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Modelling in the Social Sciences: Interdisciplinary Comparison
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Social-Scientific Modeling in Biblical Studies

1. Introduction to the paper

In the first half of the paper, I provide some background information about the use of social sciences in biblical and related studies and then introduce the basic themes and factions in the debate about "modeling" which has played a significant role in biblical social-scientific criticism. The other half of the paper consists of examples. I am focusing on two cases from my own work. While the first, older one, illustrates some of the characteristic problems of social-scientific modeling in biblical studies, the second one may provide a more interesting starting point for the discussion since it represents a work in progress. I am still working on the graph to be added to the second example; I hope to be able to send it in good time before the workshop. The paper is quite long but I wanted to include also some background information—feel free to skip the parts that you find unnecessary or too boring. In the workshop we'll probably be able to discuss only one example thoroughly. If so, my choice would probably be the second one since that is from the material I am currently working on. However, if others (conveners and the respondent, in particular) find the first one more interesting and/or suitable for the workshop I am sure it also provides material for an interesting discussion. The draft includes bit and pieces from my earlier work. Thus, there is also some overlap and echoes of discussions that may not be directly relevant in the present context.

The area of research, discipline, that is nowadays commonly called "biblical and related studies" or the study of "biblical and related literature" is originally a historical discipline that uses the same kinds of historical methods as all research of antiquity and ancient sources. The term "related" in the name of the discipline signals that the research is not restricted to any dogmatically defined canon of the Hebrew Bible ("Old Testament") or the New Testament. Although the historical methods applied in biblical studies are closely related to the methodology of the study of antiquity in general, a set of approaches—designed in view of the special character of the main sources—has become established as the commonly applied core of "historical-critical methods". These approaches examine (1) the history of texts and the original wordings of manuscripts (textual criticism), (2) the unity and the composition of the sources (source criticism; "older literary criticism"), (3) form, social setting and history of smaller (oral) units of tradition (form-, genre- and tradition criticism) and (4) the editorial history of the sources (redaction criticism). These basic historical-critical methods prevailed until 1970s, after which a variety of approaches from other humanistic disciplines have become adopted to complement the basic historical-critical research. Among these newcomers is also the social science approach.

In order to understand biblical social-scientific criticism one needs to bear in mind that biblical scholars who apply social scientific models usually do that in the context of the basic information that is produced with the conventional historical-critical methods. For instance, my discussion of the Gospel of Matthew in the second half of this paper does not read Matthew's gospel as a record of what historical Jesus did. Instead, it analyzes it from the viewpoint of its final Jewish-Christian

editor and his[1] community around 80-90 CE. The way how the editor has molded his sources (the Gospel of Mark and the so-called Q-source) shows how the story of Jesus is used in reflections about the present situation of the editor's community that was competing with the representatives of formative Judaism (= slowly emerging Rabbinic Judaism), after the destruction of Jerusalem (70 C.E.; memorized in the Arch of Titus in Rome). Overall, the following discussion focuses mostly on the study of early Christianity, because that is where my own expertise lies. On the other hand, the explicit discussion about the use of models is also centered around the study of early Christianity, because the most prominent "modelers" have been New Testament scholars.

2. Social sciences and modeling in biblical studies

The beginnings of social-scientific study of the Bible is usually traced back to the1970s when scholars started to criticize the one-sided concentration on the study of ideas and "theologies" of Biblical writings and their editors. In a review of the first phases of the social-scientific approach Robin Scroggs aptly characterized the ideological approach in its extreme forms as "methodological docetism" which discusses religion "as if believers had minds and spirits unconnected with their individual and corporate bodies." However, social-scientific criticism did not want to go the other extreme and reduce early Christianity only to social dynamics. Rather, it wanted, as Scroggs put it, to "put body and soul together again" and avoid limiting early Christian reality to mere theological or dogmatic systems.[2]

Since the beginning of the 1970s, social-scientific criticism has grown into a major movement in the field of biblical studies. It has adopted various theoretical traditions from sociology, anthropology and social psychology. Some of the first works had a clear functionalist orientation.[3] In contrast to the study of the origins and original forms of the traditions these pioneers focused on the social function of the biblical traditions and beliefs in their historical settings. Other early applications were drawing on Weber's typology of charisma,[4] the grid and group model by Mary Douglas,[5] sectarian studies[6] and Mediterranean anthropology.[7] Berger and Luckmann's sociology of knowledge was also applied already in the 1970s[8] but it gained even more attention at the end of the 1980s and in the beginning of the1990s when it was applied in some influential studies in order to illuminate the sectarian stance of various New Testament writings.[9] More recent applications include medical anthropology,[10] Anthony Giddens' structuration theory,[11] and the social identity approach.[12]

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[1] Most probably the editor was male.
[2] Scroggs 1980, 165-166.
[3] Theissen 1977; Meeks 1972, Meeks 1983.
[4] Theissen 1977; Holmberg 1978.
[5] Malina 1986; Neyrey 1986.
[6] Gager 1975; Elliott 1981.
[7] Rohrbaugh 1996.
[8] Meeks 1972.
[9] Esler 1987; Horrell 1993; Horrell 2001.
[10] Pilch 2000.
[11] Horrell 1996.
[12] Esler 1998b; Esler 2003. For descriptions at different stages of the movement, see Elliott 1986; Holmberg 1990; Osiek 1992; Martin 1999; Elliott 2001; Horrell 2002; Esler 2004; Elliott 2008. In the present short review I am drawing on Luomanen, et al. 2007b, 15-16 (the first draft of this section was written by Risto Uro).

One of the very latest developments is the introduction theories developed in the cognitive science of religion. Taking their cue from some leading cognitive scientists of religion, some biblical scholars have become interested in cognitive science, neuroscience, evolutionary biology and –psychology.[13] In addition to impulses coming from the cognitive science of religion there have also been other developments within biblical social-scientific criticism that have naturally linked up with the research of human cognition. The cognitive science of religion shares its interest in the cognitive modules of the mind with cognitive linguistics which has a slightly longer pre-history in the field of biblical studies.[14] Growing interest on social memory has also naturally raised the question about the functions of human memory in general.[15] Furthermore, the social identity approach which is one of the latest applications that have been introduced to biblical social-scientific criticism, was originally developed on the basis of observations that Henri Tajfel made in his cognitive psychological research.[16]

The first example in the second half of this paper falls in the category of sectarian studies. The second one, which represents my ongoing work, seeks to define a model for analysis which would combine social and cognitive approaches (micro and macro points of view). As a matter of fact, one of the main arguments of my current work is that biblical social-scientific criticism (and biblical studies in general) would benefit from acquaintance with cognitive science. Since the present paper presents parts of that work,[17] the readers should not be surprised to find some legitimating references to cognitive science.

