REEXAMINING THE GREEK-SPEAKING ABILITY OF PETER IN LIGHT
OF A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Despite strong patristic evidence attesting to Petrine authorship,[1] critics have long argued for the Pseudonymous Author Hypothesis of 1 Peter, largely on linguistic grounds. The absence of the *Ausgangstext* of 1 Peter and the unavailability of an undisputed sample of Peter's writing have been utilized by critics who hold to what is probably the most dominant critical position on the subject of the authorship of 1 Peter. Reputable scholars generally agree that the linguistic problems in 1 Peter raise the most compelling objection to

   1.   Since patristic attestation is early and widespread, Charles A. Bigg remarks, 'There is no book in the New Testament which has earlier, or better, or stronger attestation [than 1 Peter]' (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* [ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901], p. 7). Thorough lists and comparisons of the patristic attestations of 1 Peter may be found in John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 37B; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 138-48.

Petrine authorship.[2] The linguistic objection addresses (1) the author's extensive reliance on the LXX rather than the Hebrew text or Aramaic Targums[3] and (2) the author's Greek, which seems to be far beyond the ability of Peter, 'a Galilean fisherman raised to speak Aramaic'.[4] Based on these criticisms, modern critical scholarship generally agrees that such evidence must be indicative of forgery.[5]

It is important to note that those who hold to the Pseudonymous Author Hypothesis of 1 Peter base much of their argument on the assumption that

2.   For a concise explanation of this issue, see Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Master Reference Collection; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 4th edn, 1990), p. 763; Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (NAC, 37; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), p. 32; Daniel B. Wallace, 'First Peter: Introduction, Argument, and Outline', in *New Testament: Introductions and Outlines*, online: https://bible.org/seriespage/21-first-peter-introduction-argument-and-outline#_ftnre f1.

3.   Today, the general scholarly consensus is that the Old Testament quotations and allusions in 1 Peter are derived from the LXX, and that whoever authored 1 Peter must have been fluent in Greek and possessed great knowledge of the LXX. See I. Fransen, 'Une homélie chrétienne: La première Epître de Pierre', *BVC* 31 (1960), pp. 28-38; A. Vanhoye, '1 Pierre au carrefour des théologies du nouveau Testament', in Charles Perrot (ed.), *Études sur la Première Lettre de Pierre* (LD, 102; Paris: Cerf, 1980), pp. 97-128 (105-107); T.P. Osborne, 'L'Ancien Testament dans la Iª Petri', *RTL* 12 (1987), pp. 64-77; P. Lampe and U. Luz, 'Nachpaulinisches Christentum und pagane Gesellschaft', in Jürgen Becker (ed.), *Die Anfänge des Christentums: Alte Welt und neue Hoffnung* (Christentum und Gesellschaft, 1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1987), pp. 185-216 (188); Karen H. Jobes, 'The Septuagint Textual Tradition in 1 Peter', in Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden (eds.), *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (SCS, 53; Atlanta: SBL, 2006), pp. 311-33.

4.   Bart D. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 247.

5.   Some of the commentaries that have held to the Pseudonymous Author Hypothesis of 1 Peter are as follows: Werner Georg Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, rev. edn, 1973), pp. 421-24; Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), pp. 4-5; Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), pp. 721-22; Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Epistle of Peter: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (trans. Peter H. Davids; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), pp. 32-39.

Greek was primarily used in major urban areas, whereas Aramaic was almost exclusively used in Galilee.[6] Consequently, Peter, a Galilean, would have been unfamiliar with the Greek language. However, the assertion that Peter exclusively spoke Aramaic should not be taken for granted, especially when a sociolinguistic approach[7]—a more sophisticated and comprehensive, but quite often neglected,[8] means of understanding language acquisition than that of traditional approaches (i.e. analysis of archaeological materials and textual notices, grammatical studies and logical inferences)—strongly argues in the opposite direction. Thus, a failure to engage with a sociolinguistic approach could yield incorrect conclusions about the linguistic ability of Peter. Rather than disregarding its insight, sociolinguistics must be consulted to better assess this subject. Utilizing a sociolinguistic approach in this study will

6.   See especially Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery*, pp. 242-49; *idem*, *Forged: Writing in the Name of God—Why the Bible's Authors Are Not Who We Think They Are* (New York: HarperOne, 2011), pp. 138-39.

7.   It is a field that deals with the interrelationship of language, its speakers and the linguistic community in a particular social setting. See Hughson T. Ong, *The Multilingual Jesus and the Sociolinguistic World of the New Testament* (LBS, 12; Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 114-15.

8.   For example, Mark A. Chancey has sought to properly evaluate to what extent Roman Galilee was Hellenized in the first century CE by synthesizing archaeological evidence and textual notices from ancient Palestine. Contrary to the perceptions of many New Testament scholars, Chancey observes that the cumulative evidence overwhelmingly points to a large Jewish presence in Galilee—only in Sepphoris and Tiberias did Gentiles reside in Galilee. Given that the site was thoroughly Jewish, he makes the following arguments: (1) Greek was reserved only for a few urban elite administrators in Sepphoris and Tiberias, and (2) Aramaic was exclusively used as the common language of Galileans. He then concludes that the Greek language was not nearly as widely known in Roman Galilee as has often been assumed. See Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (SNTSMS, 118; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); *idem*, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus* (SNTSMS, 134; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 122-65. Although Chancey sought to offer a better methodological approach than that of traditional approaches, I believe that he did not go far enough since he does not adequately take into account the sociolinguistic approach, which can help reconstruct a person's linguistic ability in significant ways. Thus, his methodology is an incomplete interpretive tool for validating the spoken languages in the Galilean speech community.

provide a clearer window into language acquisition and, thereby, allow for a better understanding of Peter's linguistic ability.

The aim of this article is to demonstrate, based on sociolinguistics, that the Aramaic Hypothesis of Peter cannot be used to support the Pseudonymous Author Hypothesis of 1 Peter; instead, greater recognition should be given to the fact that Peter was almost certainly multilingual and able to speak Greek.[9] This task will be accomplished by first reconstructing the distribution of languages in Roman Palestine to understand the languages used in Peter's surrounding area. Secondly, Peter will be placed in his personal sociolinguistic domains (i.e. his birthplace, occupational area and mission territories) to examine what kinds of languages Peter needed to learn to communicate with his interlocutors (e.g. relatives, friends, neighbors, business contacts, among others).[10]

Key Developments in Sociolinguistics

It is not the intention of this article to trace the history or development of sociolinguistics; however, it is helpful to observe the work of several sociolinguists that is relevant to the goal of my investigation in the present undertaking—that is, the reconstruction of Peter's linguistic ability by establishing the links among the languages of Roman Palestine, their users, and their communities. Thus, I will begin with a brief survey of the contributions of William Labov, Charles Ferguson and Joshua Fishman.

