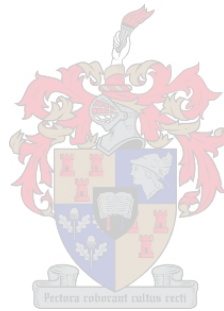


THE FUNCTION OF *APORIAE* IN JOHN 21: A MEDIA-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

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of Theology (Old and New Testament) at the Stellenbosch University**

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

March 2021

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Abstract

There has been an ongoing debate in contemporary studies over the literary disunity and narrative unity in the Gospel of John. Some scholars have used *literary aporiae*, or seams in the text, to posit a composition history or community history that can be reconstructed from the final text by working backwards through these *aporiae*. Other scholars have noted that there is narrative unity in John, but debate whether this exists uniformly throughout the book, or only in chapters 1-20, leaving chapter 21 as a text reflecting a later composition history or community history. The approach taken in this study attempted to use a *media-rhetorical* approach that takes into account the media texture of the text when dealing with *literary aporiae*. As such, this study looks at the media culture of the time in which John 21 was composed and distances itself from a particular Johannine community history. The study therefore argues that John 21 was composed after John 1-20, reflecting a media culture at the end of the first century CE.

Opsomming

Daar is deurlopende debat in kontemporêre studies gevoer oor die literêre verdeeldheid en narratiewe eenheid in die Evangelie van Johannes. Sommige skoliere het gebruik gemaak van *literêre aporiae*, of nate in die teks, om 'n samestellingsgeskiedenis of gemeenskapsgeskeidenis te positeer wat gerekonstrueer kan word deur agteruit te werk deur hierdie *aporiae*. Ander skoliere het opgemerk dat daar narratiewe eenheid is, maar bespreek of dit eenvormig in die boek bestaan, of slegs in hoofstukke 1-20, met hoofstuk 21 te laat as 'n teks wat 'n latere samestellingsgeskiedenis of gemeenskapsgeskeidenis weerspieël. Die benadering wat in hierdie studie gevolg is poog om aan te toon dat 'n media-rhetoriese perspektief die media-tekstuur van die teks in ag neem wanneer dit met *literêre aporiae* handel. As sonadig, kyk hierdie studie na die mediakultuur van die tyd waarin Johannes 21 saamgestel is en distansieer dit hom van 'n bepaalde Johannine-gemeenskapsgeskeidenis. Die studie voer dus aan dat Johannes 21 na Johannes 1-20 gekomponeer is, wat 'n mediakultuur aan die einde van die eerste eeu GJ weerspieël.

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To the Lord Jesus Christ who is the reason why we have gospel texts today.

List of Abbreviations

<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992.
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>DJG</i>	<i>Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels</i> . 2d.ed.; Edited by J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, and N. Perrin. Downer's Grove, 2013.
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
NT	New Testament
NTL	New Testament Library
SHS	Scripture and Hermeneutics Series
SBLECL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Christianity and its Literature
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLWGRW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Greco-Roman World
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
STI	Studies in Theological Interpretation

Table of Contents

Declaration	1
Abstract	2
Opsomming	3
Acknowledgements	4
List of Abbreviations	5
Table of Contents	6
Figures	9
1. Introduction	10
1.1 Background to the Research	10
1.2 Assumptions and Focus of the Investigation	11
1.3 Research Question and Statement of the Problem	12
1.4 Literary Aporiae and Narrative Unity in the Final Composition	13
1.5 Re-examining Aporiae in John 21: Rhetorical Composition in Literary and Oral Perspective	14
1.6 Methodological Approach for a Media-Rhetorical Analysis of Aporiae in John 21	16
1.7 Research Design and Outline	19
2. Literary Aporiae and Narrative Unity in John 21	21
2.1 Literary Aporiae and Composition History in Light of John 21	21
2.1.1 Literary Aporiae in the Puzzle of John's Composition History	22
2.1.2 Literary Disunity and Composition History: The Function of Aporiae in Source, Form, and Redaction Criticism	24

2.2 Orality and Textuality in Transmission History of John’s Initial Text	33
2.2.1 John 21 and Literary Aporiae in the Manuscript Witnesses	34
2.2.2 Models of Orality and Literacy for Understanding the Transmission Process ‘behind’ the Final Text	35
2.2.3 Initial Text and Composition History in Light of Oral-Aural Media Culture	38
2.3 Narrative Unity and a Turn to the Final Text and Audience	40
2.3.1 Literary Aporiae and Narrative Unity: Relecture in John 21	41
2.3.2 Literary Aporiae and Johannine Literary Production: Multiple Editions and the Sphragis in John 21:24–25	44
2.4 Conclusion	48
3. Media-Rhetorical Approach to the Function of Literary Aporiae in John 21	50
3.1 Modelling Ancient Media Cultures in the Milieu of John 21	50
3.1.1 Methodological Reflection on Utilizing Ancient Communications Systems as Interpretive Paradigms	51
3.1.2 Medium and Message in Ancient Communications Perspective	52
3.2 Textual Media Technology and Oral-Manuscript Communications	54
3.2.1 Textual Criticism and the Physical Properties of Manuscript Media Technology	54
3.2.2 Oral-Manuscript Communications in Ancient Media Perspective	59
3.3 Rhetorical Composition and Performance in John 21’s Ancient Media Culture	65
3.3.1 Progymnasmata and Ancient Rhetorical Composition: Toward a Media-Rhetorical Dialogue for the Gospel of John	65

3.3.2 Rhetorical Composition and Audience Expectations in John 21's Compositional Milieu	74
3.3.3 Media-Rhetorical Analysis: Rhetorical Criticism in Media Perspective	86
4. Media-Rhetorical Function of John 21:1–25 as Oral-Manuscript	91
4.1 Ancient Manuscript Media Culture in John 21	91
4.1.1 Media Situation and the Double Ending Aporia: John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25	92
4.1.2 Oral-Manuscript Media Composition and Ancient Numerical- Literary Structuring in John 21	99
4.1.3 Literary Units in the Oral-Manuscript Structure of John 21	105
4.2 Function of John 21 as Oral-Manuscript Communication	107
4.2.1 Encoded Oral/Aural Media in John 21: Elevating the Audience through Repetition, Variation, Redundancies, and Ellipses	108
4.2.2 Elevating the Listening Audience: Media-Rhetorical Properties of Oral-Manuscript Composition in John 21	112
5. Conclusion	129
Bibliography	130

Figures

Figure 3.1 Standard Notation and Tablature (see 3.2.2)

Figure 3.2 Tablature on Guitar and Piano (see 3.2.2)

Figure 3.3 Hypothetical Oral-Manuscript Construction of John 21:11 (see 3.2.2)

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Research

Understanding the literary unity and composition of the Gospel of John has always been a challenge for interpreters. Ashton, who engages with questions of the “social and historical situation” and backgrounds of the “strange ideas” contained in the narrative,¹ argues for literary disunity in John. Rather than viewing the text as a “seamless garment,” major *aporiae* suggests disunity in John’s final form.² Hengel defines *aporiae* as “breaks, supposed ‘contradictions,’ inconsistencies, and explanatory glosses.”³ Compositional theories were developed to account for the “breaks and inconsistencies” found in John’s textual context.⁴ In his description of *aporiae*, Stibbe attributes the “seams that disrupt the narrative flow of the story ... to a later editor.”⁵ *Aporiae* were thus explained as being the result of the editing process of John, either from the same hand⁶ or from another compositional hand.⁷ Can a media-rhetorical perspective

¹ John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*. 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5. Critical scholars agree that John 7:53–8:11 is a later interpolation on account of textual evidence and the narrative disunity presented by the *pericopae adulterae*.

² Ashton, *Understanding*, 42–49, identifies an “awkward conjunction between John 5 and John 6” resulting in a contextual *aporiae* since in the narrative there are chronological and geographical gaps (p. 46). By identifying John 10:1 as an *aporiae*, Ashton accepts a Johannine composition history that changed decisively after John 9, when the blind man healed by Jesus was expelled from synagogue (p. 48). Ashton solves the problem by suggesting that John “was not composed at a single sitting but over a period of years” (p. 47).

³ Martin Hengel, *The Johannine Question* (London: SCM Press, 1989), 95, supports a multiple edition explanation for the appearance of literary disunity in the final form of John, produced in an Asia Minor school.

⁴ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, ABRL, ed. by Francis J. Moloney (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 40–41.

⁵ Mark W. G Stibbe, “Magnificent but Flawed: The Breaking of Form in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*. SBLRBS 55. ed. by Tom Thatcher and Stephen D. Moore (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 149–65, 149, finds that scholars often identify *aporiae* in John 14:30–31, since 18:1–3 “flows very naturally from 14:30–31” (p. 150). Stibbe argues against literary *aporiae* being viewed only within a narrative coherence as he regards John 21 as being added by the “Ecclesiastical Redactor” after the logical ending of John 20:31 (p. 155).

⁶ Ashton, *Understanding*, 106, admits that John 21 may stem from a later and different editor while most of John 1–20 as it stands in the final form emerged from subsequent editing by the same composer.

⁷ So Brown, *Introduction*, 82, whose composition history extends from the Beloved Disciple as the eyewitness source of Johannine tradition, to the evangelist, the elder as authoring the Letters, and final redactor.

that takes into account the media texture of the text provide deeper insights into the function of *literary aporiae* in John 21?

The method of viewing literary⁸ *aporiae* as a window into the composition history has been used to consider John as a “literary document.” Kysar, however, has questioned the extent to which literary *aporiae* can be used as evidence to posit a composition history.⁹ Scholars therefore began to focus on the communication enacted by the final text, prompting the investigation of the social systems for which the “storytelling”¹⁰ of John was composed, edited, circulated, and performed rather than on the recovery of pre-texts and sources in John’s literary history. Stibbe for example, in his narrative-historical approach, emphasizes both literary disunity and narrative unity as essential parts of understanding and interpreting John.¹¹ Since the use of *aporiae* as windows into John’s composition history presents a lack of consensus, their function should be reviewed in light of new concerns and evidence.¹² The aim of this research is therefore to answer the question of whether taking into account the media texture of the text provides deeper insights into the function of *literary aporiae* in John 21.

1.2 Assumptions and Focus of the Investigation

Literary disunity is often used for theories of composition involving multiple stages and editions before John reached its final form.¹³ The research will explore if there are more than one *aporia* in John 21. Although the use of *aporiae* for a composition history mainly presupposes a *literary* process of composition, Loubser’s view that John was “primarily

⁸ *Aporiae* are usually defined as ‘literary’ in the sense of being found when considering texts from a literary rather than oral perspective. And used as windows into a composition, tradition, or community history.

⁹ Robert Kysar, *Voyages with John: Charting the Fourth Gospel* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 53, considers, in addition to John 5 and 6, the difficulties posed in John 14:31, which concludes a discourse of Jesus and should be followed by John 18:1 rather than by John 15–17, the epilogue which is a narrative that follows a conclusion in 20:30–31, and the prologue (1:1–14) as an indication of John’s literary development.

¹⁰ Stibbe, “Magnificent,” 163.

¹¹ Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel*. SNTSMS 73 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 153, accepts that John “was the product of a lengthy process of composition.” He accepts a three-stage model of this composition history rooted in eyewitness tradition.

¹² Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17*. NTL (London: SCM Press, 1968), 2–3, dismisses John the son of Zebedee as the author, but argues that historical criticism has not succeeded in the “quest” to solve John’s historical riddles. He finds John 17, composed using the literary “device of a farewell speech of a dying man,” and the prologue as key compositional markers (p. 4).

¹³ Paul N. Anderson, “On Guessing Points and Naming Stars: Epistemological Origins of John’s Christological Tensions,” in *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology*. ed. by Richard Bauckham and Carl Mosser (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 311–45, 321–26, understands John 21 as an *aporia* that indicates its literary development and community history. He posits a first edition (85 CE) marked by persecution and a move to Asia Minor, and a final edition (100 CE) engaged with docetic and centralizing Christian developments.

conceived in the oral mode” invites scholars to explore oral processes of composition and to investigate the function of literary *aporiae* from the perspective of oral composition.¹⁴ In focusing on the media function of literary *aporiae* in John 21 there is a danger of adopting an oppositional view between orality and textuality. Eddy avoids this pitfall by viewing the NT gospels as “ancient, orally oriented written texts” that “derive their meaning” from the media culture in which they were composed and heard.¹⁵ Even if, despite the lack of manuscript evidence, John 21 points to literary development in relation to an earlier edition containing John 1-20,¹⁶ the researcher will argue for the oral/aural communicative function of literary *aporiae* in John 21 by attending to the conventions of the oral/aural communications *media* culture that influenced the *rhetorical* composition of John 21. In suggesting that John 21 was composed in relation to John 1-20, the dating of John 21 will be assumed to be at the end of the first century CE in Ephesus¹⁷ with the earlier edition of John 1-20 being completed between by 85 CE.¹⁸

1.3 Research Question and Statement of the Problem

Due to the interplay of orality and textuality in John’s compositional period, scholars debate the connections between oral performances¹⁹ and literary techniques used in the process

¹⁴ J.A. (Bobby) Loubser, *Oral & Manuscript Culture in the Bible: Studies on the Media Texture of the New Testament - Explorative Hermeneutics* - (Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2007), 68. In primary manuscript culture (550–338 BCE), genres were “exclusively derived from the oral environment.” Oral genres often contain “ring compositions, chain compositions, chiasms, paratactic expressions” and “extended allegories.” Primary manuscript culture, entrenched in oral-aural communications media, saw the production of dramas, historical narratives, dialogues, and written speeches. These genres were developed in the rhetorical/intermediate period (338 BCE–150 CE) where manuscripts served oral performers. Although various “strata of society appropriated new media technologies at different times” (p. 55), the development of new communications media technology in the high manuscript period (150 CE) facilitated the intertextual use of manuscripts, but it did not “replace the previous media.” New media was “superimposed on the existing media, re-defining them in a new way” (p. 21). John’s composition period experienced a transition from intermediate to advanced manuscript culture (p. 122).

¹⁵ Paul R. Eddy, “Orality and Oral Transmission,” in *DJG* 641–50, 647. He suggests further that while the four NT gospels range between “a straightforward transcription of an actual oral performance ... and a ‘literary’ work with roots in the oral Jesus tradition.” He thus proposes that scholars develop “a literary-critical approach guided by an oral-aural poetics ... that is sensitive both to the media dynamics and the inherent constraints of first-century compositional practices” (p. 648).

¹⁶ Craig S. Keener, “John, Gospel of,” in *DJG* 420–36, 421, finds that “Johannine scholarship ... maintains a strong tradition of viewing John 21 as an appendix added by a later hand.”

¹⁷ Keener, “John,” 422, finds that scholars have tried dating the final form to the late second century, but that the early second century fragment P⁵² showed that those arguments were not true. The majority of scholars now date the Gospel of John to the last decade of the first century CE, the same period attested in early Christian tradition. He also agrees with early Christian tradition that the provenance of John is in Ephesus.

¹⁸ See note 13 on the position of Anderson.

¹⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 68, against a literary mode of composition that implies that gospel writers adopted known literary genres, suggests that oral composition makes “preliminary drafts” being written “on papyrus” unnecessary. He admits that methodological constraints prevent absolute certainty on this orality/literacy issue.

of composing John 21.²⁰ Despite the debate between oral and literary composition, John 21 was used as part of an *oral-aural* communication system with Greco-Roman audiences. It therefore seems plausible to suggest that *aporiae* in John 21 may be a function of both the *rhetorical* composition and the communications *media* available in John 21's compositional milieu. It is important, however, to first consider how the function of literary *aporiae* is conceived in recent approaches to the final form and narrative of John 1–21.

1.4 Literary *Aporiae* and Narrative Unity in the Final Composition

Growing objections against the use of *aporiae* to posit a literary history have prompted scholars to reconsider methods proposing to reconstruct the life settings or sources behind the text. Moving away from a composition history approach, Segovia attends to the communication envisioned and enacted by the final text by focusing on the “literary process of composition” and its “artistic devices, strategic concerns and aims.”²¹ The final text is analysed without recourse to a composition history. Other scholars such as Keener accept narrative unity while considering that at least some *aporiae* result from an editorial process.²² Rather than only adopting a narrative unity approach, it is important to consider if John 21 can be seen as a unified narrative without overlooking the differences between John 21 and John 1–20. This approach is taken by Moloney, who regards John 21 as a later addition that *continues* and *discontinues* aspects of John 1–20's viewpoint.²³ Another suggestion accounts for multiple stages of editing and rewriting as a *relecture*. This approach considers that John 21 was composed from a rereading of John 1–20 for a communication situation outside of the one implied in 1–20 so that a claim for historicity (John 21:24) may have been necessary.²⁴

²⁰ Jo-Ann A. Brant, *Dialogue and Drama: Elements of Greek Tragedy in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2004), 15, argues that the composer belonged to an educated class with training in *literary* composition techniques in a period when Greek and Roman tragedies were read to audiences in private homes.

²¹ Fernando F. Segovia, “The Tradition History of the Fourth Gospel,” in *Exploring the Gospel of John: In Honour of D. Moody Smith*, ed. by R Alan Culpepper and C Clifton Black (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 179–89, 183, explains the literary *aporia* of John 21 as stemming from a perceived change “in the rhetorical situation of the implied readers by the implied author of the Gospel” (p. 186).

²² Keener, “John,” 420–21, considers that ancient compositions often underwent “multiple stages in editing and postpublication revision.” He argues for narrative unity in John 1–21 despite designating John 21 as an epilogue that follows the “climactic conclusion” of John 20:30–31.

²³ Francis J. Moloney, “John 21 and the Johannine Story,” in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*. SBLRBS 55 (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 237–51, 242, considers John 21 conceals a “lost” ideological view and forms “an integral part of the literary and theological unity” of John “as we now have it.” Whereas John 1–20 presents the Johannine Jesus as having to depart, the “addition of the appearance stories of 21:1–25 contradicts the original storyteller's narrative design” (p. 249).

²⁴ Michael Labahn, “Peter's Rehabilitation (John 21:15–19) and the Adoption of Sinners: Remembering Jesus and Relecturing John,” in *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 2: Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel*.

Culpepper's comparison of John 21:24–25 to a *sphragis*²⁵ supports a link between the validation of authority²⁶ and the communication enacted by John 21. These insights suggest John 21:1–25 was incorporated after 20:30–31 for a communication situation around 100 CE, but the *media-rhetorical* conventions of this period are more relevant to the research focus.

1.5 Re-examining *Aporiae* in John 21: Rhetorical Composition in Literary and Oral Perspective

Some scholars prioritizing the final form accept a literary disunity theory for John 21 alongside a postulated narrative unity across John 1–21.²⁷ Although not ignoring the possible disunity implied by John 21, Greco-Roman rhetoric can also be used to understand the function of *aporiae* in John 21.²⁸ When the communications media culture in which John 21 was composed is considered, there emerges an ancient function of texts pointing out the possible oral performance thereof.²⁹ Whether composed in *oral* or *literary* modes,³⁰ John 21 was performed for Johannine audiences situated in a particular media culture in Asia Minor around 100 CE. The performance was either read from the text or spoken from memory. Since “[a]ll communication involves rhetoric,”³¹ it is plausible to consider the *media-rhetorical* function of

SBLECL 2 (Atlanta: SBL, 2009), 335–48, 340–41, posits a separate composer for John 21 due to *hapax legomena*, changes in narrator point-of-view, the ending of 20:30–31. John 21 addresses “unanswered questions” from John 1–20 and as a “fictional narrative ... builds up meaning for a new time and a new community,” showing that the “memory of Jesus was still open to creative renarration” in the period when John 21 was composed (p. 346–47).

²⁵ R. Alan Culpepper, “John 21:24: The Johannine Sphragis,” in *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 2: Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel*. SBLECL 2 (Atlanta: SBL, 2009), 349–64, 359, finds the literary form of John 21:24–25 to be closer to the *incipit* and *sphragis* than to other ancient paratexts such as the *colophon*.

²⁶ Culpepper, “Sphragis,” 363. The *sphragis*, an ancient literary form functioning as a validating paratext or certification of authority, may have been added by a “member of the Johannine school” concerned for John’s reception in settings where alternative characterizations of Jesus’s life were available to audiences.

²⁷ Robert Kysar, *Voyages with John: Charting the Fourth Gospel* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 58, sees John’s *aporiae* as indicating how a “developed tradition ... either in written or oral form” was “embedded ... in an imperfect way,” resulting in literary “breaks, contradictions, and repetition.” He finds that John 1–21 is “a literary whole,” but narrative unity literary disunity theories should be used together (p. 75).

²⁸ Jerome H. Neyrey, *The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 3–4.

²⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 46, considers elements of the two-way “communication process” as the “sender, message (as code, concept, and medium), receiver, noise” and “feedback,” but focuses on the aspect of medium.

³⁰ Eddy, “Orality,” 641, asserts one of the complexities in orality and literacy debates as the relationship between textual and oral *modes* and *media* of communication. Oral and literary *media* and *registers* (style of communication) “can influence and interface with each other” in complex ways. Oral communication could occur in either an oral and/or literary linguistic register, showing that an oral medium does not imply an oral register and that a literary medium does not imply a literary register. A text can be composed using literary techniques that envisions the oral-rhetorical performance thereof.

³¹ George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. 2d ed. Revised and Enlarged (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 1–3.

aporiae in John 21. It is therefore necessary to determine how ancient texts were composed and performed in John 21's media culture and milieu.

The *chreia* form was used as “an oral and literary compositional device that speakers and writers could manipulate in various ways” and was as compositional exercises in the training of “literate individuals.”³² Theon, writing his *progymnasmata* prior to 100 CE,³³ suggested that teachers should compose refutations and confirmations for their students to “retell” and “imitate” (Theon, *Prog.*13 [Kennedy]). This means that the composition of a narrative containing historical tradition³⁴ possibly known by the intended audiences may have emerged as a result of the literary process of refutation and confirmation (Theon, *Prog.*27 [Kennedy]). It would not mean that an oral function is absent in a literary compositional process even if speeches in rhetorical schools were written before being memorized and performed. Loubser questions the extent to which John is characterized by literary processes of composition.³⁵ In contrast, Neyrey argues that composers of the Gospel of John were familiar with the *progymnasmata* exercises and rhetorical conventions expected by audiences.³⁶

This oral/literary debate has implications for the identification and use of *aporiae* in John 21, but first century CE texts, whether composed from oral and/or literary compositional processes, were composed to be utilized in the predominantly oral/aural media culture of the time. Theon indicates that reading aloud and listening to readings were an important part of

³² John T. Fitzgerald, “Chreia/Aphorism,” in *DJG* 113–15, 114.

³³ George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 1. Aelius Theon of Alexandria wrote his *progymnasmata*, composed for teachers, between the middle to late first century CE, before Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* was published (94–95 CE). Theon's *progymnasmata* “suggests that students might be asked to write about their own experiences” (p. x), and that his exercises were useful for those practicing rhetoric, or composing as “poets or historians or any other writers.”

³⁴ Alicia D. Myers, *Characterizing Jesus: A Rhetorical Analysis on the Fourth Gospel's Use of Scripture in Its Presentation of Jesus*. LNTS 458. Paperback (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 26, finds that ancient composers of Greco-Roman historical narratives had constraints when constructing characterizations of historical lives. The composer of John did not have uncontrolled freedom in his characterizations of historical persons such as Jesus, since “for his *bios* to be persuasive, it must align with facts already known” about Jesus to the audiences receiving John's account (p. 13).

³⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 137, finds the “naïve” model of the composition and transmission of manuscripts in the first century CE “assumed that “authors composed ... on papyrus using the very best rhetorical and linguistic skills.” He also argues against the precedent of ancient orators, who prepared speeches in writing before memorizing and performing them, supported by Kennedy, as providing an adequate model for understanding the composition of John.

³⁶ Neyrey, *Rhetorical*, 4. Theon (*Prog.*13–14 [Kennedy]) finds it a “faulty composition” practice to adopt the “metrical and rhythmical style, like ... the so-called Asian orators, and some things of Epicurus” although “it is excusable when someone falls occasionally into those meters.” This supports oral composition for John, but Neyrey's contention is that John's text indicates at least some awareness of Greek composition.

rhetorical training.³⁷ This is affirmed by Loubser.³⁸ It is possible that process of composition for John 21 was undertaken within the constraints of the oral/aural communications media in the period when texts functioned as *oral-manuscripts*. By taking the evidence of *chreiai* and ancient narrative composition into account, a media-rhetorical analysis of John 21 may suggest a different function for the ‘literary’ *aporiae* in John 21 posited in Johannine studies.

1.6 Methodological Approach for a Media-Rhetorical Analysis of *Aporiae* in John 21

A media-rhetorical analysis uses the approach of Loubser, who looks at the media texture of texts, in combination with approaches that look at ancient rhetorical devices such as Kennedy. Media-rhetorical therefore refers to the approach that looks at the media texture of texts within the rhetorical environment in which it originated. Loubser’s approach in relation to the Johannine texts considers various communicative roles. There are also narrators in the texts which we have to distinguish from the beloved disciple and John. This implied narrator-performer is considered to be a likely feature also because of the “relatively late dating of John that allowed it to be performed on a regular basis by a number of authorised evangelists” as well as the reference to the beloved disciple in John 21:24 that indicates more than one person at work. However, when it comes to writing, it may be that the writer and the narrator are the same person in all Johannine materials as there is no indication of a separate writer.³⁹ Regarding reader-performers, Loubser finds that the Gospel of John was written to be performed aloud and it was probable that the written text was to a large degree an oral performance that had been formalised and standardised to a high degree. It was also expected that the manuscript would assist the performance from memory. Loubser therefore seeks to uncover if there are traces in the texts that would provide clues to the performance. In other words, is it possible to find the reader(s) and audiences already inscribed in the text.⁴⁰

³⁷ Reading, or *anagnôsis*, “‘is the enunciation of a written text in a loud and strong voice.’” Advanced students will be instructed about “character types ... uses of ethos and pathos, digressions, amplifications, diminutions ... as well as styles of expression and uses of ornaments of style” (Theon, *Prog.*102–366–67 [Kennedy]). Listening to what is read, or *akroasis*, requires “‘frank and friendly attention to the speaker’” so that the auditor may “recall the subject of the writing, identify the main points and the arrangement” and recall memorable passages (Theon, *Prog.*105–669 [Kennedy]).

³⁸ Loubser, *Oral*, 135 says that “almost nothing was written without the purpose of either being performed either [*sic*] from memory or while being read aloud.” He also acknowledges that “some literary works obviously reflect the conventions of oral composition more than others do.”

³⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 123-24.

⁴⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 125.

Conceiving the function of *aporiae* in John from a media-rhetorical perspective requires the awareness that texts represent the “solidification of a preceding communication event.”⁴¹ This means that John 21 participated in the late first century CE Mediterranean media culture. The function of *aporiae* in John 21 may therefore be analysed within this milieu. If John 21 emerged in past communicative network, then a “rejection of historical inquiry”⁴² as found in radical reader-response approaches suggests that scholarly readings may downplay the contributions that John 21’s socio-historical horizon and media culture can offer to contemporary readers. A postpositive epistemology should account for the limited evidence available to reconstruct a communication situation for John 21.⁴³ As “living systems,” ancient communicative networks can only be modelled by isolating the wider aspects of John’s media-rhetorical environment.⁴⁴ Limitations in reconstructing oral performances for John 21 imply that second-order modelling⁴⁵ or reductionism is inevitable for a contemporary participation in John’s manuscript and media culture.

Oral composition can only be inferred from the textual artefacts of John 21’s communication network, but there are residual elements of oral media as well as narrative compositional techniques in John 21. Theon attended to the role of the narrator⁴⁶ and the use

⁴¹ Bernard C. Lategan, “Hermeneutics,” *ABD* 3:149–54, 152.

⁴² Joel B. Green, “The Challenge of Hearing the New Testament,” in *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation* (2d ed.; ed. J. B. Green; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010b), 1–14, 11. Radical reader-response methods argue historical enquiry no hermeneutical priority on the contemporary meaning of the text to the reader. Exploring the media texture of John 21 requires an analysis of the period of composition and initial reception, but this does not mean that a media analysis suggests a new hermeneutical priority.

⁴³ Jeppe Sinding Jensen, “Epistemology,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*. ed. by M. Stausberg and S. Engler (New York: Routledge, 2011), 40–53, 41. Epistemic virtue addresses the “problem of ‘knowledge of unobservables.’” These unobservable factors from the larger social network around the text are only accessible when interpreted through abstract models (p. 50).