3. The art of modeling: controversies and developments

Because it is not self-evident that the social sciences must be used in biblical studies, methodological and meta-theoretical questions have perhaps gained relatively more attention in

[13] The cognitive science of religion emerged among scholars of comparative religion at the beginning of the 1990s. This multidisciplinary approach draws on cognitive science, cognitive and developmental psychology, neuroscience, evolutionary biology and anthropology. Since the cognitive scientists of religion have already developed some theories for the study of religion, it is reasonable to apply these while developing a cognitive approach to early Christianity. This strategy makes it possible to evaluate and develop cognitive scientific theories of religion through the analysis of biblical and related materials.

[14] For instance, Vernon K. Robbins has used Fauconnier and Turner's conceptual blending theory (Fauconnier & Turner 1996; Fauconnier & Turner 2002) in his rhetorolectic analysis. For an introduction to Robbins' method, see, for instance, Robbins 2007.

[15] One example of this interest is the program unit *Mapping Memory: Tradition, Texts, and Identity* which is currently run in the SBL Annual Meetings by Alan Kirk and Tom Thatcher. Some articles produced in this section are available in Kirk & Thatcher 2005.

[16] To our knowledge, Luomanen, et al. 2007a is the first collection of articles where the cognitive study of religion is programmatically introduced in the field of biblical studies. The collection also includes articles that exemplify the other three links to the study of cognition. Linguistic approach and conceptual blending was dealt by Lundhaug 2007 and Robbins 2007. Philip Esler's article links the social construction of memory to memory theories (Esler 2007) and my own contributions traced the cognitive roots of the social identity approach (Luomanen 2007).

[17] The paper combines (and partly elaborates) drafts of several sections from my forthcoming book: *Theology in the Flesh: Exploring Socio-Cognitive Exegesis*. The book is under contract to E. J. Brill, Biblical Interpretation Series. (And, yes, the title modifies Jakoff and Johnson's *Philosophy in the Flesh!*)

biblical social-scientific criticism than within the mainstream social sciences.[18] Nevertheless, the basic methodological and theoretical problems are typical of the social sciences in general: should models be taken as mere heuristic tools or as a means of explaining, testing and predicting? Is it possible to employ models developed in quite distant (either modern industrialized or contemporary non-industrialized) societies to ancient biblical societies? Do models presume a deterministic view of life and social order as opposed to a view which grants more freedom to individual actors?

In particular, scholars affiliated with the so-called Context Group[19] have advocated models as practical heuristics to overcome the cultural distance between the modern Western individualistic culture and the ancient Mediterranean culture. This has made models a central topic in the discussion between *theoretically oriented* and more *socio-historically* oriented scholars of early Judaism and early Christianity.[20]

Another reason for the centrality of the topic of models is that some of the pioneers of social-scientific exegesis have drawn on the common distinction between *theories* and *models* as it is presented in Thomas Carney's *The Shape of the Past: Models and Antiquity*.[21] Carney distinguishes between theories that are based on "axiomatic laws" and present "general principles," and models that "act as a link between theories and observations," providing a simplified "framework which can be brought to bear on some pertinent data." In particular, Carney's distinction has made its mark on the discussion through John Elliot's textbook which largely relies on Carney.[22]

In practice, modeling has become a sort of trade mark for the scholars affiliated with the Context Group. This can be seen, for instance, in the names of two significant collections of essays produced within the group: *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*, ed. by Philip Esler (London: Routledge, 1995) and *Social-Scientific Models for Interpreting the Bible: Essays by the Context Group in Honor of Bruce J. Malina.* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).[23]

However, not surprisingly, the use of the term "model" is not consistent among social-scientifically oriented biblical scholars. Occasionally, the term model is also used to characterize large-scale research frameworks, such as structural-functionalism.[24] Judging on the basis of the two collections listed above, "model" can practically refer to all kinds of categorizations of social and cultural phenomena from a detailed modeling of Herodian economics to such broad anthropological characterizations like honor and shame as pivotal values in (ancient) Mediterranean culture. [25] Some

[18] According to Horrell 1996, 10 critical discussion on the validity and usefulness of "models" has by and large not been of much importance in the social sciences.
[19] The Context Group is a working group of scholars interested in using the social sciences in biblical interpretation. Members of the group meet annually in order to work collaboratively on joint projects and in order to offer peer reviews of publications on which the members are working. The group started its work in the late 1980's. For more information, see the website of the group: http://www.contextgroup.org/.
[20] For the main positions in the discussion see Malina 1982; Elliott 1986, Elliott 1993; Garrett 1992; Esler 1995, Esler 2000; Horrell 1996, Horrell 2000; Martin 1999; Luomanen 2002.
[21] Carney 1975 (XXX; Carney's book was not available when I was writing this draft; not in Finnish libraries and sold out, but I've ordered a loan from Denmark)
[22] Elliott 1993, 40-48. See also Elliott 1986, 4-5; Holmberg 1990, 12-15; Esler 1987, 6-16
[23] "Interpretative models" also characterized one of the very latest volumes edited by the Context Group scholars; see DeMaris & Neufeld 2010.
[24] Malina 1982, 233; Esler 1987, 9, Esler 1998a, 254; Cf. Elliott 1986, 7; Horrell 1996, 10-11.
[25] Herodian economy is studied by Freyne 1995. Mediterranean anthropology was introduced to biblical social-scientific criticism by Bruce Malina (Malina 1981) and it features in practically all Context Group collections.

critics have found this confusing,[26] but in this regard, biblical scholars probably do not fare worse than social scientists in general.[27]

Whether abstract or concrete, models have become a practical means of introducing new perspectives and questions to the study of biblical texts. Those who advocate the use of models often follow Carney in stating that there is no choice as to whether to use models or not since model construction is an inevitable part of the basic human processes of perception and categorization.[28] Although it is clear that we cannot escape categorization, I find this argument less relevant because basic categorization processes are not quite the same as consciously crafted scientific models. I also do not find it very useful to blur the boundary between simple categorizations and models. In my view, the definition of model should go beyond simple classification by assuming causal (or other) relations between the categorizations of the model.

Furthermore, we do not have quite the same competence for explicating the scientific models that we use, on the one hand, and the basic categorization processes of our brains on the other hand. Even though it is not always so easy to explicate one's models it is still a question about a manageable theoretical process where we can either include or exclude factors so that we can come up with a manageable set of variables (given the task in hand).[29] However, our own cognitive processes are not immediately open to similar critical reflection. In my view, cognitive science can be of assistance here, by explicating the ways our brains work—and the ways the brains of the ancients, whose writings and life we study, work.

