ROSEMARY CANAVAN

Clothing the Body of Christ at Colossae

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A Visual Construction of Identity

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

It started with a dream: an interdisciplinary collaboration of archaeology and theology which would survey and excavate the ancient site of Colossae located in the Denizli region of modern Turkey. Studying with the principal researchers of the Colossae Project[1] I became engaged in the translation of ancient texts, inscriptions and coins relevant to Colossae in preparation for the survey of the ancient site. The idea for my doctoral thesis through Flinders University in South Australia developed in the fertile ground of academic inquiry and study tour experience of the ancient site. This book, completed with the support of the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne (a college of the MCD University of Divinity), is the result of that thesis.

I owe an immense debt of gratitude to Rev Dr Michael Trainor. The Colossae Project is his initiative. As supervisor of my thesis, his clarity of vision, scholarship, and constructive criticism enabled me to reach a new level of maturity in my research techniques, communication with colleagues and academic enterprise. Throughout this time he modeled all the best traits of the teaching of Paul and Epaphras endearing me to the practical application of the Colossians text even further. His own research endeavours, especially with regard to the Colossae Project, continue to inspire me.

Especial thanks to Rev Dr Alan Cadwallader, principal researcher of the Colossae Project with Dr Trainor. Dr Cadwallader, co-supervisor, has long engaged me in ancient Greek texts and the wonders of epigraphy and numismatics. When Dr Cadwallader's work took him interstate, the Rev Dr Vicky Balabanski worked in partnership with Dr Trainor in supervision. Dr Balabanski's grace and precision urged me to think critically and laterally and to push the limits of accepted ideas towards new discoveries.

Thanks too, to Michael, James and Phillip Canavan who have lived this journey with me as family with all its trials and joys. Their love sustained me. I offer grateful thanks to my community in life: my extended family and friends along with my post graduate colleagues, especially Joan Riley

[1] The Colossae Project is an interdisciplinary research project which was launched via Flinders University in 2000. The principal researchers are Rev Dr Michael Trainor, Rev Dr Alan Cadwallader and Professor Claire Smith.

and the members of the Greek Reading Group, especially Emily Harding, Margaret Hokin, Nicoly Moyse and Julie Hooke (since deceased).

I extend my gratitiude to Flinders University for the assistance of a study grant and to Michael, my husband, for his generous accompaniment and financial supplement so that I could visit Turkey. The museums and sites pictured in this book are testament to such generosity. Endearing thanks goes to my Turkish friends: Dr Hatice Erdemir, Associate Professor Bilal Sögüt and Ismail, Hafize, Özgür and Onür Íyílíkçí for their gracious hospitality, academic interest and ongoing friendship.

In gratitude for life beyond the thesis I acknowledge the Very Rev Dr Shane Mackinlay, Master of the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne, for his faith in me and support to complete my thesis and prepare it for publication in conjunction with employment at the college. I am thankful also for the friendship and support of my new colleagues and coworkers Dr Frances Baker rsm, Deputy Master, and Rev Dr Brian Boyle, Academic Dean. Thanks too to Jenny Delahunt, Academic Records Officer, who generously assisted the final editing for publication.

Widely encompassed in these acknowledgements are many very special people too numerous to mention by name. All reflect to me the lived reality of being clothed in virtues and love as the body of Christ.

To all of these, my teachers, my family, my friends and colleagues, this book is dedicated.

Rosemary Canavan
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March 2012

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Abbreviations

BMC	*Catalogue of Greek coins in the British Museum*, 29 vols., London 1873–1927 (repr.).
IAph2007	*Inscriptions of Aphrodisias* (2007), available http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. Herman Dessau. 3 vols in 5 parts, Berlin, 1892–1916 (repr.).
IvE	*Die Inschriften von Ephesos,* ed. Hermann Wankel, Bonn, 1979–1984.
JOAI	*Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts in Wien.* Wien, 1898–.
MAMA	*Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua,* ed. William M. Calder et al. 8 vols. Manchester, 1928–62.
OGIS	*Orientis graeci inscriptions selectae*, ed. W. Dittenberger. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1903.
SNG Cop	*Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, Danish National Museum* (in Copenhagen). 43 pts., Copenhagen 1942–77.

