1 Introduction

1.1 THE INSIDER/OUTSIDER DISTINCTION

How did early Christ-believers understand 'outsiders'? What language did they use when speaking about 'outsiders' and what does this language say about how they understood themselves as 'insiders', as Christians?[1] The emergence of language for 'them', for 'the other', is very revealing when we are interested in the identity of a group and in group boundaries – that is, who is in and who is out of the group. A group might describe 'outsiders' in hostile terms such as 'enemies' or in more positive terms such as 'future recruits' or 'friends'. The variety of ways of conceiving of 'outsiders', of 'them', is of significance when we wish to understand a group's sense of identity. In particular, the way 'outsiders' are labelled sheds light on the features early Christians considered most salient about their own faith, since 'the outsider' was regarded as on the wrong side of the important boundary constructed by such language.

Any society is made up of a number of social categories that consist of the way people can be grouped together on the basis of nationality, race, sex, class, occupation, religion and so on. Importantly, 'categories do not exist in isolation. A category is only such in contrast with another'.[2] Hence we can think of contrasting and mutually exclusive socially constructed categories such as medical doctor, carpenter and so on. Michael Hogg notes:

> Groups exist by virtue of there being outgroups. For a collection of people to be a group there must, logically, be other people who are not in the group (a diffuse non-ingroup e.g. academics vs.

[1] For discussions of the use of 'Christian' as a designation, see Trebilco 2012a: 3–4, 272–297; Hakola, Nikki and Tervahauta 2013: 19n35.
[2] Hogg and Abrams 1988: 14.

> non-academics) or people who are in a specific outgroup (e.g. academics vs. politicians). In this sense, social groups are categories of people; and just like other categories, a social category acquires its meaning by contrast with other categories. The social world is patterned by social discontinuities that mark the boundaries of social groups in terms of perceived and/or actual differences in what people think, feel, and do.[3]

To a very real extent then, a group defines itself over and against other groups. The 'otherness' of 'the other' or 'the outsider' is an important dimension of group identity. Identity is constructed through opposition, and 'we' need 'them' in order to fully define and conceptualise 'ourselves'.[4] It is through knowing the other that we can fully define ourselves and our own identity.

Accordingly, one element that enhances our understanding of the 'ingroups' of early Christ-believers is an understanding of the 'outgroups' with which they related, and the nature of relations between these ingroups and outgroups. Important dimensions of these relations are the nature of the designations ingroups used for outsiders and the way these designations contributed to group identity and to intergroup differentiation.

In this book, I will consider a range of different terms that were used as labels or designations for outsiders.[5] I will consider the ways that various New Testament authors constructed outsiders linguistically, what this indicates about how these authors thought of their own identity and how such language functions in different ways in different texts. I will ask how such language is used to exclude or to create and maintain clear boundaries between ingroups and outgroups and so what it says about the construction of early Christian identity. I hope to show that, as well as adopting a range of terms from the LXX, a variety of creative and innovative linguistic moves were at work in this process. My hope then is that we will gain insight into the early Christians and their identity by considering how they spoke about and understood 'outsiders'.

[3] Hogg 2001: 56.

[4] Lieu 2002: 186 writes that identity 'involves self-awareness in relation to the other: "us" demands "them". It is the assertion of a collective self and the simultaneous negation of collective others'. Similarly, Sheridan 2014: 201 writes: 'Any identity needs the support of alterity to be upheld'. See also Hall 1997: 47; Lieu 2004: 269–271; Smith 2011: 5.

[5] The terms 'labels' and 'designations' will be used interchangeably.