The advocates of models within the Context Group have responded to the critics who claim that models presume "positivism" or "determinism" or "filling-in gaps"[30] by emphasizing that models are only heuristic tools that have no ontological reality. They only help find new questions and frameworks which may—or may not— prove to be helpful in understanding the texts.[31] However, this quite pragmatic approach to the usefulness of models leaves open the question of why a certain model or framework finds "responsive data" in the text.[32] This makes the use of models vulnerable to the criticism that predetermined models direct the interpreters towards finding what they seek.[33] By bringing the cognitive scientific point of view into this discussion, it should be possible to give more nuanced answers to the question of why a model fits the data. Are there only coincidental correspondences between cultural variables of two temporally distinct cultures or does the model perhaps embody cross-culturally valid generalities in human cognition?

To be sure, all biblical social science theorists do not have such a practical and heuristic approach to theorizing as the above cited proponents of modeling in the Context Group do. Rodney Stark is the best example of a hard-core covering law theorist who assumes that results from sociological research on modern religious movements allows us to draw inferences about the social reality of ancient religious groups as well. According to Stark,

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[26] Horrell 1996, 9-12; Martin 1999, 129-130.
[27] Cf. *model* in Marshall 1998.
[28] Carney 1975, 5; Elliott 1986, 5-6, Elliott 1993, 44-45; Esler 1994, 12, Esler 1995a, 4, Esler 1998b, 255.
[29] Of course, this does not yet say anything about the validity of such explicated models. The point is only that, theoretically, we are able to explicate our models. To which extent the models correspond with the social reality they seek to characterize is another thing. In the case of ancient history, the correspondence is often only suggestive.
[30] Stowers 1985; Garrett 1992; Horrell 1996, 18-22; Martin 1999, 130.
[31] Elliott 1993, 43-45 Esler 1995, 7, Esler 1998a, 256.
[32] Cf. Esler 1998a, 256.
[33] Cf. Horrell 1996, 15-16.

> it is the abstract generality of science that makes it possible for social science to contribute anything to our understanding of history, let alone to justify efforts to construct history from social scientific theories.[34]

Stark also states that

> there is no reason to suppose that we cannot reason from the general rule to deduce the specific in precisely the same way that we can reason from the principles of physics that coins dropped in a well will go to the bottom.[35]

Although Stark basically assumes similar hierarchy from abstract theories to observations and testing of hypotheses as the biblical scholars who have drawn on Carney (see above), in practice his analysis does not pay much attention to the intermediate level.[36] I have elsewhere discussed Stark's approach in detail and noticed that he often makes quite direct deductive jum from his theories to concrete conclusions, thereby ignoring the discussion about the differences between ancient and modern contexts. It seems clear that in the light of the recent discussion within analytical sociology Stark is extremely confident—I would say overconfident—on the validity and applicability of generalized covering law explanation in the sociology.[37]

Overall, Stark is a complex and controversial figure among social scientist who have studied early Christianity. Originally Stark is a sociologist of religion who became interested in early Christianity in the mid-1980s. In the early stages of his interest he was in contact with social-scientifically oriented biblical scholars, many of whom were affiliated with the Context Group. However, lately he has become more independent in his mission to "introduce historians and biblical scholars to real social science"[38] For scholars who have specialized on the study of early Judaism and/or early Christianity it has been easy to point out some problems in Stark's work.[39] He has also received extremely critical comments from some leading proponents of social-scientific exegesis. Bruce Malina, for instance, characterizes Stark's results as "the usual ethnocentric anachronisms we have come to expect from those who have applied North American or Northern European sociology to Mediterranean antiquity."[40] In practice, there has not been recent discussion between Stark and other scholars who have applied social scientific approach to early Christianity.

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[34] Stark 1997, 23.
[35] Stark 1997, 26.
[36] Stark does not regard middle-range theorizing sufficient in sociology. He makes his stance clear in *Cities of God* where he discusses Merton's approach. Stark makes a distinction between proper theories and theses. He explicitly connects his use of the term thesis to Merton's theories "of the middle range." He gives as an example of a thesis the correlation between Catholic slave codes and the treatment of slaves: the treatment of slaves in North America was better in Catholic than in Protestant societies because the greater liberality and intrusiveness of the Catholic codes. According to Stark this is not a theory: " It is a thesis rather than theory because it is not sufficiently abstract to have very general application, but applies only to a quite limited time and place." Stark 2006, 18-19.
[37] I have discussed Stark's sociological approach to early Christianity in the light of the social mechanisms approach in another context: Luomanen forthcoming (2010).
[38] See, for instance, Stark 1997, xii. For an overview of Stark's research on early Christianity see Luomanen forthcoming (2010).
[39] Smith 1997. Pearson 1999. For positive evaluations—with some critical comments—see, Blasi 1997; Eisenbaum 1998; Pearson 1999; Treviño 1996; Smith 1997.
[40] Malina 1997. Stark has received notable criticism also from the front of historical sociology. See Bryant 1997.

Nevertheless, Stark's books have been very well received among readers all around the world: For instance, *The Rise of Christianity* is translated into nine different languages: German, Dutch, Spanish, Greek, Portuguese, Italian, Korean, Japanese and Chinese. Furthermore, Stark's sociological analysis of the rise of Christianity has inspired scholars who have wanted to develop evolutionary accounts of the development of religions and especially Christianity. [41] Obviously, scholars who come from other disciplines are temped to take Stark as the most influential sociologist of early Christianity, being unaware of other contributions in this area of study.[42]

Stark is also very well known for *A Theory of Religion*, which he co-authored with William Sims Bainbridge.[43] In this theory, Stark and Bainbridge analyze religion from the viewpoint of religious markets drawing on principles of rational choice theory (or exchange theory). Aside standard criticism against rational choice theories[44] Stark and Bainbridge's theory has been criticized for not paying enough attention to ritual, morality and emotions.[45]

In 1999, Stark published a major update to the theory modifying it to meet some of the criticism that had been presented against it. Among other things, Stark replaced a very thin formulation of rational choice with a more sociological version which pays more attention to choices as they appear to persons themselves.[46] In another context Stark has also stated that his version of rational choice theory leaves open the content of the rewards people prefer. According to Stark, "This leaves all the room needed for people to be charitable, brave, unselfish, reverent and even silly."[47] This move saves Stark's version of the rational choice theory from accusations that the theory contains unrealistic assumptions about people's capability to make objectively rational choices.[48] However, this does not improve the usability of the general theory. On the contrary, if peoples' choices can vary freely according to their personal preferences, all decisions they make can be declared rational—but only afterwards.[49] The theory has no predictability at all.