⁴⁴ Loubser, *Oral*, 129, finds that “[i]n reconstructing the communication event between the implied author and implied audience ... the media texture of the text” may provide contemporary scholars with the awareness that communicative acts, such as “gestures and voice, have disappeared with the oral performers.”

⁴⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 48. Loubser states, “no model of a communication system can be more than a second-order model” since the reconstructed system is “a simplified model of a larger dynamic reality.” It will “always be an abstraction” that only “points to the communicative event” and should therefore be understood as a reduction of the larger social and cultural reality in which John 21 was composed and performed.

⁴⁶ Theon defined the “virtues” or *aretai* of narration as “clarity, conciseness, and credibility” (Theon, *Prog.*29 [Kennedy]). Myers, *Characterizing*, 76, considers the qualities of the Johannine narrator to be in line with the expectations and conventions of reliable narration. She finds the “three key ‘virtues’ of narrative” in John, which “shows a concern for brevity, clarity, and especially credibility,” citing John 1:12–13, 20:30; and 19:35 as examples of each respectively.

of rhetorical *topoi* and *techniques*.⁴⁷ The use of the narrator⁴⁸ and rhetorical techniques⁴⁹ may be evident in John 21 since there are similarities as well as differences between John and Greco-Roman rhetorical composition.⁵⁰ Loubser argues that manuscript communications accommodated to oral conventions and that John's media texture illustrates the conventions of oral composition. He posits that redundancies in speech are smoothed out in manuscript writing while admitting that special emphases are made through the use of repetition.⁵¹ If this accounts for the repetition in John 21:15–19, then Theon's point that "one should narrate very briefly things that are going to distress the hearers"⁵² implicates how ancient auditors of John would hear John 21:23.

John 21 could also be analysed according to its "mnemotechnical poetics" and the "typically Johannine ... rhythmic presentation of the colloquial, simplistic Greek language."⁵³ While parts of John 21 presents close links with John 20⁵⁴ and Johannine style,⁵⁵ the occurrence

⁴⁷ Theon (*Prog.4* [Kennedy]), posits that orators make frequent use of *topos* (common-place) while historical writers made frequent use of *ekphrasis* (description). The use of *prosōpopoeia* (personification) was applicable to both historical writers and to orators and poets. *Synkrisis* (comparison) is useful for "judicial speeches" (p. 5) while *paraphrasis* (paraphrase) allows what was previously composed to be expressed "in a number of different ways" and was used by ancient writers to rephrase their own and others' writings (p. 6). Myers, *Characterizing*, 26, examines Greco-Roman audience expectations concerning the composition of narratives, especially of narrative containing historical tradition, to determine the rhetorical "persuasiveness" of John's characterization and use of a "reliable narrator" that allows "a fuller presentation of the facts." Some of the rhetorical techniques considered for analysing John's characterization of Jesus are *synkrisis*, *ekphrasis*, and *prosopopoiia* (p. 47). The use of *paraphrasis* is also found in the Johannine use of "biblical style and imagery."

⁴⁸ Myers, *Characterizing*, 76, considers the qualities of the Johannine narrator to be in line with the expectations and conventions of reliable narration. She finds John "shows a concern for brevity, clarity, and especially credibility" (John 1:12–13; 20:30; 19:35).

⁴⁹ Myers, *Characterizing*, 26, Some of the rhetorical techniques considered for analysing John's characterization of Jesus are *synkrisis*, *ekphrasis*, and *prosopopoiia* (p. 47). The use of *paraphrasis* is also found in the Johannine use of "biblical style and imagery."

⁵⁰ Brant, *Drama*, 15, suggests that John employs a narrator to help communicate the narrative. The publication process assumed by Brant involves a comparison to the performance of Greek and Roman tragedies, but they key difference is that John made use of a narrator to facilitate the telling of the story instead of assuming that John would be performed in the theatre with its own set communicative conventions.

⁵¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 139–40, finds that first-century scribes "were highly skilled in reducing oral speech into the forms conducive to manuscript communication" where the redundancies are less but the infodensity is higher. Redundancies in the manuscript communications (cf. John 4:2 in note 69), rather than being an *aporia*, may be a tool to "facilitate the oral performance of the manuscript." The "reader-performer" was to supply the gestures and contexts that were lacking in first century CE oral-manuscript communications media.

⁵² He also suggests that narratives should "dwell at greater length on pleasant-sounding things" (Theon, *Prog.29* [Kennedy]). This may implicate the characterization of the Beloved Disciple throughout John 21.

⁵³ Loubser, *Oral*, 129, describes the compositional style of John as revealing elements of "mnemotechnical poetics ... produced as audible message [sic] to be memorised and orally performed."

⁵⁴ Newman & Nida, *Translator's*, 630, point out that John 21:14 "ties Chapter 21 to Chapter 20, making this resurrection appearance to the disciples sequential to the two in Chapter 20." They suggest this creates the effect of an *aporia* for scholars who find a literary disunity in John 21 when compared to John 1–20.

⁵⁵ Barclay M. Newman and Eugene Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of John* (London: United Bible Societies, 1980), 623. Μετὰ ταῦτα in John 21:1 is also used as a transitional formula in John 3:22 and may be translated as "a few days later" if the receptor language requires a more precise indication of time.

of *hapax legomena*,⁵⁶ the fish story,⁵⁷ a different communicative situation enacted by John 21:24–25, and the use of “explanatory notes which are typical of adaptation of an oral text to a new medium,”⁵⁸ points to a media-rhetorical function for John 21. The main orality/textuality issue to consider in determining the media-rhetorical function of John 21 is that texts were *composed* to be *performed* by a *literate reader* for *audiences* using all the available *communicative tools* that accompany the *oral/aural communications media* culture.

The approach taken in this research will therefore look at indicators of *oral-manuscript* culture embedded within John 21 such as ellipsis, redundancy, repetition and variation, double *entendre*, and symbolism. John 21 will be divided up into individual literary units whereby each unit will be analysed according to *oral-manuscript* conventions to get to the media texture of the text. These will also be viewed in light of the narrative virtue of conciseness and manuscript constraints such as infodensity. Another important consideration will be the ancient rhetorical virtue of credibility, especially as it concerns the *sphragis* in John 21:24–25. Together, these perspectives inform a media-rhetorical analysis of John 21 that seeks to answer the research question.

1.7 Research Design and Outline

It has thus far been suggested that *aporiae* in John 21 may perhaps be considered as a function of Greco-Roman rhetoric and communications media. These aspects have influenced

Usages of ἐφανερώσεν in John 21:1 and ἐφανερώθη in John 21:14 is found throughout John (1:31; 2:11; 3:21; 7:4; 9:3; 17:6), but is used of a resurrection appearance only in John 21. Another element of style is the interplay between verbs for love, ἀγαπᾷς and φιλῶ, and the interplay between lambs ἀρνία and sheep πρόβατά, and the two verbs used for ‘take care of,’ Βόσκει and Ποίμαινε, in John 21:15–19 which is to be regarded as stylistic and not to be overinterpreted since these words are “used synonymously” (p. 637).

⁵⁶ Newman & Nida, *Translator’s*, 628..

⁵⁷ Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community*, second (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 281–82, finds that although John 21 alludes to Peter’s martyrdom, the “central action of the passage is the great catch of fish, which is strongly missionary in character.” Furthermore, the composition of John 21:11 and its numerical symbolism of the catch of fish does not require the use of “interpretive techniques not needed elsewhere in John, such as numerology or gematria” (p. 316).

⁵⁸ Loubser, *Oral*, 130–31, argues that Eugene Botha’s speech-act analysis of John 4 does not consider John’s media- texture. He finds that the narratorial comment in John 4:2 could have been included earlier in 3:22–26, but a media awareness of the nature of composition from oral performances will understand this *aporia* as an “interjection” inserted into the narrative as a continuous comment rather than inserting it earlier in the narrative context. The *aporia* in John 4:2 was “inserted” into the “continuous text as an interjection, exactly as it would have happened in an oral performance.” This is due to the confines of manuscript media technology which is expanded on by Eddy, “Orality,” 646–47, who finds that “ancient texts were written in a *scripta continua* fashion” which is “a flowing script ... reminiscent of oral speech itself ... lacking work breaks, punctuation” and case differentiation. The “literate reader” would “commit the essence of the text to memory” before performing/reading the written text. This shows that ancient texts were thus both spoken (oral) and heard (aural) phenomena.

the oral/literary composition processes and oral/aural performances of the Johannine gospel. Theon's *progymnasmata*, composed in the milieu in which John 21 was performed, indicates the pervasiveness of rhetorical composition in this period.⁵⁹ Without deciding if composers of John 21 utilized literary or oral composition processes, the media culture and rhetorical composition will be used to evaluate the function of *aporiae* in John 21.

The five proposed chapters begins with the problem and discussion of *aporiae* in literary disunity and narrative unity theories of composition. Chapter two will present the problem of literary *aporiae* in the context of theories of composition for John 21 and discuss literary disunity and narrative unity in the *relecture* (John 21:1–23) and *sphragis* (John 21:24–25). The media-rhetorical approach will then be outlined (chapter 3) and applied to literary *aporiae* in John 21 (chapter 4). Chapter five concludes the study by providing a summary of the main arguments and findings.

⁵⁹ Although it cannot be determined that composers of John were in any way acquainted with Theon's work, it is plausible to suggest that John 21 was composed in a period where audiences were aware of the rhetorical conventions utilized in first century CE Greco-Roman culture. It is important, however, to distance this study from attempts to identify a particular historical audience or Johannine community to whom the final form, and John 21 in particular, was addressed. The "audience" presupposed in this study is the generic audience who participated in the media conventions of John 21's compositional media culture.

2. Literary *Aporiae* and Narrative

Unity in John 21

In chapter one, it was considered that the approach used by a scholar to interpret John or use it in the task of historical reconstruction was linked to how they defined and utilized *aporiae* in the final text. In light of John 21, interpreters have sought to use literary disunity as evidence indicating the transmission processes in a proposed composition or community history. Rather than adopting an either/or approach to the question of literary disunity and narrative unity, contemporary interpreters of John have sought to appreciate the communication enacted by the final form as well as the plausible processes of composition that could explain the emergence of John 21 in its final form. It was also seen that a literary disunity theory could be understood within a narrative unity framework. This chapter will explore how *aporiae* function in both literary disunity and narrative unity perspectives on the final form of John. It will explore the older source, form, and redaction criticism models before addressing the role of manuscript evidence in the turn away from a literary disunity function of *aporiae* to a narrative unity and audience reception approach to John 21. The purpose is to provide a perspective of John 21 that can serve as a point of departure to assess the media-rhetorical function of literary *aporiae* in John 21.

2.1 Literary *Aporiae* and Composition History in Light of John 21

Not all scholars agree with the perspectives of source, form, and redaction criticism in how *aporiae* in the final form are used as a window into the situation behind the text. Such methods, utilizing *aporiae* as indicators of literary disunity, often reconstructed a composition history in terms of the Johannine community's historical experiences. In critique of these approaches to the interpretation of John's narrative, Reinhartz views the Johannine community

behind the text as being entirely a “scholarly construct.”⁶⁰ Literary *aporiae* by themselves are not sufficient evidence for a composition or community history model. As a perspective against which to undertake a media-rhetorical analysis, it should be asked if the function of *aporiae* in John 21 could be explained as a result of a multiple edition process of composition. This is because the Johannine *relecture* (John 21:1-23) presupposes a narrative unity stemming from the use of John 1-20 as a pretext for its composition, while the Johannine *sphragis* (John 21:24-25) points to literary activity. Before developing these insights in § 2.3, approaches using *aporiae* to reconstruct John’s composition history will be investigated first.

2.1.1 Literary Aporiae in the Puzzle of John’s Composition History

New Testament scholars have identified various interpretive turns throughout the modern and postmodern periods.⁶¹ The place of history in contemporary NT hermeneutics addresses the debate on the historical reliability of the narrative world presented in John as well as the historical processes surrounding the production and use of the narrative.⁶² While historical-critical scholarship remained doubtful over the historical reliability of John’s narrative,⁶³ final form literary critics developed scepticism toward reconstructing a detailed process of composition and community history from the literary *aporiae* in the final form as undertaken in historical-critical approaches.⁶⁴ The emphasis in these approaches centred on the relationship between the historicity of the events narrated by the gospel text⁶⁵ and the historicity of the worlds around the text, that is, the contexts of John’s production and reception.

⁶⁰ Adele Reinhartz, “Building Skyscrapers on Toothpicks: The Literary-Critical Challenge to Historical Criticism,” in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*. SBLRBS 55 (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 55–76, 70.

⁶¹ Craig G Bartholomew, “Introduction,” in *‘Behind’ the Text: History and Biblical Interpretation*. SHS 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 1–16, 3, tracks successive stages from the historical turn to the literary, postmodern, and theological turns and acknowledges that later shifts have not cancelled out earlier turns.

⁶² Iain W. Provan, “Knowing and Believing: Faith in the Past,” in *“Behind” the Text: History and Biblical Interpretation*. SHS 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 229–66, 229. Even if scholars identify literary and postmodern turns in historiography, Provan finds modern aspirations persisting through a notion of history as “facts that can be scientifically established and woven together to produce ‘the past’” and thereby becomes a “rule against which to measure particular stories about the past and to pronounce them uncertain or false.”

⁶³ D. Moody Smith, Postscript for *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, by J. Louis Martyn. NTL. 3d ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 19–23, 19–20.

⁶⁴ C. Stephen Evans, “The Historical Reliability of John’s Gospel: From What Perspective Should It Be Assessed?” in *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology*. ed. by R. Bauckham and C. Mosser (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 91–119, 91–92.

⁶⁵ John Ashton, “History and Theology in New Testament Studies,” in *The Nature of New Testament Theology: Essays in Honour of Robert Morgan*. ed. by C. Rowland and C. Tuckett (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 1–17, 1–7, finds that uses of “history” and “theology” in NT studies have contributed to confusion between what

Rather than engaging with historicity around the text, Barrett sought to answer the question of how the *final* form of John engages dialectically with its own perception of historicity through its *final* appropriation of inherited tradition.⁶⁶ In considering the Fourth Gospel as being both “historical and theological,”⁶⁷ he acknowledges the limitations of historical investigation when he describes the “art of ancient history” as “guessing plausibly how to fill up the gaps.”⁶⁸ This insight suggests that literary *aporiae* in the narrative of John cannot be extracted and used as indicators of historical processes of literary growth. Käsemann agrees with this suggestion as he finds it implausible to extract historical events from the final text due to John’s “historicizing mode of presentation.”⁶⁹ Access to John’s composition history from internal *aporiae* is more restricted than is often implied or indicated in critical approaches to the problem of literary *aporiae* in John 21. There could be another function and use for literary *aporiae* other than being used to solve John’s composition history, as recent methodological considerations have challenged approaches to ancient narratives like John that seek to uncover the history behind the text from perceived literary *aporiae* in the text.

Ashton addresses the distinction between history and theology by dismissing the “idea that it is possible to transport oneself back into the past as on a magic carpet.”⁷⁰ Despite this methodological position, he maintains that the socio-historical context of production and the genesis of John’s “strange ideas” are fundamental to understanding John’s narrative as it was formulated in particular socio-historical contexts. This implies that seeking to model the originating milieu in which John was composed and performed is a valid object of study, but it also means, however, that scholars will have to be cautious and self-critical about the scope

should be distinct contemporary disciplines of history and theology. He distinguishes two Johannine riddles based on the modern distinction between the historical and theological questions about the backgrounds and exegesis of John.

⁶⁶ Charles K. Barrett, *Essays on John* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 131. In comparing John to the synoptics, he finds that John occasionally “adapted traditional material to... another historical setting,” while more often abstracting “his material from particular settings to give it universal applicability.”

⁶⁷ Barrett, *Essays*, 116, defines “theological” as “human language about God” which is unambiguous until complicated by the inclusion of religious and mystical experiences into the notion of theological language. Barrett locates John in a later period of Christian development when there were opportunities for a “mystical apprehension of history.”

⁶⁸ Barrett, *Essays*, 117. It is also a different media period in the history of gospel-traditioning. Barrett shows how historical questions posed of the Johannine text raises theological issues. Käsemann is seen as an example of this interplay, but is critiqued for his simplistic view of Johannine authorship (p. 126–27). The relation of this presbyter and author of the Johannine gospel and epistles is seen to have a dialectical relationship to “tradition and testimony to Jesus.” Barrett’s main critique of Käsemann’s naïve docetism proposal is that the gospel of John reflects a “dialectical quality” (p. 130).

⁶⁹ Käsemann, *Testament*, 40.

⁷⁰ Ashton, “Theology,” 12–13. Ashton regards the fusion of horizons, or *Horizontverschmelzung*, as the main problem encountered within NT hermeneutics.

and extent to which their insights are themselves constructions adapted to their contemporary scholarly concerns and presuppositions.

The argument developed thus far suggests that historical-critical views on the function of literary *aporiae*⁷¹ in John are linked to the concern for historicity in modern NT scholarship. The methodology outlined in § 1.6 acknowledges the difficulty of accessing Johannine media culture, but nevertheless proposes to undertake such a task due to the argument that texts are participants in a larger communicative reality around the text, though this reality is not directly accessible even with the use of literary *aporiae*. In § 2.1.2 it will be outlined how an appropriate media-awareness, coupled with its consequent methodological constraints, was largely ignored in historical reconstructions based on the function of literary *aporiae* in source, form, and redaction criticism as applied to the Gospel of John. This exploration will lead into a discussion in § 2.2 on the role of orality studies in seeking contemporary solutions to older historical problems.

2.1.2 Literary Disunity and Composition History: The Function of *Aporiae* in Source, Form, and Redaction Criticism

While scholars often agree on John's literary disunity, competing reasons are given for John's literary seams in source, form, and redaction criticism. Among these approaches, which focus on John as a "purely literary document," Kysar identifies at least two major approaches to the problem of literary disunity in John.⁷² These solutions were centred on a reconstructed composition history. Theories were hardly in agreement since composition history explanations were conceived of differently in the "form and tradition" theories and the "source" and "developmental theories."⁷³ Circular arguments were used to produce community history models. These arguments depended heavily on the way the various methods identified and used *aporiae* in the final text. In light of chapter one, this study suggests that a literary function for John's *aporiae* was formulated according to modern assumptions about John's tradition history and the postulated historicity of Johannine community traditions about Jesus. The solutions to

⁷¹ On the function literary *aporiae* in Johannine scholarship see § 1.1.

⁷² Kysar, *Voyages*, 53–54. One of these approaches to John's literary *aporiae* is the structural-literary approach used by some to argue for "serious disarrangement," and by others for coherence in the present order. Other approaches either use literary *aporiae*, "along with additional evidence, as a basis from which to construct histories of the composition" of John, or seek to explain the "literary difficulties" as a result of John's extensive composition history.

⁷³ Kysar, *Voyages*, 58.

John's literary disunity posited in source, form, and redaction criticism of John reveals that a lack of attention to John's media texture is common in these approaches to the Gospel of John.

2.1.2.1 *Aporiae in Source-Critical Approaches to Literary Disunity*

Kysar distinguishes at least two variants of the source-critical approach to *aporiae* in John in relation to composition history theories. A source theory like Fortna's uses *aporiae* to "study the redactional work of the evangelist" so as to "construct a history of the Johannine tradition."⁷⁴ His source-criticism finds that John's "narratives and discourses stem from radically different origins ... and they reflect distinct periods in the development" of the text. Fortna's Johannine riddle centres on the combination of the "nearly contradictory modes of Jesus' activity" as reflected in John's narrated deeds and discourses of Jesus.⁷⁵ A weakness in Fortna's approach is his attempt to extrapolate the "mind and purpose" of the writer through contextual and stylistic *aporiae* internal to the text itself, constructed from his orality/literacy assumptions about John's *Vorlage*.⁷⁶ His use of literary *aporiae* to uncover the literary redaction of the pre-text enables him determine *how* and *why* the final form was composed.⁷⁷

Examples of Fortna's use of contextual and stylistic *aporiae* are seen throughout the final form of John, although his focus is only on the narratives in John. This is because he states that the "narratives and discourses stem from radically different origins," and that the narratives represent the older "pre-Johannine" layer in John.⁷⁸ Within the narratives, Fortna identifies stylistic *aporiae* as "stylistic confusion" where the "narrative has been invaded...by another (obviously redactional) hand...by a style very close to that of the discourses."⁷⁹ An example of a textual tension found by Fortna is in John 4:46-54, which narrates an account where Jesus

⁷⁴ Kysar, *Voyages*, 65.

⁷⁵ Robert T. Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 3.

⁷⁶ Contextual *aporiae* are those revealing seams within the narrative flow of the text, while stylistic *aporiae* reveal differences based on aspects of Greek style of the composition. These *aporiae* help Fortna to reconstruct a pre-Johannine text that serves as a basis for his redaction-critical approach to the interpretation of the final text. In John 21, Fortna argues that both types of *aporiae* are present, thereby strongly favouring a view that John 21 implies a later communicative situation.

⁷⁷ Fortna, *Narrative*, xi, finds that attention must be given to the text itself, "not simply to the author, real or implied, behind the text." He reconstructs a pre-text using redaction-criticism in light of his pre-Johannine narrative source. His approach thus regarded the function of *aporiae* in John to be indicators of the composition history of the text from some or other narrative or literary pre-text.

⁷⁸ Fortna, *Narrative*, 3.

⁷⁹ Fortna, *Narrative*, 4. He says the "intrusions" can be a word, phrase, or a verse or two that produces the "roughness and tensions."

heals an official's son. Here he finds that a "lofty Johannine voice," which sounds like the discourses, is inserted into the narrative in verse 48.⁸⁰ He resolves the inconsistencies he raises by stating that the final narrative came from more than one author, implying that redaction had taken place. He acknowledges, however, that the pre-Johannine sources have not survived and are therefore hypothetical reconstructions posited from the text itself and working backward from it.⁸¹ Yet, this admission of the difficulties of the approach he takes does not prevent him from confidently positing a pre-Johannine source based on *aporiae* in the final form that reveal Johannine insertions. Fortna's confidence comes from his assertion that the Johannine redactor had not sought to rewrite his source(s) completely, leading to the appearance of *aporiae*. If the redactor had completely rewritten his source(s), as he postulates for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, he could then have smoothed out the text so that it would not contain any apparent *aporiae*.⁸²

For an example of how Fortna uses *aporiae* to separate a pre-Johannine source from later redactional insertions, we can look at his analysis of John 1:1-34, which narrates the testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus. He finds verses 1-5 as completely redactional. Verse 6 is pre-Johannine, and in verse 7 he identifies the phrase "to testify to the light" as redactional, along with verses 8 to 18. In verse 19, the phrase "the Jews from Jerusalem sent" is redactional, while in verse 20 "he did not deny but confessed" is redactional. In verse 22 "So that we can give an answer to those who sent us" is redactional, as are verses 24 to 25. In verse 26, the phrases "John answered them and said" and "one you do not know" are redactional, as well as verse 28. In verse 29, the phrases "the next day" and "who takes away the sin of the world" are redactional, as well as verse 30. In verse 31, the phrases "and I did not know him" and "baptizing with water" are redactional, as well the phrases "and John testified saying" and "and it remained" in verse 32. Finally, in verse 33, "and I did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water, he himself said to me, 'The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain on him'" is redactional.⁸³

⁸⁰ Fortna, *Narrative*, 4-5. He raises questions on verse 48 based on the official not asking for a sign in order to believe, yet Jesus responds by stating that unless the people see signs they will not believe. Also, Fortna questions the logic of the narrator using the conjunction *oun* (therefore) and why Jesus is using a second-person plural to address the official. Most of all, he finds it puzzling that Jesus still performed the sign despite treating it polemically.

⁸¹ Fortna, *Narrative*, 6.

⁸² Fortna, *Narrative*, 7, states, "aporias ... are the points of contact ... between source and redaction" where the "Evangelist as redactor comments on a source, supplements it, corrects it" yet "does not obliterate it."

⁸³ Fortna, *Narrative*, 21-22.

Fortna engages in source criticism for the purpose of uncovering the meaning of the pre-Johannine text as well as the redactional Johannine text based on how the pretext was altered. He argues that the motivation for these redactions of the pre-Johannine source served as an “anti-Baptist corrective” against the followers of John the Baptist, who were contemporary to the Johannine community.⁸⁴ Also, he finds that the pre-Johannine source narrated John’s testimony “in response to eager questioning,” while the redactional text became a “courageous confession in the context of an official accusation.”⁸⁵ The mention of the Pharisees (1:24) is seen in light of Johannine interrogation, as it was historically unlikely that the priests and Levites (1:19) were chosen from among the Pharisees.⁸⁶

Another approach to the sources behind the final form can be found in Brown’s developmental theory of Johannine gospel traditioning. This approach shows a scholarly concern for the historicity surrounding the text’s composition and community history that derived from the eyewitness testimony of the Beloved Disciple.⁸⁷ He suggested a first stage originating in the life of the historical Jesus where “memories of his words and deeds supplied the raw ‘Jesus material.’”⁸⁸ For Brown, much of the early transmission of Jesus tradition was oral, but “written forms” of the oral traditions and communications may have emerged toward the end of stage two.⁸⁹ In stage three, Brown distinguishes the “evangelist,” who is the main composer of the existing material in the final form, from the “redactor,” who is “another writer” making additions after the evangelist’s textual composition.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Fortna, *Narrative*, 23.

⁸⁵ Fortna, *Narrative*, 24. In the redacted version, the religious establishment has already positioned itself against John in the same way it will do against Jesus (John 1:19, 24). In verse 25, John the Baptist is challenged to both justify himself and his activity of being a baptizer, which is not found in any of the other gospel traditions.

⁸⁶ Fortna, *Narrative*, 31.

⁸⁷ Brown, *Introduction*, 64, simplified his position from a five-stage model of “moments of origin and development” to a three-stage model as he admits that the “full details” of John’s “prehistory are far too complicated to reconstruct. The three stages roughly cohere to the periods given by Anderson (see note 13).

⁸⁸ Brown, *Introduction*, 65, finds the Beloved Disciple as the eyewitness and a Judean follower of Jesus, thus having a different memory of Jesus than his Galilean disciples. It is therefore interesting as to the function of this Beloved Disciple, if a historical figure having Judean origins, being incorporated into the John 21 scene which is set in Galilee and in a context where the followers of Jesus return to their former ways of life.

⁸⁹ Brown, *Introduction*, 77. In this second stage of composition history, particular gospel traditions took shape around particular communities, each with their own history (p. 66).

⁹⁰ Brown, *Introduction*, 78. He is careful to nuance his perspective on the continuity between the redactor and the evangelist so as to differentiate this from the ecclesiastical redactor posited by Rudolf Bultmann. For a contemporary view on the ecclesiastical redactor see Stibbe, *Magnificent*, 162–63, who argues that the “breaking of form is part of the strategy” and could even be “an artful literary device” used in Johannine processes of composition. Stibbe also finds that the broken narrative indicates the “ambiguities and fissures” of life experienced in the contemporary communication system being addressed by the narrator while also including “epiphanies of unbrokenness” in the commands to love (John 13:35; 15:12) and the “unbroken bread, unbroken tunics, unbroken

Although Brown postulates a multiple edition theory where the evangelist himself have edited earlier forms “to meet new problems” as a plausible explanation for John’s literary *aporiae*, he suggests that a multiple edition theory alone, without positing a later redactor, is insufficient for understanding John’s composition history and the literary disunity between John 1–20 and 21.⁹¹ The possibility that the composer or redactor of John 21 preserved material from stage two not included in John 1–20 in John 21 is suggested by Brown.⁹² This point suggests that John 21 may have been composed as a *relecture* of John 1–20. Unlike the model of *relecture* introduced in § 1.4, Brown’s model finds a link between *aporiae* in John 21 and the historicity of eyewitness traditions contained therein. Unlike the emphasis in source theories on privileging John’s literary prehistory, the present research endeavours to analyse the communication situation addressed by, and enacted by, the final form and placement of John 21.