1.2 OUTSIDER DESIGNATIONS IN NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS

In a classic study on 'outsiders', Becker uses the term 'to refer to those people who are judged by others to be deviant and thus to stand outside the circle of "normal" members of the group'.[6] In my study, the term 'outsider designations' will be used for the different terms that describe or refer to non-group members.[7] These are terms for outsiders that clearly distinguish those who are insiders from those who do not belong to the group. On occasions, these outsider designations will be contrasted with 'self-designations', which are terms used to address, to refer to or to describe group members.[8]

How do we determine what terms are being used as 'outsider designations'? A helpful guide is if a particular term can be replaced with the word 'outsiders', then it can be regarded as an 'outsider designation'. Note these passages:

> Rom 11:13b: 'Inasmuch then as I am an apostle *to the Gentiles* (εἰμι ἐγὼ ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος), I glorify my ministry'.
>
> 1 Cor 6:1: 'When any of you has a grievance against another, do you dare to take it to court before *the unrighteous* (ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδίκων), instead of taking it before the saints (καὶ οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἁγίων)?'
>
> 1 Thess 5:15: 'See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and *to all* (εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντας)'.

Here, 'Gentiles' and 'unrighteous' are used as outsider designations, and we can determine this by replacing the term in question with 'outsiders'. In the case of 1 Thess 5:15, the context shows that 'all' is inclusive and refers to *both* insiders *and* outsiders. These are the types of designations that I will be considering here.

The use of outsider designations in the New Testament (NT) can be seen to fall into three categories.[9] Firstly, outsider designations are used as part of a description of, or to refer to, the contemporary outsiders of a particular group of readers. 'Gentiles', 'the unrighteous' and 'all' given above are examples of such designations for people who are not members of the readers' group.

[6] Becker 1963: 15. For further discussion of deviance, see Chapter 2.
[7] For a discussion of different types of labels, see Trebilco 2012a: 1–3.
[8] See Trebilco 2012a. [9] Furnish 2002: 105–106 uses somewhat different categories.

Secondly, outsider designations are used as part of a description of the pre-conversion lives of Christian readers. For example, in Rom 5:6, Paul says that 'while we were still *weak*, at the right time Christ died for *the ungodly*', and he then goes on to say that readers were also '*sinners*' (5:8) and '*enemies*' (5:10). These are labels for what his readers once were. These two categories will be of interest to me at various points in this study.

Thirdly, outsider designations are used as part of a description of or to refer to people who would regard themselves as Christ-believers but whom a particular author considers to be wrong or misguided and so as no longer part of the movement or of their particular group. These are 'false teachers' or 'opponents' – former insiders who are now 'othered' by the author and regarded as deviants in some way.[10] We could call them 'rejected insiders'. They can be regarded as 'the most proximate other'[11] in our texts, in the sense that our authors regarded them as outsiders, but as I have noted, the people concerned would have regarded themselves as Christ-believers. At times, these 'opponents' may have regarded our canonical authors as 'false teachers', or perhaps they would have included our canonical authors as insiders, and so had a broader vision of what it was to be a Christ-believer. But it seems likely that these 'opponents' are 'the most proximate other' of our Christ-believing groups in the sense that they had the most in common with our canonical authors and are sociologically the closest groups.

These 'opponents' are often the most strongly 'othered' groups in our texts – that is, the most maligned, or most polemically attacked, with the most pejorative language in the books concerned being used for them. There is also often a strong sense of vilification of such opponents.[12] This reflects the point that social groups are often most strongly

[10] See e.g. false brother (ψευδάδελφος; 2 Cor 11:26; Gal 2:4); false apostle (ψευδαπόστολος; 2 Cor 11:13; cf. Rev 2:2); false teacher (ψευδοδιδάσκαλος; 2 Pet 2:1); false prophet (ψευδοπροφήτης; Matt 7:15; 24:11, 24; Mark 13:22; Luke 6:26; 1 John 4:1; 2 Pet 2:1); liar (ψευδής; Rev 2:2); dogs (κύων; Phil 3:2; 2 Pet 2:22; Rev 22:15); antichrist (ἀντίχριστος; 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7) and servants of Satan (implied in 2 Cor 11:14–15). See also e.g. Acts 20:29; 2 Cor 11:1–6; Gal 1:6–9; 5:11–12; Phil 3:18–19; 2 Tim 3:1–6; 2 Pet 2:1–22; Jude 4–19; Rev 2:14–15, 20–23. For further discussions, see Sumney 1999; 2010: 55–70; Porter 2005; Ong 2014: 154–159.

[11] The expression 'proximate other' is from Smith 1985: 15, 45–46.