Introduction

Clothing with Meaning

Nel Hedayat is a young Afghani woman living in England. Her story was featured in a 2010 public affairs program on Australian television.[1] Living outside of her home country since she was six years of age, Nel finds that she is not sure of her identity or where she belongs. To all intents and purposes she feels 'Western' but she knows her skin and appearance is Afghani. She wants to return and see if she can live there. In order to travel into Afghanistan, one of the first things she must do is to buy clothes that allow her to visit Kabul. Her Western attire will not permit her to cross the boundary into the identity that she has in Afghanistan. The garments worn by Afghani women define them with regard to their religious beliefs, ethnicity and culture. Nel is filmed buying scarves, long sleeved shirts and skirts that modestly cover her body. She accepts assistance to wrap the scarf appropriately around her head, covering her hair. She dons the clothes with pride and excitement as she sets off to visit her homeland.

In Kabul she is met by relatives. Her dress allows her to blend immediately into the community. Cocooned in the company and home of her aunts and cousins she shares stories and reacquaints with her heritage. When she ventures out she finds her movements restricted. Dressed as a local and in the company of her kinswomen she is bound by the rules of the land. Her Afghani identity and belonging are affirmed by her clothing.

Once she leaves the city to visit a rural centre outside Kabul, it is immediately obvious that her clothing is inadequate. In this region all the women wear burqa. She feels the stares of all as she stands out as foreign. She is glad to borrow a cloak to cover her difference. With relief she retreats inside a women's centre. Already unsettled by her experience in the streets she listens in dismay to the stories of young women in the local hospital and jail. They recount their physical and mental abuse by their husbands, fathers and brothers. Nel is brought to tears as she encounters women who self-harm in desperation to escape their situation of oppression.

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[1] Australian Broadcasting Commission, "In a Strange Land", *Four Corners,* 17 May 2010.

The traditional dress of Afghani women, which signifies their ethnic and religious belonging, also communicates the power relationship of the male over the female. Under the present regime in Afghanistan dress is regulated to construct a particular identity and enforce the power relationship.

Nel is able return to London and to take off the garments of her Afghani identity, putting on the attire of her Western life in London. She expresses the freedom she feels in the exchange of clothing. She is painfully aware that this is not the option for her fellow country women living in Afghanistan.

As the story of Nel shows, what we wear identifies us. Our identity is both embedded in us and shown outwardly. Identity is hidden and overt, internalised and externalised, inherent, inherited and constructed. Identity is multilayered and multivalent, individual and collective. Identity is not static but a "complex process of construction, negotiation and contestation".[2] In Nel's case she is both 'Western' and 'Afghani'. When she dons the scarf and clothing identifiable with Afghani women in Kabul she covers over her current identity. She also puts on the meaning and values of the clothing of her Afghani identity in the context of a country emerging from a religious war.

Afghanistan today still reflects many of the values of the ancient world including honour, shame and the authority vested in the male head of the household. Nel is dismayed to hear her young male cousin censurous of his sister's wish to appear on a television talent show. Such activity would bring shame upon him and the line of males in the household. His reaction mirrors values held in the first century CE where people were governed to what others thought of them. They understood their identity in relational terms. First and foremost individuals were identified by their family and specifically in relation to the male head of household, *pater-familias.* This relational connection, where a person relies on another for his or her identity, is known as dyadism.[3] A 'dyadic person' is one who is 'group embedded' and 'group oriented'.[4] From this perspective it is the group identity of ethnic origin, family, clan or tribe in conjunction with the values of honour and shame which determined how people belonged. Their world relied on a group-centredness different to the individualism of our current

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[2] Rebecca Preston, "Roman Questions, Greek Answers," in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of the Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University 2001), 88.