2.1.2.2 *Aporiae in Form-Critical Approaches to Literary Disunity*

While Kysar questions the benefit of a Johannine gospel composition history founded upon literary *aporiae*, Ashton’s form-critical approach identifies literary *aporiae* by indications of “literary or contextual roughness” in the text.⁹³ Examples of this are seen in the narrative transitions and style of Greek used. Form-criticism argues that small units of tradition circulated independently and only later came to serve specific functions in the *Sitz im Leben*⁹⁴ of the early church. It is clear that form-critical approaches provide theories of tradition behind the text, though often more inclined towards oral forms than the literary focus of Fortna. In relation to the input of composers of John, form-critical scholars often assumed that they only constructed a narrative framework in which to place the independent units of Johannine

legs, and unbroken nets” (John 6:1–14; 19:24; 19:36; 21:11). One may even include unbroken scripture (John 19:36–37) in the communicative theme of unbrokenness or unity in the audiences being addressed.

⁹¹ Brown, *Introduction*, 82. He finds continuity between the evangelist and the redactor.

⁹² Brown, *Introduction*, 82–83, finds the “awkwardness of an intrusive passage in the sequence of” the final form and *aporiae* of duplicate “material found elsewhere” in John as the primary reasons for assuming a different hand at play in the final form than that of the evangelist alone as suggested in a multiple edition theory.

⁹³ Ashton, *Understanding*, 22.

⁹⁴ Kysar, *Voyages*, 99, says that “efforts to resolve the history of composition along with the analysis of the *Sitz im Leben* of the Fourth Gospel” raises the “question of the history of that community responsible for that document. The proposal for a Johannine school rather than a community may prove useful in seeking to analyse the rhetorical composition available to the composers of John. Culpepper’s model thus gives a historicity explanation for the Beloved Disciple as a figure of the past “held in reverence” for founding the school. In §1.5, it was put that Culpepper focuses on the audience receiving the traditions produced by the Johannine school rather than on the history of the community behind the final form, in its composition history.

community tradition.⁹⁵ This view of the role of ancient composers of texts such as John may lead scholars to expect that literary *aporiae* provides clues to matters of historicity behind the text.

A major flaw in modern form-critical paradigms was the sharp distinction assumed between orality and textuality in the environment in which John was produced and used. Form-critical principles persisting in NT interpretation also assumed that gospel traditions reflect the life setting of the Jesus-communities rather than the historical Jesus.⁹⁶ The form-critical approach sought to use criteria of literary expansion of traditional literary forms as a clue to the situation of the Johannine community history and therefore to composition history of the text. This also due to the form-critical assumption that the text reveals more about the contemporary situation of John's community than the life and times of the historical Jesus. This also reinforces the gap between history and theology as scholars have regarded the Gospel of John as the most theological, as opposed to historical, canonical gospel.⁹⁷ This assumption also leads scholars to expect a lot of results from the internal evidence provided by the form-critical conception of literary *aporiae*.

2.1.2.3 Aporiae in Redaction-Critical Approaches to Literary Disunity

While form criticism facilitated an early awareness of the oral nature of the material contained within the final text,⁹⁸ Combrink finds redaction criticism to be both a “development from form criticism” and a “reaction against it.”⁹⁹ One scholar who followed this approach in Johannine scholarship is Schnelle. In his approach to the problem of anti-docetic Christology in John, Schnelle rejects the notion of a sign source in his attempt to uncover the redactional logic embedded in the final form of John.¹⁰⁰ He also rejects the use of literary *aporiae* as used

⁹⁵ Bernard Combrink, “Redaction Criticism,” in *Focusing on the Message: New Testament Hermeneutics, Exegesis, and Methods*, ed. by Andrie du Toit (Pretoria: Protea, 2009), 341–80, 348–49. This would lead one to expect a lot of *aporiae*.

⁹⁶ James D.G. Dunn, *The Living Word*. 2d ed (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 22. This is according to Bultmann's distinction between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith.

⁹⁷ Käsemann, *Testament*, 26, claims that John's “Christology of glory” betrays a “naïve docetism” which intensified in the generation subsequent to the naively docetic community initially receiving the final text.

⁹⁸ Dunn, *Living*, 26, finds that form-criticism allows an awareness of a “period of oral tradition” as used prior to its emergence in textual forms.

⁹⁹ Combrink, “Redaction,” 347, defines form criticism as “the study of the different forms of the gospel tradition and its relationship to the life situations in the early church during the oral period of the tradition.”

¹⁰⁰ Udo Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology in the Gospel of John: An Investigation of the Place of the Fourth Gospel in the Johannine School*, trans. by Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 37. His

in theories depending on literary source-critical reconstructions. Schnelle's redaction criticism does not utilize literary *aporiae* as windows into pre-textual sources and stages of community development even though he accepts that John had a composition history indicated especially by John 21.¹⁰¹ In his approach, discussed below, he observes that John 21 reveals a later compositional period in relation to the rest of John. His view on John 21 reveals difficulties hinting at the *relecture* process of composition for John 21 in relation to John 1–20.

Schnelle finds that John 21:25 was composed in reference to 20:30, since ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ indicates that John 20:30–31 “is a consciously formulated conclusion” composed without reference or knowledge of John 21.¹⁰² An indicator of literary disunity is that the Galilee appearance narrative (John 21) seems to ignore earlier appearance narratives (John 20:19–29),¹⁰³ but the process of *relecture* is affirmed in John 21:14 which presupposes the appearances in 20:19–23 and 20:24–29.¹⁰⁴ These observations indicate that *relecture* and redaction criticism both seek to model the process of composition producing the final text and the communication situation addressed by it. In relation to the possible communication situation addressed in John 21, Schnelle argues that John 21 re-characterizes the relationship between Peter and the Beloved Disciple. For Schnelle, the Beloved Disciple comes to prominence in John 19:25–27 and 19:34–35, yet Peter is affirmed in John 21:15–17 as having

view that John should “not be regarded as an archaeological dig” suggests that literary *aporiae* can not be used as windows into a composition history behind the final text, since the final text is the “conscious and deliberate literary and theological work of an outstanding early Christian theologian” (p. 37).

¹⁰¹ Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 37–38. He describes redaction criticism as focusing on the “last stage of the tradition, the editing by the final redactor of the individual periscopes and their integration into a complete theological conception.” He also suggests the notion of a Johannine school as central to his redaction-critical approach (p. 40). Schnelle considers the literature of the Johannine school to be the Gospel and Letters of John, which show theological unity, common linguistic features, and is “clearly attested” in John 21:24b (p. 42). The first person plural in John 21:24 is not to be regarded “as an editorial ‘we’ but as a plural *communicis*.”

¹⁰² Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 13–14. To remove the appearance of the *aporiae* indicating the later interpolation of John 21, the composers of John 21 could have removed 20:30–31 or added 21:24–25 before 20:30–31 to have a smoother transition. He rejects features of language and style as evidence for what he calls the “secondary character of John 21,” but accepts arguments based on the narrative context and content.

¹⁰³ Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 14. This return of the disciples to their former tasks as fishermen in Galilee is surprising considering that the “redactional verse 20:29 utterly excludes any further appearance, rendering the appearances in John 21 to “seem out of place.”

¹⁰⁴ Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 14–15, finds the John 21 indicates “an intensified ecclesiological interest that has altered in character since chapter 1–20” as demonstrated in the “depiction of the beloved Disciple ... as a historical person whose death, which has just occurred, has caused confusion in the community based on the saying of Jesus in 21:22 which is then explained as ἐξῆλθεν οὖν οὗτος ὁ λόγος εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὅτι ὁ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνος οὐκ ἀποθνήσκει. οὐκ εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι οὐκ ἀποθνήσκει ἀλλ’· Ἐὰν αὐτὸν θέλω μένειν ἕως ἔρχομαι, τί πρὸς σέ; (John 21:23). Other indicators of the affinity between redaction criticism and *relecture* is the mention of οἱ τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου and the description of Ναθαναὴλ ὁ ἀπὸ Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, which only appears in 21:2, and the testimony of the Beloved Disciple in 21:24–25 which follows “seamlessly” from 21:1–23 while betraying the hand of a later editor.

a special status in the life of the “Johannine community.”¹⁰⁵ John 21 characterizes Peter as the central figure among the disciples (21:1–14), facilitating a juxtaposition Peter with the Beloved Disciple (21:20–22).¹⁰⁶

Another approach utilizing the insights of redaction criticism is Stibbe’s narrative-historical reading of John. He holds to the “Ecclesiastical Redactor” theory that there was not only a different editorial hand, but a discontinuity between the added material and the earlier material due to them being derived from different sources and compositional hands.¹⁰⁷ This position was accepted by Moloney in his account of John 21 as a *relecture* showing elements of continuity and discontinuity with the narrative communication of John 1–20.¹⁰⁸ Stibbe posits that the communication situation influencing the addition of John 21, which he assigns to the redactor primarily for the ending *aporiae* of John 20:30–31 and the different “Greek vocabulary” to the rest of John 1–20.¹⁰⁹ He regards the fishing trip (John 21:1–14) as making reference to the Beloved Disciple and Simon Peter in ways that reveal the communication situation addressed by the composer of John 21. In John 21:11, the emphasis is not on the symbolic interpretation of the number of fish caught, but on the surprise that the net did not break. It suggests that the “apparent issue of brokenness in the relationship between Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple” possibly had an “ecclesiological significance ... for unbroken Christian community.”¹¹⁰ If this is analysed in light of the audience expectations of the time,

¹⁰⁵ Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 15–16. This is because in John 1–20, Peter had no particular importance among other named disciples while the “special relationship of the beloved Disciple to Jesus is repeatedly emphasized.”

¹⁰⁶ Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 20–21, finds that the threefold question and answer dialogue between Peter and Jesus in 21:15–17 refers to Peter’s promise to follow Jesus (13:36–38) and his threefold denial (18:15–18, 25–27). For him. The communicative purpose is to “rehabilitate” Peter’s character in light of John 1–20.

¹⁰⁷ Stibbe, *Magnificent*, 155. While his reading of John may focus on the narrative itself in its historical communication situation, his use of composition history shows a link with assumptions in Johannine redaction criticism. For him, John “was the product of a lengthy process of composition” derived from an eyewitness stage (30–50 CE) and a first edition stage where the process of composition required the evangelist to compile the “historically reliable ... material from the Beloved Disciple” into a coherent narrative between 50 and 70 CE (p. 153). A final stage of composition occurred between 70 and 85 CE, where the “key figure ... referred to as the Ecclesiastical Redactor ... added material that came from the Evangelist but was not used in the earlier edition ... and also used material that did not derive from the Fourth Evangelist (p. 154). He regards the prologue (John 1:1–18), the temple cleansing story as being relocated to John 2, the insertion of the discourse material in John 15–17, and the addition of John 21 as work of this redactor-composer. These additions risked “disturbing the ‘narrative unity’” of John (p. 155).

¹⁰⁸ See § 1.4 and note 21.

¹⁰⁹ Stibbe, *Magnificent*, 155.

¹¹⁰ Stibbe, *Magnificent*, 156–57. The communication enacted by the redactor, as reflected especially in John 21, was to emphasise the “theme of ‘unbrokenness.’” This theme is also found in another passage regarded as a later addition. John 19:31–37 describes the veracity of the eyewitness testimony and a reason as to why the legs of Jesus were not broken as required by the practice known as *crurifragium* (p. 158).

then the communication situation addressed by the final form may reveal that John 21 was composed in a developing media culture for a later communications system.

The insights of Schnelle and Stibbe are worth exploring for their affinity to the composition criticism model for John 21 understood as the Johannine *relecture* process. There still remains a possibility that John 21 was composed at the same time as most of John 1–20, but this research regards John 21 as addressing a later communication situation. This allows the present analysis to utilize the composition process posited in the *relecture* model as a dialogue partner,¹¹¹ but Goodacre cautions against the “danger in the way that redaction criticism works in concert with source criticism.”¹¹² If the sources used to compose John were both of an oral and textual nature,¹¹³ then it is nearly impossible for scholars to reconstruct a detailed composition history from ‘literary’ *aporiae* internal to the text if no textual artefacts are discovered and used as external evidence to support the source theory. To overcome such difficulties, newer critical approaches, nuanced by a focus on the audience and final form, have begun to consider that ancient composers of narratives such as the Gospel of John were likely to have composed their works while envisioning the oral performances and aural receptions thereof.¹¹⁴ This newer perspective suggests a dynamic relationship between orality and literacy in the ancient Greco-Roman milieu in which John produced and transmitted.

It is important to explore the orality/textuality debate as it relates to the process of composition and communication in the period when John 21 was composed to be read and performed and as an epilogue for the final form. For this reason, a critique against the traditional source, form, and redaction criticism perspectives on the function of *aporiae* in John is suggested in light of the media environment in which ancient texts were used. The issue concerning this research is the function of the *aporiae* in John 21 when conceived in relation to the communication enacted by oral performances of John 21 for ancient audiences in the Greco-Roman milieu near the end of the first century CE. Before attending to the turn toward

¹¹¹ Schnelle, *Antidocetic*, 25.

¹¹² Mark Goodacre, “Redaction Criticism,” *DJG* 767–71, 770,

¹¹³ Goodacre, “Redaction,” 770, argues that variations between final text and pre-texts are not *aporiae* indicating the “redactor’s particular interests.” In a context “in which there was a constant interaction between orality and literacy” requires that “models of analysis” should account for that dynamic interaction to avoid misconstruing the NT gospels as being “solely literary products.”

¹¹⁴ Nicholas Perrin, “Form Criticism,” *DJG* 288–294, 290, finds that modern form-criticism considers gospel traditions to have emerged in isolated units and transmitted in ways similar to folk traditions. Newer form-critical approaches have begun to move away from a focus on the “oral prehistories” of the Jesus tradition” toward a focus on how the composers “anticipated ... the future reception of their works” by various audiences. The concept of *Sitz im Leben* is now applied to the context and its audiences which a later or final redactor sought to rhetorically engage (p. 293).

the audience and narrative unity in the final form in § 2.3, the function of oral media culture on the text-critical argument against the view that John 21 was composed for a later communicative situation from an earlier edition of John 1–20 will be explored as a basis for the media-rhetorical approach to the problem of literary *aporiae* in John 21.

2.2 Orality and Textuality in Transmission History of John’s Initial Text

Having considered the perspective of orality adopted for the transmission and shaping of John’s literary forms in form criticism prior to the literary turn,¹¹⁵ redaction criticism also provided scholarly tools for the *literary* redaction of *literary* sources. Scholars utilizing newer orality/literacy models such as Eddy sought to bridge the gap in how ancient oral and literary *media* and *modes* of communication are conceived in NT gospel scholarship.¹¹⁶ Another tool used in NT interpretation distinguished from source, form, and redaction criticism is textual criticism.¹¹⁷ Reconstructions for source, form, and redaction criticism remain hypothetical to scholars who argue that text-critical manuscript evidence points away from literary disunity explanations for John’s *aporiae* and toward narrative unity in the final form. This is argued as such since no extant manuscript is known to circulate without John 21.¹¹⁸ It is important to assess how text-critical perspectives relate John 21 to literary disunity theories of composition and to explore how text-critical goals engage with the oral and literary properties of manuscript media in John 21’s compositional milieu.

¹¹⁵R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 235–36, finds the “the eclipse of biblical narrative” places a distinction between empirical narratives, read as literal truth by the “standards of a positivistic historiography,” and fictional narratives.

¹¹⁶ See § 1.2 and note 15.

¹¹⁷ Gert (Jorrie) Jordaan, “Textual Criticism as Basis for New Testament Exegesis,” in *Focusing on the Message: New Testament Hermeneutics, Exegesis and Methods*, ed. by Andrie du Toit (Pretoria: Protea, 2009), 173–215, 175, notes the description of source, form, and redaction criticism as higher criticism, belonging to the “diachronic approach to texts,” and textual criticism as lower criticism which “forms part of the synchronic approach to texts.”

¹¹⁸ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 623. They affirm that “John originally intended his Gospel to end with 20:30–31,” but argue on the basis extant manuscript evidence that John “was never circulated independently of Chapter 21.” They also regard John 21 as an epilogue to the rest of John, “added at the end to supplement the body of the text” thus balancing “with the prologue.”

2.2.1 John 21 and Literary *Aporiae* in the Manuscript Witnesses

Many studies seek to reconstruct the earliest text of John based on text-critical criteria and extant manuscript witnesses. The earliest text of John is P⁵² which contains John 18:31–33 and 18:37–38 and is dated between 125–175 CE. This papyrological evidence is often cited in studies seeking to date John to around 100 CE.¹¹⁹ Despite issues around dating which are frequently linked to a concern for the historicity implied in John’s narrative about Jesus, this evidence is still an early witness to John’s text. This is despite textual variation,¹²⁰ which is evident by 200 CE, since agreements between P⁷⁵ and P⁶⁶ yields strong evidence¹²¹ for the textual contents of John.

An important issue in the manuscript evidence for John’s earliest attainable text, or its “initial text,” is whether the present form of John is the earliest attainable text or if there are other forms of the text that could be earlier editions, though lacking in the extant witnesses for reasons such as falling out of use, being destroyed, or being undiscovered.¹²² These difficulties, linked to concerns for John’s composition history, indicate the limitations of using *aporiae* as seams through which to reconstruct the earliest pre-texts, sources, and autographs. The issue for this study is that text-critical principles were often developed from modern notions of the media culture and the role of texts in its ancient context.

In the turn to ancient rhetorical composition in NT studies, scholars began focusing not only on the literary forms of rhetoric that survive in extant texts and handbooks, but also on the

¹¹⁹ Brent Nongbri, “The Use and Abuse of P⁵²: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel,” *HTR* 1 (2005), 23–48, 24, argues that this evidence be reconsidered in light of methodological difficulties inherent in papyrology and textual criticism.

¹²⁰ David C. Parker, “Is ‘Living Text’ Compatible with ‘Initial Text’? Editing the Gospel of John,” in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research*, SBLTCS 8. ed. by Klaus Wachtel & Michael W. Holmes (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 13–22, 19, regards the object of the “Coherence-Based Genealogical Method” to point to the period of textual transmission in front of, rather than behind the final form. The initial text that this method seeks to establish is a text based on a reconstruction from extant textual traditions with “a period of transmission extending over ... at least a century.” The initial text established by this text-critical method will yield a text that “will already show signs of what its readers rather than its author thought it should contain” (p. 20).

¹²¹ R. Alan Culpepper, “An Introduction to the Johannine Writings,” in *The Johannine Literature: With an Introduction by R. Alan Culpepper* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 16. Other important early papyri containing fragments of the text are P⁷⁵, agreeing closely with Vaticanus and P⁶⁶ as the earliest text of the canonical gospels around 200 CE being between Vaticanus and Sinaiticus.

¹²² Parker, “Editing,” 18, points to the codicological issue of the technological development of a “multi-quire codex” in light of evidence that P⁴⁵ was arranged in the “rare format of single-leaf quires.” Parker also asks about the ways in which the four gospels were “standardized” and if the “initial text” is “a form of the collected Gospels.” This increases the likelihood of “finding forms of the text in the surviving witnesses that are not descended from the initial text.”

aspect of rhetorical performances of composed texts and/or speeches. In relation to John, certain reader-performers were tasked with orally communicating the Johannine gospel tradition for Greco-Roman audiences in the late first century CE in Asia Minor.¹²³ We have pointed out in chapter one that Loubser argues for this point. Even in the Greco-Roman context of Asia Minor in which John was composed and published, language diversity was present despite the widespread use of *koine* Greek.¹²⁴ It is not only the textual evidence from manuscript witnesses, but also the understanding of how orality and literacy interface in John 21's composition period that requires consideration in the present attempt to analyse the *media-rhetorical* function of *literary aporiae* in John 21.

2.2.2 Models of Orality and Literacy for Understanding the Transmission Process 'behind' the Final Text

Textual criticism has many benefits for the understanding of John. The usefulness of its focus on the manuscripts used to transmit the Gospel of John reveals the technology of manuscript media technologies to be addressed in § 3.2.1. The present debate on the oral composition process is situated within "application of interdisciplinary orality studies" to the early "oral and written" gospel traditions.¹²⁵ The gospel traditions were transmitted in a period of when orality and textuality mutually influenced each other in ways specific to John's ancient media culture. This oral\textual interplay¹²⁶ was applied to the period of transmission prior to

¹²³ Myers, *Characterizing*, 26, examines Greco-Roman audience expectations concerning the composition of narratives, especially of narrative containing historical tradition, to determine the rhetorical "persuasiveness" of John's characterization and use of a "reliable narrator" that allows "a fuller presentation of the facts."

¹²⁴ Claude Brixhe, "Linguistic Diversity in Asia Minor during the Empire: *Koine* and Non-Greek Languages," in *A Companion to the Ancient Greek Language*, ed. by Egbert J. Bakker (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 228–52, 246, finds a bilingualism in major urban centres of Asia Minor while positing a non-Greek monolingualism for rural regions. He suggests that a "diversification" of *Koine* (p. 247) was brought about by the "cohabitation of Greek with the indigenous languages" (p. 246) and was evident in spoken language. He attended to the eastern regions of the empire, where Latin was "at least partially" used for administrative purposes and "almost exclusively" for military purposes (p. 248). He acknowledges that his suggestion may be "imprecise and incomplete" due to the realization that "we have no access ... to the speech of those who had no access to writing" (p. 251).

¹²⁵ Eddy, "Orality," 641.

¹²⁶ Dunn, *Living*, 26–27, finds that form-criticism made scholars aware of the "period of oral tradition" behind the written gospels and the way the tradition could have been used prior to being written. Oral communities, such as the earliest Jesus communities, "sought to retain and express their founding traditions" which were those traditions explaining their "separate and distinctive existence." This means that there are differences in the traditions of gospel-writing communities, as these communities do "not only retain these traditions, but retell them...and create opportunities to rehearse and celebrate their sacred tradition." Dunn finds this especially true for the passion narratives, but this also opens the question to the role of the final form of John, as a two-fold apocalyptic drama, being a close parallel to a Greco-Roman dramas suggested by Brandt.

the hermeneutical turn toward the final literary form.¹²⁷ Although the oral features of John could be used to understand the function of *aporiae* in John 21,¹²⁸ problems persist in applying orality theory to the interpretation of written gospels especially in the area of how textual criticism utilizes orality theory in its methodological goals.

The problem for *relecture* is that manuscript evidence goes against compositional theories for literary disunity, even if there is at least narrative unity, between John 1–20 and John 21. Arguments that are made for identifying compositional *aporiae* in John 21¹²⁹ can be seen in traditional criteria or “canons” of textual criticism.¹³⁰ One major *aporia* in John’s textual witness is in John 7:53-8:11 as it is not contained in the earliest manuscripts. Epp defines *external criteria* as “those appealing to the nature of” manuscripts “and to historical factors in the transmission process” and *internal criteria* as “those appealing to scribal habits, contexts of passages, and the author’s style, language, and thought.”¹³¹ Regarding John, difficulties that require attention include the external evidence of manuscript witnesses and the initial text, as well as the nature of orality and textuality in the transmission process both behind and in front of the final text. Furthermore, these “canons,” which reflect “probabilities” in the

¹²⁷ Dunn, *Living*, 27–28. For example, traditions used by Mark continued to circulate as oral traditions in the eastern Mediterranean after the production of the written form. If Matthew and Luke had copies of Mark, they would have had access to the oral traditions around the gospel of Mark even before receiving copies of the text. Mark itself is considered as “oral tradition written down,” implying that it was written to be read out “as an extended oral presentation of the traditions of Jesus.” The canonical gospel traditions reveal a usage in oral environments where there was a “concern among the first Christians” to celebrate and retain their memories of Jesus “in appropriate forms, to structure their traditions for easy recall, but above all to remember.”

¹²⁸ Eddy, “Orality,” 646–47.

¹²⁹ Eldon Jay Epp, “Traditional ‘Canons’ of New Testament Textual Criticism: Their Value, Validity, and Viability-or Lack Thereof,” in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research*, SBLTCS 8, ed. by Klaus Wachtel and Michael W. Holmes (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 79–127. 96. Internal criteria such as whether or not a variant is the “harder reading, or is in conformity with the author’s style and theology ... or if it lacks conformity to ... other items in the immediate context ... liturgical forms, or other theological or ideological contexts of the scribe’s time,” were common in arguments used by Johannine scholars seeking to reconstruct pre-textual sources to explain literary disunity in John. There is a preference for the “harder” or “more difficult reading” as scribes often smooth out difficulties rather than create them if indeed they are not obvious “scribal errors” or “nonsense readings” (p. 105). At times, scribes may shorten readings due to parablepsis, in which case a longer reading is preferable (p. 106), and at other times they may expand the text “through interpretation, harmonization, and grammatical or stylistic improvement, in which case the shorter reading is preferable.” These criteria indicate, in the case of John, that distinguishing the Johannine author from a pre-Johannine author is implausible in light of difficulties confronting text-critics focusing on the manuscript transmission of the final text.

¹³⁰ Epp, “Traditional,” 88, describes these criteria as “guidelines for determining which textual variants preceded others in a single variation unit.” The “preeminent” criterion is the “Local Genealogical Priority” which considers that a variant within a variation unit is more likely to be the “earliest attainable text” if it is “able to account for the origin, development, or presence of all other readings in its variation-unit” (p. 93).

¹³¹ Eldon Jay Epp, “Textual Criticism (NT),” *ABD* 412–35, 431.

goal to determine the earliest attainable text, have themselves been under review in light of their object of focus in front of, rather than behind, the text.¹³²

Variants in front of the text emerged as a result of the process of “interpreting and reinterpreting the literature for different audiences and for varying purposes.”¹³³ It shows that textual criticism reaches only as far back as the earliest text, which in John’s case is argued to sometimes include John 21 with John 1–20.¹³⁴ A further problem with this text-critical argument is that it ignores the dynamics of orality and literacy in John’s milieu. The orality problem can be used as a means to overcome the text-critical argument used by final form literary and narrative critics against the possibility that John 21 was composed in reference to John 1-20 for a later communication situation and system as posited in the *relecture* model of composition. This point will be examined in § 2.2.3. Before undertaking this argument, it is important to consider the limitations of traditional orality models where a dichotomy between oral and textual communications was the dominant model of orality in the gospel traditions.

Loubser’s critique considers that older orality models presupposed a “misleading” break between oral and literary communication.¹³⁵ The earlier work of classical scholars, anthropologists, and linguists pursued the orality/literacy debate along the lines of “distinguishing oral and written modes of communication,” resulting in the dichotomy between textuality and orality.¹³⁶ Kelber, who moved away from an earlier adoption of the dichotomy, asserts that ancient media involves “oral-scribal” interactions and suggests that scribality was

¹³² Epp, “Traditional,” 125, traces various criteria used to establish the initial text and describes these criteria as “probabilities.” The application of internal and external criteria calls for the textual scholars to “utilize their ‘art’ more than their ‘science.’” He also finds a distinction between the concept of an original or earliest text and secondary readings which are deviations from the “earliest attainable text” to be an unnecessary dichotomy as he considers “all meaningful variants as equals” while the variant used in the critical text is then the ““first among equals”” (p. 126).

¹³³ Epp, “Traditional,” 126, considers that performances of the manuscript, such as reading it and copying it, involved a “dynamic meaning-making process.” he incorporates the “meaningful variants that spring forth from the earliest text ... offering enriching insights into the thought, values, and practices in the various Christianities that employed and transmitted the manuscripts containing their writings.”

¹³⁴ Nigel T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (London: SPCK, 2003), 663, in his analysis of John’s resurrection-appearance narratives views John as a unified literary text based on internal coherence and external manuscript evidence. He finds that chapter 21, never circulated in a manuscript apart from chapter 20, but Francis Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 403–4 n.109, highlights the relatively late evidence for the secondary nature of John 21 in a fourth century CE manuscript of *MS.Copt.e. 150 (P)*. In it, John 21 is missing and he suggests the scribe may have used an earlier, or pre-publication, exemplar of John lacking chapter 21.

¹³⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 52–53. He also finds a problem in reception and reader-response criticism is the “mistake of confusing the recipient of the biblical message with the literary ‘reader’ of modern texts.” Literary methods should therefore foster a historical awareness of the difference between communicative codes in literary, as opposed to oral-aural, cultures and media contexts.