Does this mean that all the conceptualizations and propositions of Stark and Bainbridge's theory are useless? Not necessarily. Although the theory has an extremely formal deductive structure, its definitions and propositions were not built in a vacuum. Several propositions of the theory are actually based on a good deal or empirical research. In particular, the parts that describe conversion as well as formation and development of religious movements, are based on valid sociological research that Stark and his colleagues have conducted. Thus, even though Stark and Bainbridges' general approach has its restrictions, there are some conceptualizations in their theory that may help to make useful distinctions in the study of early Jewish and Christian sectarianism. In the following example some key concepts from Stark and Bainbridge's theory are applied in order to develop a model for the analysis of early Jewish and Christian communities between 70 C.E. and ca. 100 C.E.

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[41] Wilson 2003 (lisää sivut XXX); Runciman 2004.

[42] Undoubtedly this is also connected with publishing forums: scholars coming from other disciplines probably trust contributions that are published within the guild of professional sociologists, in journals like European Journal of Sociology or Sociological Analysis. Social-scientific contributions published in Biblical Theology Bulletin or Catholic Biblical Quarterly—to name two journals that have been major publication channels for the Context Group—are not on the top of their reading lists.

[43] Stark & Bainbridge 1987.

[44] See, for instance Bryant 1997, 191.

[45] Collins 1993, 404-406.

[46] Stark 1999, 265.

[47] Stark 1997, 169-172, esp. 171.

[48] This is relatively common strategy among rational choice theorists. See, Hedström 2005, 62.

[49] Bryant 1997, 194.

4. Examples of modeling

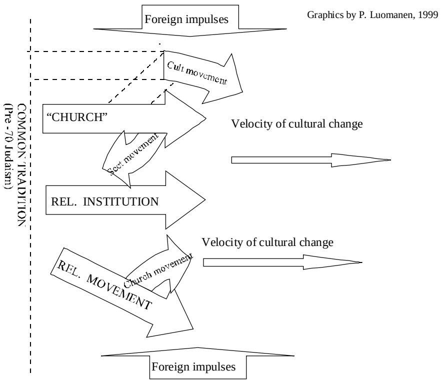
Example 1: A model for the analysis early Jewish and Christian movements

The background of the following model is in the discussions about the sectarian character of the community behind the Gospel of Matthew. During the 1990s three well-known New Testament scholars presented social-scientifically informed analyses about the sectarian character of Matthew's (i.e. the editor of the gospel) community.[50] An analysis of these contributions revealed clear discrepancies between what the sectarian models assumed about the surrounding social reality to which the sects responded, on the one hand, and how the scholars ended up describing the actual relation between Matthew' community and its opponents, on the other hand. The scholars were drawing on Bryan Wilson's and Benton Johnson's sectarian models that discard simple church-sect opposition in favor of more general approach which is interested in a sect's response to its social surrounding (or "world") at large. Nonetheless, scholars ended up describing the opposition mainly in religious terms or assumed oscillating roles for the opponents both as a parent body and as a competing sect. Furthermore, although the scholars assumed that after 70 C.E. Judaism did not have any centralized governance—different factions and groups were competing about power—Matthew's community was, nonetheless, thought to be in opposition with "Judaism," understood as a majority or more powerful parent religion.

These observations showed that the presuppositions of the models did not really match with the scholars understanding of Matthew's socio-religious position. Obviously, a more informed discussion of the parent body and a more thorough assessment of the match between the model and the social reality to be described was needed before the application of sectarian models. Furthermore, a model that would enable to picture different minority positions—instead of labeling all minorities simply as "sects"—would also be helpful.

Without going into details in this connection, my argument was that given the nature of the available sources and their topics (religious writings and disputes), it is actually preferable to use more traditional models of sectarianism that focus on the analysis of religious aspects of social interaction. Furthermore, I argued that even after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. the "Common Judaism" had such a central role in Jewish social memory[51]that it practically functioned as a parent body against which different factions and groups defined their positions. Building on these presuppositions and drawing on Stark and Bainbridge's conceptualizations I developed the following model:

[50] I analyzed J. Andrew Overman's, Anthony Saldarini's and Graham Stanton's contributions. Luomanen 2002. Cf. Overman 1990; Saldarini 1994; Stanton 1992.
[51] To be sure, I did not use the term "social memory" in the original article but the basic idea was there.


Foreign impulses
Graphics by P. Luomanen, 1999
Cult movement
"CHURCH"
Velocity of cultural change
Sect movement
COMMON TRADITION
(Pre-70 Judaism)
REL. INSTITUTION
Velocity of cultural change
REL. MOVEMENT
Church movement
Foreign impulses

A basic distinction that Stark and Bainbridge make is the one between religious institutions and religious movements. In contrast to religious institutions, which accept the social environment in which they exist and adapt to its changes, *religious movements* "wish to cause or prevent change in a system of supernaturally-based general compensators" (i.e. in religion). Institutions and movements are the two opposite poles of one axis that permits different degrees of institutionalization. The benefit of this kind of conceptualization is that it allows for degrees of tension instead of adopting a predetermined number of types, which seldom match perfectly the case under examination, resulting in the proliferation of new terms and categories.[52]

Stark and Bainbridge postulate two basic avenues by which new religious movements emerge. *Sects* come into existence through schisms with existing religious organizations.[53] *Cults,* for their part, come into existence when invented new religious ideas gain social acceptance.[54] Consequently, Stark and Bainbridge define *sect movements* as deviant religious organizations holding traditional beliefs and practices, contrasting these to *cult movements,* which are deviant religious organizations with novel beliefs and practices.[55] The theory of Stark and Bainbridge implies that, just as religious institutions and religious movements represent the two opposite ends of one axis, there is also a continuous spectrum of degrees of novelty between sect movements and cult movements.

Stark and Bainbridge think that religious movements can also be classified according to the direction of their development. It is understandable that *sect movements,* deviating from religious institutions and churches that are in low tension with sociocultural environment, move toward the high tension pole. However, there may at times also be opposite developments. When religious movements move toward less tension with their sociocultural environment they are called *church movements*. [56]

The concepts presented above allow much more variation in Matthew's social surrounding than does the classic church-sect distinction. The graph presents a theoretical model of a post-70 CE situation. It is not an exhaustive description of the situation nor does it imply that all the groups presented by it existed. Rather, it sets forth a set of concepts predicted by Stark and Bainbridge's model. It also includes arrows reminding of the relativity of cultural closure; societies and cultures usually interact with outsiders (Foreign impulses) and change in the course of time (Velocity of cultural change).[57] Since churches and religious institutions adapt to change the direction and speed of their development matches the velocity of cultural change. Dotted lines leading to Cult movement indicate that even new cults usually draw on tradition to some extent.