[12] Note Schlueter's comment (1994: 185) on Paul's writings: 'The level of intensity of his vituperation increases when he is facing opposition from within the ekklēsia in Christ'. See Schlueter's discussion of the intensity of language against 'false brethren' in 1994: 164–185; see also Johnson 1989: 441n66; Punt 2006: 217. On this language of vilification of opponents, see the classic study of Johnson 1989: 419–441; see also

in conflict with those who are perceived to be closest to them ideologically.[13] It is this most proximate other who poses the greatest threat and about whom authors are most concerned. In our literature, a key reason that some of our documents were written was precisely to combat these opponents, and they are the *key* concern of some of our authors. Because of limitations of space, the language used to designate these 'Christian opponents' will generally not be included here.[14] Rather, my focus is on what might be called 'genuine outsiders'.[15]

1.3 A BRIEF REVIEW OF PREVIOUS WORK

A range of studies has been very helpful in writing this book. There have been a number of studies of particular outsider designations that are considered here, particularly 'sinners',[16] 'Gentiles'[17] and 'οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι'.[18] There have also been studies on 'the Other' in the NT or in related texts,[19] or on 'outsiders'.[20]

However, no study known to me has sought to discuss a range of outsider designations with a view to considering their function across

A. du Toit 1994: 403–412; Bowe 2007: 98–101; Frey 2010: 275–310; Punt 2010: 212–231.

[13] See Gager 1992: 251–252; Green 1985: 69 notes that 'the most threatening kind of otherness, [is] the otherness within'. See also Goulder 1991: 300; Bowe 2007: 97–98.

[14] They are discussed briefly in Chapter 10, section 10.2.1, in regard to the Pastorals.

[15] I will also not be considering titles such as ἱερεύς, 'priest' or names such as 'Pharisees' but rather terms that involve designating someone as an outsider through the language involved, rather than as a result of the role they play in the narrative.

[16] See particularly E. P. Sanders 1985: 174–211; Winninge 1995.

[17] See Dabelstein 1981; Donaldson 1997b; 2007; Sim and McLaren 2013.

[18] See e.g. Evans and Hagner 1993; Bieringer, Pollefeyt and Vandecasteele-Vanneuville 2001. Other studies on particular outsider designations are Thibaut 1988 on ἀπειθέω; Riaud 2007 on 'the stranger'. Other studies of interest include Wimbush 1987: 76–82; Malina and Neyrey 1988; Elliott 1998: 296–302; Horrell 2005: 246–272; McKnight and Modica 2008. Others have studied a range of related matters. Stenschke 1999 considers Luke's view of Gentiles prior to them coming to faith and why, according to Luke they needed salvation; Dunning 2005: 177–198 discusses 'alien status' or a 'rhetoric of outsiderness' (198) in Hebrews; Smith 2011 describes the literary construction of 'the Other' in Acts. Some studies on self-designations have included very brief comments on outsider designations; see e.g. Karpp 1950: 1137–1138. The terms I will be considering have also been discussed in TDNT, EDNT and NIDNTTE.

[19] See Neusner and Frerichs 1985; Lieu 2004: 269–297; Punt 2006; 2009; Bowe 2007; Alexander 2008; Harlow, Hogan, Goff and Kaminsky 2011; Kuecker 2011; Smith 2011; Carter 2012; Hakola, Nikki and Tervahauta 2013;Weissenrieder 2016. Note also Gruen 2011.

[20] See van Unnik 1980; Furnish 2002; 2005; Spina 2005; Wills 2008; Kok, Nicklas, Roth and Hays 2014; Kok and Dunne 2014.

the NT and what they tell us about early Christian identity. This is what is attempted here.

In a previous work, entitled *Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament*, I considered labels used in the NT for insiders and what they tell us about early Christian identity. This is a companion volume to that work and considers the other side of the coin – the designations used for outsiders in the New Testament.