¹³⁶ Eddy, “Orality,” 643.

used to establish Roman imperial identity, since oral communication “is generally more impervious to public control than the scribal medium.”¹³⁷ Scholars realised that an oppositional relationship had to be reconsidered in light of research into contemporary oral cultures, which now serves as the “basis from which to reimagine the early oral Jesus tradition” from the vantage point of a modern academic media culture.¹³⁸

To overcome the “great divide” between literary and oral media and registers posited in earlier models of oral tradition,¹³⁹ Eddy affirms that they can “influence and interface with each other in a variety of ways and degrees.” Furthermore, his assertion that “medium and register ... are independent phenomena”¹⁴⁰ alludes to the possibility that a literary medium can actually convey aspects of oral registers. It is therefore worthwhile to examine how orality interfaces with text-critical evidence against viewing John 21 as composed from a rereading of John 1–20 and added as an epilogue after the initial conclusion (John 20:30–31). It is also important to apply the orality/textuality relationship to the text-critical argument for the initial text circulating with John 21. The problem lies in the understanding of the initial text in relation to oral and literary transmission processes in John’s milieu.

2.2.3 Initial Text and Composition History in Light of Oral-Aural Media Culture

Textual criticism is “one of the oldest scientific methods for study of the media aspect” of the NT manuscripts, but traditional views had not adequately accounted for the nature of NT texts as “auditive documents.”¹⁴¹ Variant readings can emerge in the transmission process both behind and in front of the initial text when reconstructed by the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method. In this regard, Parker finds that textual critics should not only treat the manuscript tradition in terms of its “written tradition,” but also in terms of the “oral forms of the text.”¹⁴² This means that the text-critical evidence often used to argue against the possibility that John 21 was composed as a rereading of an earlier edition of John containing John 1–20 can be

¹³⁷ Werner H Kelber, ‘Roman Imperialism and Early Christian Scribality’, in *Orality, Literacy, and Colonialism in Antiquity*. SBLSS 47 (Atlanta: SBL, 2004), 135–53, 136. He finds that early Christian identity construction and formation was facilitated by the “appropriation” of “scribal communication.” The scribal medium had to negotiate its characterization of Jesus “in view of Roman imperialism” (p. 137).

¹³⁸ Eddy, “Orality,” 643. One model known as the *oral formulaic* theory, initially developed to explain Homeric epics, asserts that “performers of song-based oral tradition do not strictly memorize their compositions prior to performance,” but “re-create the composition anew with each successive performance.”

¹³⁹ On literary and oral *registers* and *modes* of communication see § 1.5 note 33 and § 1.6 note 79.

¹⁴⁰ Eddy, “Orality,” 641.

¹⁴¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 52.

¹⁴² Parker, “Editing,” 20–21.

misleading. This is because the initial text from which the form of John as we have it today was derived may not be the earliest or only published edition of John. Recognising that the extant manuscripts circulating with John 21 is only an *initial text* from which our extant texts with John 21 was derived opens up the possibility that John 21 was composed after an earlier edition of John containing chapter 1–20 so that the final form as we have it now represents a “written record of a process of regular performance over several decades.”¹⁴³ This then points to an oral media function for John 21’s literary *aporiae*.

Eddy considers that contemporary orality studies hold important ramifications for traditional NT gospel text-criticism by better appreciating the dynamics of the ancient “orally dominant milieu” in which the NT gospels were first composed and transmitted.¹⁴⁴ An objection to theories of composition or literary prehistory is made on account that major literary *aporiae* such as John 21 are not supported in the physical evidence provided by extant manuscript witnesses. Parker highlights methodological problems in attempts to construct an initial text for the Gospel of John without accounting for the role of orality in the textual history of John.¹⁴⁵

Parker uses a genealogical method to indicate that the “initial” text circulating with John 21 may only happen to be the text from which the extant witnesses are derived.¹⁴⁶ This argument requires scholars to reconsider the view that textual evidence can be used to explore the composition and transmission history *behind* the *initial* text from which other texts are genealogically derived. In the present study, the oral/literary interplay concerns the notion that *aporiae* in John 21 are a function of oral and literary processes composition. This study considers that John 21 points to a later communication situation when compared to John 1–20. This is despite a lack of manuscript evidence, as text-critical arguments against a *relecture* view of the composition process for John 21 should be reconsidered in light of the orality and textuality dynamics in the transmission process behind and in front of ancient compositions.

¹⁴³ Loubser, *Oral*, 127, also considers that John 20:30–31 shows an emphasis on textuality that became evident during the transition to a high manuscript culture, thus signalling a shift in the “communication patterns of the audience” (p. 128).

¹⁴⁴ Eddy, “Orality,” 648, posits that scribal “corruptions” are better conceived as scribal performances of the particular gospel traditions. Scribal performances are therefore within the “verbal parameters” of what was “orally performed” and “communally controlled” variants of that particular gospel text.

¹⁴⁵ Parker, “Editing,” 15.

¹⁴⁶ Parker, “Editing,” 15, finds textual variation in the NT Gospels as a process of interpretation of gospel tradition. This seems to be an extension of the gospel-writing process after undergoing a transition from an oral- to an intertextual- manuscript culture.

2.3 Narrative Unity and a Turn to the Final Text and Audience

The importance of textual criticism for evaluating the plausibility of reconstructing a composition history for John based on the literary *aporiae* in John 21 has been assessed in light of new theories of orality and textuality in John's compositional milieu. It seems reasonable to adopt the argument of some scholars that John has always circulated with John 21, favouring approaches focusing on the communication enacted by the final text rather than its composition history. Brown moved beyond a literary prehistory focus to assert the importance of interpreting the narrative unity across John "as it finally came down to us."¹⁴⁷ Culpepper's view of John as a multi-dimensional narrative¹⁴⁸ presenting Jesus as living in a particular historical context and bridges the relationship between history and theology that concerned the approaches to literary *aporiae* discussed in § 2.1.2.¹⁴⁹ The literary turn fostered a renewed appreciation for the narrative shape of John and the various levels of rhetorical communication occurring between characters in the narrative and between the implied narrator and the implied audience.¹⁵⁰ It is therefore important to consider the methodological impact of the view that John 21 indicates a composition history in relation to John 1–20 while appreciating the rhetorical communication enacted by the composition of John 21 and its place within the final form of John.

A major pitfall in the attempt to understand oral poetics, according to Foley, is the "inordinate fascination with composition over reception" or "to the performer's work over than of the audience."¹⁵¹ Many scholars turning away from historical and narrative-historical

¹⁴⁷ Brown, *Introduction*, 30–31.

¹⁴⁸ R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, IBT (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 14–18.

¹⁴⁹ A difference in the results obtained when using a narrative approach to focus on the storytelling in the final form in contrast to results from a history-of-religions approach like Kasemann's naïve docetism hypothesis is seen in Kasper Bro Larsen, "Narrative Docetism: Christology and Storytelling in the Gospel of John," in *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology*, ed. by Richard Bauckham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 346–55, 347, uses a "semio-narrative" approach argues for a narrative docetism instead of. This results from the "narrative dynamics" used by the fourth evangelist to make the protagonist "an omniscient cognitive actor in the story-world." This narrative docetism is a literary phenomenon that does not require a location within the history of ancient Christianity." The narrative docetism is a result of the Johannine storyteller who did not compromise a high christology for the sake of narrative drama where actors have a limited point of view (pp. 354–55).

¹⁵⁰ Jeannine K Brown, "Narrative Criticism," *DJG* 619–624, 620–21. These narratorial concepts are textual constructs that "are not to be equated with the empirical author and audience." Ruth Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture: 'The Jews' and the Scriptural Citations in John 1:19-12:15*. BIS (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 54, finds the "narratorial voice ... interrupts the flow of the story to provide a commentary on the events and characters in the story." She uses the concept of "narratee" as a listener compliant with the narrator's viewpoint.

¹⁵¹ John M. Foley, "Indigenous Poems, Colonialist Texts," in *Orality, Literacy, and Colonialism in Antiquity*. SBLSS 47 (Atlanta: SBL, 2004), 9–35, 11.

criticism to literary and reception criticism would argue that a Johannine composition, redaction, or source theory remains only a scholarly construct, but those focusing on the audience receiving the final form should also recognize their reconstructed audiences or contexts of initial reception as scholarly constructs.¹⁵² This is an important perspective in seeking to understand ancient processes of composition from a contemporary perspective, since ancient composers may have envisioned the reception of their work already in the process of composition, editing, and publishing.¹⁵³

The present task is to investigate how a turn to narrative unity and the audience of the final form influences the function of literary *aporiae* in John 21. The perspective that John 21 was composed using an earlier edition, containing only John 1–20, as a pre-text points to a multiple edition theory despite a lack of manuscript evidence for literary disunity between John 1–20 and 21. It will be appropriate to explore the aspect of *relecture* as a theory of the composition process for John 21 while evaluating a multiple-edition explanation for John 21’s literary *aporiae* within the scope of the Johannine *sphragis* (John 21:24–25).

2.3.1 Literary *Aporiae* and Narrative Unity: *Relecture* in John 21

Scholars aware of the turn toward the final form of texts in NT interpretation often maintain the importance of a diachronic composition history to explain contextual *aporiae* throughout John 1–21. This is represented in an approach such as Ashton’s, who identifies John 21 as a major literary disunity by undertaking a surface reading of the final text in its narrative context.¹⁵⁴ Alongside the appearance of literary disunity between John 1–20 and 21, there also exists elements of narrative unity and continuity. Koester, who regards the symbols in John 21 are used to communicate various levels of meaning to its Greco-Roman audiences,¹⁵⁵ considers

¹⁵² Myers, *Characterizing*, 19–20, seeks to explore the rhetorical conventions known as “authorial audience” rather than to the “historical audience behind the text.” This authorial audience construct is “based on generalizations concerning persons living in Mediterranean antiquity,” particularly concerning shared rhetorical and literary backgrounds exemplified through the surviving Greco-Roman and Jewish literature of the time. The “authorial audience” of John’s milieu had expectations concerning ancient characters in light of its “rhetorical practices” (p. 42), illustrated in the characterization techniques of *synkrisis*, *ekphrasis*, and *prosopopoiia* (p. 47).

¹⁵³ See § 2.1.2 note 55 for Perrin’s review of a newer approach to form-criticism that incorporates the role of reception in the composition of works.

¹⁵⁴ Ashton, *Understanding*, 52. This is because whatever can be known “about the Johannine community is what can be inferred from its writings” (p. 100).

¹⁵⁵ Koester, *Symbolism*, 27. Johannine symbolism must be interpreted with the “disciplined use of the literary context in which the image appears” and in relation to the “cultural and social setting in which the Gospel was composed.” The basic assumption in Koester’s work when turning to the category of “cultural context” is the focus on how readers are invited to interpret John’s symbols. This view accepts that John was composed for

John 21 as being likely to have been added to an earlier edition of John 1–20 without 15–17.¹⁵⁶ His position on John 21’s symbolism, which “closely resembles that found in earlier chapters,”¹⁵⁷ suggests narrative unity in the interpretation of the symbols in John. This position hints at the model of *relecture* that views John 21 as being partially modelled and composed from an earlier form of John 1–20. This means that *relecture*, as introduced in § 1.4, supports both literary disunity and narrative unity, and a composition criticism, shows links to redaction criticism of John as discussed in § 2.1.2.3.

The method of viewing John 21 as a rereading of John 1–20 seeks to understand the rhetorical situation occasioning the *relecture* in John 21 from evidence internal to the text. Zumstein finds the literary concepts of “narrator and point of view, narrative time, plot, characters, implicit commentary,” and “implied reader” as valid tools for reading John, but he engages John’s narrative with the purpose of “demonstrating its intertextual characteristics ... with other literary corpora.”¹⁵⁸ He uses *intratextuality* to describe the interplay within a literary work, while the interplay with other literary works is identified as *intertextuality*.¹⁵⁹

Both continuous and discontinuous relationships may be present in the intertextual networks within which texts were composed,¹⁶⁰ but it is not only in the intertextual

readers of the textual form, since a focus on the oral communications media of the first century CE in Asia Minor is outside the scope of his study of the function and interpretation of symbols in John.

¹⁵⁶ Koester, *Symbolism*, 281–82. Although John 21 alludes to Peter’s martyrdom, the “central action of the passage is the great catch of fish, which is strongly missionary in character.”

¹⁵⁷ Koester, *Symbolism*, 315–16. This resurrection appearance in John 21 follows the “typical Johannine movement from Christology (21:1–14) to discipleship (21:15–24). Furthermore, the composition of John 21:11 and its numerical symbolism of the catch of fish does not require the use of “interpretive techniques not needed elsewhere in John, such as numerology or gematria.” In contrast to this, a detailed study by M. J. J. Menken, *Numerical Literary Techniques in John: The Fourth Evangelist’s Use of Numbers of Words and Syllables* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 24, postulates that John was composed from “conventional literary means” and also from “numbers of words and syllables in the composition of at least large portions of his text.” He analyses John 5 and 6 for its “sequence of narration dialogue and monologue,” and John 9 for its “extensive and dramatically shaped story.” John 10:1–18 and 17 represent long monologue and John 1:19–2:11 illustrates a “series of connected scenes.” His criteria for uncovering this numerical feature of the composition process considers that a “literary unity” contains a “round number of words or syllables” (divisible by 50).

¹⁵⁸ Jean Zumstein, ‘Intratextuality and Intertextuality in the Gospel of John’, in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*, SBLRBS 55, ed. by Tom Thatcher and Stephen D. Moore, trans. by Mike Gray (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), pp. 121–35, 121. John is often read as an “autonomous literary unity” apart from a consideration of John’s originating intertextual network.

¹⁵⁹ Zumstein, “Intratextuality,” 122. He uses the term *intertextuality* in the sense that “a reading always takes place against the backdrop of certain pre-texts or in correlation with other texts.” The phenomenon of intertextuality involves an interplay between a reference text, or hypotext, and a reception text, or hypertext. Ruth Sheridan, *Retelling Scripture: ‘The Jews’ and the Scriptural Citations in John 1:19–12:15*. BIS 110 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 90–91, affirms that textual meaning is not “fixed,” but to be understood within a web of other texts. Her “narrative-rhetorical” approach posits an “ideal reader” as a “guiding heuristic construct” while using intertextuality theory and insights from narrative criticism to understand how Scriptural citations in John 1:19–12:15 functions “as a means of ‘indirect’ character presentation for ‘the Jews’” (p. 97).

¹⁶⁰ Sherridan, *Retelling*, 91–92, analyses the “intertextual referent” rather than the “historical referent.”

relationships between texts that continuity and discontinuity may be seen. The “interweaving of intratextual relationships of meaning” can be explored in John’s paratexts which, in the process of *relecture*, resulted in John containing “multiple levels of interpretation of the narrative.”¹⁶¹ This concept of *intratextuality* can be illustrated through the *paratext* of John 21. Zumstein argues that John 21 refocuses the earlier emphasis in John 1–20 on Christology with an ecclesiological emphasis.¹⁶² In this intratextual rereading, John 21 carries out a “repragmatization” of John 1–20 through the re-characterization of Peter and the Beloved Disciple.¹⁶³ This in turn allows the communication enacted by John 21’s role in the final form to be analysed by the model of *relecture* despite the assumption of literary development inherent in the perspective of continuity and discontinuity in John’s *intratextual* network.

As a theory of the process and communicative situation of a text’s composition, *relecture* attends to how an existing text is supplemented by texts of differing lengths and ideological orientations. For Zumstein, *relecture* was “not intended to fill holes in the plot but to extend the theological reflection of the text.”¹⁶⁴ A common goal in *relecture* is to determine the relationship between a reference text or pre-text such as John 1–20 and the reception text such as John 21.¹⁶⁵ Labahn contends that John 21 was composed to address unanswered questions from the narrative in John 1–20 “to build new meaning and a new story through the repetition and variation of established themes.”¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, Moloney suggests that John 21 conceals the differing ideological viewpoint of the earlier edition of John 1–20.¹⁶⁷

The *relecture* process can be used to explore literary disunity and narrative unity between John 21 and John 1–20. The redaction process suggested by Moloney considers John 1–20 as the pre-textual source used to compose John 21. Although he found traces of the compositional hand of John 21 within the present form of John 1–20, such as 19:35, he

¹⁶¹ Zumstein, “Intratextuality,” 122–23. John’s paratexts include the prologue (1:1–18), conclusion (20:30–31), and epilogue (John 21). He suggests reading the prologue as the “hermeneutical framework” guiding the narrative that is affirmed in the conclusion in John 20:30–31 (p. 124).

¹⁶² Zumstein, “Intratextuality,” 124, affirms that the epilogue paratext, John 21, stands in close intratextual relationship to John 20:30–31, which was not “deleted nor moved but recognized in its function as a conclusion.”

¹⁶³ Zumstein, “Intratextuality,” 125.

¹⁶⁴ Zumstein, “Intratextuality,” 126.

¹⁶⁵ Zumstein, “Intratextuality,” 126, focuses on continuity between the reference and reception text, and finds that *relecture* “expresses a surplus of meaning” implicit in the reference text, which then “receives a creative reception that extends it into a new dimension of meaning.”

¹⁶⁶ Labahn, “Relecturing,” 335.

¹⁶⁷ For an emphasis on the discontinuous viewpoint of John 21 in relation to John 1–20 see § 1.4 and note 17.

postulated that events and characters between John 21 and the earlier form of John 1–20 from which John 21 was composed were closely associated.¹⁶⁸ Evidence of these links can be found in the appearance narratives that are continued in John 21 and in the opening words of John 21:1, μετὰ ταῦτα ἐφάνερωσεν ἑαυτὸν πάλιν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, which are typically “Johannine and form a close temporal and narrative link” to earlier sections of John’s storytelling (John 2:12; 3:22; 5:1; 6:1; 7:1; 19:28, 38).¹⁶⁹ These connections suggest narrative unity and continuity between John 1–20 and John 21.

There are also indications of narrative discontinuity in the model of *relecture* that supports the strong tradition in Johannine scholarship that John 21 was composed to engage a later communication situation. Moloney finds that discontinuity resulted from the addition of John 21, altering the “design of the original narrative” of John 1–20.¹⁷⁰ This discontinuity is a function of the communicative situation in which and for which John 21 was composed, performed, and published.¹⁷¹ Discontinuity can also be inferred from literary, lexical, and stylistic considerations.¹⁷² These differences suggest literary disunity since John 21 sought to rhetorically engage a later communicative situation. In order to better appreciate the communication enacted by the final form, the next section will address the issue of ancient literary production in light of the Johannine multiple edition hypothesis.

2.3.2 Literary *Aporiae* and Johannine Literary Production: Multiple Editions and the *Sphragis* in John 21:24–25

The turn to the contexts in which the final form of John was received became important in light of the inadequacies of composition history arguments based on the evidence of internal literary *aporiae*. In order to appreciate the media function of literary *aporiae*, it is important to situate John within ancient Greco-Roman processes of literary production. In proposing the necessity of a composition history for gospel texts, Chilton concludes that the roles of editors,

¹⁶⁸ Moloney, “John 21,” 242.

¹⁶⁹ Moloney, “John 21,” 242.

¹⁷⁰ Moloney, “John 21,” 251. To explain this discontinuity, he finds that “behind John 1–20 and John 21 lurk two implied authors communicating different points of view through the voice of a single narrator.”

¹⁷¹ Moloney, “John 21,” 251, sees in “hints that the early Christian community that listened to and read 1:1–20:31, despite its conviction that ‘the world itself could not contain the books that would be written’ (21:25), could not resist the temptation to add more to the book” treasured as “part of its storytelling tradition.”

¹⁷² Moloney, “John 21,” 244.

collectors, and creators of the gospel texts that later bore canonical titles are unknown.¹⁷³ One reason given is that “the authorships that produced those texts are communities.”¹⁷⁴ The issue of anonymity poses a challenge to interpreters of John, but there are other ways of analysing how a text such as John was produced. One way involves the study of ancient literary conventions in John’s compositional period and context.

Last uses a comparative methodology to identify the literary conventions in which John was produced and finds that gospel literature was produced to reflect the values and beliefs of the community of production rather than of individual composers or redactors.¹⁷⁵ Culpepper’s position implies that a Johannine school was responsible for the composition of John 21.¹⁷⁶ On the one hand, Culpepper’s analysis of John 21:24–25 in its originating literary environment considers that the *sphragis* is the closest form for understanding how the audience would have understood the final ending of John. On the other hand, the *aporia* of John 21 suggests that audiences would have understood the relationship between the two endings of John’s final form (20:30–31; 21:24–25) to have a particular communicative purpose regardless of the oral/literary interplay in the process of composing John 21.

Watson’s solution to the problem *aporia* of John 21 is that the final ending (John 21:24–25) was modelled on the earlier ending (John 20:30–31).¹⁷⁷ He finds that both endings focus

¹⁷³ Bruce Chilton, “Tradition-Historical Criticism in the Study of Jesus,” in *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*, ed. by J. B. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 37–60, 39.

¹⁷⁴ Chilton, “Tradition-Historical,” 38.

¹⁷⁵ Richard Last, “Communities That Write: Christ-Groups, Associations, and Gospel Communities,” *NTS* 58 (2012), 173–98, 180. Having stressed the inadequacy of using the *bioi* genre hypothesis to assert something about the Gospels’ original communities, it seems that Last goes further than Culpepper by asserting the impact of communities on the collaborative decision-making and composition process of early Christ-groups producing writings that were deemed authoritative in the specific gospel community (p. 194).

¹⁷⁶ Culpepper, *Letters*, 245, accepts that John 21 was added late in John’s composition history “by a member of the Johannine school drawing on Johannine tradition.” He also considers that this resurrection appearance in Galilee may have circulated independently from John 20’s resurrection appearances, but there is insufficient data beyond the use of *aporiae* already discussed in chapter one of this study. Composition history models seeking elements of historicity in the traditions embedded in the final form of John will remain theoretical in light of the available evidence.

¹⁷⁷ Francis Watson, “The Gospel of John and New Testament Theology,” in *The Nature of New Testament Theology: Essays in Honour of Robert Morgan*, ed. by Christopher Rowland and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 248–62, 255–56. The Greek text of John 20:30–31 reads as follows: Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν, ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ· ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεῦσθε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ (SBLGNT). John 21:24–25 reads as follows: Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ τούτων καὶ ὁ γράψας ταῦτα, καὶ οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθὴς αὐτοῦ ἡ μαρτυρία ἐστίν. ²⁵ ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ ἃ ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἅτινα ἐὰν γράφηται καθ’ ἓν, οὐδ’ αὐτὸν οἶμαι τὸν κόσμον χωρῆσαι τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία (SBLGNT). From this comparison, the theory that John 1–20 was a pre-text used to compose John 21 can be argued by finding phrases or clauses common to John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25. Watson’s view is that the underlined text represents this commonality between the earlier and final endings.

on a distinction between written and unwritten testimony, while developing these distinctions with differing perspectives.¹⁷⁸ The media texture of the text may be uncovered through analysing the emphasis on written and unwritten traditions, but these aspects will only be addressed in chapter 3. Culpepper's discussion of the aspect of "closure"¹⁷⁹ in John's two endings considers that John 20:30–31 explicitly draws attention to what was narrated in the manuscript communications of John 1–20, and that John 21 "continues the crafting of closure by symbolically depicting the evangelistic mission of the church."¹⁸⁰ This suggests a communicative situation beyond those enacted by earlier editions since the publication of a Gospel toward the end of the first century CE may have envisioned the wider reception and performance of the text for audiences already acquainted with the Jesus traditions. This publication process is a key insight for explaining the emergence of *aporiae* in John.

As mentioned in § 1.4, scholars positing various multiple edition theories often suggest that *aporiae*, whether from an edition published by a different hand or an edition published from the same hand, may be a result of the ancient editing process in John's compositional milieu. Hengel's model of the editing process proposes that after the death of the elder, there was an increased emphasis on the literary production and its circulation to other communities outside of those communities in which the Johannine elder taught.¹⁸¹ He suggests that a probable form in which the final text was published was the codex based on the argument that the codex form was a unique Christian development together with its use of the *nomina sacra*.¹⁸² The assumption that the codex form, whether parchment or papyrus, was a Christian development based on the literary and communicative needs of the early Jesus movements

¹⁷⁸ Watson, "Theology," 254–56. The earlier ending elevated the written form while counting what was unwritten as negligible to the purpose of the earlier edition of John 1–20. In the earlier edition containing John 1–20, signs (σημεῖα) were needed to comply with the Johannine characterization of Jesus presented in John 1–20. In the final form, composed in a period when John's audiences would no longer have had access to living eyewitness testimony, John 20:30–31 no longer relates to the "naïve" perspective on the relation between the narrated signs and the purpose of the final form, but relays the notion that the entire written Gospel of John has now become the sign through which will become compliant to the perspective of the text that αὐτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (John 20:31a, [SBLGNT]). John 21:24–25 is regarded as affirming the importance of eyewitness testimony in facilitating at least some of the audience to comply with the narrative portrayal of Jesus while asserting the insufficiency of the written text's sufficiency to witness to the signs performed by Jesus.

¹⁷⁹ Culpepper, "Sphragis," 359.

¹⁸⁰ Culpepper, "Sphragis," 359–60. This is accomplished "through the narrative of the great catch of fish (21:1–14), resolving Peter's role through his threefold commissioning as a shepherd and an allusion to his death as a martyr (21:15–19), and resolving the misunderstanding surrounding the death of the Beloved Disciple (21:20–23)."

¹⁸¹ Hengel, *Johannine*, 105–6.

¹⁸² Hengel, *Johannine*, 106, finds that John may have been composed as a "new Christian form of literature," due to the strong allusions to Genesis 1:1 in John 1:1 and Genesis 2:1–3 in John 19:30.

overstates the papyrological and codicological evidence. This debate will be addressed in § 3.2.1, but for now it is more appropriate to discuss the function of literary *aporiae* in a multiple editing process centred on the final literary product of John 1–21.

Keener, who supports the argument that a lack of manuscript evidence for an edition of the Gospel being in circulation without John 21,¹⁸³ posits a multiple edition theory, but unlike a literary disunity view of multiple editions by different hands such as Brown's,¹⁸⁴ he finds that *aporiae* in John arose from the editing process of a single editing hand.¹⁸⁵ Ashton dismisses Keener's argument that other ancient literature such as book 24 of Homer's *Illiad* continued after reaching a "concluding climax"¹⁸⁶ as does John 21 in relation to 20:30–31. Ashton, whose multiple edition theory posits the same hand for *aporiae* in John 1–20 while positing a different hand for John 21, finds Keener's view of "Homer's art"¹⁸⁷ to be an inadequate comparison. As a result using a view of Homeric composition for understanding the status of John 21 as an epilogue, Ashton suggests that Keener ignores how the "story of the miraculous catch of fishes differs radically, in both mood and manner," from the rest of John 1–20.¹⁸⁸

While Ashton may be correct in asserting that book 24 of the *Illiad* is not an exact parallel, it is important to adopt the perspective that comparative literature need not yield exact parallels for them to highlight some of the literary and performative conventions imposed on the media culture of the ancient context in which John 21 was first produced and received. Yet, it is also important to analyze ancient literature for close parallels. This is seen in Culpepper's analysis of various ancient literary postscripts in order to conclude that the *sphragis* form most closely resembles the form and function of John 21:24–25. By positing a different period and

¹⁸³ See § 2.2 for the debate over the use of text-critical arguments as a basis for disregarding the possible literary, and therefore communicative, development in the composition of John 21 in relation to an earlier edition. The section argues that traditional models of textual transmission did not adequately account for the impact of the oral media culture of the period during which the gospel manuscripts were first composed, performed, and transmitted. More than this, by understanding the place of the "initial text" in light of the multiple edition process means that editions of John without chapter 21 may have existed but fallen out of use in light of the final edition of John containing John 1–21, though highly likely without John 7:53–8:11.

¹⁸⁴ See § 2.1.2.1 note 28.

¹⁸⁵ Keener, "John," 421. He does not argue merely for a narrative unity and literary disunity between John 1–20 and 21 as assumed in this research. He asserts both narrative and literary unity throughout John 1–21.

¹⁸⁶ Keener, "John," 421.

¹⁸⁷ Ashton, *Understanding*, 43, accepts the point made by Keener's description of Priam's plea for the return of Hector's body in book 24 of the *Illiad* as "completely anticlimactic to the story," as a reasonable indication that epilogues were known in the ancient milieu in which John was composed. Ashton disagrees with the specific comparison to John's composition process as misleading since his literary disunity theory of the multiple edition hypothesis posits a different hand at least for John 21, thus pointing to a different composer and communicative situation unlike the comparative example used by Keener.