The role Matthew gives to Jesus marks the boundary between Matthew's group and his Jewish contemporaries. This new "Jesus cult," connected with a liberal interpretation of the law, characterizes Matthew's community and distinguishes it from contemporary Jewish groups.[58] Thus, on the axis between sect and cult movements, Matthew's community finds its place closer to the cult end of the axis and can thus be characterized as a *cult movement*.[59] Nevertheless, in spite of everything new, there are also many traditional beliefs in Matthew's community. Especially on the level of symbolic universe, Matthew lays claim to the Jewish heritage of his community and

[52] Stark & Bainbridge 1987, 16-17 For instance, Elliott 1995, 80-89 lists twenty-one salient sectarian features and nine sectarian strategies.
[53] Stark & Bainbridge 1987, 128.
[54] Stark & Bainbridge 1987, 156.
[55] Stark & Bainbridge 1987, 124.
[56] Stark & Bainbridge 1987, 126.
[57] Cf. Stark & Bainbridge 1987, 60-66.
[58] I have argued for this in Luomanen 1998, 263-265, 278-284
[59] Stark 1986, 223-224 has himself described the early church (i.e. Pauline Christianity) as a cult movement.

legitimates the existence of his group in the same way as many sects do. However, in the long run, the form of Christianity which took over Matthew's gospel became institutionalized within the superstructures of the Roman empire.[60]

The Pharisaic-scribal communities for their part can be best understood as the backbone of the synagogue *institution,* which continued its existence after the destruction of the Temple and managed to *adapt to change*.[61] In the Pharisaic-scribal communities there was also development, but this concerned the means of compensation: the temple cult was replaced with the study of the Torah.[62] This, however, happened within traditional Jewish modes of compensation. Nevertheless, the Pharisaic-scribal community can be understood as an institution only within the Jewish subculture, since the relationships between Jews and local Roman authorities must have varied in the different parts of the Roman society.

Example 2: A model for socio-cognitive analysis of early Christian social identities

While the first example seeks to model the Syro-Palestinian *social reality* of early Christian and Jewish movements around 70-100 C.E., this one presents an attempt to model the *process of research and interpretation* where the study of early Christian social identity is informed by cognitive science.

Some basic knowledge of the social identity approach (SIA) is needed in order to understand the more specific discussion concerning the application of the SIA in the study or early Christian texts. Thus, first a short summary of the SIA and its background in cognitive psychology. Those who are familiar with the SIA may skip this section.

> *Prototypes and Exemplars in Social Categorization* [This chapter is from Luomanen 2007, 210-214, 219-220]
>
> Philip Esler has pioneered the use of the social identity approach in the study of New Testament[63]. Among the key concepts he adopted from the social identity approach in his study on Paul's letter to the Romans were *prototypes* and *exemplars* (on the relation of these two, see below). In Esler's perspective, Paul used Abraham as a prototype who serves as the foundation for a new common ingroup identity for both Judean[64] and non-Judean Christians in Rome[65].
>
> Because of the cognitive roots of the social identity approach, it is also possible to pose more in-depth questions about the cognitive role of prototypes and exemplars in social categorizations. This kind of deeper cognitive analysis might lend further credence to social-scientific analysis by showing that when models fit the data, this is not because of some

[60] Cf. proposition 300 in Stark and Bainbridge's theory (Stark & Bainbridge 1987): Successful sects and cults tend to move toward lower tension. On this see also Holmberg 1990, 104-105

[61] It is to be kept in mind that there is always change in societies. Thus, in order to keep their positions, even institutions have to change; they adapt to their social surrounding (cf. Stark and Bainbridge's definition of institution cited above).

[62] See, Neusner, 35-41

[63] Esler 1998b; Esler 2003

[64] Esler prefers to use the term "Judean" instead of "Jewish" because, for him, it better captures the original geographical overtones of the Greek term. See, Esler 2003, 63-74.

[65] Esler 2003, 171-194.

accidental correspondence but because of the innate and universal cognitive functions of the mind (cf. the Introduction to this volume).

Tajfel and his colleagues showed that categorization of visual stimuli and accentuation of differences between visually observed categories have regularities that also characterize the formation of cognitive representations of social groups and intergroup relations. Thus, Tajfel showed a clear correspondence between perceptual judgments and the formation of social stereotypes. For Tajfel, it was important to realize that such negative phenomena as prejudice and stereotyping of outgroups cannot be understood without analyzing the cognitive processes that produce them:

The principal argument is … that the etiology of intergroup relations cannot be properly understood without the help of an analysis of their cognitive aspects, and also that this analysis cannot be derived from statements about motivation and about instinctive behaviour[66]. It is important and *useful* … that a consideration of prejudice as a phenomenon in the minds rather than in the guts of people should take precedence …[67]

This cognitive aspect in Tajfel's (and Turner's) *social identity theory* is further developed in John Turner's *self-categorization theory*. [NB: in this chapter I am using "the social identity approach (SIA), as an umbrella term that includes both social identity theory and self-categorization theory]. The original mission of Turner's theory was to cast light on the psychological basis of group formation but its most important contribution in the field of the social identity approach has turned out to be a new cognitive perspective on social categorization.[68] While Tajfel described the cognitive representations of groups mainly in terms of categorization, accentuation and stereotyping, Turner has introduced the concept of *prototypicality* (or prototypes) in the discussion of social perception.

Turner and his colleagues have taken their cue from Eleanor Rosch who had studied the cognitive representation of semantic categories in a series of experiments in the 1970s. The results of Rosch's experiments challenged the classic Aristotelian view according to which membership in a category is defined by a set of critical features shared by all members of the category. The experiments rather showed that, in practice, membership in a category is judged on the basis of a degree of similarity to the *prototype* (the best example) of the category in question. Consequently, members of a category vary in their degree of typicality. This also effects how easily they are classified: the closer the stimulus is to the prototype, the faster it is categorized. For instance, American subjects see robins as more typical representatives of the bird category than ostriches. On the other hand, the invocation of the category prototype by the category name negatively affects how quickly two examples of "poor" members of the category were recognized as belonging to the same category. This probably happens because, in this case, a simple matching task (verification if the two examples share certain features) is replaced by two separate verifications through the prototype and this takes more time. Thus, instead of being clearly defined closed entities, categories are more like "fuzzy sets" where members of a category are tied together through "family resemblance." Furthermore, Rosch's experiments also showed that categories vary in their relative inclusiveness so that superordinate categories are more inclusive than basic/intermediate categories and subordinate categories are less inclusive than the basic/intermediate categories.[69]

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[66] Tajfel 1981, 131.
[67] Tajfel 1981, 142.
[68] Oakes, et al. 1998, 75.
[69] Rosch 1975, 193-196, 203-205, 224-227 Oakes, et al. 1998, 75-76.