[3] Jerome Neyrey, "Dyadism," in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values*, ed. John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 53.

[4] Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Revised ed. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 67.

age. First and foremost people were members of their kinship group which defined their identity, giving parameters to their belonging. Greek nomenclature often included 'son of' or 'daughter of' designations so that the family connection was easily known. Roman nomenclature popularly names both sons and daughters for their fathers using variations of his name thus identifying them patrilineally. People were born into households which were the basic building block of society and key determinants of identity and status. Kinship groups were ethnically based and often distinguished by specific clothing styles. Trades were also hereditary affirming social status connected to kinship. People were born into an identity by virtue of their family origins which was readily recognised through their attire.

The tensions of differing identities arise as one group defines itself against the other: Roman and Greek, Greek and barbarian, Greek and Judean, Roman and Phrygian. Mode of dress operated as an identifier of ethnic origin, gender, political status and was used in a symbolic way by the Romans to convey their cultural identity and ideology.[5] Firstly, specific garments identified Romans as Romans: the toga was the symbol of Roman citizenship. The specific style of the toga made it distinct from the Greek *himation* and the barbarian leggings or trousers. Secondly, for Romans, clothing indicated rank, status, office and authority. Such distinctions included the addition of stripes on the tunic worn with the *toga* which signalled that the wearer held the rank of equestrian or senator. Senatorial families were distinguished from the equestrians by the width of the stripes (*clavi*) on their tunics.[6] Putting on the *latus clavus* meant 'becoming a senator'.[7] The purple border of the *toga praetexta* designated the wearer as the holder of a magisterial office. These distinctions of clothing were a visual language that marked the boundaries of identity and carried the symbolic representation of power and values.

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[5] The terminology of 'Jew/ish' has become problematic in terms of describing first century phenomena. Ἰουδαῖοι does signify people with a strong attachment to the land of origin, Judea, and especially the temple in Jerusalem. It can well be argued that those in Asia Minor in the first century did not view themselves so closely related to Judea; however to call them Jewish indicates a religious identity disenfranchised from their political and other social realities which is not in keeping with the culture of the time. For this reason I choose to use the terminology of 'Judean' but recognise that this is still inadequate. Bengt Holmberg, "Understanding the First Hundred Years of Christian Identity," in *Exploring Early Christian Identity* ed. Bengt Holmberg (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). For further information and discussion see Holmberg, "Understanding the First Hundred Years of Christian Identity," 3–5.

[6] Liza Cleland, Glenys Davies, and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, *Greek and Roman Dress from a to Z* (London: Routledge, 2007), 180.

[7] Cleland, Davies, and Llewellyn-Jones, *Greek and Roman Dress from a to Z*, 35.

Roman commentators describe those at the fringes of the empire as all the more wild and strange in appearance and dress. Diodorus Siculus (90–21 BCE) describes the clothing of the Gauls in this way:

> shirts which have been dyed and embroidered in various colours, and breeches, which they call in their tongue 'bracae', and they wear striped heavy coats, fastened by a buckle on the shoulder, heavy for winter wear and light for summer, in which are set checks, close together and of various hues.[8]

The Gauls were cited as in 'kinship and friendship' with the Romans yet the description of their clothing marked them as foreign and other.[9]

It is in this context, in first century CE, that a letter was sent to the fledgling Christ community resident in Colossae.[10] This ancient city was located in the south-western region of Asia Minor, near Denizli in modern day Turkey. The letter was also to be read to the gathered community of Christ followers at Laodikeia.[11] A third city of the Lycus Valley, Hierapolis, is also mentioned in the letter. Together these three are the major centres in the Lycus Valley. As Graeco-Roman cities, their streets and buildings were home to a multiplicity of images in the form of statuary, *stelae*, votive offerings, funerary monuments and coins.[12] All these forms

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[8] Siculus Diodorus, *Diodorus Siculus. Diodorus of Sicily in Twelve Volumes with an English Translation by C. H. Oldfather*, vol. 4–8 (London: William Heinemann Pty. Ltd., 1989), 5.30.1–2.