After presenting irrefutable evidence of the impact of social factors (e.g. age, gender, occupation, education) on linguistic change, William Labov demonstrated that language is a social behavior; therefore, the study of

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9.   It should be noted from the outset that this article does not argue for or against the Petrine Authorship of 1 Peter. Decisions on authorship are outside the scope of this study. Rather, my sole goal is to reconstruct the distribution of languages in Peter's personal sociolinguistic domains to better gauge the linguistic situation of his surroundings.

10.   The utilization of the multi-dimensional framework for establishing the linguistic milieu and linguistic competence of a Greco-Roman resident (i.e. Jesus) via sociolinguistic means was recently articulated in Ong, *Multilingual Jesus*. Ong's multi-level methodological framework was adopted in the pursuit of the present study.

languages should not be separated from their social contexts.[11] Results from subsequent research have also confirmed that a society inevitably influences the language of its individual users. Consequently, one's ability to speak a language cannot be adequately studied when one is separated from one's social contexts. Ever since the pioneering work of Labov, it has become widely recognized that social factors need to be taken into account in any study of language, and the investigation of the linguistic ability of Peter, of course, is no exception.

In 1959, C.A. Ferguson famously identified diglossia in a monolingual speech community as the co-existence of two distinct linguistic varieties (i.e. 'high' for a more formal occasion or in written language, and 'low' for a less formal occasion or in spoken language), with each having a definite function to play.[12] The contribution of this work helps us visualize certain aspects of language use in a monolingual community. In New Testament studies, diglossia has been discussed and applied by various scholars, including especially Stanley E. Porter and Jonathan M. Watt among others.[13]

In 1967, Joshua A. Fishman developed Ferguson's concept of diglossia into a theory of multilingualism in a speech community. He extended the original utility of diglossia to multiple languages existing side by side within a geographical area. Whereas Ferguson was geared toward analyzing dialects within a monolingual community, Fishman expanded the concept of diglossia at the societal level, aiming to analyze multiple languages within a multilingual community.[14] The contribution of Fishman cannot be ignored since he expanded a version of diglossia that helps us describe both the situation of language distribution in Roman Palestine and the identification of the language choice of individuals in the community.

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11.   William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972).

12.   C.A. Ferguson, 'Diglossia', *Word* 15 (1959), pp. 325-40.

13.   See Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *Diglossia and Other Topics in New Testament Linguistics* (JSNTSup, 193; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); Jonathan M. Watt, *Code-Switching in Luke and Acts* (Berkeley Insights in Linguistics and Semiotics; New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

14.   Joshua A. Fishman (ed.), *The Sociology of Language: An Interdisciplinary Social Science Approach to Language in Society* (Rowley: Newbury, 1972), pp. 91-106.

It is critical to take into account the basic concepts of sociolinguistics regarding relationships between languages, their users and their multilingual community in order to correctly place Peter in his linguistic context. As will be demonstrated later in this article, Peter was a member of a multilingual speech community where he must have been involved in the social dynamics that influenced his linguistic ability. As a member of a multilingual speech community, it is probable that he used multiple languages for different kinds of social communication in various social contexts. If granted, Peter's linguistic ability cannot simply be determined from merely an archaeological or textual approach. There must be an interdisciplinary analysis which correlates archaeological materials, textual notices and sociolinguistic studies in order to elucidate the issue under our consideration. Sociolinguistic analysis of the linguistic environment of Roman Palestine, therefore, can help us get a better grasp of Peter's linguistic ability by relating him and his multilingual communities to the languages he spoke. However, it is unfortunate that there is a noticeable absence of Petrine scholars utilizing a sociolinguistic approach in their works.

Reconstructing the Linguistic Landscape of Peter's Environment

Investigation of the Linguistic Milieu of Roman Palestine

Recent sociolinguistic studies demonstrate that societal multilingualism[15] arises when speakers of different languages interact within the same speech community. Though the causes of these interactions vary depending on the criteria, the most common causes are as follows: territorial expansion, political unions, border contacts and migration.[16] A speech community that falls into one or more of these categories generally becomes a multilingual society due to the frequent intersection of administrative languages and local vernaculars.[17] Applying this sociolinguistic lens to Roman Palestine reveals that the

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15. It should be noted that I use this word as an umbrella term for the use of two or more languages, thus encompassing plurilingualism, trilingualism and so forth.

16. Ralph W. Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), pp. 9-12.

17. Hughson Ong, 'Language Choice in Ancient Palestine: A Sociolinguistic Study of Jesus' Language Use Based on Four "I Have Come" Sayings', *BAGL* 1 (2012), pp. 63-101 (65).

region under consideration was influenced by all four causes of multilingualism mentioned above.[18] In addition, there were a number of distinct communities within first-century Palestine (i.e. native-born Jews, Diaspora immigrants and their Greek neighbors) that increased the area's multiculturalism and multilingualism.[19] Hence, greater recognition should be given to the fact that ancient Palestine fits the mold of a multilingual community.[20]

This hypothesis is supported by archaeological evidence discovered in the caves of Qumran and other Judean Desert sites in the middle of the twentieth century. A linguistic investigation done by Joseph A. Fitzmyer concludes that ancient Palestine was not a monolingual community; rather, it was a multilingual community where several languages—especially Latin, Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek—were used in different sociolinguistic settings.[21] Subsequent scholarship has further examined the historical and linguistic evidence, confirming that these four languages were utilized within the region.[22]

18.   Cf. Willem Smelik, 'The Languages of Roman Palestine', in Catherine Hezser (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 122-41 (122).

19.   John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew, Rethinking the Historical Jesus.* I. *The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), pp. 255-68. Cf. Chris Keith, *Jesus' Literacy: Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee* (LNTS, 413; LHJS, 8; New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2011), pp. 108-109, who points out, '[The] multilingual context means that first-century Jews could hold different literate skills in different languages' because multilingualism is 'a by-product of living in a multilingual culture'.

20.   Ong, *Multilingual Jesus*, pp. 243-44.

21.   See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 'The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.', *CBQ* 32 (1970), pp. 501-31.