¹⁸⁸ Ashton, *Understanding*, 43–44, argues that even if the "style" in John 21 is the same as that in John 1–20, then it will have to be acknowledged that "the sensibility is not" (p. 44).

communication situation within the context of a Johannine school,¹⁸⁹ he is able to focus his investigations more on narrative unity in the final form than on literary disunity and reconstructing a detailed composition history from *aporiae* in John. A particular challenge requiring attention in light of his focus on the audience of the final form is to “discern the intended readers who would have needed the validation the *sphragis* provides and yet would have known those ... who speak for the testimony of the Beloved Disciple.”¹⁹⁰ This strategy would facilitate a better understanding of the rhetorical function of the later ending of John, considered as a literary *aporia* function to indicate the composition history of John and to assess the historicity contained in the narrative of John 21.

2.4 Conclusion

The present chapter addressed important issues relating to the function of literary *aporiae* in John 21. In § 2.1 the problem over the use of literary *aporiae* in historical-critical Johannine scholarship was investigated in relation to composition history theories. The problem of the oral/textual interplay in John’s context of composition was not adequately nuanced in traditional approaches to the function of *aporiae* in John 21. This was addressed in § 2.2 where the nature of text-critical evidence for literary unity theories of composition for John 21 in relation to John 1–20 was examined. In § 2.3, the model of *relecture* considered that John 21 addressed a different communication situation than John 1–20, placing John 21 in a media culture near the end of the first century CE. The *sphragis* (John 21:24–25) also points to the literary production of the final form of John 21,¹⁹¹ opening up the possibility that John 21:1–25 contains both oral and literary composition features.

¹⁸⁹ Culpepper, “Sphragis,” 363. The set of relationships implied in the use of the *sphragis* indicates the rhetorical purpose of the Johannine *sphragis* (John 21:24–25) in the period in which it was composed as a conclusion to the final form of John. These relationships are to be understood as being between the audiences addressed by the *sphragis* and the situation giving rise to its need if these audiences are acquainted with the literature and traditions of the Johannine school.

¹⁹⁰ Culpepper, “Sphragis,” 363, also argues to the support of the view that John 21’s composition period overlapped with the transition from intermediate or rhetorical manuscript culture to the advanced or intertextual manuscript media culture in his view that the *sphragis* was added by the final editor for a later generation of Johannine community members who respected the authority of the Beloved Disciple, but who were at the same time being more exposed to gospel accounts offering alternate characterizations of the historical Jesus to Greco-Roman audiences in the late first century CE.

¹⁹¹ Culpepper, “Sphragis,” 360, finds that John “uses resolution of conflicts, completion of narrative gaps, prolepsis of events in the narrative future, reports of the deaths of the principal characters, and literary inclusions to develop a strong sense of closure.”

In order to address the question over the function of literary *aporiae* in John 21, appropriate attention should be given to the conventions of rhetorical composition discussed in *progymnasmata* of writers in John's Greco-Roman milieu such as Theon, since the exercises described therein were crucial for those learning to read, copy, and compose ancient works of literature. This was argued for in chapter one. Theon is a suitable choice to find out about ancient rhetorical practices since it is an extant text that is contemporary to the Gospel of John. The difficulty lies in the oral/literary dynamics of John's process of composition. In order to appreciate a media-rhetorical perspective, this research argues that manuscript communications are not only *rhetorical*, but also a function of the communicative conventions and audience expectations in the milieu when John 21 was composed and performed. The following chapter will first examine the methodological support for using ancient composition categories from Theon's *progymnasmata* and for using insights from the ancient media function of texts.

3. Media-Rhetorical Approach to the Function of Literary *Aporiae* in John 21

In chapter two, it was argued that literary approaches to the ‘final’ text often prioritised narrative unity when engaging John 21. Literary-critical methods¹⁹² did not always attend to ancient conventions when explaining *aporiae* in its narrative context.¹⁹³ When the ancient function of texts is considered, a media situation¹⁹⁴ is observed involving a dynamic interplay between oral and textual communication. In chapter one it was suggested that the literary *aporiae* in John 21 may be assessed from a media-rhetorical perspective. Chapter two explored the debate that John is characterized *either* by oral composition *or* by literary composition. This chapter will further develop the media-rhetorical approach by considering the interplay between oral-manuscript *media* and *rhetorical* conventions in John’s milieu.

3.1 Modelling Ancient Media Cultures in the Milieu of John 21

While Modern methods utilized *aporiae* to explore composition history and the relationship between John 21 and the rest of the Gospel, scholars sought to incorporate literary disunity perspectives in reading the ‘final’ text. Yet, even in final form analyses, the complexity of the oral/textual transmission was not given appropriate attention. This was so until the

¹⁹² Kysar, *Voyages*, 58, finds John’s literary form to indicate how a “developed tradition ... either in written or oral form” was “embedded ... in an imperfect way,” resulting in literary “breaks, contradictions, and repetition.” The literary form, taking its communicative logic from the final redactor, constitutes “a literary whole,” but Kysar calls for a dialogue between final form or “structural analysis and history of composition” methods (p. 75).

¹⁹³ Neyrey, *Rhetorical*, 3–4. See also Myers, *Characterizing*, 4–5, who considers, in addition to the variety within the *progymnasmata* handbooks, *topoi* and techniques from rhetoricians contemporary to John’s milieu such as Quintilian and also from earlier and later rhetoricians.

¹⁹⁴ Loubser, *Oral*, 46, considers elements of the two-way “communication process” as the “sender, message (as code, concept, and medium), receiver, noise” and “feedback,” but focuses on the aspect of medium.

adoption of nuanced oral¹⁹⁵ and social memory models¹⁹⁶ now seen in contemporary approaches to John's narrative composition and transmission history. This diversity of methods utilized in NT studies calls for methodological dialogue.¹⁹⁷ Differing interpretive interests means that the present approach should dialogue with diverse methodological views and methods and engage the limitations in modelling John's ancient media textures.

3.1.1 Methodological Reflection on Utilizing Ancient Communications Systems as Interpretive Paradigms

Communications theory was not a preferred model for interpreting NT texts in modern historical-critical methods. Scholars focusing on diachronic issues 'behind' the text were challenged to adapt to the nuanced understandings of contemporary interpretive processes and the role of hearers and readers in the originating communications systems. Discontent with the results of historical-critical reconstructions based on literary *aporiae* in the text, scholars applying literary insights to NT texts facilitated the awareness of the role of the readers 'in front' of the 'final' text as received in critical editions.¹⁹⁸ This is not to deny that different schools of literary theory had particular models for the author, text, and reader.

Schools such as "new criticism" argued against a 'positivist' historical-critical emphasis on authorial intention, calling it an "intentional fallacy," by drawing attention to the "feeling a work arouses in a reader."¹⁹⁹ A counter argument to reading ancient narratives in terms of contemporary literary theories came from new historicism. This perspective went beyond the 'positivist' historical notions of access to authorial intention while still seeking to

¹⁹⁵ Eddy, "Orality," 641, asserts one of the complexities in orality/literacy debates as the relationship between textual and oral *modes* and *media* of communication. Oral and literary *media* and *registers* (style of communication) "can influence and interface with each other" in complex ways. Oral communication could occur in either an oral and/or literary linguistic register, showing that an oral medium does not imply an oral register and that a literary medium does not imply a literary register.

¹⁹⁶ Joel B. Green, "Historicisms and Historiography," in *DJG* 383–87, 386. Social memory perspectives suggest that recollection is a "complex process whereby the past is reconstructed in light of present interests that are defined and shaped socially." Green suggests that neuroscientific memory research undermines Bauckham's model of historicity in the Gospel of John that is based on the eyewitness recollection of the Beloved Disciple.

¹⁹⁷ Craig G. Bartholomew, "Introduction," in *"Behind" the Text: History and Biblical Interpretation*. SHS 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 1–16, 3.

¹⁹⁸ Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 29.

¹⁹⁹ David M. Schaps, *Handbook for Classical Research* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 122. This is seen in narratological approaches focusing on the underlying structure of a text by "distinguishing the way a story is told (the 'narrative') from the events of the story itself." Schaps also draws attention to the "affective fallacy," which ascribes "importance to the reader's emotions." Approaches to the text derived from disciplines outside of literary theory are known as "externally generated" schools and includes Marxism, psychoanalysis, and feminism (pp. 124–25).

understand texts as the products of their contexts of production.²⁰⁰ Subsequent hermeneutical developments reacted against new historicism's assumptions regarding the reconstruction of an ancient text's context of production. In a postpositive view, new historicism's focus on the originating communications systems in which texts were composed could not be maintained, since all texts could be constructed to reveal a multiplicity of contemporary meanings.²⁰¹

In § 1.6 it was suggested that access to John's media texture requires an investigation of how texts functioned in their ancient contexts, since there are differences between ancient and contemporary media cultures that emerge when scholars appreciate oral-manuscript communications media.²⁰² This research accepts that access to John's originating contexts of production and reception is elusive, but regards it as appropriate to consider the ancient function of texts in their originating media cultures so that modern assumptions of *literary aporiae* could be informed by the conventions of oral-manuscript texts.

3.1.2 Medium and Message in Ancient Communications Perspective

In § 1.6 it was considered that ancient communications systems consisted of more than just textual artefacts. Texts like John are only "traces" of ancient communications systems where oral-manuscripts served to assist oral performances from memory for private or public audiences. The oral/aural communication implied or enacted by the textual communication means that the *message* is more than the *medium*, since the communication of oral-manuscripts consisted of both oral/aural and textual media. It is therefore important to identify the ancient function of texts in the oral/textual dynamics of ancient media cultures.

An important perspective in a media-critical approach is that the medium co-determines the message. Media criticism should therefore be considered as part of the diverse array of hermeneutical strategies used to read NT texts. Ashton's exploration into the meaning of John's

²⁰⁰ Schaps, *Classical*, 123.

²⁰¹ Schaps, *Classical*, 124. This radical reader-response view denies the "right of the author or any reader to establish a definitive meaning."

²⁰² Loubser, *Oral*, 52. A key difference between ancient and modern media cultures is found in the interplay between oral/aural and manuscript communications media.

narrative²⁰³ considers that the “medium is the message.”²⁰⁴ Although supporting the notion that John was composed by a single major writer, he finds the discourses in John 13–17 “are best thought of as built upon the words of a preacher addressing a responsive audience and not simply the work of a writer tolling away with calamus and papyrus.”²⁰⁵ This indicates an interplay between literary process of composition and oral communications,²⁰⁶ but it is important to consider this interplay in ancient media cultures so that the ancient function of modern literary *aporiae* in John 21 can be explored.

Loubser’s approach asserts that the process of composition for John must be considered in light of the media constraints and technologies available in the milieu in which John was manuscripted. Rather than equating the contents of the *message* with the textual *medium* as Ashton does, Loubser perceives that texts are only carriers “of a message (within a communication situation)” that must be “decoded” before it is properly received.²⁰⁷ Many of the codes of the original communication system are lost, but since only the text remains, it is important to consider the role of the oral-manuscript medium as the “physical aspect of the message”²⁰⁸ that also co-determines “all other aspects of the message.”²⁰⁹ A media-sensitive criticism of John calls for a distinction between the written medium, or oral-manuscript, and the oral/aural media conventions contained in oral-manuscripts that served to assist performances of the composition from memory.²¹⁰ The physical and communicative properties

²⁰³ Ashton, *Understanding*, 357, in his form-critical study, attends to the compositional procedure which the composer used to piece together his edition of John. finds that John can be compared to “some of the very greatest artists, painters, and composers as well as poets and novelists” due the “reflections John makes upon his own work.”

²⁰⁴ Ashton, *Understanding*, 529. This is explained by his understanding of John’s creative and dialectical use of the gospel genre and inherited tradition in composing the Gospel. One such suggesting involves Ashton’s analysis of the appearance narratives in John 20, where he suggests that the fourth evangelist engaged dialectically with the value placed on preserving past tradition by radically reinterpreting that tradition for a much later time.

²⁰⁵ Ashton, *Understanding*, 103, posits a literary process of composition by a single creative genius rather than an oral composition process for the Gospel of John.

²⁰⁶ Ashton, *Understanding*, 102, finds that orality studies provided form critics with more plausible tools to work with by admitting that oral stages of the gospel traditioning process may have “extended much further ... than the application of source and form criticism” suggests. He does not, however, consider that in ancient media contexts the *medium* co-determines the message and should also be investigated alongside the *codes* used to communicate *concepts*.

²⁰⁷ Loubser, *Oral*, 46.

²⁰⁸ Loubser, *Oral*, 51, critiques socio-rhetorical criticism for undertaking a “literary study of rhetorical forms” while “not adequately” considering the “oral-aural practices that underlie those forms” (p. 52).

²⁰⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 134.

²¹⁰ Eddy, “Orality,” 647, finds the oral register/style assists the “listening audience in grasping and retaining the essential content of what they were hearing.” This can be observed in phenomena such as “simple word choice, direct speech, frequent use of” *kai*, “parataxis, alliteration ... idea/word repetition ... topical clustering ... and ‘acoustic echo’ techniques” such as chiasmus and concentric patterns. He suggest “performance criticism” as an interdisciplinary study of aspects ranging from rhetorical criticism, narrative criticism, orality

of texts in the ancient *media* culture will be explored in § 3.2 before attending to ancient *rhetoric* in § 3.3.

3.2 Textual Media Technology and Oral-Manuscript Communications

Despite the distinction between the medium and the message, a dynamic relationship, rather than a “great divide,” exists in the relationship between textuality and orality. In both *oral/aural* and *oral-manuscript* communication, the message to be communicated requires suitable communications media and shared concepts and codes between senders and receivers.²¹¹ There are also differences in that, for instance, oral/aural communication “consists of sound bites” and “visual gestures,”²¹² requiring proximity between *speakers* and *auditors*, while textual communication requires proximity between *readers* and the *texts*.²¹³ To better understand the ancient function of texts within the oral/textual media dynamics of the time, the physical aspect of manuscript media will be addressed in § 3.2.1 before discussing the communicative properties of oral-manuscript communications in § 3.2.2.

3.2.1 Textual Criticism and the Physical Properties of Manuscript Media Technology

In his consideration of manuscripts and early Christian book production, Kruger suggests that the *contents*, rather than the “physical *vehicle* of ... early Christian texts,” have been the main focus of NT interpreters.²¹⁴ Manuscripts have “physical and visual features” such as the “codex form, scribal hand, and other inscriptional features” which “together provide

studies, and theatre criticism, that can ask new exegetical questions, since it could be asked if contemporary interpretations align with the meaning received by ancient auditors listening to the text being orally performed (p. 648).

²¹¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 33, states that the transmission of messages requires that the sender encodes the message on one or more media, but the receiver is required to “perceive the medium, interpret the codes and incorporate the concepts into” their “conceptual world.”

²¹² Loubser, *Oral*, 35.

²¹³ Loubser, *Oral*, 35. Limitations are also implied by particular media since the “volume of data and the storage and retrieval of information communicated” differs between textual and oral media. An example of this is seen in “first-century manuscripts,” limited in length by papyrus bookroll technology until the development and increased use of the multi-quire codex technologies, allowing “much larger works” to be circulated together.

²¹⁴ Michael J. Kruger, *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 233–34.

a fresh window into the literary culture of early Christianity.²¹⁵ Textual criticism provides perspectives on the physical properties of ancient manuscripts.²¹⁶ These windows may provide a glimpse into the nature of “literary production/reproduction in antiquity.”²¹⁷

3.2.1.1 Manuscript Media Forms in Ancient Literary Culture

The literary culture and media environment of John 21 can be illuminated by a study of the physical artefact of manuscript media technology in the ancient milieu. Insights from epigraphy,²¹⁸ papyrology,²¹⁹ and codicology²²⁰ provide glimpses into the physical properties of textual media. Papyrus manuscripts are usually distinguished as literary and documentary papyri,²²¹ though not all scholars follow this traditional distinction.²²² Other scholars focusing on papyri regard early Christian literary activity as a datum for the subsequent media

²¹⁵ Kruger, *Canon*, 234.

²¹⁶ Loubser, *Oral*, 52, finds that textual criticism should analyse NT texts as “auditive documents.”

²¹⁷ Ulrich Schmid, “Conceptualizing ‘Scribal’ Performances: Reader’s Notes,” SBLTCS 8 (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 49–64, 62–63. This includes the scribal and nonscribal activities through the various stages, from the “authorial stage” to the “editorial stage” where the authored literature is prepared for publication by such activities as “adding titles and prefaces, subdividing longer texts into books or chapters” and even undertake to rework the “texts to fit the needs of a certain target audience.”

²¹⁸ Schaps, *Classical*, 217, defines epigraphy as the “study of texts written on hard and durable surfaces” such as stone. They are limited as to the scope of their content, but their durability means that these texts remain in their “original form, with the precise wording, spelling (including spelling errors), letter-forms and visual layout that they had when first written.” For this reason, these texts are valuable historical and linguistic sources. Epigraphy also indicates that the form Greek letters were inscribed in such texts in the local dialect of each *polis* until *koine* of the Greco-Roman period “slowly displaced the local ways of speaking” (p. 223).

²¹⁹ Schaps, *Classical*, 235–36. As “the most common substrate on which people wrote,” papyrus was found mostly in Egypt and used to produce a papyrus roll with the text usually being written on the *recto* rather than on both the *recto* and *verso*. There were other writing media available in addition to the papyrus technology. Wax-tablets could be erased by smoothing over the wax and reused indefinitely. Inscribed potsherds, or *ostraca*, were convenient for writing something short. The present practice of papyrology includes the analysis of materials such as parchment which, from about the second century BCE, became an important substrate for “most important texts,” even though considered a luxury item in John’s media culture.

²²⁰ Schaps, *Classical*, 254, states that “every physical aspect of the manuscript may give information about its date and provenance” and therefore to its intertextual network of relationships.

²²¹ Schaps, *Classical*, 238. Literary papyri are those that preserve at least a portion of a literary work previously lost or known to scholars today. Documentary papyri include other kinds of written messages, from personal letters to records of transactions and magic formulae.

²²² Guglielmo Cavallo, “Greek and Latin Writing in the Papyri,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. by Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 101–48, 101, finds it methodologically challenging to trace the “history of Greek and Latin writing in the papyri over many centuries.” He suggests the problem is an overly “drastic . . . distinction between documentary and literary hands, for handwriting is a unitary phenomenon.” This is because the “writing exercises attested in papyri, ostraca, and tablets” illustrate “training at different levels.” The distinction is therefore between “cursive and semicursive writing styles” and “regular or calligraphic handwritings.”

development of codices.²²³ Evidence calls into question the view that early Christians were responsible for media advancements in the late first century CE Mediterranean world.²²⁴

The arguments that reinforce a dichotomy between non-Christian and Christian media developments are that early Christian literature was distinguished by “scribal practices” such as a “preference for the codex form” and use of *nomina sacra*.²²⁵ Kruger affirms that the development of the codex was stimulated by the needs of early Christian literary culture.²²⁶ Reasons for an early Christian preference for the codex format are often linked to the practical benefits for travelling reader-performers, who required “books of modest enough size to be easily carried.”²²⁷ There are some difficulties in arguing that early Christian literary activities facilitated the advancement of ancient codex manuscript technologies.

Johnson looks at the papyrus bookroll in comparison to the codex book style before undertaking a case study from an Oxyrhynchus text into the relationship between the “use of books” and the “nature of reading in antiquity.”²²⁸ Technologies such as “papyrus rolls, ink, pen, sponge, glue, and knife” were required for the making of ancient books by a process of “taking a premanufactured papyrus roll, writing out the text, attaching additional fresh rolls as the length of text required,” and “cutting off the blank remainder.”²²⁹ The physical process of

²²³ David G. Martinez, “The Papyri and Early Christianity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. by Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 590–622, 592, also regards the use of *nomina sacra* as important for distinguishing between Jewish and Christian papyri. Christian scribes wrote certain sacred words “in abbreviated form with an overstrike.”

²²⁴ Schaps, *Classical*, 237. Its survival in Egypt illustrates a spectrum of literary activity at least in Egypt in the first and second century CE. These papyri are mostly in Greek though some are in Egyptian, Latin, and relatively less attestation for other languages such as Aramaic, Arabic, Pehlevi, and Hebrew.

²²⁵ Robert F. Hull (Jnr.), *The Story of the New Testament Text: Movers, Materials, Motives, Methods, and Models*. SBLRBS 58 (Atlanta: SBL, 2010), 179. In relation to the present study, Hull’s call for future text-critical research suggests that “research is needed on the education and responsibilities of scribes and their relation to editors, readers, and other users of texts” and that orality/scribality studies should interface with textual criticism since the “phenomenon that ancient literature was mostly consumed (and even produced) orally/aurally has not been sufficiently explored” (p. 190).

²²⁶ Kruger, *Canon*, 248–49, argues strongly that the codex manuscript technology was a form of Christian literary production that was “decidedly different from both its heritage (Judaism) and its immediate context (the surrounding Greek culture),” which only replaced the papyrus roll as the preferred means of textual transmission by the fourth century CE. He explains the need for the codex form of literary production to be the result of the shaping of the various corpora that would later come to make up the New Testament canon.

²²⁷ Hull, *Text*, 181.

²²⁸ William A. Johnson, “The Ancient Book,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*. ed. by Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 256–81, 270, describes *P.Oxy. XVIII 2192*, a letter sent to Oxyrhynchus in the second century CE, as written “in at least three ... hands” while the “body of the letter, mostly lost, is written in the ... hand of a practiced scribe.” The sender then “adds a subscription in his own hand” and “adds a substantial postscript underneath the subscription. A second postscript, also substantial, follows the first in what is clearly a third hand” most likely being the “sender’s colleague.” There may have been a third postscript written by a second colleague, but the papyrus breaks off.

²²⁹ Johnson, “Book,” 256.

making manuscripts described here does not presuppose a specifically early Christian innovation or role in the development of ancient manuscript media technologies.

The codex technology, having come into use by the first century CE, progressively overtook the “bookroll for literary texts” by the fourth century CE.²³⁰ Parchment was later preferred for the codex, but early codices were made from papyri sheets.²³¹ Manuscript media developments did not only involve a move from rolls to codices, but also from papyrus to parchment.²³² The codex form may have been developed from the parchment notebook, which was possibly a Roman invention that was developed from the wooden tablet technology.²³³ Parker considers evidence from the Roman epigrammatist Martial (38/41–101/104 CE)²³⁴ to suggest that codex technology was in use outside of Christian literary circles.²³⁵ Patzia also shows that Christian literary needs were not the only sources enquiring the utility of more advanced manuscript media technologies.²³⁶ Evidence from the Pauline tradition²³⁷ suggests that early Christian literary culture at least *contributed* to ancient media developments.

Newer communicative properties and media situations were made possible by the increased functionality provided by more advanced manuscript technologies.²³⁸ To explore the

²³⁰ Johnson, “Book,” 265.

²³¹ David C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 13–14. While second century CE papyri indicate that John may have been written on a papyrus codex, he states that the media “transition from the roll to the codex was a momentous change in ancient Mediterranean culture,” and finds that by 150 CE, “it was normative for Christians to copy the writings which later became the New Testament into the papyrus codex format.

²³² Parker, *Manuscripts*, 14–15.

²³³ Arthur G. Patzia, *The Making of the New Testament: Origin, Collection, Text, & Canon*, 2d ed. Paperback (Downer’s Grove: IVP Academic, 2010), 202.

²³⁴ Parker, *Manuscripts*, 16, argues that the codex was more user friendly than the bookroll, but also that it was in use outside of Christian circles even before the earliest surviving Christian codices.

²³⁵ Parker, *Manuscripts*, 17–18.

²³⁶ Patzia, *Making*, 196–97, cautions that parchment is not to “be confused with ordinary leather,” which dates from as early as 1468 BCE, since parchment is a “form of animal skin that is far superior to leather.” The parchment technology was manufactured by soaking the animal skin and removing hair and flesh before stretching and drying it in a frame. One would then smooth the surface with pumice and give a finish touch with chalk. A more expensive form of parchment was vellum, made from calfskin.

²³⁷ When referring to the books and parchments in ἐρχόμενος φέρε, καὶ τὰ βιβλία, μάλιστα τὰς μεμβράνας (2 Tim 4:13 [SBLGNT]), Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 6.59, considers that what μεμβράνας refers to here is not necessarily parchment codices. It could also refer to blank parchment sheets or documents written on parchment sheets. Parchment sheets were sewn together in the scroll format before being bound together in codex forms in subsequent media developments.

²³⁸ Johnson, “Book,” 267, makes findings concerning the “shift in technology from roll to codex” that challenges one of Loubser’s media properties of ancient manuscripts to be seen in § 3.2.2. For Johnson, the advantages of the codex over the roll included “compactness,” facilitating the ability to carry multiple documents with relative ease when compared to the bookroll, and “durability” of the codex, which was “less prone to squashing, tearing, and other damage” than the bookroll, which required frequent repairs. He finds that a “red herring” used in arguments of the advantages of the codex includes the “ease of access and reference” for a reader

different communicative properties of the various manuscript media technologies available in John's compositional milieu would require an examination of the media properties specific to the *formats* and *materials* used. This research will instead investigate the communicative properties of ancient oral-manuscript communications within the ancient media environment.

3.2.1.2 Role of Media in the Composition of Ancient Texts

A significant part of Loubser's biblical media criticism of John involves the notion that John, "as the most developed oral tradition in the New Testament" emerged during a transition to "advanced manuscript culture."²³⁹ Parker corroborates Loubser's view that a transition to high manuscript culture occurred by 150 CE.²⁴⁰ In relation to the present investigation, however, it is more appropriate to explore why "a written record of a process of regular performances over several decades" was needed in the ancient orally-dominated context where the production of oral-manuscripts required significant resources.²⁴¹ The possible communication situation proposed by Loubser is that there was a "crisis" relating to the oral tradition as a result of the "cultural shift" to "high manuscript culture" which began to "affect the communication patterns of the audiences."²⁴² Brickle also argues that a changed media situation is reflected in the "composition of John's capstone project ... the Fourth Gospel."²⁴³

to "mark and locate a passage" is a result of modern assumption that the bookroll was exceedingly difficult to use. Another red herring is the argument for "economy of material" where the sheets were written on both sides, but Johnson finds the "use of ample margins" to mitigate against this being a crucial consideration.

²³⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 132, argues that a move from a rhetorical manuscript culture, where texts were composed according to rhetorical compositional techniques, to an intertextual compositional culture occurred around 150 CE.

²⁴⁰ Parker, *Manuscripts*, 14, finds that "by about 150 it was normative for Christians to copy the writings which later became the New Testament into the papyrus codex format." He also explores the scholarly conceptions regarding diction, especially within text-critical arguments regarding how variants came about in the extant manuscript witnesses. He suggests that ancient copying involved a team on some occasions, especially when copying by diction even to a single scribe, but could also be done individually through visual copying and reading aloud on other occasions (p. 156).

²⁴¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 127. Some resources include the physical material, the scribes, and the patrons financing the production of the text.

²⁴² Loubser, *Oral*, 128, posits that in a media culture where oral/aural media was the primary means of communication for most people, oral composition was the main method of composing narratives like John.

²⁴³ Jeffrey E. Brickle, "Seeing, Hearing, Declaring, Writing: Media Dynamics in the Letters of John," in *The Fourth Gospel in First-Century Media Culture*, LNTS 426, ed. by Anthony Le Donne and Tom Thatcher (New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 11–28, 14, places the Letters as a midway point on a "continuum from oral discourse to written text" while the "written Gospel" represents a preference for the written medium of communication. He also adopts a nuanced view of literary/oral dynamics by positing that a text's media function "served in large measure as a script to preserve an oral event for later oral re-enactment," symbolizing the spoken medium and serving as a "script for reperformance" for different audiences, which represents different communicative and performative situations (p. 17). The reader-performer then seeks to re-enact the compositional or dictated "performance of the text," thereby "bringing the inscribed words to life for the audience through gesticulations, facial expressions and vocal inflections" (p. 18).

This suggests that the textual media culture referenced in the Johannine *sphragis* (John 21:24–25) may yield clues concerning the media culture around 100 CE, prior to the onset of high manuscript culture around 150 CE.