In short, Rosch's experiments showed that there is a relative inclusiveness across categories and a relative prototypicality within categories. Self-categorization theory makes use of both these aspects. Following Rosch, self-categorization theory assumes three levels of abstraction for self-categories: interpersonal (subordinate level; self as an individual), intergroup (intermediate/basic level; self as a group member) and interspecies (superordinate level; self as a human being). Self-categorization theory also assumes that prototypicality plays a key role in judgments about group memberships.[70]

Social psychologists and cognitive scientists have disputed the role of prototypes and their relation to exemplars in (social) categorization. While earlier research focused on the role of preconceived categories and schemata ("prototypes"; cf. Tajfel's research) in social categorizations, the function of exemplars (information about specific group members) started to gain more attention at the beginning of 1990s[71]. Various social psychological models of intergroup perception have tried to determine the conditions under which people are engaged either with prototype representations or exemplar representations of ingroups and outgroups. For instance, it has been suggested that the salience of a group might have an effect on whether the prototype or the exemplar mode of representation is activated. Since salience is often connected to relative group sizes, it would follow that more salient small groups are represented predominantly by prototypes while less salient large groups evoke the exemplar representation mode[72]. It is not possible to go into the details of this discussion here. In the following, I only briefly describe the stance of the self-categorization theorists[73] and introduce some neuroscientific experiments that may help to understand how prototypes and exemplars are processed in the brain.

There has been a tendency among some social psychologists to take social prototypes as *fixed cognitive structures*, abstract representations of ideal group members. Membership in the category is assessed on the basis of perceived similarity to the prototype. For instance Brewer, who was among the first to draw on Rosch's studies, has argued for the character of prototypes as picture-like images of the ideal category member.[74] Some social psychological approaches to leadership have also assumed that possible leaders are assessed on the basis of their similarity to the prototype of the ideal leader.[75]

However, Medin (1989) has pointed out that, if prototypes are understood as fixed invariable cognitive structures, the assessment of the membership in a given category is reduced to the simple attribute matching task. Comparison to necessary and sufficient attributes (the classic approach) is replaced with comparison to the attributes of the prototype.[76] According to Medin, "Prototype theories … fail to reflect the *context sensitivity* that is evident in human categorization. Rather than getting at the character of human

[70] Oakes, et al. 1998, 76-80.
[71] Cf. Smith & Zárate 1992.
[72] Mullen, et al. 1996.
[73] For an overview of the positions, see Oakes, Haslam and Turner 1998.
[74] Brewer 1998.
[75] Frazier & Lord 1988.
[76] Interestingly, Gil-White 2001, supports his argument about the human tendency to process "ethnies" as essences of natural kinds by defending the "classic" categorization model. In his view, people would resort to the classic matching when making decisions about memberships in the category of natural kinds. Even if this would work for "ethnies," which I doubt, it is clear that the assumption fails to do justice to the context sensitivity of most social categorizations.

conceptual representation, prototypes appear to be more of a caricature of it."[77] Since there are also other cognitive researchers that have emphasized the contextual variability of judgments of Prototypicality,[78] the self-categorization theorists have insisted that prototypes must not be understood as fixed cognitive structures. Instead, prototypicality always depends on the judgmental context. Turner and his colleagues also argue that this is the original "Roschian" view of Prototypicality.[79] Because prototypes are perceived as contextual variables, they prefer to speak about *prototypicality* instead of (fixed) prototypes.

In self-categorization theory, the dynamic character of social comparisons is formalized in the principle of *meta-contrast*. According to the meta-contrast principle, "a given set of items is more likely to be categorized as a single entity *to the degree that differences within that set of items are less than differences between that set and others within the comparative context*"[80]. Consequently, the most prototypical member of a group is the one whose position minimizes intragroup differences and maximizes intergroup differences.[81] Notably, the theory assumes that the most prototypical position and relative prototypicality of the members is being constantly monitored and recalculated according to shifting comparative contexts. For example, the prototypical communist in the context of fascists is different from the prototypical communist in the context of liberal democrats.[82]

Although self-categorization theorists themselves do not explicitly use the term "exemplar" in their discussion, it seems clear that the calculations of prototypicality have to be based on real-life exemplars of ingroup and outgroup members or exemplars that have become otherwise salient in the comparative context, such as historical or fictitious group members.[83] Similarities and differences are not observed across randomly chosen representatives but within a set of exemplars that are (initially) thought to be relevant representatives of the ingroup and the outgroups. This brings us back to the question of how prototypes and exemplars are related to each other in social categorizations and whether we should regard prototypes or exemplars as more important in judgments about group memberships. A possible answer to this question may come from neurological laterality experiments (see below).

Laterality studies are conducted with split-brain patients whose left and right hemispheres have been disconnected (usually as an extreme means to prevent violent epileptic seizures), patients who have lesions either in the left or in the right hemisphere, and with healthy

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[77] Medin 1989, 1472 (emphasis added.). Medin and his colleagues argue for the "background theories" the perceivers have about the world. These theories have a crucial role in determining which categories hang together as meaningful wholes. Because Medin studies general category formation, his approach is more comprehensive than what needs to be developed in the context of social ingroup and outgroup categorizations. From the viewpoint of Medin's approach, social categorization can be understood as an example of one meaningful whole that is held together by the assumption that humans tend to form groups and act according to their group memberships. However, Medin's theory shares with self-categorization theory the idea of categorizations as contextual variables (see below).

[78] Barsalou 1987.

[79] Oakes, et al. 1998, 76.

[80] Oakes, et al. 1998, 77. Oakes, et al. 1998, 80. Marques, et al. 1998.

[81] Oakes, et al. 1998, 80. Marques, et al. 1998.

[82] Oakes, et al. 1998, 80

[83] In some contexts, exemplars may also include historical or fictitious persons. These are particularly important if the user of the social identity approach wishes to include a discussion of historical perspective. See Cinnirella 1998, 231-232 Esler 2003, 22-24, 172-178

subjects by directing stimuli only to the left hemisphere (from the right visual field) or to the right hemisphere (from the left visual field). These studies indicate that the left hemisphere may rely on prototypical representations while the right hemisphere seems to be more adept at exemplar modes or representation.