22.   H. Leclercq, 'Note sur le grec néo-testamentaire et la position du grec en Palestine au premier siècle', *Les études classiques* 42 (1974), pp. 243-55; John C. Poirier, 'The Linguistic Situation in Jewish Palestine in Late Antiquity', *JGRChJ* 4 (2007), pp. 55-134; Steven E. Fassberg, 'Which Semitic Language Did Jesus and Other Contemporary Jews Speak?', *CBQ* 74 (2012), pp. 263-80; Bernard Spolsky, *The Languages of the Jews: A Sociolinguistic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 46-62. According to Pieter W. Van der Horst, *Saxa Judaica loquuntur: Lessons from Early Jewish Inscriptions: Radboud Prestige Lectures 2014* (BibInt, 134; Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 14-16, nearly 60 percent of all Jewish funerary inscriptions, including those of rabbis and their families, are written in Greek. Interestingly, Smelik, 'Languages of Roman Palestine', p. 134, observes

Investigation of the General Linguistic Milieu of Galilee

Although it is now widely accepted that four languages were used in Roman Palestine, the multilingualism within the region does not necessarily imply that those languages were equally distributed throughout the geographical sub-regions of Roman Palestine. Thus, one needs to take a closer look at how widely Greek[23] might have been used in ancient Galilee to understand which languages Peter and his interlocutors most likely learned and utilized in their daily lives.

Galilee was integrated into a network of international trade and travel because well-constructed roads were directly and indirectly connected to the region.[24] Not only did the *Via Maris* pierce through the heart of Lower Galilee, but there were also two other connecting roads that branched from the *Via Maris* and passed through Galilee.[25] Since the strategic location of Galilee would have meant foreign visits, traveling salesmen and various kinds of trade and commerce, it is reasonable to suppose that Gentile travelers would pass through the region and have contact with them.[26] Archaeological

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that those inscriptions are 'informal, clumsily written graffiti with spacing and spelling mistakes, which suggests that they were private recordings rather than public announcements'. If so, this indicates that Greek extended even to the lower, less educated classes, and that many Jews in first-century Palestine frequently used Greek.

23. It should be noted that this paper has selected Greek as a representative language and passed over others (i.e. Aramaic, Hebrew and Latin).

24. See David A. Dorsey, *The Roads and Highways of Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); as well as J. Pastor, 'Trade, Commerce, and Consumption', in Catherine Hezser (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 297-307 (304), who remarks, '[E]ven silk from China passed through the Galilee on its way to the consumers in Rome'.

25. Eric M. Meyers, 'An Archaeological Response to a New Testament Scholar', *BASOR* 297 (1995), pp. 17-26 (23).

26. See Eric M. Meyers, 'Jesus and His Galilean Context', in Douglas R. Edwards and C. Thomas McCollough (eds.), *Archaeology and the Galilee: Texts and Contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Periods* (SFSHJ, 143; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 57-66 (58, 60); Pastor, 'Trade, Commerce, and Consumption', pp. 299-301; Sharon Lea Mattila, 'Revisiting Jesus' Capernaum: A Village of Only Subsistence-Level Fishers and Farmers?', in David A. Fiensy and Ralph K.

evidence appears to support this view, revealing that the inhabitants of Galilee traded various items (e.g. fish, clay pottery, wine, basalt, millstones, vegetables, dried figs, grains and olive oil) with bordering Hellenistic cities and foreign countries.[27] Furthermore, the unearthing of luxury goods from Hellenistic and early Roman contexts in Galilee further supports the idea that there was some social interaction and trade between Galilean Jews and Gentiles.[28] This reasonably suggests that Galilean Jews were beneficiaries of the multiple networks of local and international trade,[29] and, consequently, that Hellenism was integrated into the daily life of most Galileans.[30]

It is also important to realize that Greek was the lingua franca of the Mediterranean world in the first century.[31] Since an inability to speak the lingua

Hawkins (eds.), *Galilean Economy in the Time of Jesus* (Early Christianity and Its Literature, 11; Atlanta: SBL, 2013), pp. 75-138.

27.   Jürgen Zangenberg, 'Archaeological News from the Galilee: Tiberias, Magdala and Rural Galilee', *Early Christianity* 1 (2010), pp. 471-84; *idem*, 'Jesus der Galiläer und die Archäologie: Beobachtungen zur Bedeutung der Archäologie für die historische Jesusforschung', *MTZ* 64 (2013), pp. 123-56; David J. Downs, 'Economics, Taxes, and Tithes', in Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald (eds.), *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), pp. 156-68 (162); Douglas Edwards, 'The Socioeconomic and Cultural Ethos in the First Century: Implications for the Nascent Jesus Movement', in Lee I. Levine (ed.), *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), pp. 53-73 (61).

28.   Mattila, 'Revisiting Jesus' Capernaum', pp. 75-138.

29.   Agnes Choi, 'Never the Two Shall Meet? Urban-Rural Interaction in Lower Galilee', in David A. Fiensy and James Riley Strange (eds.), *Galilee in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods*, *Volume 1: Life, Culture, and Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), pp. 297-311 (309).

30.   Milton Moreland, 'The Inhabitants of Galilee in the Hellenistic and Early Roman Periods', in Jürgen Zangenberg, Harold W. Attridge and Dale B. Martin (eds.), *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee: A Region in Transition* (WUNT, 210; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), pp. 133-59 (138, 146, 148).

31.   Stanley E. Porter, *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals* (JSNTSup, 191; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2000), pp. 135, 169. It is also important to realize that Herod the Great made Greek the official language of the government; cf. Ong, 'Language Choice', pp. 89, 93; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*

franca would have been detrimental to successful daily communication and fruitful commerce, it naturally follows that Galilean Jews who were involved in interregional trade and commerce with Greek-speaking merchants and artisans would have picked up Greek in order to effectively conduct their business.[32] This strongly suggests that the Greek culture and language made great inroads in the life of Galilean Jews.[33] The first- and second-century ossuaries that contain a sarcophagus with Greek inscriptions at *Kefar Baruh* (Ἰούδας Θαδδαίου, 'Judas, son of Thaddaeus') and *Qiryat Tiv'on* (Μαίας| Σαοῦλος, 'of Maia, daughter of Saul') seem to support this view.[34] For this reason, a

(175 B.C.–A.D. 135) (4 vols.; rev. and ed. Géza Vermes, Fergus Millar and Matthew Black; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2014), II, p. 13.

