by the *Apocalypse of Peter* during the Bar Kokhba war.

The influence of Bauckham's work on a number of subsequent commentators can be illustrated through the statement made by Davids in his commentary. Without any out explanation or presentation of any evidence he simply states, 'we can say that it is absolutely clear that 2 Peter was written before A.D. 140 and most likely before A.D. 110 since that is the probable range of dates in which the *Apocalypse of Peter* was written, a work that borrows from 2 Peter.'⁹⁴ It is striking how in many commentaries written after Bauckham's own research that the dependence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter is taken as axiomatic and without need of demonstration. That is perhaps even more surprising when one examines the slender evidence-base and the highly contested debates around existence and direction of any proposed literary relationship between the two texts.

In broadly the same vein as Davids, Grene echoes similar sentiments when he comments on the priority of 2 Peter in relation to the *Apocalypse of Peter* and states that this offers proof of an early dating. He writes, '[t]he most striking attestation of 2 Peter comes from the apocryphal Apocalypse of Peter (ca. 132-135) ... As Bauckham notes, the use of 2 Peter by the Apocalypse of Peter "is sufficient to rule out a late date for 2 Peter".'⁹⁵ Grene helpfully cites a couple of possible textual parallels. However, a number of features of his argument are striking. First, the dating of the *Apocalypse of Peter* to ca. 132-135 reveals his acceptance of Bauckham's linking of the text to the Bar Kokhba rebellion. It may be debated whether the case for doing so is compelling. Second, the inference drawn that a late date is ruled out does not follow logically. Even if 2 Peter were indeed a text utilised by the *Apocalypse of Peter* that would only imply a date prior to 132 C.E. on Bauckham's reckoning. Most who reject a late date do not mean a date after the 130s, but any date in the early second century or late first century. The motivation is often (but not always) to date 2 Peter earlier in the first century, often early enough to allow for Petrine authorship. However, even the Bar Kochba *terminus ad quem* for 2 Peter still leaves open the possibility of a second century date for 2 Peter. A point recognized at least partially by Davids, since he states that the text could be as late as 110 C.E.⁹⁶

4. Arguments for the Literary Dependence of 2 Peter on the Apocalypse of Peter

Both in his commentary⁹⁷ and in an even more focused form in his Radboud Prestige Lectures,⁹⁸ Frey presents the case for the temporal priority of the *Apocalypse of Peter* over

⁹² R. Bauckham, 'The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba', in R. Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovT Supps 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 160-258, here 160.

⁹³ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158.

⁹⁴ P.H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Nottingham: Apollos, 2006) 131.

⁹⁵ G.L. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) 142.

⁹⁶ Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 131.

⁹⁷ Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 170-173.

⁹⁸ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, 12-15.

2 Peter, and for the latter’s literary dependence on the former. He presents five pieces of textual evidence which he sees as supporting this hypothesis, three of which involve literary parallels and two of which are inferential in nature derived from elements lacking in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. These five arguments will be examined in detail to assess both their individual value and cumulative weight in establishing the case that Frey and Grünstäudl⁹⁹ have recently articulated.

4.1 The Transfiguration Accounts

Frey suggests that the highly compressed first-person plural account of the transfiguration contained in 2 Peter (2 Pet 1:16-18) is aware of the Matthean version of the transfiguration story, but that it also draws some key elements from the enlarged version of the story contained in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* (Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15-17). Frey first describes Bauckham’s hypothesis, that the transfiguration account contained in the Ethiopic version of *Apoc. Pet.* 15-17 combines traditions from 2 Peter, which is independent of Matthew, with elements from the synoptic tradition.¹⁰⁰ He then calls upon his readers to entertain another scenario. Namely the following:

If 2 Peter is in fact aware of the Synoptic tradition and most probably the Gospel of Matthew, the argument turns: 2 Peter differs from Matthew just in those instances where 2 Peter and *Apoc. Pet.* concur. Thus the reference to the transfiguration in 2 Peter is better understood as a brief and focused combination of a reference to the Synoptic accounts, with the addition of particular features (“holy mountain,” heavenly voice, “honor and glory”) from the *Apocalypse of Peter* (E).¹⁰¹

These observations are based on Grünstäudl’s slightly earlier argument.¹⁰² To assess the degree of similarity between the transfiguration accounts in 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* it is helpful to set out the parallel texts in English translation. As has been noted, the description of the transfiguration in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is far more extensive than that of the transfiguration account in 2 Peter (and for that matter than the parallel account in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*).

2 Pet 1.16-18	Eth. <i>Apoc. Pet.</i> 15-17 ¹⁰³
<p>For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honour and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’— and we ourselves heard this voice borne from heaven when we were with Him on the</p>	<p>And my Lord Jesus Christ our King said to me: Let us go to the holy mountain. And his disciples came with him, praying. And behold, (there were) two men. And it was not possible for us to look at their face. For from one of them comes a light which shines more than the sun. And their clothes (are) shining, and it is not possible to tell, and there is nothing that prevails against them them in this world. There is no mouth which (in) its smoothness is able to tell the beauty of their splendor for astonishing is their appearance and wonderful. And the second, large I say, shines more than hail in his appearance. Rose flowers (are) images of the colour of his appearance and his body . . . And the hair of his head and from his shoulders and on their foreheads (is) a crown of nard woven in a beautiful flower. Like the rainbow in the sky (is) his hair. Thus (is) the loveliness of his face, and adorned with every ornament. And when we saw them suddenly, we were amazed. And I approached (to) God Jesus Christ and said to him ‘My Lord, who is (this)?’ And he said to me, ‘This is Moses and Elijah.’ And I said to him, ‘(Where are) Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the other righteous fathers?’ And he showed us a garden, open (and) large, a pleasant tree and full of the fruit of blessing, full of the smell of fragrance. Its smell (was) beautiful. And its smell comes to it, and from in it</p>

⁹⁹ Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, esp. 97-147.