For instance, Marsolek[84] conducted a laterality experiment with normal subjects. He created eight prototypes of abstract line drawings and eight sets of variations on these prototypes. During a training period, the subjects were shown the variations (not the prototypes) and were trained to categorize them. In the test phase, the stimuli were presented either in the left or in the right visual field. When the subjects were shown the variations, their judgments were faster when the variations were processed by the right hemisphere (presented in the left visual field). On the other hand, when they were presented with the previously unseen prototypes, their judgments were faster when the stimuli were processed by the left hemisphere (presented in the right visual field). Thus, it seems that the left hemisphere had "correctly" abstracted the form of the prototypes from the exemplars and was therefore able to recognize them faster. The right hemisphere, for its part, had stored the information about the exemplars as they were shown and was therefore faster when dealing with them.

The ability of the left hemisphere to engage in categorization, interpretation and theory construction is attested in many neurological processing systems, including perception, memory and language. As a matter of fact, the specialization of the left hemisphere in these areas is probably connected to the fact that language processing is located in the left temporal lobe and language development requires highly developed categorization skills[85].

Although the left hemisphere is better at category formation and interpretation, the right hemisphere is faster and more accurate in tasks demanding identification of previously confronted stimuli. When split-brain patients were asked whether or not they had seen a series of stimuli in the set that they had studied for the experiment, their right hemisphere was able to correctly identify the previously seen items and reject the ones that were not seen. However, the left hemisphere of these patients tended to falsely identify items that were not seen in reality but which resembled those that the subjects were shown, presumably because the left hemisphere found these correct in the light of the schema/prototype it had created[86].

In the light of the laterality experiments, the left hemisphere appears as an interpreter that goes beyond simply observing the facts by creating theories that assimilate the observations in comprehensive wholes. In the right hemisphere, the observational accuracy remains high because it is not engaged in these kinds of interpretative operations. In an intact brain, these two systems operate in concert allowing highly developed category formation and theorizing without sacrificing veracity[87].

The significance of the lateratility experiments for the social identity approach lies in the fact these prove the existence of two different cognitive systems in the brain for the processing of prototypes and exemplars. Furthermore, they show that, in a normal brain, these are not two mutually exclusive modes of processing but form a dual system that enables flexible, context (exemplar) sensitive categorizing and theorizing. Thus, it seems worthwhile to develop the social identity approach in terms of theorizing with both

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[84] Marsolek 1995; cited here according to Gazzaniga, et al. 2002, 435-436. Gazzaniga, Ivry and Mangun 2002: 435–36
[85] Gazzaniga, et al. 2002, 436
[86] Gazzaniga, et al. 2002, 672-675
[87] Gazzaniga, et al. 2002, 436-447, 672-675

> exemplars and prototypes. For instance, *exemplars* could be termed as observed ingroup and outgroup members as well as culturally transmitted descriptions of the possible past, present and future members of ingroups and outgroups. Exemplars can contribute to categorical judgments either "on line," as present observations or through memory retrieval. The context of the social categorization effects the relative salience of the exemplars to be taken into account and it also cues the memory retrieval of previously stored exemplars with their associative emotional and other characteristics.[88]
>
> The term *prototype* could be reserved for the products of the categorizing and generalizing activity of the left hemisphere. This use of the term *prototype* would be fully consistent with the way in which prototypicality is presently defined by the self-categorization theorists: prototypicality is profoundly context dependant and dependant on the individual who accomplishes the social calculus in terms of the meta-contrast principle. By definition, it is possible to discuss shared group prototypes only as approximations of averages of individually calculated prototypicalities since groups as such do not possess memories or conduct assessments of prototypicalities. This line of theorizing would not allow for the direct communication of prototypes since prototypicalities are always assessed/calculated by individuals in certain, irreproducible contexts (individuals are, though, deeply affected by their group memberships). However, exemplars are more easily accessible to social entrepreneurs who may try to effect the assessment of prototypicalites by manipulating the character and salience of relevant past, present and future exemplars.
>
> The above considerations about terminological distinctions between exemplars and prototypes are suggestive; it is clear that, in practice, similar context sensitive analyses of prototypicalities can be made without such clear-cut terminological distinctions between exemplars and prototypes.[89] More important is that although the above considerations are not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of the cognitive aspects of social categorizations, the above reasoning—together with examples presented in the Introduction to this volume—should have made clear the benefits of trying to combine social psychological theorizing with cognitive (neuro)science.

SIA in the study of historical texts

Because social-psychological research usually concerns present social groups and their relations it is not clear from the outset how concepts and models developed within the social identity approach should be applied in the study of history and especially in the study of texts that are some two thousand years old. Because of their discipline is oriented towards analyzing the present social interaction, social identity theorists have not much reflected on temporal aspects of social identity phenomena.

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[88] The third main assumption of Smith and Zárate's exemplary based model (1992) is that "a range of social and motivational factors including individual differences, the perceiver's past experiences, the self-schema, the current social context, in-group/out-group dynamics, and the like, which are known to affect social judgment, do so by shaping the perceiver's attention to stimulus dimensions and therefore influencing exemplar retrieval and use."

[89] For instance, Esler (Esler 2003, 172-175) does not make any clear distinction between exemplars and prototypes although he seems to suggest that exemplars could refer to historical persons, but if the person proves to be fictitious, then one could term him/her a prototype. Nonetheless, irrespective of the terminology, Esler's analysis of the prototypes Paul uses in Romans is highly context sensitive.

Philip Esler's book *Conflict and Identity in Romans* includes a fine summary and discussion of the few social identity studies where this point of view is discussed.[90] Although Esler provides a reasonable theoretical discussion of how the SIA can be applied in Paul's letters it is not directly applicable in the study of early Christian gospels. In the case of Paul's genuine letters we are dealing—in social identity perspective—with a relatively reliable historical record of how Paul, as a social entrepreneur, propagated his understanding of Christian identity to the recipients of his letters. However, as compared to Paul's (genuine) letters the relationship between history and the text is much more complicated in the gospels. Gospels are multilayered historical records that tell the story of Jesus. However, through this story we can—by means of historical-critical study—try to reconstruct historical situations that accompany the gospels' cumulative editorial history.