   32.   The existence of different languages within the business community may have made communication between people who spoke different languages difficult. In order to solve this problem, a lingua franca was adopted as a means of communication between them. Although there are a number of spoken languages within a multilingual community*, a dominant language is generally used for a functional purpose.* Hence, it is unlikely that Aramaic was the lingua franca in trade and commerce. Cf. Mercedes Durham, *The Acquisition of Sociolinguistic Competence in a Lingua Franca Context* (Second Language Acquisition, 75; Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2014), p. 3; Ong, 'Language Choice', pp. 68-69.

   33.   Karen H. Jobes, 'The Syntax of 1 Peter: Just How Good Is the Greek?', *BBR* 13 (2003), pp. 159-73 (160), gives references from Josephus who documented that Greek language acquisition was readily available in Galilee.

   34.   Scott D. Charlesworth, 'The Use of Greek in Early Roman Galilee: The Inscriptional Evidence Re-examined', *JSNT* 38 (2016), pp. 356-95 (360). See Hughson T. Ong, 'The Use of Greek in First-Century Palestine: An Issue of Method in Dialogue with S.D. Charlesworth', in Lois K. Fuller Dow, Craig A. Evans and Andrew W. Pitts (eds.), *The Language and Literature of the New Testament: Essays in Honor of Stanley E. Porter's 60th Birthday* (BibInt, 150; Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 218-36, for Ong's response to this article. It should be noted that Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, p. 131, disregards this evidence because he thinks that there are too few Greek inscriptions that date to the first century, and that there are too few ossuaries to draw conclusions. His approach is not sensible for two reasons, however. First, the development of languages does not simply happen overnight. It is a gradual process that takes several generations. According to the general linguistic consensus, a language shift is a three-generation process. See Tasaku Tsunoda, *Language Endangerment and Language Revitalization: An Introduction* (Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs, 148; New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2005), p. 73.

significant portion of Galileans would have had at least a rudimentary knowledge of Greek.

Placing Peter in His Sociolinguistic Domains

The fact that Roman Galilee was a multilingual community does not necessarily indicate that all members within the area were equally multilingual. Since each individual in a multilingual society would have had significantly different circumstances (e.g. 'social class, ethnicity, gender, age, regional identity, national identity, education, employment, life experiences, participation in social networks'[35]), one must accept that a distinction may exist between the languages spoken by Peter and the languages spoken by his neighbors. For this reason, sociolinguists believe that multilingualism 'belongs to the domain of the individual and not the property of the group; it is a person's speech (*parole*) rather than the language (*langue*) of his community'.[36] The purpose of the current section, then, is to turn the focus from the multilingualism of the community to that of the individual in order to understand Peter's

Consequently, the Greek inscriptions on first- and second-century ossuaries can possibly be an indication that Greek was used in much earlier periods than the date of the ossuaries. Second, the evidence must be evaluated by its quantity *and* nature. To reiterate, the scarcity of evidence cannot simply overrule its importance; there must be a balanced approach in examining the evidence. According to Yifat Peleg, 'Gender and Ossuaries: Ideology and Meaning', *BASOR* 325 (2002), pp. 65-73 (66-67), ossuaries have a highly personal, familial and intimate nature, representing emotions of the family of the deceased. Consequently, ossuaries may provide a glimpse into the daily language(s) of the deceased and his family. This raises the question as to why some of the Galilean Jews chose Greek over Hebrew or Aramaic as the language used to memorialize their deceased. The simplest and most suitable explanation for this, I believe, is that some Galilean families would have used Greek as their everyday language in a much earlier period than Chancey suggests.

35. Julia A. Snyder, *Language and Identity in Ancient Narratives: The Relationship between Speech Patterns and Social Context in the Acts of the Apostles, Acts of John, and Acts of Philip* (WUNT, 2.370; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), p. 9.

36. Timothy H. Lim, 'Multilingualism', in John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow (eds.), *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 973-75 (973).

linguistic ability more accurately. I will first place Peter in his birthplace, then in his hometown and occupational field and, finally, in the territories of his mission to the Gentiles.

Peter as a Child in Multilingual Bethsaida

According to the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), there is an ideal period in which an individual is able to acquire full competency in two or more languages.[37] This period, which arguably extends from infancy to puberty, is thought to determine the degree to which language proficiency can be attained.[38] While it seems almost self-evident that children in multilingual societies would be able to pick up languages without much difficulty, more critical and methodologically sophisticated studies completed in recent years have continually yielded evidence in favor of CPH, confirming that children can attain proficiency in secondary languages without formal schooling if their acquisition takes place within the critical period.[39] Thus, it is plausible to view one's birthplace as greatly influential in one's language development and thus determinative of the language one would be comfortable using.

37. The Critical Period Hypothesis was suggested by Wilder Penfield and Lamar Roberts in 1959 and advanced by Eric H. Lenneberg in 1967. Penfield and Roberts emphasized the timing effects associated with the outcome of second language acquisition, whereas Lenneberg supported the theory by evidence, demonstrating that brain maturation accounts for the uniformity and pace of language acquisition. Lenneberg then claimed that there is a critical period for acquiring full competency in two or more languages. See Wilder Penfield and Lamar Roberts, *Speech and Brain Mechanisms* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959); Eric H. Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967).

38. Zhaohong Han, *Fossilization in Adult Second Language Acquisition* (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2004), p. 46; Penelope Gardner-Chloros, *Code-Switching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 142.

39. Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language*, p. 72; Joanne Jalkanen, 'Language Proficiency and Age-Appropriate Methodology at the English Kindergarten of Kuopio', in Marianne Nikolov (ed.), *The Age Factor and Early Language Learning* (Studies on Language Acquisition, 40; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 97-118 (97); Małgorzata Jedynak, *Critical Period Hypothesis Revisited: The Impact of Age on Ultimate Attainment in the Pronunciation of a Foreign Language* (European University Studies, 333; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009).

Therefore, an examination of Peter's birthplace will certainly help in determining Peter's multilingual ability.