¹⁰⁰ Bauckham, ‘2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter’, 290-303.

¹⁰¹ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament,

¹⁰² Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 121.

¹⁰³ This translation is taken from Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 232-244.

<p>holy mountain.</p>	<p>I saw a marvel: (there was) fruit often. And my Lord and God Jesus Christ said to me, “[And] you have seen the patriarchs, and like this (is) that which is their rest.’ And I rejoiced and believed that this (will be) ‘the honour and glory of those who pursued my righteousness.’ And I understood what is written in the book of my Lord Jesus Christ. And I said to him, ‘My Lord, do you wish that I make three tabernacles here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah?’ And he said to me in wrath, ‘Satan wages war against you, and hath veiled your understanding and the manner of life of this world defeats you. Your eyes will be uncovered and your ears opened up, that (there is) one tabernacle, which the hand of man has not made, which my heavenly Father has made for me and for the elect. And we saw (it), rejoicing.</p> <p>And behold, a voice came suddenly from heaven, saying, ‘This is my Son whom I love, and I have been pleased with him. Obey him!’ And a cloud large came over our head and (it was) very white and it lifted up our Lord and Moses and Elijah and I trembled in astonishment. And we watched and this heaven opened and we saw men who were in the flesh and the came and went to meet our Lord and Moses and Elijah and they went into the second heaven. And the word of the scripture was fulfilled, ‘This generation seeks him and seeks the face of the God of Jacob.’ And there was great fear and amazement in heaven. The angels flocked together that the word of scripture might be fulfilled which said, ‘Open the gates, princes.’ And then this heaven which had been opened was closed. And we prayed and went down from the mountain praising God who wrote the names of the righteous in the book of life in heaven.</p>
------------------------------	--

There is a further element that the texts share, which is not part of the synoptic tradition. They both use the christological title ‘Lord Jesus Christ’. Presumably this title is viewed as a common early Christian designation that it is not singled out as a significant point of contact. There is also an obvious similarity in the form of words spoken by the divine voice. In 2 Peter the utterance is ‘This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’ (2 Pet 1:17). Whereas in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* the voice declares, ‘This is my Son whom I love, and I have been pleased with him. Obey him!’ (Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15-17). These sayings need to be placed alongside their synoptic counterparts to properly assess the degree of unique textual affinity between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased (2 Pet 1:17).

This is my Son whom I love, and I have been pleased with him. Obey him! (Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15-17).

This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to him! (Matt 17:5)

This is My beloved Son, listen to him! (Mk. 9:7)

This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to him! (Lk. 9:35)

Although the saying in 2 Pet 1:17 does not contain a parallel to the final instruction, the form of wording in Greek is extremely close to Matthew.

ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός μου οὗτός ἐστιν εἰς ὃν ἐγὼ εὐδόκησα (2 Pet 1:17).

οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα (Matt 17:5)

The differences being the transposition of the οὗτός ἐστιν which stands as the opening two words in Matthew,¹⁰⁴ and the change of preposition from Matthew’s ἐν with dative relative pronoun to the preposition εἰς with the accusative relative pronoun.¹⁰⁵ Despite these minor differences the significant agreement in the Greek wording of 2 Pet 1:17 and Matt 17:5

¹⁰⁴ There is, however, a textual variant in 2 Pet 1:17 that presents a form of text that agrees with Matthew in having οὗτός ἐστιν coming before ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός. This is the reading found in a range of manuscripts, Ⲙ A C¹ Ψ 5 33 81 307 436 442 642 1243 1448 1611 1735 1739 1852 2344 2492 Byz latt sy. The text given above, ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός μου οὗτός ἐστιν, is read by Ψ⁷² B sa^{ms}. Although fewer manuscripts preserve this reading it is likely to be original both because of the early combined testimony of P72 and B and because of the tendency to assimilate texts to the better known form, here as contained in Matt 17:5.

¹⁰⁵ Although not as strongly attested some manuscripts of 2 Pet 1:17 read ἐν ᾧ in agreement with Matt 17:5. See Ψ 33 1175 1243 1611 1852.

suggests a literary relationship between these two texts, most plausibly with the more likely direction of dependence being that of the dependence of 2 Peter on the Matthean text. Hence, Frey's observation, against Bauckham, that 2 Peter is not independent of Matthew appears to find support.

Frey's more substantive point concerns the perceived similarities between the transfiguration accounts in 2 Peter and in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The weakest of the three points of affinity that he detects is the reference in each account to what he describes as the 'heavenly voice'. In the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* it is stated that 'a voice came suddenly from heaven', whereas in 2 Peter 1:18 the text relates that 'we ourselves heard this voice borne from heaven'. The Matthean preamble to the divinely uttered statement is 'and behold, a voice out of the cloud' (Matt. 17:5). Here the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is closer to the Matthean statement, apart from the agreement with 2 Peter that the voice came from 'heaven', rather than from the 'cloud' as in Matthew. The synoptic tradition is uniform in referring to a voice from the cloud. However, the substitution of what is perhaps the more common idea of a voice from 'heaven', in place of the 'cloud' is a very natural change of lexeme. The agreement of this single word is not strong enough evidence to support the supposition of direct literary dependence. Moreover, it is important to take into account the significant differences between the narratives as they occur in turn in the synoptic tradition, in the version in 2 Peter, and in the expanded story in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*. Thus, it appears appropriate to conclude that this agreement in the word 'heaven' does not constitute a sufficiently strong similarity between the two texts to propose a case of literary dependence.