1.4 OTHER INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

Firstly, we need to distinguish here between language that a group uses internally and language that is used externally. In their own internal discourse, a group might refer to outsiders very negatively, but the same group might use more neutral or even positive language when actually talking *with* outsiders (perhaps for the purpose of mission or recruitment). However, since the NT is entirely written for insiders, we do not have any indications of actual designations used for outsiders when speaking directly to them; that is, we have no record of terms of address for outsiders. This is in contrast to the use of self-designations in the NT, where some self-designations were used by an author to address readers, of which ἀδελφοί is the most common in the New Testatment.[21] Our NT evidence consists entirely of the way the NT authors referred to outsiders, and so this is a clear point of difference in the use of self-designations and outsider designations.

Secondly, when discussing Paul's letters, along with the seven undisputed letters (Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon), I will include Ephesians, Colossians and 2 Thessalonians.[22] I will deal with the Pastorals separately from the rest of the Pauline corpus.[23]

Thirdly, there are many additional outsider designations that could have been discussed here, particularly terms that occur only a few

[21] See Trebilco 2012a: 22, 28–30.

[22] On the authorship of Ephesians, see Trebilco 2004: 89; although I regard Ephesians as pseudonymous, I will include it in discussions of the Pauline corpus, since, in regard to the matters that I discuss here, it is very similar to the undisputed Paulines. For a discussion of the authenticity of Colossians, see Dunn 1996: 35–41; D. A. Campbell 2014: 276–304; cf. Sumney 2008: 1–9. On the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians, see Malherbe 2000: 349–75; D. A. Campbell 2014: 204–216, 251–253.

[23] On the authorship of the Pastorals, see Trebilco 2004: 197–202.

times.[24] Nor does my discussion here generally go beyond outsider designations used in the NT itself.[25] I have not sought to be comprehensive, since to do so would considerably expand this work. I have sought rather to identify instances where the designations used for outsiders shed the most light on early Christian identity.

1.5 AN OUTLINE OF THIS STUDY

In Chapter 2 I address the question of the methods to be used in this study and discuss the different insights that emerge from social identity theory, sociolinguistics and the sociology of deviance. In Chapter 3 I will argue that in the LXX the concept of the outsider is lexicalised using a whole range of different Greek terms.[26] Accordingly, when the NT uses a range of terms such as unrighteous, lawless, ungodly, sinners and so on, these terms are not to be significantly distinguished. Rather, what we see is that these terms lexicalise the concept of the outsider in the LXX, and this lexicalisation of the concept in this way is carried across to the NT. I will also discuss how this range of terms functions by demarcating particular people or a particular group as 'outside'.

In Chapters 4–8, a range of key outsider designations used in the NT will be discussed: 'unbelievers (οἱ ἄπιστοι and other terms)', 'outsiders (οἱ ἔξω, οἱ ἔξωθεν and ἰδιῶται)', 'sinners (οἱ ἁμαρτωλοί)', 'Gentiles (τὰ ἔθνη)' and 'Jews (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι)'.[27] In each case, my goal is not a comprehensive treatment of all that the NT says about 'Jews' or 'Gentiles', nor all that could be said about 'sinners' (and salvation) or 'unbelievers' (and faith), all tasks that are beyond the scope of this book. Rather, I am considering the usage of these terms as outsider designations. How does considering the way these terms are used as designations shed light on group identity and on the construction and maintenance of group boundaries?

In Chapters 9 and 10, I will consider the function of outsider designations in a range of texts: 1 Corinthians, Romans and 1 Thessalonians

[24] Outsider designations that have not been considered in detail here will be listed in Chapter 3.

[25] Later usage will be discussed occasionally, but only when it sheds light back on to the NT.

[26] Throughout this book, references to and quotations from the Old Testament (OT) are according to the LXX, and NETS will be used, unless stated otherwise. English translations of the NT follow the NRSV, unless stated otherwise.

[27] I will justify the discussion of these particular designations in Chapter 3. Note that 'non-Christian' is first used by Tertullian (*Apol.* 2:18; 35:10), who uses *non Christiani* (2:18) and *non Christianis* (35:10); see Karpp 1950: 1137.

(Chapter 9) and the Pastorals and 1 Peter (Chapter 10). Included in these chapters will be discussions of other outsider designations, such as οἱ ἀπολλυμένοι ('those who are perishing'), οἱ ἄδικοι ('the unrighteous') and πάντες ἄνθρωποι ('all people'), designations that have not been considered up to that point. It will be argued that outsider designations fulfil a key role in different forms of boundary construction in these letters and that the use of particular outsider designations can be seen to be part of the communicative strategy of the authors concerned. This will be followed in Chapter 11 with general conclusions of the study.