3.2.2 Oral-Manuscript Communications in Ancient Media Perspective

In his critique of socio-rhetorical methods, which focus on the rhetorical codes and forms used to communicate concepts, Loubser asserts that insufficient attention is usually given to the roles of manuscript *media* in the production and transmission of *messages*.²⁴⁴ To explore the impact of “medium” on ancient messages, Loubser distinguishes between the production, format, distribution, and reception of messages.²⁴⁵ It is important to consider that the chosen medium, whether phonetic units or sound bytes in oral/aural media, also imposes certain restrictions on communication.²⁴⁶ It will be important to highlight the differences and similarities between oral/aural and oral-manuscript communications, since an oral “performance communicated a range of meanings that could not all be inscribed in the manuscript.”²⁴⁷ The focus is not on whether the oral-manuscript was written in a specific format and on a specific material. It is rather to better appreciate the media textures of oral-manuscript communications within the oral/textual dynamics of ancient media cultures.

The textuality/orality²⁴⁸ media properties that regulate the production, format, distribution, and reception of ancient messages can be compared. The production of messages concerns code friendliness, manipulability, viscosity, volume capacity, infodensity, and bulkiness.²⁴⁹ The format of messages includes multimedia capacity, intertextual capacity,

²⁴⁴ Loubser, *Oral*, 52. Socio-rhetorical criticism focuses on *concept* and *code*. Messages consist of *concepts* requiring *codes* and *conventions* to be conveyed through the available *communications media* (p. 33).

²⁴⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 12.

²⁴⁶ Loubser, *Oral*, 35.

²⁴⁷ Loubser, *Oral*, 138.

²⁴⁸ Pieter J. J. Botha, “Cognition, Orality-Literacy, and Approaches to First-Century Writings,” in *Orality, Literacy, and Colonialism in Antiquity*, SBLSS 47, ed. by Jonathan A Draper (Atlanta: SBL, 2004), 37–63, 39, emphasises that linguistic research distinguishes speech and writing though admitting that they are not exclusive categories. This is because “some genres of writing may incorporate certain ‘oral’ attributes, and some genres of speech clearly have certain ‘literate’ characteristics. These differences can be better appreciated when the media properties of the written and spoken media and modes of communication are analysed.

²⁴⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 37–38, finds that viscosity deals with distortions that occur in the encoded message over time while the volume of information and the speed at which the message can be communicated is determined by the media employed. Reading speed is faster than the oral/aural medium, which has a lower infodensity than written media. The oral/aural medium is easier to manipulate than written media, while writing on parchment or papyrus was easier than engraving on stone.

linear access, and feedback speed.²⁵⁰ Media properties regulating the distribution of messages are durability, affordability, range of reception, censorship, copying, and storage.²⁵¹ The reception of textual messages involves accessibility to reading-performances,²⁵² aesthetic quality of the composition and oral performance, and distanciation.²⁵³ These aspects illustrate that the media properties of oral-manuscripts must be taken into consideration.

The importance of understanding the ancient media culture and the utility of the oral-manuscript composition can be illustrated through the aspect of the accessibility that ancient audiences had to oral-manuscripts by drawing a parallel to the phenomenon of non-literate musicians who learn music by listening rather than reading. Figure 3.1 depicts standard notation and tablature forms of musical texts. Tablature is more readable than the standard notation as it requires less musical literacy than reading standard notation. A limitation is that aspects of the composition communicated in standard notation are lost in the tablature form. This loss results from a difference in infodensity between the two forms of musical texts.

²⁵⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 38–39, finds multimedia interactions in how manuscripts were meant to be communicated in the oral media culture, while intertextual capacity refers to the ease at which codex intertexts were easier to consult than intertextual references in scrolls. Writing allows the reader to “backtrack (without influencing the production of the message)” unlike direct speech. Codices are again seen as allowing multiple access to information rather than the linear access to information in scroll reading. This aspect also influences how oral composition using secondary scribes produces literary *aporiae* such as John 4:1–2 in relation to 3:22–26. In contrast to the literary/orality difference, the written medium only allows for a one-directional communication, thereby requiring the “bi-directional communication” afforded by the reader-narrator.

²⁵¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 39–40. The timespan for preserving textual messages is much greater than in oral/aural messages, which disappears after being produced though remaining only “in the memory of the audience.” Media carries a “socio-economic aspect,” making oral/aural media more affordable than manuscript communications. The range of reception of the text is much more limited than oral/aural communications since a text is only directly accessed by a reader, whereas many auditors may access a single communications situation of the reader-performer. Censorship of textual media is easier than oral communications since texts can be confiscated and destroyed while oral communications may only be banned but not confiscated in the sense that texts can. Copying of textual communications involved scribal errors and variant readings or performances of the text. Oral composition from dictation is a related process. Also related to copying is the storage capacity accompanying the specific media. The role of memory and recollection in the oral performance is assisted by the oral-manuscript medium.

²⁵² An illustration is provided regarding accessibility. Refer to figure 3.1 and 3.2 and also the description regarding accessibility and performance of musical texts in the next paragraph.

²⁵³ Loubser, *Oral*, 40–41. Oral/aural communications were more accessible to ancient auditors than textual media due to the orality/literacy dynamics of first century CE Mediterranean media culture. The aesthetic qualities of oral/aural media include aspects not found in manuscript media, such as “pitch, tone and rhythm,” whereas for texts, the surface of writing and the instrument used for writing influences the forms of the letters. There is a greater level of distanciation for readers of texts than for auditors of live reading-performances of written messages.



Figure 3.1 Standard Notation and Tablature

Before exploring the ancient literacy/orality environment, consider figure 3.2, which shows the positions on the guitar fretboard (top) and keyboard (middle) that corresponds to the tablature form (bottom). It is easier to use the tablature form for guitars than pianos, since there is a correspondence between the numbers and the string positions indicated in the tablature and the guitar fretboard. Keeping in mind figures 3.1 and 3.2, the literacy/non-literacy dynamics of ancient media contexts will be illustrated by an example of a non-literate guitar player learning a musical composition by hearing the harmonies and melodies being performed by a literate reader and then memorizing it before re-enacting the music.

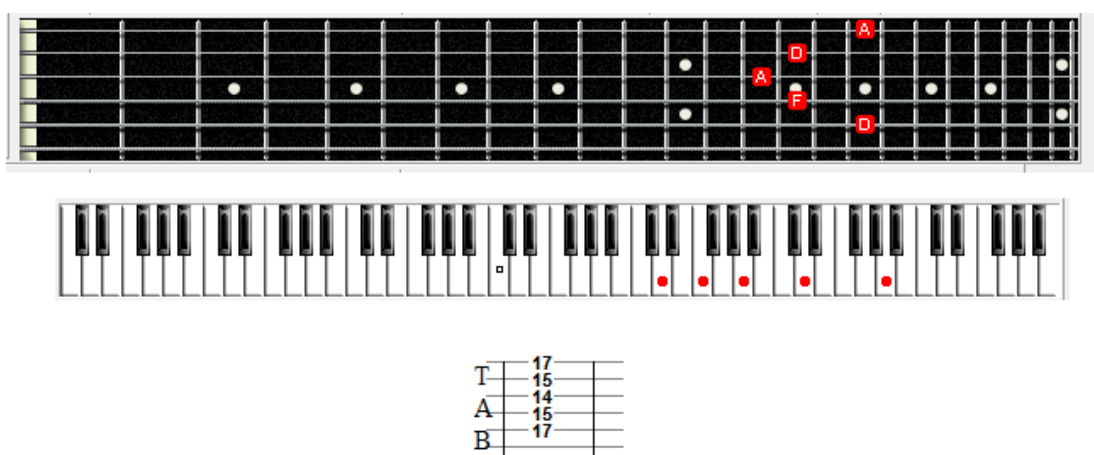


Figure 3.2 Tablature on Guitar and Piano

Suppose a situation arises where the standard notation or sheet music of a composition for guitar is required to be performed. Given a guitar player/performer unable to read sheet music and a literate reader of music unable to perform on guitar, a dynamic relationship

between the literate *reader* and the gifted *performer* can be imagined.²⁵⁴ Being able to perform the standard notation requires literacy levels in reading this musical text. The guitar player, whether able to read tablature forms or not, can access the musical text by hearing a literate reader performing the notes required for the melodies and harmonies. It is also possible for the guitar player to have memorized previous performances thereof.

To appreciate the level of access ancient audiences had to oral-manuscript texts, Brickle finds it possible for non-literate auditors, if given enough exposure to performances, to “have become familiar enough with a text to have memorized it.”²⁵⁵ Given the ancient literacy/orality dynamics in which John was produced, where many auditors were unable to access oral-manuscripts through personal reading, a parallel phenomenon can be observed in the ability of a musician to learn a musical composition by *hearing* rather than by *reading*.²⁵⁶ In relation to the performances of John 21, it would not have been required that performers were to spontaneously vocalize an oral-manuscript through a literary reading alone. This is because exposure to oral performances was necessary to understand and perform the oral-manuscript text. Oral-manuscript texts were themselves a function of oral communications.

Considering the oral-manuscript function of texts in John 21’s milieu, the *scripta continua*²⁵⁷ style of writing²⁵⁸ required more than just a literary reading ability since knowledge of the oral performances of the text was necessary to reproduce a vocalised performance or *anagnôsis* of the oral-manuscript composition.²⁵⁹ When presented with an oral-manuscript text,

²⁵⁴ This does not ignore the possibility that a literate reader of musical texts may also be a virtuoso guitarist, but this literary/aurality situation illustrates a relationship between literary and oral communications and also of the access to oral-manuscripts through oral/aural media in John’s ancient media culture.

²⁵⁵ Brickle, “Hearing,” 16, says that even non-literate persons had access to ancient texts “through the surrogacy of a skilled reader-performer,” rendering the “lack of literacy a non-issue.” Texts were often read directly or recited from memory while being held by a reader-performer.

²⁵⁶ *Anagnôsis* and *akroasis* were important aspects of Theon’s preliminary rhetorical education. See § 3.3.2.1 note 43.

²⁵⁷ Brickle, “Hearing,” 16–17, describes the oral composition process of the Johannine Letters. He finds that the “substance and structure” was first developed in the memory before dictation to a scribe (p. 16) These “dictated oral texts” may have been drafted initially in shorthand Greek on tablets before being “reworked and ... in the process converted to *scriptio continua* (a writing convention devoid of space between words, paragraph divisions and punctuation), perhaps when finally committed to parchment or papyrus” (p. 17). He supports the view that the Gospel of John reflects a different media situation that intentionally shows preference for written rather than oral communication (p. 14).

²⁵⁸ Cavallo, “Papyri,” 101, distinguishes between two main ways of development in writing styles beyond the elementary level. These were either toward the speed of cursive script or toward “calligraphic deliberateness” which remains closer to the “original graphic structure of letters” taught in elementary school.

²⁵⁹ Eddy, “Orality,” The difficulty in spontaneously vocalizing an oral-manuscript text is that it also contains certain abbreviations and idioms that may only be known to those having already heard the work being orally performed.

it was easier to decipher the words by reading it aloud rather than silently.²⁶⁰ The reader would then work out the vocalisation of the text for oral performances. Figure 3.3 contains a miniscule form of the Greek text of John 21:11 (right) that transcribed into a hypothetical *scripta continua* majuscule (uncial) format (left), that is, without spaces, punctuation marks, paragraph divisions, and with all letters capitalised. It demonstrates the difficulty of reading a *scripta continua* oral-manuscript text (left) especially without access to an explanation or performance of the text.²⁶¹

ANEBHOYNΣIMΩNΠETPOCKAIEIA	ἀνέβη οὖν Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ εἰλ-
KYCENTOΔIKTOYNEICTHNGHNMECTON ◊	κυσεν τὸ δίκτυον εἰς τὴν γῆν μεστὸν ἰχθῶν
MEΓAΛΩNEKATONΠENTHKONTATPIONKAI	μεγάλων ἑκατὸν πενήκοντα τριῶν· καὶ
TOCCTONONTONOUKECXCICHTOΔIKTYON	τοσούτων ὄντων οὐκ ἐσχίσθη τὸ δίκτυον
	(John 21:11, SBLGNT).

Figure 3.3 Hypothetical Oral-Manuscript Construction of John 21:11

A focus on the media function of John 21 considers the media textures of oral-manuscript communications.²⁶² In figure 3.3,²⁶³ Theon’s point concerning confusion between words²⁶⁴ becomes more pronounced in light of the nature of the *scripta continua* style of oral-manuscript texts. Furthermore, the textual variation observed bracketed in 21:11, εἰς τὴν γῆν, shows that Theon’s preliminary exercises in rhetorical composition²⁶⁵ could be relevant for

²⁶⁰ Patzia, *Making*, 205–6, suggests that the continuous script made it “difficult to read and translate, especially if scribes were not careful in the formation of letters or if the quality of ink and writing material was poor” (p. 205). Furthermore, “[r]eading aloud helped to avoid errors that may have occurred when reading by sight, but reading aloud did not eliminate errors entirely” (p. 206). Errors of hearing, known as *itacisms* occurred because many “vowels and words were pronounced alike” such as homonyms, which sound alike but are spelt differently and have different meanings (p. 233).

²⁶¹ Parker, *Manuscripts*, 21–22, finds that papyrus codices around 200 CE would have contained *nomina sacra*, which the scribe used to indicate that “familiarity with the general contents of the text” was assumed of the anticipated reader” (p. 22). The only punctuation observed was the placement of medial points in letters which divided the sense units.

²⁶² Loubser, *Oral*, 138, posits that scribality “enabled the development of new communication genres” and that the best illustration of the “shift from oral to manuscript communication is that of the *chreia*.”

²⁶³ The special character in line two represents a *nomina sacra* of the Greek ινϰϰω,ν and is used here for illustrative purposes in this example in figure 3.3 to show difficulties encountered by readers of the oral-manuscript text. Scribal contractions were also used, but Patzia, *Making*, 209, highlights that the final sigma in majuscule contractions is called the “lunate sigma” (C) due to its crescent shape as the S was developed later. This, together with the *nomina sacra* and the *scripta continua*, illustrates some difficulties in oral-manuscript reading.

²⁶⁴ See Theon’s point on confusion in performances of texts in § 3.3.2.2 note 379 and Eddy’s point on difficulties in vocalising oral-manuscript texts in § 3.3.2.2 note 383.

²⁶⁵ See for instance grammatical inflections of *chreia* in § 3.3.1.3.

understanding what Schmid calls “scribal performances.”²⁶⁶ Scribal services in the first century CE was an important part of the production of manuscripts.²⁶⁷ Many scribes were used in the multiple stages of editing or redaction.²⁶⁸ Even the oral composition involving a live recording of what was dictated or performed for audiences, utilized scribal services.²⁶⁹

It should be recalled that ancient texts were composed to aid oral reading performances.²⁷⁰ Therefore, the “conventions of oral communication,” such as “chiasms, inclusions ... concatenations, extended antithesis, irony,” as well as the use of sharp contrasts for clarity and a “variety of mnemonic patterns ... to preserve valuable information” are observed in oral-manuscript communications, but they were also “intensified when written down.”²⁷¹ From a media-critical perspective, oral conventions were adapted to the manuscript media and was exemplified in the media properties of oral-manuscript compositions.²⁷²

To extract “data on orality and literacy” from NT texts, Loubser suggests beginning with a survey of words focusing or reflecting on the manuscript medium and other communications media.²⁷³ John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25, known as a double ending *aporia*,

²⁶⁶ Schmid, “Performances,” 50–51, focuses on how gospel variants could be understood as marginal readerly notes. For instance, the parallel account of John 19:34 was placed in a marginal note for the spear detail in Matthew 27:49. Schmid proposes that the marginal note was inserted or interpolated into the textual variant and then became part of the text of Matthew for those witnesses (p. 60–61). This is an example of how scribal performances could enter the text itself.

²⁶⁷ Kelber, “Scribality,” 135, claims that the “scribal medium was the prerogative of the political and intellectual elite” and that “scribality was applied for the purpose of recording the people’s stories and history,” thereby making the scribal medium shape how “people would remember the past ... and how they acted in accordance with it.” In opposition to the imperial use of scribality by the upper classes of ancient Greco-Roman society, Kelber finds that “dissenting groups ... seized upon the scribal medium to construct their identity” in relation to the “dominant power structures.” A consideration of ancient “oral-scribal dynamics” by Kelber leads to the view that orality, as the “predominant mode of communication,” was “more impervious to public control than the scribal medium” (p. 136).

²⁶⁸ Johnson, “Book,” 270, examines postscripts as indicators of literary activity in the second century CE Oxyrhynchus (see § 3.2.1.1 note 225). Culpepper has argued that John 21:24–25 is most closely paralleled to the ancient literary form and function of the *sphragis* (cf. §§ 1.4 and 2.3.2).

²⁶⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 136–37, regards an anachronistic model for ancient compositional processes to be where the author and the scribe were the same person. For him, a better model considers the role of scribes “as part of an authorial team, participating in communal authorship.” He uses a comparison of Plato’s description of the recording of Socrates’s dialogues in *Thaetetus* (143a–c). This process is described as involving the making of notes from memory of the dialogue, reconstructing the dialogue as memory recollection allowed, corroborating this reconstruction with Socrates, and then inserting corrections before finalising the manuscript.

²⁷⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 125, states that John, “like all biblical texts, was written to be performed aloud.”

²⁷¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 130–31. Narratorial asides in John are also “typical of adaptation of an oral text to a new medium” such as the “continuous text” of oral-manuscript communications.

²⁷² Loubser, *Oral*, 140, posits that NT gospels do not demonstrate redundancies on a macro-level, but that “[i]n smaller figures of style we still find the oral conventions of parallelisms, repetitive expressions” and other redundancies that “facilitate the oral performance of the manuscript.”

²⁷³ Loubser, *Oral*, 73. These steps include identifying the media culture of the context in which the text was composed, various examinations of the text itself for indications of “orality and literacy.” Such examinations include surveying the “use of words implying some form of communication and to assess the kind of

reveals an intentional Johannine “reflection on literary activity.”²⁷⁴ This observation supports the use of a media-critical approach to the ancient function of texts. The method to uncover John 21’s media texture will be detailed in § 3.3.3.1 and applied as part of a media-rhetorical analysis of literary *aporiae* in chapter four. It is necessary, however, to first explore historical rhetorical criticism by developing a dialogue between the media texture of John 21, having a provenance in Ephesus near the end of the first century CE, and the rhetorical conventions emerging from Theon of Alexandria’s *progymnasmata* in the later first century CE period.

3.3 Rhetorical Composition and Performance in John 21’s Ancient Media Culture

The present investigation has established that the function of literary *aporiae* in John 21 could be understood in light of its ancient media context. This context was accompanied by certain media technologies and rhetorical conventions that differ from modern literate media cultures. Furthermore, ancient audiences had certain expectations of texts and narratives within the ancient oral/aural environment. By exploring these expectations, a dialogue between *media* and *rhetoric* may emerge through which to assess the ancient function of texts such as John 21. This dialogue will be established in § 3.3.1 in order to postulate media-aware rhetorical insights from Theon’s *progymnasmata* in § 3.3.2.

3.3.1 *Progymnasmata* and Ancient Rhetorical Composition: Toward a Media-Rhetorical Dialogue for the Gospel of John

The appropriateness of whether to use ancient rhetoric or modern rhetoric for reading NT texts is debated among contemporary proponents of NT rhetorical criticism.²⁷⁵ The present

communication they involve.” Next is to analyse the communicative function of certain forms used in the text, though caution is required. Scholars can also “evaluate the syntactical structures” to “detect a higher or lower degree of interiorisation/abstraction in the text.” The final steps involve using the foregoing analysis to reflect on the differences between literary and oral media cultures, and then proceeding to utilize media theory to resolve unsolved problems in uncovering the media texture of the text.

²⁷⁴ Loubser, *Oral*, 127. In John 21:25, furthermore, the reference to “many other things” implies a rich oral tradition, while 20:31 states the purpose for the literary activity.

²⁷⁵ Johannes Vorster, “Rhetorical Criticism,” in *Focusing on the Message: New Testament Hermeneutics, Exegesis and Methods*, ed. by Andrie du Toit (Pretoria: Protea, 2009), 505–78, 540, looks at the differences between ancient and modern rhetoric, but finds a commonality in the “notion of rhetorical situation.” Modern rhetoric focuses on the “symbolic nature of human interaction with reality” (p. 535). Whereas traditional rhetoric is concerned with rhetorical genres and the usual “five parts” or categories posited by Quintilian (*Inst.* 3.3.1), modern rhetoric has “selectively located these categories within new, currently more appropriate paradigms” (p. 518). He does, however, find it important to distinguish the “real audience” from the “implied

study requires an understanding of ancient rhetorical composition²⁷⁶ that is informed by an awareness of the media culture in which John 21 was manuscripted and performed. By using a historical approach to ancient rhetoric, a dialogue can be established between the ancient media texture of texts and the rhetorical conventions of the media situation in which John 21 was produced and re-enacted for ancient audiences.

3.3.1.1 *Engaging Media and Rhetoric in Ephesus and Alexandria*

Scholars have argued strongly for the traditional view that John was produced in Ephesus toward the end of the first century CE, though others have also argued for an Alexandrian provenance.²⁷⁷ Direct access to the oral performance and aural reception of reading performances is not possible.²⁷⁸ Therefore, the media dynamics described by Theon, which attends to the performative aspects of ancient narratives, will be employed.

A dialogue between Ephesus and Alexandria can be argued based on the prominence of these cities. Evidence shows that “travelling teachers” moved from Alexandria and taught in Ephesus and vice versa.²⁷⁹ It is possible, in theory, that near the end of the first century CE, John was manuscripted with an awareness of reception in Alexandria and other prominent cities.²⁸⁰ This was needed as different audiences may misunderstand the performance due to

audience” (p. 565). This implied audience can be constructed from the known “cultural stereotypes” or conventions imposed on the authors and performers of John (p. 566).

²⁷⁶ George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 78, finds that John 17 “may be a *prosōpopoeia*, a rhetorical recreation of what Jesus might have said under those circumstances.” He also finds compositional *aporiae*, or “signs of editing” in John 15–17, which may have been added to deepen the “understanding of the topics enunciated in John 13 and 14. Another *aporia* is that John 16:5 appears inconsistent with 13:36 (p. 85).

²⁷⁷ Keener, “John,” 422.

²⁷⁸ Loubser, *Oral*, 47, suggests that a general grasp of the media culture of the time, together with an analysis of the text itself, may provide insight into the oral performances of John for ancient audiences.

²⁷⁹ Sjeff van Tilborg, *Reading John in Ephesus* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 126–28. Two examples of Alexandrian “travelling teachers” engaging Ephesus in the first century CE are Potamōn, an early first century CE philosopher who “came from Alexandria and held conferences in Ephesus,” and Apollos, a mid-first century CE Alexandrian who taught in Ephesus and also travelled to Achaia and Corinth (Acts 18:24–19:1). Tilborg also uses the example of Dionysius, born in Miletus and buried in the *agora* in Ephesus during the time of Hadrian, who travelled to Alexandria and other cities.

²⁸⁰ Perrin, “Form,” 293, finds that new form criticism considers how the composers of texts “anticipated ... the future reception of their works,” and involved the use of rhetorical methods to engage audiences.

problems of associated with oral reading²⁸¹ and aural hearing²⁸² (Theon, *Prog.* [Kennedy]). If ancient texts could function in consideration of the contexts of reception, then it may be possible to establish a relationship between John in Ephesus²⁸³ and Theon in Alexandria.

Ephesus was an important centre of the early Christian movement in Asia Minor in the first century CE.²⁸⁴ As the “principal Aegean port city for Asia Minor,” Ephesus had intricate road networks as it was also the provincial seat of the Roman proconsul, but its attention was focused on Artemis.²⁸⁵ It was a trading and banking centre where specialized studies in medicine and rhetoric could be undertaken.²⁸⁶ Tilborg finds the *aporia* of the displaced temple story (John 2:13–22) as being placed there in light of the prominence that the temple of Artemis, also called the “bank of Asia Minor,” had within the economy of the first century CE Greco-Roman world.²⁸⁷ Ephesus was also a centre of “significant Christian literary activity” and of a “tradition that the Apostle John lived in Ephesus toward the end of the first century.”²⁸⁸ However, there remains a difficulty in using categories derived from Theon’s *progymnasmata*

²⁸¹ Theon uses the example of pronouncing a word in two possible ways. In the statement “let a maid not wear gold ornaments, and if she does, *dêmosia estô* (let her/them be public property).” Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 62n190, notes that if the alpha in *dêmosia* is long, then it is a feminine singular referring to the maid becoming public property (a prostitute) while if short, then it refers to the coins becoming public property.

²⁸² Theon notes that confusion in meaning may arise due to the interpretation given by different people groups especially if “new or very archaic or foreign” words are used. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 63n191 notes that in Cretan dialect, *keramos* refers to dungeon while in most Greek dialects it means earthen pot (*keramikos*) or can be used to refer to a roof (*oi keramoi*). In Greek, it is *desmôtêrion* that refers to dungeon.

²⁸³ Tilborg, *Reading*, 63, approaches the problem of the disputed location for John’s composition by focusing on how John was read and received by audiences in Ephesus. He claims that John’s city-story about Jerusalem would be read as a story from a different world that is somehow similar to city life in Ephesus, where the temple of Artemis served as the “bank of Asia” (p. 73).

²⁸⁴ C. E. Arnold, “Centers of Christianity,” *DLNTD*, 144–52, 146–47.

²⁸⁵ Arnold, “Centers,” 147, finds that epigraphic, numismatic, and literary evidence points to at least fifty different gods and goddesses being worshipped by the diverse inhabitants of Ephesus. The dissemination of magical formulae was prominent in Ephesus and is reflected in the NT (Acts 19:13–20, 23–41).

²⁸⁶ Tilborg, *Reading*, 90.

²⁸⁷ Tilborg, *Reading*, 73–74, uses the evidence from Chrysostom (Or. 31.54) to infer that the temple of Artemis functioned as a place where money from various sources was deposited. The temple story in Matthew, Mark, and Luke occurs in the context of the Passion narratives whereas the Gospel of John places the temple story just after the Cana sign. By arguing for the performative context of Ephesus, Tilborg can explain the major *aporia* of the temple story occurring early in John’s narrative as opposed to the synoptic gospels within his methodology of reading the text in light of how readers in Ephesus may have read the narrative. A further media perspective may then consider how a generic reader in Ephesus may then perform the text for audiences in the Asia Minor context of Ephesus toward the end of the first century CE.

²⁸⁸ Arnold, “Centers,” 147. The view on the identity of the John in Ephesus is more complex since there are conflicts in the ancient patristic sources such as Papias and Irenaeus. One may also note that the transmission of tradition by Eusebius complicates the matter, but regardless of the authority behind the Johannine literature, it is not widely disputed that each document reflects a communicative situation with links to Ephesus. Even Keener, *John*, 427, who argues for the authority behind the Gospel of John as the apostle John admits that “only a minority of scholars” agree with this view. Keener does allow for the possibility that John was “further shaped or edited” by later editors.

for a text produced in Ephesus, but the phenomena of travelling teachers may provide a means to conceive the possibility to cross-influence between these cities.

Despite a lack of attestation to early Christianity in Alexandria in the time when John 21 was composed,²⁸⁹ there are various theories regarding the origins of Jesus communities in Egypt.²⁹⁰ While it was suggested that the early Egyptian Christianities were originally heretical, it was argued that extant second century CE Christian manuscripts²⁹¹ revealed “a primitive Jewish theology such as found in early Alexandrian Christian literature” due to the presence of *nomina sacra*.²⁹² The material and literary evidence²⁹³ of papyri fragments of John and the LXX texts in Egypt²⁹⁴ points to early Christian literary activity in Alexandria by the early to mid-second century CE. This movement of texts from other contexts is plausible for Alexandria, a commercial centre containing “the busiest port in the empire.”²⁹⁵

In view of the rhetorical perspectives known in the ancient Greco-Roman world,²⁹⁶ Witherington²⁹⁷ identifies forensic rhetoric as the “rhetoric of the law court ... of attack and

²⁸⁹ Arnold, “Centers,” 149. Considers that Alexandria was the second largest city in the Roman world and contained the “largest Jewish settlement in the diaspora.” He also finds that Alexandrian Jews tended toward “spiritual interpretation of the temple.” There is mention of Αἴγυπτον (Egyptian Jews) in Acts 2:10 aligns with his reading of the Epistle of Barnabas, which he considers the “oldest Christian document from Alexandria,” as containing similarities to the kind of early Christianity observed in Stephen’s speech (Acts 7).