The second similarity is that both the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter agree in describing the mountain as 'holy', as opposed to Matthew's description of a 'high' mountain (cf. 'high mountain', Mk 9:2; 'mountain' Lk 9:28). At first consideration this may be seen as a significant agreement, although admittedly it involves a single word. However, a third version of the transfiguration story contained in the *Acts of Peter* also refers to the 'holy mountain', and also like 2 Peter uses the word 'majesty' to describe 'our Lord'. Thus while the text of the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* appears to have some affinities with 2 Peter this is unlikely to be due to literary dependence, but rather may reflect the natural substitution of the common referent 'holy' in place of 'high'. Since this substitution is also made in the *Acts of Peter*, as cited below, it is plausible that this is not a case of literary dependence but reflects a more widely circulating change to the transfiguration story as it was retold in later Christian literary accounts.

Our Lord, willing that I should behold his majesty in the holy mountain -I, when I with the sons of Zebedee saw the brightness of his light, fell as one dead and shut mine eyes, and heard such a voice from him as I am not able to describe, and thought myself to be blinded by his brightness. And when I recovered (breathed again) a little I said within myself: Peradventure my Lord hath brought me hither that he might blind me. And I said: If this also be thy will, Lord, I resist not. (*Acts of Peter* 20)

It is also helpful to consider arguments against the shared term 'majesty' in 2 Peter and the *Acts of Peter* as constituting strong evidence against these two texts being literarily dependent. As has been observed elsewhere in relation to Grünstäudl's arguments:

It may be observed that both accounts use the keyword 'majesty', μεγαλειότητος (2 Pet. 1.16) and maiestas (*Acts Pet.* 20). Thus Grünstäudl states, 'Einen „Einfluß von 2 Petr.“ auf ActPet 20 könnte vor allem die Spezifizierung des Verklärungsberges als „heilig“ (vgl. 2 Petr 1,18) und das Stichwort „maiestas“ nahe legen.'¹⁰⁶ He goes to some length to demonstrate the different manner in which the term is used in the two accounts, thereby arguing that one need not assume literary dependency on the basis of this shared terminology. His argument is convincing. However, it may be a simpler argument to observe that the term 'majesty' is already found in the Lukan account of the transfiguration. The Lukan account states, 'all were astonished at the majesty of God', ἐξεπλήσσαντο δὲ πάντες ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι τοῦ θεοῦ

¹⁰⁶ Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 155.

(Lk. 9.43a). Therefore the Lukan account of the transfiguration is more likely to be the source of the appearance of the term ‘majesty’ in both the *Acts of Peter* and 2 Peter, than suggestions of a direct relationship between the two writings.¹⁰⁷

Therefore, the term ‘holy mountain’ is a very natural substitution for ‘high mountain’. The phrase ‘holy mountain’ is frequent in two of the most commonly cited books of the Septuagint in early Christian literature – Psalms and Isaiah (Ps 2:6; 3:4; 48:1; Isa 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11; 65:25; 66:20; as well as other LXX texts). By contrast, the expression ‘high mountain’, although not unevidenced in the LXX is less frequent (Isa 40:9; Ezek 17:23; 20:40; 40:2; note also the phrase ‘high and lofty mountain’). This second snippet of common phraseology, which Frey construes as evidence of literary dependence, is again more likely to reflect typical early Christian language than it is to reveal a case of literary dependence.

The third example is perhaps the most significant of the three points listed by Frey, since it involves a three-word phrase ‘honour and glory’ inserted by both authors of 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* in their respective retellings of the transfiguration account. Again this phrase is not without precedent in the New Testament in this precise order (1 Tim 1:17), or with reverse order ‘glory and honour’ (Rom 2:7, 10; Heb 2:7, 9; Rev 21:26). Bauckham suggests that the significance is not simply the correspondence of the phrase, but its occurrence alongside other points of similarity. He states, ‘τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν is a natural combination, and this point of resemblance between the two works is again significant only in the context of others.’¹⁰⁸ The cumulative weight of the similarities is in general an important factor to take into consideration. However, none of the three cases proposed by Frey is decisive, and hence in combination it is unlikely that these points have a combined force beyond that of their individual weight. Moreover, one must account for the vast differences between the two transfiguration accounts in 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*. Length, tone, style, and intention are all vastly different. It is not impossible that one or other drew just three tiny parallels, but omitted the bulk of the account from the alleged source text. However, while not impossible, this is not the most likely scenario when both accounts individually show greater similarity with the synoptic tradition than they do with each other.

Another issue that is not considered in the majority of discussions concerning the possible literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* is which form of the text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* represents the earliest state of that text. Bauckham perhaps states the consensus view, although the opinion is rarely reconsidered that ‘the Ethiopic text represents the order and content of the original *Apocalypse of Peter* much more faithfully than the Akhmim fragment.’¹⁰⁹ Rather than preferring the uniform priority of one form over the other, it appears that at various points either the Greek or Ethiopic texts have the better claim to originality. Specifically, in relation to the parallel between the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* 15-17 and the Greek *Apocalypse of Peter* 4-11, in the latter the identification with the transfiguration scene is less apparent. In fact, it is questionable whether the account in the Greek text is intended as a recasting of the transfiguration narrative. It may be the case that a totally different scene is intended, but at a later stage the standard epiphanic features of shining apparel resulted in a subsequent editor recasting the more primitive story in the Greek text of *Apocalypse of Peter* in the more developed form as contained in the Ethiopic version with clear indebtedness to the transfiguration account. For in the Greek text, unlike the Ethiopic version, there is no identification of Elijah and Moses, Peter does not express a desire to construct tabernacles, nor is there any voice from heaven that reveals the identity of

¹⁰⁷ P. Foster, ‘The Relationship between 2 Peter and Early Christian Pseudepigrapha’, forthcoming.