2 Methodology: Insights and Perspectives from Other Areas of Study

The general topic of 'outsiders' or 'outgroups' has been studied in a range of disciplines.[1] This work leads to considerable insight into our topic, and will also help me to pose particular questions of the texts I will be considering. Here I will discuss insights that emerge from social identity theory, sociolinguistics and the sociology of deviance that will be drawn on in later chapters.

2.1 INSIGHTS FROM SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

2.1.1 Introduction

At the beginning of Chapter 1, I noted the importance of the ingroup-outgroup distinction, which is a key insight from Social Identity Theory (SIT) developed initially by Henry Tajfel. SIT provides a number of insights that are relevant as we study the use of designations for outsiders.[2]

Members of a social group have a sense of belonging to a group, of sharing values and norms with other group members, of being 'ingroupers'. By virtue of its existence as a group, this sense of the 'ingroup' also creates the category of 'others', 'outsiders', who do *not* belong to the group. These people can be regarded as 'outgroupers', as 'them', or 'not us'. As Tajfel and Forgas note: 'we are what we are because *they* are not what we are'.[3] Hence, the ingroup-outgroup distinction is fundamental to identity, both for a person and for a group.

[1] For a discussion of the definition of a 'group', see Hogg 1992: 4–6. An ingroup is a group to which the individuals we are concerned with belong, while an outgroup is a social group that does not include these individuals as members; see Brewer 2003: ix.

[2] For helpful overviews of SIT, see Baker 2012: 129–138; Esler 2014: 13–39; for its application to the NT see e.g. Kuecker 2011; Tucker and Baker 2014.

[3] Tajfel and Forgas 1981: 124, italics original. Brewer 2003: 45 notes: 'intergroup discrimination can be produced by mere categorization into separate groups'.

Hinkle and Brown give this helpful overall perspective on SIT:

> In this theory, it is argued that our sense of who we are stems in large part from our membership of and affiliation to various social groups, which are said to form our social identity.[4] This identity is thought to be maintained through evaluative comparison between in-groups and relevant out-groups. When these comparisons are favourable, that is, when some positive distinctiveness has been achieved, our social identity is said to be positive and, by implication, our more general self-concept. Since it is assumed that there is a general preference for a positive rather than a negative self-concept, this introduces a motivational element into our comparative activity; we will be more disposed to look for and recognize intergroup differences which favour our in-groups over out-groups.[5]

SIT also notes that groups tend to maximise their distinctiveness. When group members make a social comparison between their own ingroup and other outgroups, the tendency is to maximise the distinctiveness between groups and to differentiate between them in as many ways as possible.[6] Further, group members tend to:

> accentuate intergroup differences especially on those dimensions which reflect favourably upon the ingroup. By differentiating ingroup from outgroup on dimensions on which the ingroup falls at the evaluatively positive pole, the ingroup acquires a *positive distinctiveness*, and thus a relatively *positive social identity* in comparison to the outgroup. Since self is defined in terms of the ingroup (self and ingroup are identical), this selective differentiation accomplishes a relatively positive self-evaluation that endows the individual with a sense of well-being, enhanced self-worth and self-esteem.[7]

This maximisation of the differences between ingroup and outgroup in favour of the ingroup can be seen to lead to particular forms of group behaviour which include: 'intergroup differentiation and discrimination, ingroup favouritism, perceptions of evaluative superiority of the ingroup over the outgroup, stereotypic perception of ingroup, outgroup and self,

[4] 'Social identity' was defined by Tajfel 1978: 63, italics original, as 'that *part* of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership'. See also Hogg and Abrams 1988: 7; Jussim, Ashmore and Wilder, 2001: 6; Tucker 2010: 41; Esler 2014: 19.

[5] Hinkle and Brown 1990: 48. [6] Hogg and Abrams 1988: 23.

[7] Hogg and Abrams 1988: 23, italics original.