John 1.44 states, ἦν δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος ἀπὸ Βηθσαϊδά, ἐκ τῆς πόλεως Ἀνδρέου καὶ Πέτρου. In the context, the preposition ἀπό probably indicates 'originally from', signifying that Peter was born and raised in Bethsaida.[40] Although the identification of the exact site of Bethsaida has long been a matter of controversy, *et-Tell* has been the most likely candidate.[41] Archaeological finds over the last several decades demonstrate that the region has signs of a large Gentile presence (e.g. a pagan temple, a figurine, Hellenistic fineware, Roman wares, two incense shovels, non-kosher catfish bones and many pig bones),[42]

40.   BDAG, s.v. ἀπό 3.b. However, Mark Appold, 'Peter in Profile: From Bethsaida to Rome', in Rami Arav and Richard A. Freund (eds.), *Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee* (Bethsaida Excavations Project Reports and Contextual Studies, 3; Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2004), pp. 133-48 (138), has recently challenged this view, pointing out that the Greek construction in Jn 1.44 'could just as well suggest the place of work or the location of one's residence, temporary or permanent'. He argues that Peter resided in Capernaum and commuted to Bethsaida for work. While this is certainly a possibility, since Bethsaida was located in close proximity to Capernaum, this view fails to provide an adequate reason why Peter would have traveled back and forth from Capernaum to Bethsaida, walking ten miles and spending approximately five hours every day doing so. Could he not simply operate his fishing business at Capernaum? I believe—and will assume—that Bethsaida is Peter's birthplace where he spent most of his childhood days.

41.   Markus Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory: The New Testament Apostle in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), p. 174; James H. Charlesworth, 'Jesus Research and Archaeology', in Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald (eds.), *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), pp. 439-66 (455).

42.   Rami Arav, 'Bethsaida Excavations: Preliminary Report, 1994-1996', in Rami Arav and Richard A. Freund (eds.), *Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee* (Bethsaida Excavations Project Reports and Contextual Studies, 2; Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1999), pp. 3-114 (84); Sandra Fortner, 'Hellenistic and Roman Fineware from Bethsaida', in Rami Arav and Richard A. Freund (eds.), *Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee* (Bethsaida Excavations Project Reports and Contextual Studies, 1; Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1995), pp. 99-126 (106-107); Barclay M. Newman

and the growing amount of archaeological evidence—especially bones of catfish and pigs—seems to confirm that the inhabitants were largely Gentiles.[43] Furthermore, the Hellenization of the city is demonstrated by other facts: (1) the region lacks evidence of any Jewish elements (e.g. a synagogue, Jewish writings, Hebrew or Aramaic inscriptions and immersion pools), and (2) the only epigraphic evidence is written in Greek.[44] This information strongly suggests that Bethsaida was a predominantly Greek-speaking city, which, in turn, would have meant that Greek was the primary language used by the residents of Bethsaida.

If growing up in a multilingual environment from childhood is the most natural and optimal way of becoming multilingual, as CPH suggests, then it is almost certain that Peter grew up bilingual—speaking Aramaic and Greek—since he spent his critical period at the edge of Gentile territory.[45] His Aramaic-speaking ability would have been secured by conversing with his Jewish parents at home,[46] whereas his Greek-speaking ability would have been acquired by interacting with the ethnic residents of Bethsaida outside his home.[47] Thus, Peter would have acquired Aramaic and Greek as his native

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and Eugene A. Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John* (UBS Handbook; New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), p. 47; Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, p. 173.

43. Due to rabbinic eating regulations, it is generally accepted that the archaeological presence of pig bones indicates the absence of a Jewish settlement. See David Kraemer, 'Food, Eating, and Meals', in Catherine Hezser (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 403-19 (407-408). Of course, on the basis of the faunal evidence alone, it is infeasible to argue for a Gentile presence. However, the evidence is compelling when combined with the evidence mentioned above.

44. Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, p. 173.

45. Cf. Pierre Francois Steenberg, *The Reversal of Roles as the Reasoning for Remaining Christian in the Face of Hardship in the First Epistle of Peter* (PhD diss., University of Pretoria, 2000), p. 54.

46. Here I am assuming that Peter was born to a Jewish family whose native language was Aramaic. However, it is also possible that Peter's parents also grew up in multilingual societies and thus were able to speak Greek and Aramaic as their native languages. If correct, one can argue that Peter's family was already multilingual before his birth, and, therefore, that Peter grew up in a multilingual family, which further suggests that Peter was conversant in Greek.

47. Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (TSAJ, 81; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), p. 238, remarks, 'If speakers of one or more

languages in his early years without formal education.[48]

The argument for Peter's Greek-speaking ability can be further advanced by the insight of Markus Bockmuehl. According to Bockmuehl, the following evidence strongly supports the idea that Peter was heavily influenced by Hellenistic culture from his youth: (1) all disciples from Bethsaida (i.e. Peter, Andrew and Philip) have Greek names;[49] (2) Andrew, a brother of Peter, seems to be one of two disciples who was most fluent in Greek; and (3) Peter's name, except in 2 Peter, is 'consistently given in the Greek form Σίμων [a Hellenized adaptation of Συμεών], rather than in the Septuagint's rendition of the Hebrew patriarch Συμεών as throughout the canonical books'.[50] Based on the evidence, Bockmuehl argues that '[Peter's] childhood in Bethsaida, a village with little Jewish presence, in which his brother Andrew and close friend Philip were known exclusively by their Greek names, would have ensured his ability to speak tolerable Greek from a young age, even if not perhaps to read or write it'.[51] Bockmuehl is not alone in arguing for Peter's Hellenistic influence. Eckhard J. Schnabel,[52] Karen H.

languages form part of a child's immediate social network of family and friends, the acquisition of those languages takes place within his or her socialization process'. Assuming Peter had Greek-speaking counterparts (e.g. friends and neighbors) and regular activities and interactions with them were common, he must have acquired at least Aramaic and Greek during his childhood. Furthermore, J.F. Hamers and M. Blanc, *Bilinguality and Bilingualism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 76, note, 'The child's social network will usually reflect the societal values of the languages and transmit them to the child'. If true, the Greek language used in Peter's social network must have reflected the societal values of that language and been absorbed by Peter at an early age. Consequently, given the likelihood that Greek was part of his social network, he would have valued Greek and been encouraged to speak it.

48.   Cf. Markus Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter: In Ancient Reception and Modern Debate* (WUNT, 262; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), pp. 158-85.

49.   Markus Bockmuehl, 'Simon Peter and Bethsaida', in Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans (eds.), *The Missions of James, Peter, and Paul: Tensions in Early Christianity* (NovTSup, 115; Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 53-90 (64, 82).

50.   Bockmuehl, *Remembered Peter*, p. 159.

51.   Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, p. 127.

52.   Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* (2 vols.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), I, p. 226.