¹⁰⁸ R. Bauckham, ‘2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*’, in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 301.

¹⁰⁹ Bauckham, ‘2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*’, 291-292.

Jesus. However, the luminous nature of the two unnamed heavenly messengers in the text of the fragment of the Greek *Apocalypse of Peter* may have caused later readers or copyists to make links with the transfiguration story, although such luminous or transformed appearances are not unique to the account of the transfiguration.¹¹⁰ In this case, the longer form of the Ethiopic text with its explicit reference to the transfiguration account, appears to be a secondary expansion of the more primitive form of the text in the Greek fragment. Since the three features mentioned by Frey, the ‘holy’ mountain, the reference to ‘honour and glory’, and the voice coming from ‘heaven’, are all unique to the Ethiopic version, it is not automatically possible to claim that these elements were part of the original form of *Apocalypse of Peter*. Consequently, it is possible that these elements were all later expansions of a more primitive Greek textual form, and therefore they are of little value for determining a literary relationship between 2 Peter and the original form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.¹¹¹

4.2 Prediction of the Death of Peter

The second parallel that Frey finds to be of significance for establishing the literary dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter* is the perceived similarity in the predictions of Peter’s martyrdom contained in 2 Pet 1:13-14 and in Ethiopic *Apoc. Pet.* 14. Once again the tradition concerning the impending death of Peter is not present in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. However, the tradition is present in a small fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* known as the Rainer fragment, or as P.Vindob.G 39756, to give it its catalogue number. Therefore, the case for this tradition being part of the original text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* has a higher degree of probability than was the case with the expanded transfiguration account contained in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*.

In the Ethiopic version the text presents the prediction of Peter’s death in the following manner:

I have told you, Peter, and I have informed you. Go out, therefore, and go to the city which is (in) the west and drink the wine about which I have told you, from the hand of my son who is without sin, that the work of destruction might begin. (Ethiopic *Apoc. Pet.* 14.3-4).

The form of the text contained in the Greek Rainer fragment is obviously closely related, but not identical. This provides some insight into the ongoing fluidity in the textual tradition surrounding the text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, between the time of the scribal production of the Rainer fragment and the stage reflected in the later extant Ethiopic manuscripts. The Rainer fragment, which presumably reveals an earlier stage of transmission than the Ethiopic, reads:

Look, Peter, I have manifested to you and expounded all of this. And go into the city that rules over the west and drink the cup which I have promised you at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades, so that his destruction may have a beginning. (P.Vindob.G 39756; f.2 recto line 8 – f.2 verso line 11).¹¹²

¹¹⁰ P. Foster, ‘Polymorphic Christology: Its Origins and Development in Early Christianity’, *JTS* 58 (2007) 66-99.

¹¹¹ Bauckham postulates a lengthy and complex transmission period and translation process before the Ethiopic version of the text came into existence. He states, ‘[t]he Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was probably made from the Arabic (though no Arabic version is now known to be extant), which in turn would have been translated from the original Greek.’ This leaves open the opportunity for several stages of redaction in the Ethiopic text. Furthermore, in relation to the two extant Ethiopic manuscripts, it is noted that ‘the text in both manuscripts is frequently corrupt.’ See R. Bauckham, ‘The *Apocalypse of Peter*: A Jewish Christian *Apocalypse* from the Time of Bar Kokhba’, in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 254.

¹¹² This translation is taken from T.J. Kraus, & T. Nicklas, T. (eds), *Das Petrus-evangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die Griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004) 128.

Here is assumed that the Rainer fragment offers the best text for comparison with the putative parallel in 2 Pet 1:13-14, since it is both early and is likely closer in wording to the original Greek text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

The parallel between the earliest recoverable form of the prediction of Peter's death in the *Apocalypse of Peter* and a martyrdom prediction in 2 Peter can be set out to highlight the similarities and differences between the two texts.

P.Vindob.G 39756; f.2 recto line 8 – f.2 verso line 11	2 Pet 1:13-14
ἰδοὺ ἐδήλωσά σοι Πέτρε καὶ ἐξεθέμην πάντα. καὶ πορεύου εἰς πόλιν ἀρχούσαν δύσεως, καὶ πίε τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐπηγγειλάμην σοι ἐν χειρὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἐν Ἅιδου, εἶνα ἀρχὴν λάβῃ αὐτοῦ ἢ ἀφάνια.	δίκαιον δὲ ἡγοῦμαι, ἐφ' ὅσον εἰμι ἐν τούτῳ τῷ σκηνώματι, διεγείρειν ὑμᾶς ἐν ὑπομνήσει εἰδῶς ὅτι ταχινή ἐστιν ἡ ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματός μου, καθὼς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐδήλωσέν μοι.
Look, Peter, I have manifested to you and expounded all of this. And go into the city that rules over the west and drink the cup which I have promised you at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades, so that his destruction may have a beginning.	And I consider it right, as long as I am in this <i>earthly</i> dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