²⁹⁰ Birger A. Pearson, “Christianity in Egypt,” *ABD* 1:954–60, 956, highlights the gospels texts whose Alexandrian “provenance can be established with relative certainty” as the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, and the *Secret Gospel of Mark*, though they are only known in mediated form through quotations from Clement of Alexandria. These gospels represent traditions that could indicate the existence of different Jesus communities toward the end of the first century CE. He also finds that the Egerton Papyrus 2, which contains significant Johannine parallels, “could have been brought into Egypt” from elsewhere. The early Christian literature include the *Kerygma of Peter* and the *Epistle of Barnabas* before the middle of the second century CE and the *Sentences of Sextus* and the *Teachings of Silvanus* (p. 957). The Nag Hammadi Codices contain texts that were likely to have been composed in Alexandria such as the *Apocryphon of James*, which preserves “valuable gospel tradition.”

²⁹¹ Pearson, “Egypt,” 958.

²⁹² Pearson, “Egypt,” 959.

²⁹³ Arnold, “Centers,” 149.

²⁹⁴ See § 2.2.1 on mid-second century CE evidence for John’s text found in Egypt.

²⁹⁵ Strabo (*Geog.* 17.1.13) calls Alexandria “the greatest emporium of the inhabited world.” Alexandria also served as a centre for the establishment of the Jesus movement further into North Africa.

²⁹⁶ C. Clifton Black, “Kennedy and the Gospels: An Ambiguous Legacy, a Promising Bequest,” in *Words Well Spoken: George Kennedy’s Rhetoric of the New Testament*, ed. by C Clifton Black and Duane F. Watson (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008), 63–80, 70, argues that Johannine scholars should “take seriously the heavily judicial tenor of the Fourth Gospel” since judicial rhetoric “was the social location for a vast body of theory and practice of rhetoric among the ancients.”

²⁹⁷ Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2009), 7, uses “macro-rhetoric” to mean that NT documents “reflects the use of rhetorical categories and divisions used in ancient speeches” such as the *exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, *propatio*, *refutatio*, and *peroratio*. These aspects of ancient speeches were found in forensic, deliberative, and epideictic rhetoric. He regards “micro-rhetoric” as the “use of rhetorical devices within the NT documents” such as “rhetorical questions, dramatic hyperbole, personification, amplification, irony, enthymemes (i.e., incomplete syllogisms),” and other stylistic features. In relation to the communications media context,

defence ... focused on the past.”²⁹⁸ Kennedy, looking at John 13–17, emphasises the role of *epideictic* rhetoric in illuminating the farewell discourse section of the Johannine Gospel.²⁹⁹ This suggests an overlap between categories in Theon’s exercises and John’s media culture. It is also possible to perceive a media-rhetorical dialogue in the ancient role of *chreiai*.³⁰⁰

It was common educational practice in the time of Theon³⁰¹ for young students to undertake exercises in composition and writing by copying *chreiai*.³⁰² Loubser argues that the fluidity in expression in the *chreia* form is a characteristic of oral performance that is also observed in the *chreiai* attributed to Jesus in the gospels. He points out that the “ostensity” of oral communication, which allows for the use of aspects such as gestures, facial expressions, and intonations, fosters a “much stronger emotional bond” to develop between the communicator (sender) and the audience (receiver) than is allowed in the manuscript communication between the composer (sender) and the reader (receiver). As such, “oral communication enables the transmission of *ethos* and *pathos* while written communication allows for a greater distancing between the sender and receiver so that the oral persuasive strategies now have to be modified toward *logos*.”³⁰³ A transition toward textuality allowed for the “abbreviation and standardisation” of *chreia*. As a result, the need for the *chreia*, initially

Witherington accepts that in ancient speeches, rapport with the audience was established by the use of *ethos* in the *exordium*, *logos* in the *probatio* and *refutatio*, and *pathos* in the *peroratio*.

²⁹⁸ Witherington III, *Rhetoric*, 6, distinguishes approaches to NT rhetorical criticism as a “historical enterprise” based on “ancient Greco-Roman rhetoric” while socio-rhetorical criticism “is more an exercise in modern hermeneutics.” His approach to rhetorical criticism thus favours the use of historical categories from ancient rhetorical handbooks and *progymnasmata* more than the use of modern literary or epistemological perspectives. He proposes that John only shows evidence of micro-rhetoric while 1 John reveals aspects of macro-rhetoric, though “used with some flexibility.” He also finds that 1 John contains no epistolary conventions, but is a “powerful epideictic rhetoric about Christian values” (p. 20).

²⁹⁹ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 73, uses the distinction made by Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1.3.1358a) to suggest that epideictic oratory of praise or blame is “everything that does not fall clearly into the category of judicial or deliberative” rhetoric. Moreover, the audiences of epideictic orations focused more on the eloquence of the speaker’s oral performance rather than the cause of the communication situation itself.

³⁰⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 138–39. He states that the *chreia* form illustrates the “shift from oral to manuscript communication.” Initially, the “actions and sayings of Jesus were conceptualised and orally transmitted in concise format as *chreiai*.” These were then “adapted to the needs of the audience by the embellishment of descriptions, expansion of the dialogues, and alignment to the needs of the discourse. Although Loubser rejects the need for reading John using rhetorical handbooks, in light of the present research and use of Theon, it seems plausible to suggest that such embellishments as suggested by Loubser could also have been practiced in a manner much like the *progymnasmata* exercises outlined by Theon and others. This may be more especially so in Alexandria, which had a significant array of early Christian literature in circulation indicated by the manuscript fragments discovered in Egypt in recent times.

³⁰¹ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 1, supports consensus scholarship on the view that Theon’s work is the “earliest surviving work on exercises in composition” showing a “system of instruction still in a stage of experiment and development.”

³⁰² John T. Fitzgerald, “Chreia/Aphorism,” *DJG*, 113–15, 113.

³⁰³ Loubser, *Oral*, 139. In addition to ostensity and distancing, other aspects of oral and manuscript communications are explored in § 3.2.2.

a form of oral memory, declined in the wake of an advancing manuscript culture in the media situation toward the end of the first century CE. For this reason, the *chreia* exercises, which are placed first in Theon's sequence of preliminary exercises, show a media period in Alexandria that overlaps with the oral-manuscript media situation of John 21.

3.3.1.2 Historical Rhetorical Criticism in Oral and Literary Perspective

In order to use ancient conventions in the present study, it must be argued that a historical approach to the rhetorical criticism of NT texts will produce appropriate results to explore John's ancient media texture. Historical rhetorical approaches have in recent times been undertaken by Johannine scholars. Neyrey focuses on the encomia and invective,³⁰⁴ and Myers investigates characterization techniques in light of ancient conventions expected by auditors of "historically rooted narratives" like John.³⁰⁵ The use of Theon's *progymnasmata* requires the utilization of historical or traditional rhetorical criticism, but this is appropriate to the goal of understanding the role of texts within their ancient communications systems.

Traditional or historical approaches to rhetorical criticism can be observed in the usual identification of three kinds of oratory. These are the deliberative (*deliberativum*), forensic (*iudiciale*), and epideictic (*demonstrativum*) oratory.³⁰⁶ There are also five parts of ancient rhetoric. *Inventio* is the "discovery of ideas" and *dispositio* is "their arrangement in an appropriate order," while *elocutio* is "their expression in appropriate words." *Memoria* involves "learning the speech by heart" while *pronuntio* or *actio* "is delivering it."³⁰⁷ In relation to the ancient speech itself, scholars identify the *exordium*, *narratio*, *probatio*, *refutatio*, and

³⁰⁴ Neyrey, *Rhetorical*, 57 finds that *roles* of characters in John have less importance than the *status* of characters. Furthermore, "with the exception of forensic witnessing, the roles are directed to insiders" and are "roles involving speech of some sort." The most important status marker is "knowing." He also analyses the roles and status of Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple among others. Peter's role is as the "successor of the Noble Shepherd" (John 13:6–8, 36–38), but in John 21 it is the traditional synoptic view of Peter as chief fishermen and agent of recruiting outsiders (50–51). On the question of status, Peter ranks lower than Andrew and the Beloved Disciple so that by the end of the narrative, "it remains unclear what kind of status" the traditional figure of Peter had in contexts for which John had been composed.

³⁰⁵ Myers, *Characterization*, 180–81, explores the "rhetorical expectations ... present in the ancient Mediterranean world" and finds that John's narratorial voice guides audiences through the narrative with "clarifying asides" and "incorporates common *topoi* in the characterization" of the protagonist. These *topoi* include the "cosmic origins of Jesus," which is an adaptation of the conventional "origins" *topos*.

³⁰⁶ Schaps, *Classical*, 132. Deliberative oratory "argues for or against a particular future course of action" and includes speeches before public assemblies. Forensic oratory "accuses or defends past actions" and includes speeches in a courtroom setting. Epideictic oratory "does not necessarily persuade ... but speaks in praise or blame of a topic before an audience of whom no decision is demanded."

³⁰⁷ Schaps, *Classical*, 133.

perotatio.³⁰⁸ The two aspects of *memoria* and *pronontio/actio* have since been lost and have to be reimaged in order to envision the communication and media situation in which the oral-manuscript was produced, performed, reproduced, and reperformed.³⁰⁹ Theon also demonstrates the awareness of the three types of oratory in the ancient Greco-Roman world (Theon, *Prog.5* [Kennedy]).³¹⁰

The focus of the present research will not be on these traditional areas of historical rhetorical criticism. The spectrum of preliminary exercises in rhetorical composition, as proposed in Theon's sequence, includes the anecdote (*chreia*) and maxim (*gnôme*), fable (*mythos*), the twin aspects of narrative (*diêgêma*) and narration (*diêgêsis*), along with the refutation (*anaskeuê*) and confirmation (*kataskeuê*) thereof,³¹¹ common-place (*topos*), description (*ekphrasis*),³¹² characterization (*ethopoeia*) and personification (*prosôpopoeia*), encomion (*enkômion*) and invective (*psogos*), comparison (*synkrisis*), thesis or proposition (*thesis*), and law (*nomos*) (*Prog.4–5* [Kennedy]).³¹³ Rhetorical techniques and topics were not only used in rhetorical handbooks. They were also used in other types of ancient literature.³¹⁴

Not all scholars agree with the use of historical rhetorical criticism of the NT and therefore introduce hermeneutical perspectives to the interpretive task. Vorster cautions against favouring particular rhetoricians in NT rhetorical criticism.³¹⁵ The present study, however,

³⁰⁸ Schaps, *Classical*, 133. The *exordium* aims "to win the sympathy of the judge or audience." *Narratio* "states the facts of the case in such a way as to make the speaker's claim plausible." *Probatio* "proves the speaker's case" and *refutatio* "disproves the opponent's claims." These are often together described as *argumentatio*. The *perotatio* "refreshes the audience's memory and influences its emotions in such a way as to bring about the desired decision."

³⁰⁹ Schaps, *Classical*, 137, finds that ancient speeches were normally invented by historical composers. He also states that certain aspects of ancient communication systems are lost as very few of the extant textual witnesses "that survive from the ancient world give us the actual words that were spoken in a moment of crisis."

³¹⁰ The "three species of hypothesis" are the encomiastic (epideictic), dicanic (judicial), and symbouleutic (deliberative).

³¹¹ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 4n10, notes that Theon's distinction between narrative and narration was not followed by later *progymnasmata* writers. Rather, *diêgêsis* is narration that forms part of a speech while *diêgêma* are the exercises in narrative.

³¹² Theon finds that common-place was used more by orators while *ekphrasis* was utilised more frequently by historical writers.

³¹³ Arguments (*epikheirumen*) in the composition of historical narratives could be developed from these headings with the aid of various rhetorical considerations and strategies (Theon, *Prog.8* [Kennedy]).

³¹⁴ Schaps, *Classical*, 135–36. Historical writers such as Herodotus and Thucydides included speeches in their narratives. Tragedians such as Euripides used rhetoric to argue for "outrageous theses" and Antigone argued that the "death of a brother is more grievous than that of children or a husband."

³¹⁵ Vorster, "Rhetorical," 516. Modern rhetorical criticism does not ignore traditional rhetorical forms and categories, but has "selectively located these categories within new, currently more appropriate paradigms" (p. 518). Furthermore, modern rhetorical criticism also attends to "all processes of human symbolization" including architecture and art (p. 533). This means that there is a "rhetorical quality in every human symbolic interaction" (p. 534).

focuses on accessing the media culture of the period in which the ‘final’ text of John 21 was produced. The construction of generic ancient audiences holding to generic ancient conventions attends to contemporary methodological difficulties in accessing ancient communication situations.³¹⁶ Ancient rhetorical perspectives may also facilitate an awareness of the conventions that guided composers in composing oral-manuscripts texts like John.

3.3.1.3 Grammatical Forms and Preliminary Rhetorical Exercises

The exegesis of NT texts involves the attempt to interpret the meaning of the Greek constructions within their narrative and socio-historical contexts. There are difficulties arising from variant readings, such as deciding on the tense of the verb in John 20:31.³¹⁷ Another exegetical difficulty involves the interpretation of the word play between ἀγαπᾶς and φιλῶ (John 21:15–17), as well as in Βόσκει τὰ ἀρνία μου (21:15), Ποίμαινε τὰ πρόβατά μου (21:16) and Βόσκει τὰ πρόβατά μου (21:17).³¹⁸ Labahn considers this problem from a *relecture* model of John 21’s composition process and finds that a “change in verb does not imply a new meaning but rather a stylistic variation,” as this is part of the “Johannine technique of repetition and variation.”³¹⁹ A solution to the problem is therefore to distinguish from the literal meaning of phrases over a figurative meaning within the narrative context.³²⁰ This rhetorical purpose behind the choices for words is a function of the ancient media situation where oral/aural performances were inscribed in oral-manuscript forms and where oral-manuscript texts functioned as an inscribed memory for future reading-performances.³²¹

³¹⁶ For the methodological discussion concerning ancient media criticism see § 3.1.1.

³¹⁷ Robert Kysar, “John, the Gospel of,” *ABD* 3, 912–31, 913. If an aorist subjunctive πιστεύητε (SBLGNT) is preferred, then based on the grammatical form, the reading is suggested to be “may go on believing” whereas present subjunctive πιστεύ[σ]ητε (NA²⁸) would imply “may come to believe.” Other key textual difficulties include the secondary nature of 7:52–8:11, the punctuation in 1:3–4 presenting a difficulty as to whether ὁ γέγονεν applies to the end of verse 3 or the beginning of verse 4, and the reading in 1:18 between μονογενῆς θεὸς ὁ and ὁ μονογενῆς υἱός (SBLGNT).

³¹⁸ Taken literally, without consideration of a figurative meaning in its narrative context, the phrase Βόσκει τὰ ἀρνία μου could mean “feed my lambs,” while Ποίμαινε τὰ πρόβατά μου could be taken literally as “shepherd my sheep.”

³¹⁹ Labahn, *Relecturing*, 343–44.

³²⁰ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, Vol.1, 2d edn, ed. by Rondal B. Smith and Karen A. Munson (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), grant figurative extensions of the literal meanings of ἀρνία (11.29) and πρόβατά (11.30), but not to Βόσκει (23.10) or Ποίμαινε (44.3), within the narrative context John 21:15–17.

³²¹ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 632. Although translators often maintain a difference in meaning between the verbs and nouns, Newman and Nida posit a rhetorical function for the choice of synonyms. This is because variation “in the choice of nouns and verbs is a stylistic feature of the Johannine writer” so that “no real distinction in meaning should” be sought. The researcher suggests that for an approach focusing on the reception of the narrative, it remains important to be aware of synonyms as these may have been received by various auditors

The grammatical function and the part of speech may not always align with the expected meaning represented by these Greek forms and constructions.³²² This complicates the debate regarding the present subjunctive and aorist participle forms in the example of John 20:31. Additionally, considering the ancient practice of inflections, there appears a rhetorical or communicative factor influencing the word choices, ordering, or forms used.³²³ These inflections and changes are described in Theon's *chreia* exercises.

A *chreia* or anecdote "is a brief saying or action making a point, attributed to some specified person or something corresponding to a person," whereas a maxim (*gnômê*) and a reminiscence (*apomnênoneuma*) are distinguished, though related to the *chreia* form (Theon, *Prog.*15 [Kennedy]).³²⁴ Theon uses the following *chreia*, "Isocrates the orator said that those with natural ability are the children of the gods," to illustrate how grammatical inflections of case, person, and number³²⁵ could be practiced by students (*Prog.*19 [Kennedy]).³²⁶ After grammatical inflections, students could then add comments (*epiphônein*) to "appropriately and briefly" approve of the *chreia* and also expand, compress, contradict, or refute the *chreia* (Theon, *Prog.*21–22 [Kennedy]).³²⁷

in different ways. In John 21:15–17, however, the differences in meaning between synonyms should not be overemphasised since they may have been chosen to enhance the oral communication thereof.

³²² Maurice A. Robinson and Mark A. House, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament: Revised and Updated* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2012), 382, notes the flexibility of Greek words "in terms of their meanings and their grammatical usages in various contexts." Scholars therefore require a "thorough knowledge of Koiné Greek syntax" and an appreciation of linguistics in addition to the ability to correctly parse Greek words.

³²³ From Theon (*Prog.*14 [Kennedy]), it can be suggested that in the composition of texts, the style was to be "clear" and "vivid" since in the ancient Greco-Roman media culture, the "need was not only to express a thought but also to make what is said dwell in the mind of the hearers."

³²⁴ Whereas an *apomnênoneuma* is "an action or a saying useful for life," a "brief maxim attributed to a person creates a *chreia*."

³²⁵ These are changed to make one person speak about two or more, two people speaking about one, two, or more people, and of plural persons speaking about one, two, or more people.

³²⁶ Although normally presented in the nominative case, there were different suggestions for inflecting a *chreia* according to the type of *chreia* being inflected or the subject matter. To practice the genitive inflection of a *chreia*, one either adds something like "the saying 'has become memorable'" to the end of the *chreia*, or in the middle or beginning of the saying. Adding "'the story is remembered'" fits in a saying *chreia*, but for passive action *chreiai*, it is appropriate to add the "'experience of X ... has become memorable'" to the end of the *chreia*. If they are active, then the "'action of X ... has become memorable" is most suitable. For all dative *chreiai*, except for the passive, "[i]t seemed to X," ... [i]t appeared to X ... [i]t occurred to X ... [i]t came to X," can be added. For passive, it is better to add "[i]t happened to X." For the accusative case, "[t]hey say," or "[i]t is said" may be added to every *chreia*. The vocative is the clearest inflection used in *chreia* exercises since the remark is addressed "to the person to whom the *chreia* is attributed as though present with us" (Theon, *Prog.*20–21 [Kennedy]).

³²⁷ Expansion involves extending the questions and answers provided and also the "action or suffering." The "starting points (for refutation and confirmation of *chreias*)" are the same as those for *thesis*, but the composition of the *prooemion* should be specific to the *chreia* or fable under consideration. Thereafter, the *chreia* should be stated along with the supporting argument, using "whatever amplification and digression and characterization" that is appropriate (Theon, *Prog.*23 [Kennedy]).

Examples of grammatical inflection is also provided in Theon's *mythos* exercises, which involves stating the fable, inflecting its grammatical forms, and incorporating the fable into a narrative by expanding, compressing, and adding an explanation to it (*Prog.24* [Kennedy]).³²⁸ Fables were to be restated with special attention given to the accusative case,³²⁹ since this case reflected the "way the ancients told most of the myths" (Theon, *Prog.25* [Kennedy]).³³⁰ These considerations indicate that historical rhetorical perspectives yield suitable categories to analyse the ancient function of literary *aporiae* in John 21.

3.3.2 Rhetorical Composition and Audience Expectations in John 21's Compositional Milieu

It is appropriate to indicate how Theon's preliminary exercises in rhetorical composition overlaps with the oral-manuscript media culture of John 21. The oral/aural media dynamics implied in Theon's treatise and the access of education in the ancient world will be explored in § 3.3.2.1 to argue that Johannine composers and audiences were aware of rhetorical conventions such as those observed in Theon's sequence of preliminary exercises. These arguments will lead into media-sensitive exploration of Theon's criteria and conventions for ancient narratives in § 3.3.2.2.

3.3.2.1 Ancient Oral/Aural Communications Media and Rhetorical Training

The *chreia* form provides the rationale for bringing insights from ancient 'literary' rhetoric into dialogue with a media focus on the oral/literary dynamics of John 21's ancient media environment. It is appropriate then to consider that Theon's emphasis on *chreia* and on the oral/aural communications reflects a similar media situation as that of the oral-manuscript culture in John's compositional milieu. Furthermore, Hock and O'Neil have pointed out that *chreia* exercises were used to teach primary level pupils how to read, write, and also copy texts

³²⁸ Fables should be inflected like the *chreia*, but when it is inflected with different grammatical numbers and cases, the "style should be simpler and natural" and as "artless and clear" as possible.

³²⁹ The "original grammatical construction" of fables could be restated using a variety of constructions, but Theon states that composers should "avoid using the same grammatical case when different people are involved" as it then becomes ambiguous, especially in the accusative case, as to which person is being attributed with a particular action. Ambiguity can also occur in the nominative, genitive, and dative cases though with the addition of appropriate articles the style is no longer ambiguous. (Theon, *Prog.32* [Kennedy]).

³³⁰ The reason for the accusative case is that myths were attributed to antiquity to "excuse the fact that they seem to be saying what is impossible."

calligraphically,³³¹ suggesting that composers, performers, and auditors in John's compositional milieu and media culture should have been familiar with at least some of the conventions of rhetorical composition indicated in Theon's *progymnasmata*. There are media aspects in Theon's preliminary exercises also finding overlap with John's media texture.

While Theon treats the *chreia* exercises first in his *progymnasmata*, he, unlike later *progymnasmata* writers,³³² focuses explicitly on students reading their compositions aloud (*anagnôsis*) and on students hearing texts being read aloud (*akroasis*) (Theon, *Prog.5–6* [Kennedy]).³³³ *Anagnôsis* could facilitate the process of shaping the composition to better suit the needs of oral reading-performances. *Akroasis* could aid those practicing rhetorical composition³³⁴ to better appreciate the “words of older writers,” the “purity of their language ... harmonious composition ... urbanity of sound,” and other “beauties of rhetoric” (Theon, *Prog.6* [Kennedy]). Ancient texts were to be composed with reference to being read and heard aloud, showing areas of overlap with the oral-manuscript qualities observed in John.³³⁵

Although not a progymnastic form, the role of paraphrase (*paraphrasis*) provides further parallels to John's media situation (Theon, *Prog.6* [Kennedy]).³³⁶ A central idea (*phantasia*) could be paraphrased in a variety of ways, depending on whether one is making a

³³¹ Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O'Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises*, SBLWGRW 2 (Atlanta: SBL, 2002), 1. Education was often taught “informally at primary level,” and may have been offered publicly for marginalized classes of society. Despite the differences in access to secondary and advanced education in the ancient world, a three-stage curriculum would cover exercises in reading, writing, copying calligraphically, literature, grammar, and “rhetorical composition and delivery” (p. 2). The emphasis on copying skills is noted in the papyri, ostraca, and wooden tablets (p. 3). The core level of education involved a study of maxims, poetry of Homer, and Euripides, with only the most privileged of students gaining access to peripheral works such as Menander and other rhetoricians. This means that a curriculum such as represented in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* would be too “ambitious than what the documentary evidence from Egypt suggests students actually learned” (p. 4).

³³² Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 2–3, says that of the *progymnasmata* works, only Theon's “describes classroom methods consisting of oral teaching, listening, memorizing, paraphrasing (*paraphrasis*), elaborating (*exergasia*), and contradicting (*antirrhêsis*) what has been read.” Another characteristic of Theon's work is that alone “among the writers on *progymnasmata*, suggests that students might be asked to write about their own experiences.” Kennedy also considers that during the Hellenistic period, “exercises in composition probably began to approximate the forms known from later writers” (p. xi).

³³³ For more on *anagnôsis* and *akroasis* see § 1.5 note 36.

³³⁴ Theon says that *akroasis* is useless “to those who are going to engage in rhetoric unless each student exercises himself every day in writing.”

³³⁵ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, x, considers that speeches were normally composed first in writing. For the most part “even in rhetorical schools students usually wrote out their speeches before delivering them,” but this does not mean that editions of John prior to the publication of the ‘final’ form could not have been orally composed and performed orally from memory using the assistance of the oral-manuscript. The position argued for in this research is that John 1–21 was composed from a combination of oral and literary methods and processes that cannot easily be reconstructed into specific stages of community and composition history. Such reconstructions were often attempted in methods utilizing modern literary *aporiae* as internal evidence.

³³⁶ Theon argues against those that consider that “one something has been said well it cannot be done a second time,” showing support for the utility of *paraphrasis*.

declaration, asking a question (*erôtêsis*), making an inquiry (*pysma*),³³⁷ beseeching, or expressing the thought in other ways. Ancient paraphrase may provide clues of how the central idea (*phantasia*) in composed *chreia* could be adapted to meet new communicative situations and audiences. *Paraphrasis* involved “changing the form of expression while keeping the thoughts” and also consisted of variations in word arrangements.³³⁸

Paraphrasis is observed in poets, historians, and other ancient writers paraphrasing their own thoughts³³⁹ or those of others³⁴⁰ (Theon, *Prog.6–7* [Kennedy]). Students were also to gain proficiency in *paraphrasis* by *anagnôsis* and *akroasis* (Theon, *Prog.70–71* [Kennedy]). This is because paraphrasing required that students carefully consider the speech through a careful *akroasis*³⁴¹ of the reading.³⁴² Students began with the reading (*anagnôsis*) of oratory, such as Isocrates, Hypereides, Aeschines, Demosthenes. The teacher would indicate whether the speech was encomiastic, judicial, or deliberative, and whether it was for a public or private audience (Theon, *Prog.66–67* [Kennedy]).³⁴³ The reading of oratory was followed by reading historical works from Herodotus, Theopompus, Xenophon, Philistus, Ephorus, and Thucydides (Theon, *Prog.68* [Kennedy]).³⁴⁴ Students were to progress in their ability to paraphrase first by

³³⁷ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 6n19, notes that Theon distinguishes a question, which can be answered yes or no, and an inquiry, which requires a more nuanced response.

³³⁸ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 70n208, notes that “syntactic paraphrases such as changing a clause into a genitive absolute” may be considered under “substitution” since here Theon is considering a rearrangement of the original word order.

³³⁹ For instance, Demosthenes often paraphrases himself “not only transferring things he said in one speech to another” (*Against Meidias*), “but even in a single speech the same things are constantly repeated” (cf. *Against Aristocrates, Against Androtion, Philippics, Against Leptines*), though evading the “notice of the hearers because of the variation in style (*hermêneia*)” (p. 7). Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 7n23, notes that none of these speeches have survived, but this may indicate that are not as yet extant.

³⁴⁰ For instance, Homer (*Odyssey* 18.136–37) says “[s]uch is the mind of men who live on earth/ As the father of men and gods grants it for the day,” while Archilochus (frag. 131) paraphrases Homer by saying “[s]uch, Glaucus, son of Leptines, is the mind/ Of mortal men as Zeus brings it for the day.”

³⁴¹ By listening to famous orators, younger “orators acquired so good an ability by listening ... that their works were attributed to the master” (Theon, *Prog.69* [Kennedy]). To practice *akroasis*, the student was to recall the subject of what was read aloud, identifying the “main points and the arrangement” and to recall memorable passages. Students may also progress from the *prooemion* to the narration and then to the arguments. The observation regarding the attribution of works composed by students to their master may be of interest Johannine scholars seeking to explore aspects of historicity and composition history behind the text.

³⁴² Regarding *anagnôsis*, a student reads a text and “reflects upon the sense and then seeks to reproduce the passage, in so far as possible keeping the words of the original in the original order.” The utility of *akroasis* is evident when students were to listen to a reading and recast in the style of another composer. For instance a speech of Lysias is read and then those listening should attempt “to recast it in the style of Demosthenes” or conversely. This is also undertaken with reference to “other orators and historians.”