[9] Diodorus, *Diodorus Siculus. Diodorus of Sicily in Twelve Volumes with an English Translation by C. H. Oldfather*, 5.25.1.

[10] I am using the term 'Christ community' to indicate that the community addressed by the Letter to the Colossians was centred on the risen Jesus, using 'Christ' terminology most often unaccompanied by "Jesus".

[11] In keeping with the focus on the identity in the risen Christ I am adopting the terminology of 'Christ follower'. This understanding builds on the favoured terminology of Paul, that continues into the Letter of the Colossians, where Paul identifies the community members as being 'in Christ'. As will be shown later in the exegesis, the use of Χριστός in the letter to the Colossians names the identity of the community in the body of Christ. Similar terminology has already been adopted by William Campbell and Philip Esler in the form of 'Christ-follower' or 'Christ-believer' and 'Christ-movement' to respectfully address the tensions for Judeans and gentiles in first century CE. See William S. Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2006), 12.; Philip Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 12.

[12] 'Graeco-Roman' indicates the presence of both Greek and Roman characteristics. I use the term to indicate both the tension between these two as well as the cross-fertilisation of ideas. Laura Nasrallah suggests the use of this descriptive "flattens difference and unequal power into a pat compound adjective". It is not my intention to do this. 'Graeco-Roman' is employed here to alert the reader to the interactive environment and the continued negotiation and assertion of identity. See Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church Amid the Spaces of the Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 30.

of images offer insight into the identities prevalent there. Each image has the propensity to communicate specific values and ideologies, thereby constructing identity.

Augustus (27 BCE–14CE) recognised the potential for constructing identity through visual images. From before he was known as Augustus, Octavian took the advantage of the name of his great uncle and adoptive father, Caesar (100–44 BCE). In donning the name he also adopted the image of Caesar (Gaius Julius Caesar) and became 'son of the deified Caesar' (*divi filius*). He laid claim to the divine and heroic ancestors of the Julian house.[13] The appearance of the young Caesar was deliberately in likeness of son to father and portrayed a young hero in the style of Alexander. He assumed the name of 'Augustus' meaning stately, dignified and holy. He constructed his new image with a new name, title and representations of himself cuirassed as a military commander emulating Greek classical values and with overtones of Alexander and Apollo. This was a new phenomenon in the "meaningful use and repetition of images and messages".[14]

The precedence of dissemination of statues throughout the Mediterranean had already been established by Julius Caesar in the period c.50–25 BCE.[15] Augustus was to make this commonplace practice with the added value of applying a schema of meaning. As part of his cultural reform Augustus devised a strategy to focus identity in the person of the emperor. This was implemented through images of the emperor clothed in the virtues of Rome. Augustus and his successors personified Rome wearing the toga or cuirass. The production of these images was likely centred originally in Rome. The exponential increase in the number required caused a move to regional workshops, gradually set up through the first century CE, which would style the portraits from models made in Rome, probably from terracotta or plaster.[16]

This deliberate and organised means of constructing identity instigated by Augustus and well developed by the first century CE allows a new perspective on the use of clothing imagery in Colossians 3:1–17. The author of Colossians insists that Christ followers clothe themselves in a distinctive manner that identifies them in Christ. In this way they hold together in one body in the midst of competing identities. The reference point for their identity is Christ. They are embedded in Christ. Their clothing, which

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[13] Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1988), 36.

[14] Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, 37.

[15] Charles Brian Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 58.

[16] Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period*, 57–58.

identifies them in the body of Christ, parallels the style of visual construction of identity observed from Augustus and subsequent emperors.[17] In light of all this, I now come to what I shall be arguing in this book: I propose that the imagery of clothing and body in Colossians 3:1–17 parallels and critiques a systematic visual construction of identity in the cities of the Lycus Valley in the first century CE.