The two most striking similarities are the shared use of the verb δηλώω although in slightly different forms (ἐδήλωσά//ἐδήλωσέν), and the use of first person narratives – although in the *Apocalypse of Peter* it is Jesus speaking, whereas in 2 Peter it is Peter describing his impending fate. The differences are, however, more striking. The metaphor for death in the Rainer fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is to ‘drink the cup’ (in the Ethiopic ‘drink the wine’), whereas in 2 Peter the image is that of ‘the putting off my tent’ (or ‘the laying aside of my dwelling’). The *Apocalypse of Peter* also located the place of death as the city that is in or rules over the west, which is obviously a fairly transparent cipher for Rome. The fact that Rome is identified as only ‘ruling over the west’ may reflect a text that is aware of the split between imperial capitals in the east and west, with Constantine moving the seat of the Empire to Byzantium around 330 C.E. In the Rainer fragment there is an explicit reference to Peter, and he is promised that his fate will be at the son of Hades (presumably Nero), and that this will lead to the beginning of the ‘destruction’. All these elements are absent in 2 Pet 1.13-14. Instead, in 2 Peter the rhetorical function of the announcement of Peter's impending death is entirely different. Rather than serving as a warning of the impending destruction, it functions as a hortatory encouragement to believers remember the truth of the faith, especially as communicated in the letter itself, after the death of Peter.¹¹³

Despite Frey's contention that the passage in the Rainer fragment ‘provides the closest parallel to the remark in 2 Pet 1:14 about Jesus revealing Peter's impending death’,¹¹⁴ it is difficult to locate substantive agreement between the two traditions. Frey may be correct in relation to determining an antecedent or source for 2 Pet 1:14, that ‘the only prophecy of Peter's martyrdom in the New Testament provides no adequate explanation (John 21:18-19), since it only foretells that Peter will be an old man when he dies.’¹¹⁵ However, it does not follow as a default that if Jn 21:18-19 is not a basis for 2 Pet 1:14, then the tradition in 2 Peter must derive from *Apoc. Pet.* 14.3-4. Given the vast differences 2 Pet 1:13-14 and *Apoc. Pet.* 14.3-4, it appears far more likely that both attempt in extremely different ways to account for

¹¹³ Most commentators understand the injunction to remember ‘these things’ as directing readers to the contents of the letter. Slightly more specifically, Green suggests that ‘these things’ refers ‘to the opening discussion in the body of the letter (vv. 3-11), including the grace God has shown them as Benefactor as recounted in verses 3-4 and the Christian virtues outlined in verses 5-7. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, 214.

¹¹⁴ Frey, *Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament*, 13.

¹¹⁵ Frey, *Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament*, 13.

the sense of loss and maybe even crisis in believing communities after the death of Peter, and part of the coping strategy adopted in John's gospel, in 2 Peter, and in the *Apocalypse of Peter* is the trope frequently known in testamentary literary that the protagonist knows of the impending death before it occurs. Hence, in this example it is not possible to determine a secure or even likely evidential basis for postulating a literary relationship between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Pet.

4.3 The Eschatological Conflagration

An account of the final fiery destruction of the world is depicted in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* 4-6. In 2 Peter there is also reference to a fiery end of the created order (2 Pet 3:7, 10, 12). The relevant texts from the epistle present the following account of a fiery final destruction.

But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. . . . But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up. . . . waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! (2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 12).

The discussion of the 'last days when the day of God comes' (Ethiopic *Apoc. Pet.* 4) spans three lengthy sections of the text. These will not be replicated here in full, but the most relevant parallels will be excerpted and presented alongside the relevant verbal parallels from 2 Peter. This material is not present in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, nor in the Bodleian or Rainer Greek fragments. Therefore, any apparent parallels are derived solely from the Ethiopic text.

The material in *Apoc. Pet.* 4 is certainly integral to the larger section dealing with the coming day of God. It provides the textual and theological basis for asserting that nothing is impossible for God, and hence God will raise up all people for judgment. The chief parallel with 2 Peter is thematic, namely that the heavens and the earth – along with 'ungodly men' – are being stored up for judgment (2 Pet 3:7). Here there is a well-known and wide spread idea that punishment and justice will be dispensed by God on a final day of judgment. The verbal parallels are slight and far too generic to permit any case to be mounted for direct literary dependence between the two texts at this point. The verbal parallels may increase slightly in strength between 2 Peter and *Apoc. Pet.* 5-6. Both texts speak of fire at the final assize. This is done in a truncated manner in 2 Peter, with the cosmos being preserved 'for fire' (2 Pet 3:7). By contrast, in the *Apocalypse of Peter* the references to fiery destruction are recurrent and much more fulsome. As the agent of destruction 'cataracts of fire will be opened up', water will be transformed 'into coals of fire and everything which is in it will burn up and even the ocean will become fire.' In addition to terrestrial fire, the cosmos will be incinerated: 'from under heaven a bitter fire which does not go out . . . will flow for the judgment of wrath.' In addition, the celestial bodies will be consumed with fire. (*Apoc. Pet.* 5). The description continues throughout *Apoc. Pet.* 5-6 with recurrent descriptions of the fire of judgment. It is helpful to consider Buchholz explanation of the textual relations to *Apoc. Pet.* 5. He states,

The conflagration of the universe in this chapter is based in large part on Isaiah 13:6-13, 2 Pt 3:5-7, 10-13 is the only place in the New Testament where the dissolution of the world by fire is expressed (cf. Rev. 20:9). But in 2 Peter the first creation was through water in order to have it ready, it seems, to be destroyed with fire.¹¹⁶

There are shared ideas concerning the final destruction of the cosmos by fire in both 2 Peter and Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*. However, the scale of the literary description found in the

¹¹⁶ Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 298.

latter is simply not matched nor paralleled in 2 Peter. Consequently, it appears that both texts inhabit the same thought world – perhaps not unique to Jewish or early Christian texts – but beyond this there is little evidence of direct literary borrowing.