Jobes,[53] Paul J. Achtemeier[54] and E. Earle Ellis[55] also focus on Peter's and Andrew's Greek names, suggesting that this may imply that even their whole family was heavily influenced by Hellenistic culture and the Greek language. This notion seems to explain the historical sociolinguistic perspective proposed by Hughson T. Ong:

> [F]rom historical sociolinguistics, one could argue that, because of the extensive and intensive Hellenization program of Alexander the Great and his successors beginning in the fourth century BCE, Greek would have been the *lingua franca* and most likely the primary or first language (or even the mother tongue) of the people by the first century CE. This four-century period could strongly indicate that the Palestinian residents during the first century CE would probably already have been fourth- to sixth-generation Greek-speaking Jews, who would have learned the language from the speech community in general regardless of their educational status.[56]

If correct, one can argue that Peter's family was already multilingual before his birth, and, therefore, that Peter grew up in a multilingual family, which further suggests that Peter was conversant in Greek. These observations strongly suggest that the true issue at stake should be the *degree of* Peter's multilingualism and not whether he *was* multilingual.

Peter as a Fisherman in Multilingual Capernaum
Though Peter would have been exposed to Greek at an early age and acquired some competency in Greek, it is important to realize that the level of Greek competency varies among members within the same multilingual community. If a member of the community exposes himself or herself to Greek more often than others, his or her ability to speak Greek would naturally be much better than that of other members. In other words, the influence of one's social network, which depends on an individual's situation, can play a significant role in determining one's linguistic fluency. For this reason, Catherine Hezser

53. Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), p. 326.

54. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, p. 7.

55. E. Earle Ellis, *History and Interpretation in New Testament Perspective* (BibInt, 54; Leiden: Brill, 2001), p. 45.

56. Ong, 'Use of Greek', p. 228.

observes, 'Palestinian Jews' proficiency in Greek varied greatly',[57] and then goes on to say that a key criterion for determining the level of an Aramaic-speaker's ability to speak Greek is his occupation.[58] For example, for those who were involved in local businesses with Aramaic-speaking customers, Aramaic would have been their preferred language for interacting with customers. Similarly, Greek would have been an ideal language for those who were involved in intercultural trade and needed to speak Greek with customers residing in neighboring Hellenized towns.[59] Depending on the type of business the Aramaic-speaker was involved in, a particular language would be chosen to profit his business. For this reason, it is plausible to view the occupational domain as greatly influential for one's language development and thus determinative of the language he would be comfortable using. Therefore, an examination of Peter's occupation will certainly help us in determining Peter's multilingual ability.

Peter was described in the Gospels as a fisherman who was involved in the fishing industry and trade. In Capernaum, he was a leader in Zebedee's fishing fleet (Lk. 5.1-11). Though it is unclear when he left the neighboring village of Bethsaida, Peter established his home and fishing business in Capernaum (Mt. 8.14-15; Mk 1.16-21, 29). Fortunately, Capernaum's geographical location is not controversial because the identification of the place is firmly established by literary sources and archaeological data. It has always been identified with *Tell Ḥûm*, which is located on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee, about 2.5 miles (4 km) west of the Jordan River.[60] Recently, Jonathan L. Reed has compellingly argued that Capernaum was not cosmopolitan; rather, it was a small village with a maximum population of

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57.   Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, pp. 237, 243.

58.   Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, pp. 237, 240.

59.   Cf. Mark Janse, 'Aspects of Bilingualism in the History of the Greek Language', in J.N. Adams, Mark Janse and Simon Swain (eds.), *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 332-90 (332).

60.   J.P. Kane, 'Capernaum', in D.R.W. Wood *et al.* (eds.), *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 3rd edn, 1996), pp. 175-76 (175); Stanislao Loffreda, 'Capernaum—Jesus' Own City', *Bible and Spade* 10 (1981), pp. 1-17; Keith N. Schoville, 'The Archaeology of the Cities of Woe', *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* 49 (2004), pp. 15-26 (21).

1,700.[61] The site does not exhibit any Greco-Roman urban architectural features (e.g. theatres, basilicas, an agora) before the second century CE, which suggests that it may have been a Jewish town during the time of Peter.[62] Based on this, Bart D. Ehrman goes a step further and argues that the site was an 'isolated and relatively unknown Jewish village in the backwaters of rural Galilee with no evidence of any gentile presence', and then concludes that every resident of the town spoke Aramaic and '[n]othing suggests that anyone could speak Greek'.[63]

Ehrman, however, fails to take into account how the sociolinguistic character of ancient Capernaum was almost certainly influenced by its unique geography. Though it was not among the largest or most influential of the Galilean cities, as argued above, the site was situated adjacent to the *Via Maris* where intermingling with various ethnic groups was inevitable. Although the *Via Maris* did not go directly through Capernaum, a considerable number of Greek-speaking merchants, travelers and officials almost certainly passed through the village and had some degree of social interaction with its residents.[64] The presence of a significant number of luxury goods (e.g. imported vessels, Roman glass wares, Hellenistic table wares, Eastern *Terra Sigillata* A) unearthed from Hellenistic and early Roman contexts at Capernaum strongly supports this view.[65] Another worthwhile point to mention is that Capernaum was one of the few fishing anchorages that were located along the seacoast of Galilee, suggesting that inhabitants of Capernaum would have traded with major neighboring cities.[66] Such interactions would have fostered a sense of multiculturalism and multilingualism in the community. Hence, although not many people resided in Capernaum, its commercial

61.   Eric M. Meyers and James F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis, and Early Christianity* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), p. 58.

62.   Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), pp. 153-54; John Dominic Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed, *Excavating Jesus: Beneath the Stones, Behind the Texts* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), pp. 81-85.

63.   Ehrman, *Forged*, p. 75.

64.   Reed, *Archaeology*, p. 165.

65.   Mattila, 'Revisiting Jesus' Capernaum', pp. 75-138.

66.   Morten Hørning Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and its Socio-Economic Impact on Galilee* (WUNT, 2.215; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2nd edn, 2006), p. 171.

advantages and sociolinguistic landscape almost certainly necessitated that its residents acquire some knowledge of Greek. The region's openness to commerce and travel must have blurred language boundaries, making any effort to draw a clear-cut distinction of language highly improbable.[67]

As demonstrated above, there is compelling evidence that the trade and travel of Capernaum residents would have brought them into regular contact with Greek-speaking customers. Consequently, the Greek language would have been adopted as a means of communication for their businesses.[68] If so, it can be concluded that proficiency in the Greek language was a practical necessity for Peter to stay marketable and competitive.