As I shall demonstrate in the pages ahead, the author of the Letter to the Colossians employs clothing imagery as a textual device to renew the identity of the Christ community at Colossae. This is affected in the context of an imposing environment of visual images of clothing and body representing the power and values of the ruling elite. The graphic use of clothing imagery describes how to be recognised as members of the body of Christ. It is metaphorical, as it goes beyond the literal meaning of putting on garments. The metaphorical use of 'clothe' stakes a claim on the boundaries of the identity of the members of this community when those boundaries are at risk. The 'taking off' and 'putting on' recalls the ritual of initiation into this community of Christ, the body of Christ, at Colossae. It is an identity renewed in the knowledge of the image of the creator (Col 3:10), formed as "new" in connection to Christ and not through standard markers of identity such as ethnicity, religious affiliation or status (Col 3:11). This renewal is evoked through the metaphors of robing and disrobing: of throwing off vices (Col 3:8) and putting on or clothing with virtues (Col 3:12), bringing to mind the ritual dying with Christ and being raised with Christ in their initiation. Accordingly, the author draws on a pre-existing sensitivity to the symbolic potential of clothing in visual culture and in textual metaphor to weave the distinctive identity of the followers of Christ at Colossae. In the very nature of these images of clothing, the author offers a means of understanding the ongoing transformation of becoming the body of Christ: clothing themselves with virtue, renewing their identity 'in Christ', strengthening them as "God's chosen ones, holy and beloved" (Col 3:10).

Outline

I propose that the imagery of clothing and body in the Letter to the Colossians parallels and critiques a systematic construction of identity in the cities of the Lycus Valley in the first century CE. Inherent in this proposal are two major fields of investigation. The first concerns the clothing and body imagery of the Lycus Valley in the first century CE. The subjects of

[17] The authorship of this letter is still strongly contested. The debate about whether this letter can be attributed to Paul or one of his disciples will be visited in Chapter 1.

this area are the statuary, funerary monuments, *stelae* and coins. This is the sphere of visual culture where I locate the visual imagery of clothing and body. The second field of interpretation concerns the text of the Letter to the Colossians, 3:1–17. Within this text it is the metaphorical use of clothing and body which is the object of the interpretative approach. Both of these fields are brought into dialogue to test the synergy of image and text in visually constructing identity. The result is a dissertation of four parts:

Part I: Introduction, Context of Colossae and the Letter, Scholarly Context and Methodology

Part II: Clothing and Body Imagery Constructing Identity in First Century CE

Part III: Exegesis of Col 3:1–17 using a Socio-Rhetorical Approach

Part IV: Visual Construction of Identity, Implications and Further Research

Part I: Introduction, Context of Colossae and the Letter, Scholarly Context and Methodology

Part I consists of the Introduction and three chapters. I introduce the investigation of the use of clothing and body imagery as a construction of identity. I consider the metaphorical transfer from the visual material culture of statuary and other solid forms to literary images. Grounded in Aristotle's understanding of the use of metaphor as setting something 'before the eyes' (προς ὀμμάτων) , my argument develops the concept of clothing and body imagery in Colossians as bringing 'before the eyes' images from the world of the hearer/reader that make sense of their identity in Christ.[18]

Chapter 1 introduces the context of both the ancient city of Colossae and the Letter to the Colossians. I outline the physical features of the city and its relationships with neighbouring cities in the Lycus Valley. Using the visible remains of the odeon and columns I suggest the probable streetscape and describe the geophysical, political and religious circumstances of Colossae. This will help establish the context of the clothing and body imagery available to the residents. Furthermore, I describe the literary setting of Colossians as one of a group of letters written in the name of Paul.

Chapter 2 highlights those scholars who engage visual images to interpret ancient texts. These scholars are experimenting across disciplines to find effective ways to read both images and texts together. They combine

[18] Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica*, trans. W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 3.2.13.

insights from the fields of art history and iconography with biblical exegesis and semiotic models. I draw upon their wisdom to implement a 'visual exegesis'.[19]

Chapter 3 explicates my methodology. The 'visual exegesis' is based on an adaptation of socio-rhetorical interpretation. Beginning in the streetscapes of the cities of the Lycus Valley of the first century CE, I investigate the available images of 'clothing' and 'body' as they appear on statuary, funerary monuments, *stelae* and coins as a visual construction of identity. The multi-textured exegesis of Colossians 3:1–17 is brought into dialogue with these visible constructions of identity.