There is perhaps one phrase that is interesting where the language may be closer and go beyond that of the generalities that have already been noted between the two texts. This concerns the statement that ‘the elements will melt with fire’, *καὶ στοιχεῖα καυσούμενα τήκεται* (2 Pet 3:12; cf. ‘and the elements will be destroyed with fire’ 2 Pet 3:10). The *Apocalypse of Peter* likewise speaks of the liquefaction of solids in cosmic conflagration. In relation to celestial bodies, which the text appears to assume are in a solid state,¹¹⁷ the text states, ‘the stars will melt in flame of fire like they had not been created’ (*Apoc. Pet.* 5.4). Furthermore, the text portrays an even more extensive ‘melting’ when it describes the outcome of the unleashing of this all consuming fire, ‘then the whole creation has been melted’ (*Apoc. Pet.* 5.6). The image of the dissolving of the heavens and the earth described in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* may find closer parallel in 2 Clement, where the author describes ‘the day of judgment coming as a blazing furnace’ and describes the consequences as being:

καὶ τακῆσονταί τινες τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ ὡς μόλιβος ἐπὶ πυρὶ τηρόμενος
 ‘some of the heavens will be dissolved, and the whole earth will be like lead melting in a fire’ (2 Clem 16.3).

Here the verb *τήκω* is used twice to describe the process of the changing from the solid to the liquid state, that is liquefaction of a solid, dissolving, or melting. This is the verb that is used in 2 Pet. 3:12 to describe elements being melted with fire, and it may be the same Greek verb behind the description of the stars and the entire cosmos melting in *Apoc. Pet.* 5.4, 6. However, in relation to the description in 2 Clement, Tuckett notes the wide range of parallels, including 2 Pet 3:7, 10.

The image of the end of the present world order in the form of cosmic conflagration is widespread. In early Christianity, the idea occurs only in the NT at 2 Pet. 3.7, 10. The motif also occurs in Jewish texts such as 1 QH 3.29-36, *Syb. Or.* 3.84-7; 4.172-80, as well as being reflected in some Gnostic circles, and also in Greek philosophical thought, especially the Stoics. Here the apocalyptic speculation is, however, firmly linked to the paraenetic exhortation by linking the speculation about the end-time fire with the theme of judgment: the great conflagration at the End will as have as a result the making visible the ‘secret and open’ deeds of men and women.¹¹⁸

Hence, once again there is a similarity of ideas between 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*, but there is little close verbal agreement of the type that would lead to the conclusion of literary dependence. Moreover, the expansive descriptions of the fiery final conflagration in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* actually suggests that the author of 2 Peter has not drawn on this extensive narrative by selecting a couple of fairly bland details such as the ‘melting’ of the elements. Instead, it is far more plausible to see 2 Peter drawing on a well-known and widespread idea that was current in many texts, and that rather than being indebted to any particular source it has simply drawn from the large repository of ideas concerning end-time destruction by fire. From whence the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* derived its own more extensive descriptions is less certain. The detailed narrative could possibly be due to the compositional creativity of the author, alternatively it may reflect the development of precursor texts, or draw upon oral or written traditions to which there is no longer access. However, given that the proposed parallels concerning the cosmic

¹¹⁷ Obviously, since stars exist in a gaseous state the application of higher levels of heat or fire would not result in liquefying that state of matter. Only a cooling (or change of pressure) would result in the gaseous state condensing to a liquid. Therefore, it appears that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* assumes that stars are solid objects.

¹¹⁸ C.M. Tuckett, *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, OAF (Oxford: OUP, 2012) 271-272.

conflagration in both 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* are primarily thematic rather than verbal, and that such images and themes are widespread and commonplace, there is no basis for proposing literary dependence on the basis of this example between these two text in either direction.

4.4 Lack of Concern over Parousia Delay in the *Apocalypse of Peter*

In contrast with 2 Peter, Frey notes that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is lacking any concern in relation to the delay of the return of Christ. Although he does not identify in his Radboud Prestige Lectures where that concern may be present in 2 Peter,¹¹⁹ he does so explicitly in his commentary on the epistle. This concern over the delay in the return of the Lord is voiced, according to the author of 2 Peter, by those labelled as mockers in 2 Pet 3:3. Presumably they are to be identified with the ‘false prophets’ and ‘false teachers’ of 2 Pet 2:1. The words that are attributed to these people involve a scepticism about the non-appearance of Christ: ‘Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.’ (2 Pet 3:4). In regard to this statement Frey comments, ‘Das Zitat formuliert un einer skeptischen rhetorischen Frage den Zweifel am Eintreten der verheißenen Parusie bzw. Ankunft.’¹²⁰

From the identification both of this concern over the delay of the parousia in 2 Peter and the absence of this same concern in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Frey advances the following argument concerning the relative order of the documents.

A further striking argument can be taken from the fact that the problem of the eschatological delay is nowhere reflected in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It would be hard to understand why the *Apocalypse of Peter* would adopt the eschatological scenario from 2 Peter without any trace of its intense discussion about the delay of the Parousia.¹²¹

In contradistinction to what Frey has stated, it would not only theoretically appear natural for a later text to omit concern over parousia delay after the immediacy of its imminence had passed, but moreover, that tendency is discernible among several early Christian writers. Most notably in the Pauline writings the dampening down of eschatological expectations and a tendency to develop a more realized eschatology reflect this.¹²² Furthermore, among some of the Apostolic Fathers while there is still a commitment to belief in the future judgment there is little concern about the timing of the parousia.¹²³ Therefore, contrary to Frey, the lack of reference to parousia delay is precisely the type of theological tendency that one would be most likely to detect in a later text. Moreover, even if the *Apocalypse of Peter* were dependent on 2 Peter, then the omission of the reference to a concern over the delay of the coming of Christ is exactly the type of redactional activity that might be expected in a later

¹¹⁹ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, 14.