Peter as a Missionary in Gentile Territories
According to Hezser, group membership based on religious criteria serves as an important factor for language choice.[69] In other words, the language of religious teachers and preachers must match the language competency of the audience for effective religious communication.[70] If so, it is possible to view one's mission as greatly influential for one's language development; therefore, an examination of Peter's mission is warranted in order to determine Peter's multilingual ability.

It appears from New Testament accounts that Peter was committed to the Gentile mission, visiting and occasionally staying in Gentile territories where Greek was the dominant language. For example, he was at Antioch (Gal. 2.11-14), the capital of the Roman province of Syria, some time prior to 49–52 CE, enjoying fellowship with Greek-speaking Gentile Christians.[71] Peter

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67.   Moreland, 'Jesus and the Village Scribes', 759-60; cf. Bradley W. Root, *First Century Galilee: A Fresh Examination of the Sources* (WUNT, 2.378; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), p. 172.

68.   Cf. Porter, *Criteria*, p. 169. As for communication, it is unrealistic to expect Jewish residents of Capernaum to communicate with customers in Aramaic.

69.   Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, p. 245.

70.   See David Crystal, *Linguistics, Language and Religion* (London: Burns & Oates, 1965), for a discussion on the intimate relationship between language and religion.

71.   Based on the use of imperfect verb συνήσθιεν in Gal. 2.12, J.L. Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), p. 232, suggests that 'over a period of some length Peter was fully at home in the Antioch church', evangelizing the Greek-speaking Diaspora.

may have also visited and temporarily stayed with the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 1.12; 3.22; 9.5, 6),[72] which was predominantly composed of Greek-speaking Gentile Christians,[73] before 56 CE. Furthermore, the New Testament and early Christian writings (Acts 12.17;[74] 1 Pet. 5.13;[75] *1 Clem.* 5.4-

72.   The presence of a Petrine party in the Corinthian church possibly indicates that Peter taught Greek-speaking Christians in the Corinthian church.

73.   The phrase ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε in 1 Cor. 12.2 indicates that the Corinthian church was composed predominantly of Greek-speaking Gentiles. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, rev. edn, 1987), pp. 3-4; David G. Horrell, *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement* (SNTW; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996), pp. 75, 91. Peter J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles* (CRINT, section 3, Jewish Traditions in Early Christian Literature, 1; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), pp. 59-62, 242, goes even further, asserting that the members of the Corinthian church were *exclusively* Gentiles. Cf. Stanley E. Porter, 'The Greek Language of the New Testament', in *Handbook to Exegesis of the New Testament* (NTTS, 25; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 99-130 (109); Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 34.

74.   It has been widely debated whether the phrase εἰς ἕτερον τόπον in Acts 12.17 refers to Rome or not. However, it should be noted that the only other occurrence of the phrase is in Ezek. 12.3 LXX, where it speaks of being exiled to Babylon. If the phrase is identified via the context of Ezek. 12.3 LXX, εἰς ἕτερον τόπον most likely indicates Rome since 'Babylon' was almost certainly used as a cryptic designation for Rome during the Neronian persecution (see the next footnote for the defense of this notion). If true, Luke means that Peter departed from Jerusalem and went to Rome in order to escape death from Agrippa's hands (cf. 1 Pet. 5.13). For a more thorough treatment of this issue, see John Wenham, *Redating Matthew, Mark and Luke: A Fresh Assault on the Synoptic Problem* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991), pp. 154-56.

75.   There are three possible options for the meaning of Βαβυλών: (1) Mesopotamian Babylon, (2) Babylon in Egypt and (3) the city of Rome. The first option is unlikely because most of the Jewish settlements in Peter's day left Mesopotamian Babylon for Seleucia, and there is no tradition that Peter ever visited there. The second option is also unlikely because there is no tradition that Peter ever went to Babylon in Egypt, and the town was too sparsely populated during the time of the New Testament to merit a visit from Peter. The most likely choice is the last option (i.e. Rome) for the following reasons. First, Jewish literature (*4 Ezra*; *2 Bar.* 11.1-2; 67.6; 4 Esd. 3.1-2; 28.31; *Sib. Or.* 5.143, 159-60) and Rev. 14, 17 and 18 designate

5;[76] Ignatius, *Rom*. 4.2-3[77]) strongly suggest that Peter eventually made his way to Rome, teaching and uniting the diaspora Christians who were under Neronian persecution.[78] Therefore, Peter seems to have embraced the Gentile

Babylon as a cryptic reference to Rome. Secondly, early Christian tradition connects Peter with the church in Rome (*1 Clem*. 5.4-5; Ignatius, *Rom*. 4.2-3).

76.   *1 Clement* was arguably written by Clement of Rome but was certainly written at the church at Rome around the end of the first century CE. See Adolf von Harnack, *Einführung in die alte Kirchengeschichte: Das Schreiben der römischen Kirche an die Korinthische aus der Zeit Domitians (I. Clemensbriefe)* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929), p. 52; Andreas Lindemann, *Die Apostolischen Väter I: Die Clemensbriefe* (HNT, 17; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), p. 12. *1 Clement* implies that Peter was martyred in Rome during the Neronian persecution. I find this important because the letter was composed when the memory of the apostles was still preserved by living members of the church at Rome.

77.   Ignatius's *Letter to the Romans* was arguably written at the beginning of the second century. This letter seems to assume that Peter had been in Rome. For a more thorough treatment of this issue, see William R. Schoedel, 'Polycarp of Smyrna and Ignatius of Antioch', *ANRW* 27 (1993), pp. 285-349.