Part II: Clothing and Body Imagery Constructing Identity in the First Century CE

In Part II I interpret clothing and body imagery available on statuary, *stelae*, funerary monuments and coins in the cities of the Lycus Valley as elements of a visual construction of identity.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the examination of clothing images to observe the patterns of meaning pertinent and influential for the inhabitants at Colossae. I include representations from the neighbouring cities of Laodikeia and Hierapolis and from key trading partner cities such as Aphrodisias, Ephesus and Smyrna.

In Chapter 5 I concentrate on 'body' images. This analysis probes the intimate connection between clothing and body. Further, I interrogate the duality of meaning of a physical body and a representative one highlighting the strategic bodies that centre identity for the residents of the cities, namely the Demos (Δῆμος), the emperor and personifications of cities and virtues.[20]

Throughout these chapters I recognise that the portraiture is a product of the elite. Those who had the greatest access to wealth and power were able to communicate their values and identity through a highly visible means. The concrete and often colossal size images held persistent and insistent authority in the construction of identity.

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[19] I am indebted to Michael Trainor for the coining of this phrase which best describes the methodology that I apply in this thesis. This terminology encompasses my approach and gives a home to the variety of methods of placing text and image in dialogue. It will be explained further in the following chapters.

[20] Demos (Δῆμος) was the personification of 'the people'.

Part III: Exegesis of Colossians 3:1–17 using a Socio-Rhetorical Approach

Part III consists entirely in Chapter 6. This major chapter attends to the interpretation of the Letter to the Colossians and specifically 3:1–17. I employ a socio-rhetorical approach adapted from Vernon Robbins to give a multi-layered insight to the formation of identity through clothing and body imagery in the Letter to the Colossians.[21] This approach allows close attention to the text of Col 3:1–17 and the interaction of the text with the world in which it is written, heard and read. The language, culture, material culture and context are engaged through various 'textures'. These textures offer layers of meaning that open the way for a dialogue between the concrete visual images of clothing and body and the metaphorical images in the Colossian text.

Part IV: Visual Construction of Identity and Further Research

Part IV consists of two chapters. In Chapter 7 I move to the heart of my thesis. In this chapter I engage in the dialogue between images of clothing and body examined in Chapters 4 and 5 and the exegesis of Col 3:1–17 in Chapter 6. I illuminate the results of this conversation to demonstrate how vital 'visual literacy' is to the interpretation of texts. I argue that the application of a visual exegesis enhances our understanding of the Letter to the Colossians and also provides a model for future biblical interpretation.[22]

Chapter 8 is the final chapter. This chapter moves beyond the analysis of Colossians 3:1–17 to outline the implications of the use of visual exegesis for future research. I set out a vista of opportunities that arise from this investigation.

In sum, these four sections build an argument for interpreting texts in dialogue with images and apply this specifically to a section of the Letter to the Colossians. Having set the scene in Part I, the two main areas of investigation are explicated in Part II and III. The built environment of the cities incorporated depictions of persons and personifications of cities and other social bodies that structured the way people thought about themselves. The text of the Letter to the Colossians incorporated metaphorical images of clothing and body which prescribed the way community members identified themselves in the body of Christ. The centrepiece of the thesis comes in Part IV with the dialogue between concrete visual forms of

[21] Explanation of this model and my adaptation of it are found in the Methodology in Chapter 2.

[22] The terminology of 'visual literacy' and 'visual exegesis' will be explained in the development of the argument.

body and clothing and the imagery of clothing and body in the Letter to the Colossians.