¹²⁰ Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 318.

¹²¹ Frey, Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, 14.

¹²² Although perhaps over-schematized, in many ways this is a key finding by R.H. Charles in his study of Pauline eschatology. R.H. Charles, *Eschatology: A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity*, The First Jowett Lectures delivered in 1898-99 (2nd ed.; London: A&C Black, 1913). See especially chapter eleven ‘The Pauline Eschatology in its Four Stages’, 437-475.

¹²³ At the risk of over-generalization, in the Apostolic Fathers concern about the parousia appears to be diminished in comparison with the early Pauline writings in particular. There are references to a future coming judgment. However, perhaps with the exception of *Didache* 16, these tend to be stereotypical and part of larger eschatological frameworks. For instance, in Polycarp’s *Letter to the Philippians*, Jesus is affirmed to be the one ‘who is coming as judge of the living and the dead’ (Poly. *Phil.* 2.1), but this statement is made as a behavioural imperative, rather than due to a sense of immediacy of the parousia. Furthermore, in reference to the *Didache*, perhaps the earliest of those texts grouped under the artificial label ‘Apostolic Fathers’, Jefford writes, ‘the urgency of apocalyptic as a meaningful call to the immediate return of the Lord upon the clouds seems sharply diminished.’ C.N. Jefford, *The Apostolic Fathers and the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006) 79.

text and it would be reflective of the fact that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was writing at a later stage than the author of 2 Peter.

4.5 Omission of material from Jude in the *Apocalypse of Peter*

The literary relationship between Jude and 2 Peter has been long recognized. While among older scholarship the view that Jude that was dependent on 2 Peter was not uncommon,¹²⁴ that view has largely been abandoned in more recent discussions. It is, therefore, accurate to speak of a nearly unanimous consensus among contemporary scholars in support of the view that 2 Peter is literarily dependent on Jude.¹²⁵ Not only are the literary parallels evident, but an analysis of redactional tendencies supports the hypothesis that 2 Peter has modified and edited the text of Jude, rather than the opposite hypothesis that Jude is the later text and the author redacts 2 Peter.

Given that consensus, which Frey has skilfully argued in his own commentary on the two epistles, he builds upon the argument of Grünstäudl,¹²⁶ that if the *Apocalypse of Peter* had drawn on 2 Peter then one would expect to find in the *Apocalypse of Peter* material that paralleled the traditions drawn from Jude which had been incorporated from 2 Peter. Instead, since there are no instances of parallels in the the *Apocalypse of Peter* to those traditions from Jude that were used by 2 Peter, then the corollary follows. Namely, that is that it is 2 Peter that draws on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and moreover that the author of 2 Peter combines tradition from the the *Apocalypse of Peter* with material from Jude. Frey expresses this observation in the following manner.

While 2 Peter draws heavily on Jude, there are absolutely no common element between Jude and the Apocalypse of Peter. Is it realistic to think that the Apocalypse may have used 2 Peter but omitted all the elements from Jude? More plausible is the assumption that the Apocalypse of Peter did not know Jude, whereas the author of 2 Peter has adopted elements from Jude and from the Apocalypse of Peter and interpreted both of them to serve his own aims.¹²⁷

There are, however, two logical fallacies in this argument, even if one accepts that there are sufficient literary parallels to demonstrate the use of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter*. First, there is no account taken of the sample size. That is given the limited number of plausible parallel traditions between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* it is unsurprising that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* has not adopted any of the material that finds its origin in Jude. For instance, if the parallel involving the transfiguration accounts were to be considered as evidence of the literary dependence of the *Apocalypse* on 2 Peter, then the borrowing of unique elements comprises two single words: ‘holy’ in relation to the mountain, ‘heaven’ as a description of the origin of the voice, and the three-word phrase ‘honour and glory’. The author of the *Apocalypse* would have selected this material because the mountain-top revelatory scene would have been particularly apposite to the opening scene of revelatory disclosure in his own text.

This then leads on to the second logically fallacy. The author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is not engaged in some type of random sampling exercise from 2 Peter, whereby one

¹²⁴ Representative of this view, Bigg holds ‘that 2 Peter is older than Jude’ (p. 242), and this is based upon a detailed analysis of how parallel material has been redacted by the author of Jude. See Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Jude and St. Peter*, 216-224. Also for a detailed statement of this position see F. Spitta, *Der zweite Brief des Petrus und der Brief des Judas* (Halle a. S.: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1885) 381-470.

¹²⁵ See J.B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907) i – xxv. R.J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco: Word, 1983) 141-143; J.H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, AB 37C (New York, Doubleday, 1993) 120-122; Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 154-162.

¹²⁶ Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, esp. 137-141.