78.   It should be noted that the arguments which opponents use to deny Peter's connection with Rome are unconvincing. First, they argue that the word 'Babylon' in 1 Pet. 5.13 should not be seen as a cryptic designation for Rome because 1 Peter is not a book of symbols. See E.A. Judge, 'Rome', in D.R.W. Wood *et al.* (eds.), *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 3rd edn, 1996), pp. 1027-29 (1029). However, this line of reasoning is not convincing because it fails to take into account the historical situation of first-century Christians in Rome who were under the Neronian persecution. Nero's severe persecution had likely begun in Rome against Christians and spread rapidly. Thus, it is possible that the persecution led Peter to use the cryptogram as a security measure to protect the Roman church and himself from unnecessary danger in case the Epistle fell into the wrong hands. See Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, p. 797. The second argument is that it is unlikely that Peter, the apostle to the Jews (Gal. 2.7-8), went to Rome because Paul was assigned to be the apostle to the Gentiles. See E. Schuyler English, 'Was St. Peter Ever in Rome?', *BSac* 124 (1967), pp. 314-20 (317); Thomas E. Phillips, *Paul, His Letters, and Acts* (Library of Pauline Studies; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), p. 154; Robert G. Gromacki, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1974), p. 186. However, this argument, as Wallace, 'First Peter', points out, is not convincing: 'That Peter was commissioned as an apostle to the Jews was true in 49 CE. But such a divine commission ... is not necessarily set in concrete. In other words, there is such a thing as the temporary will of God for one's life.' Indeed,

mission during his earlier stay at Caesarea (Acts 10.1–11.18; 15.7-9).[79] It is generally recognized that first-century Diaspora Jews and Jewish proselytes learned to speak Greek as their first language[80] and that they primarily used the LXX as their Scripture,[81] making it highly likely that they used Greek as their language of prayer, worship and Scripture reading. For any missionary, therefore, Greek would have been an instrumental language in the Gentile territories. Since Peter was a religious teacher in Gentile territories, he almost certainly interacted with the LXX when preaching, teaching and debating during his Gentile mission.[82] These religious duties must have forced Peter to speak the Greek language and develop greater competency in it.[83] In his study

Acts 10 unmistakably portrays Peter as being committed to the Gentile mission. The last and the strongest argument is that Paul did not mention Peter in his Epistle to the Romans. See Judge, 'Rome', p. 1029. Admittedly, it is hard to explain why Paul did not greet Peter if Peter was in Rome. However, this silence probably means no more than that Peter was probably not in Rome *at the time of Paul's writing*. As Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, p. 102, correctly suggests, this silence should not be a problem because '[h]e may only have returned to the city in the early 60s AD'. As demonstrated above, the tradition connecting Peter with Rome seems to be valid.

79.   John B. Polhill, *Acts* (NAC, 26; Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1992), p. 249; cf. Michael F. Bird, *Jesus and the Origins of the Gentile Mission* (LNTS, 331; London: T. & T. Clark International, 2007), pp. 5-6.

80.   Pieter W. van der Horst, 'Greek', in John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow (eds.), *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 690-92 (691).

81.   Silvia Cappelletti, *The Jewish Community of Rome: From the Second Century B.C. to the Third Century C.E.* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 113; Leiden, Brill, 2006), p. 182; Pieter W. van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in Their Graeco-Roman Context: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (WUNT, 196; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), p. 40.

82.   R.H. Pfeiffer, 'Canon of the Old Testament', in G.A. Buttrick (ed.), *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), I, pp. 498-520 (511), estimates that arguably more than 80 percent of the quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament stem from the LXX.

83.   Cf. Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), pp. 26-30; Jobes, 'Syntax of 1 Peter', p. 161. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, p. 7, also introduces the following argument: 'It has also been argued that Peter, aware of the

on the pedagogical role of Jesus, Gerd Theissen remarks,

> Everyone becomes part of a society with predetermined patterns of be-
> havior. Everyone is faced with role expectations that are attached to
> certain positions and which cannot be avoided. It was the same for
> Jesus. Being perceived in the role of teacher and prophet, he had to deal
> with the accompanying role expectations.[84]

Peter was not an exception to this rule either. As soon as Peter became a religious teacher in the Gentile territories, his Greek-speaking audience would have a particular expectation of him as a teacher. One of the most basic and important expectations they would have had of him was to speak Greek, which was the vehicle through which Christian beliefs and rituals were expressed in the Gentile areas. As a preacher and interpreter of the law to the Greek-speaking Gentiles, Greek must have been a practical necessity for Peter to have successfully engaged with them.[85]

As mentioned previously, group membership based on religious criteria is an important factor for language choice. Without being able to teach in Greek, the Jesus movement would have been confined to Palestine and Aramaic-speaking communities. Yet, the fact that Peter was a missionary to several Gentile territories reveals that the Jesus movement was *not* confined. Peter must have been able to speak Greek fluently if he was to carry the gospel to Antioch, Corinth and Rome. Therefore, although absolute certainty concerning the linguistic ability of Peter cannot be obtained, it is more likely that he was fluent in Greek than not.

imperative for mission, would have prepared himself for that by improving his ability in the lingua franca of his world.'

84. Gerd Theissen, 'Jesus as an Itinerant Preacher: Reflections from Social History on Jesus' Role', in James H. Charlesworth and Petr Pokorný (eds.), *Jesus Research: An International Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), pp. 98-122 (98).

85. It is also important to understand that the Jesus movement went much further than Jesus' own ministry in terms of geography and adherents. Thus, the broad scope of the apostolic mission would have required that the disciples be able to speak the Greek language.

Conclusion

Critics of the Petrine authorship of 1 Peter have relied upon the absence of the *Ausgangstext* of 1 Peter and the unavailability of an undisputed sample of Peter's writing in order to support their position. By asserting that Peter exclusively spoke Aramaic, they conclude that the Epistle is too eloquent for him to have written it. However, this approach is too simple an interpretation and does not take into account the complicated factors that were almost certainly within Peter's personal sociolinguistic domains. Reconstructing Peter's linguistic ability demands a more complex and thorough means of understanding language acquisition than that of traditional approaches. Hence, this article sought to utilize sociolinguistics as a more viable historical method to shed light on Peter's linguistic ability.

I have demonstrated that the three sociolinguistic domains that heavily influenced Peter's linguistic ability (i.e. his birthplace, occupational field and mission territories) were multilingual. Peter would have acquired the ability to speak Greek during his childhood in Bethsaida. He would have also been able to refine and elevate his Greek-speaking ability as he operated a fishing business in a multilingual community. Peter's Greek-speaking ability would have continued to improve as a teacher in Gentile territories. His exposure to multilingual environments would have forced him to learn the Greek language. Combining Peter's sociolinguistic situation with the evidence presented in this article supports the assertion that regardless of how much Aramaic Peter knew, he must have also spoken Greek fluently. Sociolinguistically, it is more likely that Peter was multilingual than monolingual. In turn, the Aramaic Hypothesis of Peter can no longer be utilized to underpin the Pseudonymous Author Hypothesis of 1 Peter.

Moving forward, it is my hope that scholars will give greater credence to the idea that Peter was conversant in Greek. I also hope that scholarly investigations of the authorship of 1 Peter will begin to take Peter's multilingualism as the starting point of discussions.