Parameters

With the outline of my thesis in view, I make a few comments regarding the limitations of this undertaking. I examine the use of clothing and body imagery for the explicit purpose of understanding the visual construction of identity through material culture in first century CE Lycus Valley. I am not undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the clothing or statuary or other visual cultures throughout all Asia Minor in the first century CE. This thesis is not about clothing as such, but draws on the imagery of clothing as it is used to communicate virtues and define and construct identity.

I engage the use of metaphor to understand the dialogue between image and text in regard to clothing in the form of statuary, monuments and coins as well as in the text of the Letter to the Colossians. This is not essentially a literary exposition.

With this research I aim to expand and enhance our understanding of the use of clothing and body imagery in Colossians. I scrutinise the representations of clothing and body, found in the Graeco-Roman cities of the Lycus Valley, to determine the interplay between text and image. The links of Col 3:1–17 with the rites of baptism are well documented.[23] I assert that the references to clothing and body are applied in a context of a multiplicity of images intrinsic to Graeco-Roman cities. This array of portraiture defines the identities of citizens and inhabitants by their dress. My research begins among this structured gallery of images of clothing and body which have the propensity to construct identity.

I move now into the description of the context of the community of Christ followers at Colossae. This is explicated through a brief introduction to the ancient city, its location, trade and political connections and religious and cultural affiliations. In addition I introduce the literary context of the Letter to the Colossians. This background information is foundational to the investigation of images and text that ensues.

[23] See particularly the discussion in Chapter 2 under the heading of 'Clothing as Identity in Colossians' and the accompanying references.

Chapter 1

Colossae: the City and the Letter

Introduction

The Letter to the Colossians was written in the first century CE to a community of Christ followers in the city of Colossae located in the Lycus Valley in Phrygia, Asia Minor. Colossae, as the location of the community of Christ followers who first receive the letter, is the focal point of this thesis. The city's changing fortune was interwoven, along with the other major cities of the Lycus Valley, with its physical location, trade and the relationship with the ruling regime. In this chapter I briefly outline the geopolitical location of Colossae and its community of Christ followers. I also address the literary context of the Letter to the Colossians. Together these form the frame of reference for the investigation of the images of clothing and body and the visual construction of identity which will occur in Part II, Chapters 4 and 5.

Context of the Christ Community at Colossae

I address the ethnic milieu, the geopolitical location as well as the religious and cultic setting as three distinctive perspectives of life in the Lycus Valley in the first century CE.

The Ethnic Milieu

In the first century CE Colossae comprises a diverse ethnic community, indicated by reference to a list of varied identities in the letter (Col 3:12). Colossae was established from the fifth century BCE as a station on one of the main access routes across Asia Minor known as the Royal Road.[1] The plentiful water supply made it a convenient stop for armies on the move.

[1] Alan Cadwallader, "Appendix 1: Chronology of Colossae/Chonai," in *Colossae in Space and Time: Linking with an Ancient City*, ed. Alan Cadwallader and Michael F. Trainor (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2011).

Both Xerxes and Cyrus are recorded as resting their armies there.[2] The major movement of people throughout this region along the trade routes indicates a propensity for a diverse ethnic mix. The army Cyrus gathers is drawn from both Greek and barbarian troops already employed in besieging Miletus.[3] He adds to this Dolopians, Aenianians and Olynthians.[4] The 'barbarian' troops may have included Scythians whose expertise as soldiers was highly regarded.[5] By 133 BCE Colossae was gifted along with the entire Pergamon Kingdom to Rome through the will of Attalus III.[6]

Antiochus III is recounted as relocating two thousand Jewish families from Mesopotamia and Babylon to Phrygia in 213 BCE.[7] His plan was to quell the sedition in Lydia and Phrygia. He provided a resettlement package which included freedom to observe their laws, land to build their dwellings and make a living and exemption from taxes for ten years. The continued presence of Jewish people in the region is attested in 62–61 BCE.[8] The then Roman Proconsul, Lucius Valerius Flaccus, impeded the transfer of twenty pounds of gold being sent from the Judeans in Laodikeia as part of the Jerusalem Temple tax. Such a large amount of funds was likely collected from the surrounding region. From this we can imagine the size of the population of Judeans in the Lycus Valley to be of the order of 10,000 males.[9] By the second century CE Hierapolis tombs bear the in

[2] Herodotus, *Histories*, vol. 4, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1960-63), 7.30. Cyrus set out from Sardis taking a three stage journey through Lydia before crossing the Meander River and marching though Phrygia. He stayed at Colossae for seven days. Xenophon, *Anabasis*, ed. Carleton Brownson, 7 vols., vol. 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1922), 1.2.6.