¹²⁷ Frey, *Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament*, 14-15.

could infer that if the author of 2 Peter derived ten percent of the material in his epistle from Jude, and the author of the *Apocalypse* derived ten percent of the material in that writing from 2 Peter one would expect on average one percent of the material in the *Apocalypse* to be derived from Jude. Rather, we are dealing with authors who are making intentional rather than random selections from traditions at their disposal. Hence such inferences based on what might be expected in a pattern of random sample are of little value in explaining the literary borrowing that occur, especially when such small amounts of parallel material are being borrowed. In the end this appears to be the most fallacious of the arguments inferred in support of the dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It is also dependent on first establishing that a literary relationship does in fact exist between the two texts. As has been shown above, while that is not totally impossible, the evidential base for supporting that theory is extremely slender. Therefore, if the *Apocalypse of Peter* is literarily dependent on 2 Peter, then given the relatively slight amount of textual borrowing and the intentionality in the choice of material selected for re-use by the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* the lack of any traditions in the *Apocalypse of Peter* that reflect material in common with the Epistle of Jude is neither surprising nor significant.

5. Conclusions

One of the features of Jörg Frey's recent commentary that marks it out from other recent commentaries treating 2 Peter is the comparatively late date he assigns to the composition of the epistle. He suggests that the letter is to be dated to the period 140-160 C.E.¹²⁸ There is no strong reason to consider this as necessarily incorrect – the earliest manuscripts of the epistle date from significantly after that period and patristic citations of the letter only emerge in the third century. This discussion, however, has focused on what Frey views as the major piece of evidence in support of that date range, as opposed to earlier possible dates of composition. That argument is based on the assessment that 2 Peter can be shown to be dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Frey offers five pieces of evidence in support of this argument, three elements are based on textual parallels and two are inferential.¹²⁹ It is notable that the arguments are based primarily on the Ethiopic text. This reflects the fact that the arguments of James and Prümm (most recently promoted by Bauckham), that the Ethiopic version best preserves the origin form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, have been taken as convincing.

The first textual argument involved the transfiguration scene as depicted in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse* and also as contained in the short reference to the transfiguration in 2 Peter 1:16-18. The three significant points of contact presented were first the shared description of the mountain as 'holy', rather than 'high' in the synoptic tradition; secondly, the observation that the voice comes from 'heaven' rather than a 'cloud' again as in the synoptic tradition; and thirdly, the shared phrase 'honour and glory'. These points of contact are slight and brief. Moreover, given the dissimilarities between the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Pet 1.16-18 they are not sufficient to establish a strong argument for literary dependence. Significantly, these verbal points of contact do not occur in the Akhmîm Greek fragment, which itself presents a mountain top encounter rather than a transfiguration account. This further weakens the case for literary dependence at this point, since it may be the case that a later redactor expanded this basic narrative of a mountain top epiphany by incorporating elements from the synoptic transfiguration account.

The second and third arguments relate to shared traditions about the death of Peter and the eschatological conflagration. These two putative parallels are both textual in nature, but again the lack of extends verbatim agreement and the general nature of the topics

¹²⁸ Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 186-187.

¹²⁹ Frey, *Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament*, 12-15.

discussed (which were topics of wider interest in early Christianity) militate against a persuasive case for direct literary dependence between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter on the basis of these verbal affinities. In particular, the widespread interest in the figure of Peter both in New Testament and non-canonical texts in early Christianity is well attested.¹³⁰ Therefore, the shared interest in the themes of eschatological destruction and the death of Peter do not offer evidence for a secure, or even likely case of literary dependence.

The final two arguments suggested by Frey are of a different character in comparison with the three proposed potential literary parallels. The first concerns the lack of concern over parousia delay in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Contrary to Frey's suggestion that this suggests that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is earlier than 2 Peter, it has often been seen as axiomatic in relation to early Christian writings that there was a waning in eschatological concerns with the progress of time, and that parousia expectation and delay became less of a central concern. However, one must resist an overly linear view of such trajectories since concerns about the delay of the parousia are perhaps more dependent on group dynamics and external pressures, than simply on the passage of time. As Frey has noted,

Thus we find a short-term-expectation even in the second century and later, and such an expectation is often confined to particular groups or the result of a particular situation or experience. Short-term-expectations and the experience of the delay coexisted for a longer time, and the early Christian expectation only disappeared in a longer process that came to a closure not before the time of Constantine.¹³¹

Notwithstanding these correct observations about the non-linearity of theological developments and the specificity of concerns such as parousia delay, the fact that 2 Peter expresses concern about the passing of the apostolic generation and the delay of the parousia while the *Apocalypse of Peter* does not, this of itself reveals nothing about the relative order of texts. In fact, the absence of such features from the *Apocalypse of Peter* is more likely to be suggestive (although far from conclusive) of it being the later text.

The final argument concerning the absence of traditions found in Jude from the *Apocalypse of Peter* was seen to be logical fallacious. On the basis of the case that 2 Peter borrowed from the *Apocalypse of Peter*, given that the choice of material was not a random sample and that the level of borrowing involved a small sample of material, the absence of traditions from Jude establishes very little indeed.

In the end, while not persuaded by Frey's case for the dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, this in no way implies a rejection of his larger undertaking in producing a magisterial commentary on the epistles of Jude and 2 Peter. That careful and scholarly work is further exemplified in his series of Radboud Prestige lectures, which reflect his meticulous mind and careful handling of sources. It is hoped that this interaction with one small aspect of his work will not only be a contribution to the wider discussion, but more importantly will also mean that others focus more closely on the monumental work of the eminent scholar Jörg Frey, in whose debt we all stand.

¹³⁰ For references to Peter in non-canonical texts see P. Foster 'Peter in Noncanonical Traditions', in H.K. Bond and L.W. Hurtado (eds), *Peter in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015) 222-262.

¹³¹ J. Frey, 'Introduction', in J.G. van der Watt (ed.), *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, WUNT 2.315 (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011) 3-32, here 26.