Although the application of the SIA to historical and partly fictive record presents problems that have to be solved, it is easy to defend the basic applicability of the approach in the study of historical phenomena: The SIA is rooted in cognitive psychology and the human cognition has remained practically the same for the last thousands of years. Therefore, it is to be expected that the cognitive processes steering group categorizations and the formation of in-group biases were basically the same at the time when Matthew composed his gospel as they are now. Thus, the two thousand year time gap between us and Matthew does not as such present any problem for the applicability of the SIA. The problem is only how to get valid information about the historical situation(s) through a multilayered gospel narrative. The crucial question is: Does Matthew's story about Jesus provide reasonable information and enough information for the application of the SIA?

In my view it does. Even more, Matthew's narrative of Jesus seems to provide particularly interesting and fruitful starting point for the application of the SIA because of its transparent character. Redaction critics (i.e. those who study editor's work) have made valuable observations of the way how Matthew has developed characterization in his narrative about Jesus. When Matthew's description of Jesus' followers and his opponents is compared with Q, Mark and Luke, it has become clear that the characters in Matthew's narrative have gone through an extensive typification.

This typifiation involves standard labels and patterns of behavior that Matthew uses in his characterization of Jesus' opponents on the one hand, and his followers on the other hand. The standard title for Jesus' opponents in Matthew's narrative is "the scribes and the Pharisees." Throughout the narrative these appear as "hypocrites" who plot against Jesus and present him nasty questions. Matthew has also made Jesus to give an authoritative speech against them in Matthew 23. On the other hand, genuine followers of Jesus in the narrative are described as persons who come to him, fall on their knees and address him as Kyrios. Furthermore, Peter is presented as the spokesperson for the closest disciples. Ulrich Luz has characterized these features of Matthew's narrative with the term *transparency:* disciples in Matthew's narrative are transparent characters through which Matthew addresses his own post-Easter community.[91]

In the perspective of the SIA this phenomenon can be characterized in terms of *exemplars and prototypes.* An exemplar refers to an actual representative of a group while a prototype is formed on the basis of actual examples and it is defined as a summary or ideal representation of group members. A prototype embodies the positive characteristics that a perceiver finds as most typical of the members of a group.[92]

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[90] Esler 2003, 172-178.
[91] Cf. Luomanen 1998, 50-51.
[92] Cf. Esler 2003, 172-173. who follows Smith & Zárate 1992. OTA HUOMIOON tässä myös Hoggin hyvä prototyypin määritelmä s.69.

The role of exemplars and prototypes in social categorizations are usually studied in experiments where people are faced with on-line categorization tasks. Thus, they do not provide direct information of what role historical persons or culturally transmitted idealized heroes from the past play in social categorizations. Should these persons from the past be defined as exemplars? Or are they more like prototypes if their characterization is highly idealized? When Esler discusses the role of historical figures in creating common ingroup identity he refers to Churchill as an exemplar of Britishness and Charles de Gaulle as an exemplar of the French. On the other hand, Esler counts Abraham as a prototype. According to Esler,

> where a person belongs to the probably legendary past of a people, say Abraham or Roland, although the group members who accept his or her real existence will regard the person as (what I am calling) an exemplar, an outside observer would employ the concept of prototype.[93]

In another context [citer above], I have tried to clarify the distinction between prototypes and exemplars with the help of brain research. Because of these research results I have suggested earlier that the term prototype could be reserved for the cognitive abstractions that are created in the mind [see above].[94] However, it might also be useful—especially for historical analyses of identity construction—to make a distinction between *cognitive prototypes* and *cultural prototypes*. In this distinction cognitive prototypes refer to the mental processes studied in cognitive and social-psychological research (cf. my earlier discussion of this topic). Cultural prototypes for their part refer to cultural representations of either historical or fictive persons for the purposes of creation and maintenance of social identities.[95]

Although, from the cognitive point of view, ingroup members process these representations as exemplars, they are created and characterized the way they are because they typify characteristics that are of primary importance for the creation of positive ingroup identity. As such they reflect the cognitive prototypes of the cultural entrepreneurs who have presented them. In this regard it does not make any difference whether the person in question is historical or not—except in the sense that fictive persons may more directly reflect the cognitive prototypes of the entrepreneurs. In cultural identity-building discourse both fictive and historical persons are prone to similar processes of typification and accentuation of traits that are important for the creation of common ingroup identity.

When applied to Matthew's gospel these definitions lead us to characterize Matthew's highly typified descriptions, for instance, of the Scribes and Pharisees, disciples and Peter as *cultural*

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[93] Esler 2003, 173. Esler makes here an interesting distinction between emic and etic points of view, according to which, in the case of Abraham, outside observer would employ the concept of prototype while the observer him/herself would think in terms of exemplar. This distinction, I think, hits right on the target of the problem that we are faced with when we are trying to analyze historical record or fiction from an outsider's point of view. From the view point of the perceiver who is in the middle of a social categorization process him/herself, it is impossible to make such conscious decision between exemplars and prototypes. Our brain categorizes things without asking us Luomanen 2007 whether some individual cases should be treated as exemplars or prototypes. For the brain, all the perceived objects are treated as exemplars on the basis of which the brain calculates the nature of the prototypes on it own. Only an outside observer can start thinking whether certain cultural products are influenced by the prototypes a mind has created to such extent that it would be reasonable to call them "prototypes" in distinction to "rank and file" exemplars.

[94] Luomanen 2007, 210-224 and Chapter XXX.

[95] In on-line social categorization these cultural prototypes function as salient exemplars that—together with other examplars available for the ingroup members in their social context—result in context dependant calculations of cognitive prototypes.

prototypes that reflect the cognitive prototypes of ideal group members in the mind of the editor of the gospel.

Although I think that the above suggested distinction between cognitive and cultural prototypes will be helpful in future analyzes of Matthew in social identity perspective it is more important to take notice of the general compatibility of the social identity approach with earlier redaction-critical analyzes. Social-scientific approach is often accused of reading the evidence in the light of the chosen models or imposing to the text models and categories that are foreign to it. Obviously, such imperialism of modeling is less likely to occur if we apply the concepts of exemplars and prototypes in our analysis of Matthew. Redaction-critical work on Matthew has already highlighted the points in Matthew's narrative and editorial activity which provide a natural starting point for a social identity approach to Matthew's Gospel.

GRAPH TO BE ADDED HERE

This is a work in progress and I am still working on the graph. I'll send it later on, hopefully in good time before the workshop. The graph will include (at least) the following elements:

- Modern categorizer who's work is informed by cognitive science
- Ancient writer (Matthew in this case) and his/her categories
- Ancient reader and his/her categories
- The common ingroup of the writer and the reader
- outgroups of the writer and the reader
- The text to be studied, its narrative, categories and characterizations, as well as their relation to the author's and the reader's categories, ingroups and outgroups.

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