[3] Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 1.2.2.

[4] Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 1.2.6.

[5] Diodorus Siculus records Mazeus (c385–328), a Persian nobleman, leading an attack under Alexander on the Macedonians using Scythian horseman. Diodorus, *Diodorus Siculus. Diodorus of Sicily in Twelve Volumes with an English Translation by C. H. Oldfather*, 17.59.5.

[6] Paul Robinson Coleman-Norton et al., *Ancient Roman Statutes: A Translation with Introduction, Commentary, Glossary and Index* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003; reprint, 2003), 37, No 42.

[7] Flavius Josephus, *Josephus: Jewish Antiquities, Books XII-XIV* ed. T. E. Page, vol. 7, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 12.3.4.

[8] Paul Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 13.

[9] The annual Temple tax was calculated at half a shekel per Judean male between the age of twenty and fifty years, see Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*, 13. The action of Flaccus is attested in Cicero's defence of him in 59 BCE *Pro Flacco* 28.68

scription of menorah and Judean epitaphs.[10] These witness the continuing presence of a Judean community in the Lycus Valley.

The history of the area indicates a community of mixed ethnic background. The displacement of people and the regular traffic on the trade routes sustained this diversity. An inscription, dated from the late first to the early second century CE, honouring Markos son of Markos as chief interpreter and translator for the Colossians, highlights the diversity of the community in that period.[11] The text is reconstructed as follows:

1. ☧ ΜΑΡΚΩΙΜΑΡΚΟΥ

2. ΚΟΛΟΣΣΗΝΩΝ

3. ΑΡΧΕΡΜΗΝΕΙ

4. ΚΑΙΕΞΗΓΗΤΗ[Ι

5. …Λ.....Τ.. .Η[12]

The inscription reads: "[...dedicated this] to Markos son of Markos, chief interpreter and translator for the Colossians."[13] This is vital new evidence of a city that was large enough to support this role and presumably other interpreters, given that Markos is the 'chief'. The dating shows it may be contemporaneous with the letter. Even if dated later, the inscription asserts a continuance of the multiple ethnic identities in Colossae that were established in its early history and mentioned in Colossians.

A cylindrical *bomos* or honorary monument recently discovered at Colossae further corroborates the findings of the Chief Interpreter inscription. This monument honours Korumbos, repairer of the baths.[14] Also dated from the late first century to early second century CE, the chief interpreter inscription includes the lists of names of those who subscribed monies to this honour. The majority of these names are Greek, signifying the Greek

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[10] Photos and details of these menorah inscribed on tombs are available at Francesco D'Andria et al., *Hierapolis Di Frigia 1957–1987* (Rome: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, 1987), 117; Philip Harland, "Acculturation and Identity in the Diaspora: A Jewish Family and 'Pagan' Guilds at Hierapolis," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 57(2006): Fig. 1, 242.

[11] Alan Cadwallader, "Two New Inscriptions, a Correction and a Confirmed Sighting from Colossae," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 40(2007): 115–18.

[12] Alan Cadwallader's reconstruction of the text from the original inscription. See Cadwallader, "Two New Inscriptions, a Correction and a Confirmed Sighting from Colossae," 116.

[13] See Cadwallader, "Two New Inscriptions, a Correction and a Confirmed Sighting from Colossae," 116.

[14] Alan Cadwallader, "An Honour for Korumbos, Repairer of the Baths at Colossae," in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, ed. S. Llewellyn (North Ryde: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, forthcoming).