³⁴³ Theon suggests that for advanced students, the teacher should describe the subject, “list the arguments and describe the art of the speech” and instruct them regarding “character types” and the “uses of ethos and pathos, digressions, amplification, diminutions ... as well as styles of expression” (p. 67).

³⁴⁴ Genealogical histories contain in lists of important rulers and leaders, political histories follow a “succession of events such as revolts and wars,” mythical histories propose “legends of the heroes and the gods to our imagination,” and histories such as *bioi* preserve the “memory of fine sayings,” while general histories

paraphrasing experiences from their memory, then paraphrasing an argument within a speech, then paraphrasing a part of a speech, such as the *pooemion* or narration, before finally being skilled enough to paraphrase a whole speech and recast it into the style of another orator or historian (Theon, *Prog.71* [Kennedy]).³⁴⁵

The emphasis on *anagnôsis* and *akroasis* indicates the oral/aural aspects were considered in Theon's preliminary rhetorical exercises (Theon, *Prog.67* [Kennedy]).³⁴⁶ Elaboration (*exergasia*)³⁴⁷ and contradiction (*antirrhêsis*)³⁴⁸ of speeches,³⁴⁹ however, was only to be undertaken by advanced students (Theon, *Prog.72* [Kennedy]). The access to ancient composers with the ability of elaborating and contradicting calls for a description of ancient education in the ancient Greco-Roman milieu to further explore the relationship between John's oral-manuscript composition and ancient rhetorical considerations.

Loubser objects to the use of categories from rhetorical handbooks to read NT texts,³⁵⁰ but scholars have argued that composers and auditors who underwent elementary education would have been familiar with *chreia* exercises.³⁵¹ In advanced levels of study³⁵² in philosophy or rhetoric,³⁵³ students elaborated *chreiai* or used them as *theses* to be argued.³⁵⁴ Education was

include descriptions of constitutions, countries, or nature. A final historical genre is observed in Herodotus and other historians when they combine all the historical genres described here.

³⁴⁵ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 70, treats the description of recasting as a "somewhat obscure passage."

³⁴⁶ The student was "to fit voice and gesture" to the subject matter since this "actualizes the art of the speech."

³⁴⁷ Elaboration is "language that adds what is lacking in thought and expression ... by making clear what is obscure; by filling gaps in the language or context; by saying some things more strongly, or more believably, or more vividly, or more truly, or more wordily" or with "each word repeating the same thing ... or more legally, or making the subject pleasanter, or using a better arrangement" or style (Theon, *Prog.71* [Kennedy]).

³⁴⁸ Contradiction "is discourse that attacks the credibility of another discourse" by showing that it is obscure, impossible, incredible, deceitful, inadequate in thought or expression, or redundant, confused, contradictory, illegal, violates the "rules of good arrangement," or that the "speech was ineffectively delivered" (Theon, *Prog.72* [Kennedy]).

³⁴⁹ Elaboration is especially useful "in second speeches in trials" while contradiction "is useful in replies" (Theon, *Prog.8* [Kennedy]).

³⁵⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 137–38, finds it impossible to "know exactly how much paper work was involved in the composition of the NT texts" (p. 137), which was to be "performed by a reader" who could then "perform the message" and communicate a "range of meanings that could not ... be inscribed on the manuscript" (p. 138).

³⁵¹ Fitzgerald, "Chreia," 113, states further that *chreia* forms were "introduced at the primary level" to teach pupils to read and write, and was used in the secondary level "to instruct pupils in how to decline nouns and conjugate verbs."

³⁵² Hock and O'Neil, *Classroom*, 2. Primary education may have been informal education for marginalized people but students progressed in a three-tiered manner, first "learning to read and write" and then "studying literature and grammar" before "receiving training in rhetorical composition and delivery."

³⁵³ Schaps, *Classical*, 136.

³⁵⁴ Fitzgerald, "Chreia," 113–15. The *chreia* form itself was so named due to its "'usefulness' in addressing many situations in life," and it "gained popularity as a literary form" in the "Hellenistic period, when it became a standard part of the curriculum at all three educational levels."

also distinguished for upper³⁵⁵ and lower classes of society. Ancient auditors may have had access to the common literacy, *ludus literarius*, or to the *scholae liberales* for more privileged students.³⁵⁶ Rhetorical categories in John 21 could be used to assess the ancient function of literary *aporiae* in John 21. Even a lack of Theon's conventions in John 21, such as the one that students are to avoid "composing badly" by not adopting the "metrical and rhythmical style" observed in the "Asian orators" (*Prog* 13–14 [Kennedy]),³⁵⁷ could support the notion that John 21 betrays oral-manuscript conventions.³⁵⁸

3.3.2.2 Ancient Narratives and Auditors in Theon's Progymnasmata

Johannine scholars have recently begun to argue that the prologue (John 1:1–18) may have been composed and adapted from a variety of rhetorical conventions.³⁵⁹ Myers observes that the composer adapted "encomiastic *topoi* for his own rhetorical purposes," which supports the notion that rhetorical conventions in John's prologue need not "align perfectly with any particular prologue genre."³⁶⁰ There are also communicative functions³⁶¹ in the composition of

³⁵⁵ Johnson, "Book," 269–70, finds that patrons were needed to fund the literary activity required to publish books since books were a "product associated with the intellectual and social elite."

³⁵⁶ Neyrey, *Rhetorical*, 6.

³⁵⁷ Theon does find it "excusable when someone falls occasionally into those meters which have similarity to prose," such as the iambic rhythm.

³⁵⁸ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 32, distinguishes two competing prose styles in ancient rhetoric as Asianism and koine. He describes Asianism as a "highly artificial, self-conscious search for striking expression in diction, sentence structure, and rhythm," whereas koine "is neither artificial nor very self-conscious and results from the use of Greek as a medium of communication throughout the Near East by persons without deep roots in Greek culture. Ancient grammarians and rhetoricians taught Atticism, which uses Greek literary prose from the fifth and fourth centuries BCE "as models for imitation in diction and composition." Composers of NT texts had at least three stylistic registers from which to choose, but the choice reflected the "writer's own education and literary abilities, his perception of his function, his subject, and the audience he intends to reach." Kennedy uses Quintilian's identification of three literary prose genres as oratory, historiography, and philosophical dialogue (p. 31) to assert that John does "not show much awareness of classical literary genres, not even of biography as a non-literary form." John may be parallel to Tacitus's *Life of Agricola* which combines epideictic oratory through encomia with historical monograph. In relation to the usefulness of literary categories in rhetorical criticism, Kennedy's argument is that an identification of *literary* genres in NT texts are not fundamental to "understanding how rhetoric actually works in the units of the New Testament" (p. 33).

³⁵⁹ Brant, *Drama*, 24, compares John's prologue to Euripides and finds that it "bears little direct resemblance to the form" found in Euripides due to its "prosaic rather than poetic structure" (p. 22). There are similarities in how John's prologue introduces tensions that are also found in literature such as *The Trojan Woman*, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, and *Children of Heracles*. The function of prologues in performative contexts was to introduce the action to follow on stage by getting the attention of the audience (p. 23). The "design" had to grab the listener's attention through "repetitive or circular patterns."

³⁶⁰ Myers, *Characterizing*, 74–75. Ancient auditors of narratives expected characterization techniques to establish the credibility of the narrative, therefore the function of the prologue and the "repeated narrative asides" draws in audiences to engage with John's rhetorical characterizations.

³⁶¹ Brant, *Drama*, 38, finds that οὖν in λέγει οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς (John 21:5) and in Ὅτε οὖν ἠρίστησαν λέγει τῷ Σίμωνι Πέτρῳ ὁ Ἰησοῦς (John 21:15) illustrates a usage before a "leading question, statement, or action" and is also used similarly elsewhere in the Gospel (cf. John 4:9; 5:8–10; 6:14, 60; 7:43; 11:45–53). She finds an

prologues³⁶² that was useful in the ancient oral/textual media situation.³⁶³ It is necessary to consider the array of rhetorical features described in Theon's *progymnasmata* before applying it in the media-rhetorical analysis of John 21 in chapter four. These features found in Theon's work will provide us with a better understanding of rhetorical devices that were used in the period in which John 21 was composed.

Theon's treatise³⁶⁴ provides a set of categories for the composition of narratives that were likely to have been known in John's milieu (*Prog.4* [Kennedy]).³⁶⁵ Narrative (*diêgêma*) composition uses language to describe events that have happened or to construct events "as though they had happened" (Theon, *Prog.28* [Kennedy]). Six elements (*stoikheia*) of narration (*diêgêsis*) addressed by Theon include the person (*prosôpon*),³⁶⁶ action,³⁶⁷ place of action,³⁶⁸

inconsistency in the use of οὖν and the historic present in John, but there is enough consistency for her to suggest that οὖν and the historic present functions similarly to the "Euripidean messenger's speech," allowing the "narrator's reportage" to draw audiences into the narrative time (p. 41).

³⁶² Brant, *Drama*, 27, finds the composer of John's narrative discourses to follow theatre conventions of "episodic structure" found in Greek tragedies, catering for characters to move on and off the stage.

³⁶³ Brant, *Drama*, 24–24, describes the most important function of ancient prologues as being "to bridge the distance of time and place between the action of the play and the situation of the audience," which can be seen even in the sudden use of the first-person plural "we" in John 1:14 (p. 24). In relation to John 21:24, the sudden inclusion of the first-person plural "we" may have a similarity to rhetorical conventions of John's compositional milieu, but Brant finds that redactional and multiple edition theories posit that John 21:24 is an *aporia* where the author and narrator are revealed as having different identities (p. 25). She suggests that the function of the "we" in John 21:24 is better explained in light of the communication between the narrator and the audience.

³⁶⁴ The forms are outlined in § 3.3.1. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, ix, considers that the exercises were set with increasing difficulty and that "progymnastic forms were often combined in different ways to create epics, dramas, histories, and the genres of lyrical poetry." Moreover, these exercises were a "source of facility in written and oral expression" that also "inculcated cultural values, as well as understanding of conventional literary forms

³⁶⁵ Theon considered his exercises applicable to "those acquiring the faculty of rhetoric," and also to those seeking to undertake other kinds of writing such as "historical writing." There is also an indication that the composition of historical narratives was closely connected to the oral-rhetorical performance thereof to audiences in the Greco-Roman milieu, because "one who can refute or confirm ... is not far behind those speaking hypotheses." Theon considers those who can express a narration and a fable "in a fine and varied way will also compose a history well," since historical composition involves a "combination of narrations."

³⁶⁶ The properties of person include origin (*genos*), "nature, training, disposition, age, fortune, morality, action, speech," manner of death, and "what followed death" (Theon, *Prog.28* [Kennedy]).

³⁶⁷ *Action* consists of whether it was "great or small, necessary or unnecessary, advantageous or not advantageous, just or unjust, honourable or dishonourable" (Theon, *Prog.28* [Kennedy]).

³⁶⁸ For the *place*, one may consider the "size, distance, near a city or town, whether the place was sacred or unhallowed, owned or someone else's, deserted or inhabited, strong or insecure, flat or mountainous, dry or wet, barren or wooded, and all similar things" (Theon, *Prog.29* [Kennedy]).

time of action,³⁶⁹ manner of action,³⁷⁰ and the cause of the action³⁷¹ (Theon, *Prog.*28–29 [Kennedy]).³⁷² Theon also suggests that narrations should contain the three virtues (*aretai*) known as clarity, conciseness, and credibility (*Prog.*30 [Kennedy]).³⁷³

Regarding the virtue of *credibility*, Theon implies that composers should consider the reception of their messages, in saying that “one should narrate very briefly things that are going to distress the hearers.”³⁷⁴ Credible narratives, especially if historically rooted, should not to confuse the order of events known to auditors (*Prog.*30 [Kennedy]).³⁷⁵ These aspects distract audiences and affects the credibility of the narrative being read/performed.

Regarding the style (*hermêneia*) of narrations, the virtue of *clarity* calls for the avoidance of “poetic and coined words and tropes and archaisms and foreign words and homonyms” (Theon, *Prog.*30 [Kennedy]).³⁷⁶ Tropes signified meanings that were not obvious to audiences outside of the implied communication system (Theon, *Prog.*30–31 [Kennedy]).³⁷⁷ Archaisms represent words that were commonly utilized in the past but has since fallen out of use, while foreign words were “those native to some but not usual to others” (Theon, *Prog.*31 [Kennedy]).³⁷⁸ The use of homonyms, which are single words “pronounced in the same way but with different significations” or semantic ranges of meaning, should also be considered in

³⁶⁹ The *time* element concerns “what has gone by, what is present, and what is going to be,” and extends to the “dates people have set in public or private life.” It can therefore describe the seasons in which the action was undertaken, whether during the day or night, whether “during a meeting of the assembly or during a procession or festival ... or any such circumstance of life” (Theon, *Prog.*28–29 [Kennedy]).

³⁷⁰ The *manner* of action can be described as done “unwillingly ... done by ignorance, accident, and necessity,” or as done willingly “by force or secretly or by deceit” (Theon, *Prog.*29 [Kennedy]).

³⁷¹ The *cause* of action conveys whether the action was done “to acquire good things or for the sake of escape from an evil, or from friendship or because of a wife or for children or out of the passions: anger, love, hate, envy, pity, inebriation, and things like these” (Theon, *Prog.*29 [Kennedy]).

³⁷² He asserts that a complete narration consists of all elements while the omission of even one element would render such a narrative as “deficient.”

³⁷³ If the subject matter “is of a difficult nature, one should go for clarity and credibility,” but if it is a simple matter, one should then “aim at conciseness and credibility.”

³⁷⁴ An example is given of Homer, who declares that “Patroclus lies dead” (*Illiad* 18.20). Composers were rather to spend more effort narrating “pleasant-sounding” subject matters (Theon, *Prog.*30 [Kennedy]).

³⁷⁵ Confusing times or the order of events, as well as “saying the same thing twice” was to be avoided. It can be argued that John’s narrative ‘confuses’ the traditional order of events known in the synoptic traditions and also contains repetition in the distressful narration of the death of the Beloved Disciple (John 21:23).

³⁷⁶ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 30n112. *Poeticisms* refer “to words that need exegesis” while *coined words* are those constructed in an onomatopoeic sense of echoing the sound of their meanings. The example of coined words given is “‘rushing, clashing, gushes.’”

³⁷⁷ The trope “[b]road-browd Zeus grants a wooden wall to the Tritogenes (Athena)” (Herodotus 7.141) signifies that the Athenians were “to leave their city, go board their ships, and use them as a ‘wall.’”

³⁷⁸ For example, Theon finds that the Thessalians refer to a harbour as a marketplace and the Cretans calls a boyfriend famous instead of beloved.

relation to the clarity expected³⁷⁹ in ancient narratives (Theon, *Prog.*31 [Kennedy]).³⁸⁰ An expression may also be ambiguous or unclear³⁸¹ when it is not evident “what some part of a word belongs,”³⁸² or “when it is not evident to what some signifying portion refers” (Theon, *Prog.*31 [Kennedy]). These points hold true for oral-manuscript media composed in the “*scripta continua* fashion ... lacking word breaks, punctuation and upper-lower case differentiation.”³⁸³

A problem associated with the oral performances of texts is that lengthy digressive phrases or clauses inserted in sentences removes the *apodosis* from the clause (Theon, *Prog.*32 [Kennedy]). This may confuse audiences and distract from the clarity sought in narrations. To avoid further confusion for audiences, students were urged to avoid synonyms and substituting a phrase in place of a word as these made sentences “needlessly long” to follow, thereby detracting from the virtue of *clarity* (Theon, *Prog.*33 [Kennedy]).³⁸⁴

In Theon’s treatment of *nomos*,³⁸⁵ the issue of clarity and the occurrence of ellipses is considered (*Prog.*62–63 [Kennedy]).³⁸⁶ The problem of ellipsis, which is attested in John 21,³⁸⁷ can occur through the “omission of cause or person or necessity or manner of place or time or

³⁷⁹ Theon suggests that composers of narratives should avoid hyperbata, which is the placement of “words out of their original order in a sentence,” but does not reject all hyperbata, especially those used for a variation of expression (Theon, *Prog.*31–32 [Kennedy]).

³⁸⁰ *Pais* can mean “boy” while signifying “a son and a young child and a slave.”

³⁸¹ Another aspect inhibiting the *clarity* of narrative style is what Theon refers to as “amphiboly.” This is when there is confusion between the meanings of words since it is unclear whether the word is to be regarded as divided or undivided. For instance, *aulêtris* means “flute-girl,” but *aulê tris* means “a hall thrice.”

³⁸² Theon suggests that “Heracles fights *oukentaurois*” has two meanings, that Heracles does not fight with centaurs or that he does not fight among bulls. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 31n115, notes the suggestion of “not among Taurians” as another possibility.

³⁸³ Eddy, “Orality,” 646–47. Due to the difficulty of attempting a “spontaneous vocalized reading of the *scripta continua* style ... a literate reader would first commit the essence of the text to memory in preparation for the public performance.” The ancient function of “orally oriented written texts” was to serve “as inscribed references for future reoralizations of the tradition from which they emerged.” For a hypothetical oral-manuscript example of John 21:11 written in majuscule continuous script, see figure 3.3 in § 3.2.2.

³⁸⁴ Furthermore, concise narratives should seek to eliminate that which could be supplied by the listener and should make use of shorter and simpler words rather than compound and complex words. Theon does caution against falling into the trap of “idiosyncrasy or obscurity” in the pursuit of conciseness.

³⁸⁵ *Nomos* requires advocating the “more profitable interpretation” by amplifying the written laws while concealing differing interpretations.

³⁸⁶ Similar to narratives, Theon finds that a lack of clarity in *nomos* may result from pronunciation (prosody), from a confusion over the meaning of a word, homonymy, polyonymy (synonymy), syntactical construction, compounding and divided words, pleonasm, ellipsis, or from inconsistency.

³⁸⁷ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 632, find for instance in ἀγαπᾷς με πλέον τούτων; (John 21:15a), an ellipsis in a clause that requires to be made explicit in translation. This can be done by adding the implied “love” in the clause so that it is translated “than these other love me.” This ellipsis may yield exegetical confusion since if it is taken that “these” refer to objects, as the question then being asked is whether Peter loves Jesus more than the boats, nets, and, by implication, his previous occupation as a fisherman.

quality or quantity” (Theon, *Prog.*64 [Kennedy]).³⁸⁸ In light of the observation that in live oral communications there are often more repetitions, ellipses, and redundancies than in literary communications,³⁸⁹ if the aspects of clarity are absent, it may point to the oral-manuscript function of John 21. Although ancient narrations were to be *concise*, repetitions, redundancies, and ellipses are observed in ancient oral-manuscript communications (Theon, *Prog.*32 [Kennedy]).³⁹⁰ This is because an oral-manuscript narrative text makes use of different conventions than those needed for live oral/aural communication of the subject matter to a live audience (Theon, *Prog.*32–33 [Kennedy]).³⁹¹

For a *credible* narration, composers were to use styles suited to the speakers and the subject matter (Theon, *Prog.*33 [Kennedy]).³⁹² In the act of narrating, “it is possible to add a comment and to weave two or three narrations into the statement” (Theon, *Prog.*34 [Kennedy]).³⁹³ Narrations may also be varied according to the ways in which factual aspects are presented or enquired about (Theon, *Prog.*35 [Kennedy]).³⁹⁴ Students were also required to practice “refutation and proof”³⁹⁵ of narratives using argument from the “‘elements’ of which all action consists,” namely, “person, action, place, time, manner, cause” (Theon, *Prog.*40–41 [Kennedy]). These could be incorporated into the various topics for the refutation against “mythical narrations told by the poets and historians about gods and heroes, as well as about creatures whose natural shape has changed” (Theon, *Prog.*41 [Kennedy]).³⁹⁶ The critique of

³⁸⁸ In the following example of an ellipsis of cause regarding *nomos*, “a father-beater’s hands shall be cut off” omits whether or not it shall be cut off if done in ignorance or if done for a good.

³⁸⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 138. Due to the infodensity of speech being less than that of textual communications, “redundancies in speech as curtailed in writing.”

³⁹⁰ In the pursuit of conciseness, however, caution was needed to signify the most important facts while not adding unnecessary detail “nor omitting what is necessary to the subject and style.

³⁹¹ For instance, composing a historical writing about Cylon can include something about his ancestry, his participation and victories at Olympia, including relevant dates thereof. When narrating about Cylon for audiences, it is appropriate not to address all these aspects about his life as it will distract from the main rhetorical aim of the communication.

³⁹² The causes of things should be brief, but added to the narration, and things that are unbelievable should be stated in a believable manner.

³⁹³ Theon suggests five ways to rearrange the natural or original order of the narrative or narration. First, one may begin in the middle and backtrack to the beginning before running back to the end (middle, beginning, and end). Second, one may also start at the end and progress to events in the middle and then to the beginning (end, middle, and beginning). Third, one may start in the middle and progress toward the end before ending with the natural beginning of the narrative (middle, end, and beginning). The other combinations are end, beginning, middle, and beginning, end, middle (*Prog.*34–35 [Kennedy]).

³⁹⁴ These aspects could be set out in the form of straightforward statements, figurative or symbolic statements, questions, enquiries, doubts, commands, wishes, oaths, direct address to participants, to advance suppositions, and dialogues.

³⁹⁵ Refutation can be undertaken on the grounds of the narration being “incredible” by “showing that it is unbelievable of the person and that the action and place ... are incredible.”

³⁹⁶ Theon gives the example of Pegasus, Erichthonius, Chimeras, and Hippocentaurs.

“mythologies” is one thing, but Theon considered that explaining how a mythical story came about required an advanced level of compositional skill (*Prog.*41–42 [Kennedy]).³⁹⁷

Topos is “language amplifying something that is acknowledged to be either a fault or a brave deed” (Theon, *Prog.*42–43 [Kennedy]).³⁹⁸ *Encomia* and *invectives* require a *prooemia*, but *topos* assumes previous thought or can be considered as “part of something else spoken earlier ... like an epilogue” that expresses “what has already been demonstrated” (Theon, *Prog.*43 [Kennedy]).³⁹⁹ John 21 itself is considered as a literary *aporia* and even scholars arguing for narrative unity suggest that John 21 functions like an epilogue.⁴⁰⁰

Ekphrasis is descriptive language that brings “what is portrayed clearly before sight and is usually used to describe “persons and events and places and periods of time” (Theon, *Prog.*45–46 [Kennedy]).⁴⁰¹ Though similar, it differs from *topos*⁴⁰² in that *topos* concerns “matters of moral choice” as opposed to *ekphrasis*, which is most often “about lifeless things and those without choice” (Theon, *Prog.*46 [Kennedy]). It is possible to analyse if John 21 contains elements of *ekphrasis*, since there are descriptions, events, times, objects, and other aspects within the narrative. When composing an *ekphrasis*, one should attend to events “from the point of view of what has gone before, what was included within them, and what results from them” (Theon, *Prog.*46 [Kennedy]). Of the virtues of composing an *ekphrasis*, “clarity and a vivid impression of all-but-seeing what is described,” is foremost while the recollection of “useless details” should be avoided (Theon, *Prog.*47 [Kennedy]).⁴⁰³

³⁹⁷ Theon finds this in Herodotus (2.56–57), who critiques the mythology of how the “doves” flew from Egypt and came to rest in Dodona and on the shrine of Ammon. It is explained that the story came about as a result of maidens who came from Thebes that were priestesses, but one of them was taken as a slave to Dodona and another to the shrine of Ammon. Moreover, their strange or “barbarous language” was “incomprehensible to the local inhabitants,” facilitating the emergence of the story “that they were birds.”

³⁹⁸ As a *topos*, it serves as a common starting point or “place” from which to find arguments or *epikheiroumen* for *epicheiremes* (the argument that supports the application of *topos*). It differs from *encomia* and *invectives*, which “are concerned with specific persons and include a demonstration” while *topoi* “are concerned simply with their subjects and involve no demonstration” (Theon, *Prog.*43 [Kennedy]).

³⁹⁹ An example is found in Aeschines (1.190).

⁴⁰⁰ Keener, “John,” 421.

⁴⁰¹ *Ekphrasis* may include descriptions of the person’s appearance and feature, descriptions of events such as wars, storms, famine, plagues, and earthquakes, descriptions of places such as meadows, shores, cities, islands, and deserts, descriptions of times such as seasons and festival times, descriptions of objects such as weapons, siege engines, and describing how they were made. There can also be mixed *ekphrasis* for instance a “night battle” described by Thucydides (2.2–5, 3.22, 7.44), involves a description of time and a description of an event.

⁴⁰² Both *ekphrasis* and *topos* are concerned with what is common and general.

⁴⁰³ Furthermore, the style of the *ekphrasis* should reflect the subject matter so that the “features of the style should not strike a discordant note with the nature of the subject.” Theon suggests that a subject of something that is colourful requires the word choice to also be colourful, or if the subject is “rough or frightening” then the word choice should reflect it.

Another feature of narrative composition is personification or *prosôpopoeia*,⁴⁰⁴ which is the “introduction of a person to whom words are attributed that are suitable to the speaker” and has an “indisputable application to the subject” under discussion (Theon, *Prog.47* [Kennedy]). The writer imagines what a historical figure would have said in the particular situation by considering the personality, age, and social status of the speaker, and the occasion, place, and audience “to whom the speech is addressed (Theon, *Prog.47* [Kennedy]). Different ways of speaking belong to an older man when compared to a younger man. Also, different words were appropriate according to the *nature* of the speaker, whether a man or a woman, according to the *status* of speakers, whether a slave or a free person, according to the *activities* appropriate to the speaker, according to the *state of mind* of the speaker, and according to the *origin* of the speaker (Theon, *Prog.48* [Kennedy]).⁴⁰⁵

An *enkômion* “is language revealing the greatness of virtuous actions and other good qualities belonging to a particular person. The praise of a dead person is known as an “epitaphios” or funeral oration while the praise of the gods are known as hymns (Theon, *Prog.50* [Kennedy]).⁴⁰⁶ Fine actions were “praised after death” and are those actions “done for others rather than ourselves” and “for the sake of the honourable” (Theon, *Prog.50–51* [Kennedy]).⁴⁰⁷ Praiseworthy actions were especially those “done for benefactors and ... for those who are dead” (Theon, *Prog.51* [Kennedy]).⁴⁰⁸ Praise can come about by making conjectures “about the future on the basis of past events,”⁴⁰⁹ and to comparing the deeds of the persons being praised to those who are already honoured (Theon, *Prog.51* [Kennedy]).

Synkrisis is “language setting the better or worse side by side” and can be in relation to persons, such as Ajax and Odysseus, or things, such as wisdom and bravery (Theon, *Prog.52–*

⁴⁰⁴ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 47, finds that Theon uses *prosopopoeia* to describe “any speech in character.” He notes that Theon is apparently “unaware of the distinction between *prosopopoeia*, *ethopoeia*, and *eidolopoeia* found in later *progymnasmata*.”

⁴⁰⁵ These factors help to reconstruct a plausible speech in a narrative and the exercise in *prosôpopoeia* is “most receptive of characters and emotions.”

⁴⁰⁶ Although Theon considers the term to derive from the “ancient custom of eulogies of the gods at a revel (*kômos*) or game (*paidia*), Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 50n155, notes that the term derives from *kômos*, which is a “song escorting home a victor in athletic games.” Regardless of who is being praised, Theon considers the “method of speaking” as remaining the same.

⁴⁰⁷ Topics of praise were also composed from names, such as Demosthenes meaning the “people’s strength” (*dêmou sthenos*), from homonyms, such as when a person shares a name with a famous person, and from nicknames such as Pericles being called “Olympian” due his achievements.

⁴⁰⁸ The *enkômion* was composed on the basis of the occasion, whether someone done it alone, first, or “when no one else acted, or did more than others or with few helpers or beyond what was characteristic of his age or contrary to expectation or with toils or because they were done very hastily and quickly.”

⁴⁰⁹ The example used by Theon relates to Alexander of Macedon and conjectures about what would have become of Alexander, who overthrew many great peoples, if he had lived even a little longer.

53 [Kennedy]). In comparison, care has to be taken not to compare persons or things having a difference or superiority between them, since *synkrisis* is the comparison of likes (Theon, *Prog.53* [Kennedy]).⁴¹⁰ Theon suggests two ways of presenting *synkrisis*, either presenting each party being compared separately or presenting them as part of the same account (*Prog.55* [Kennedy]).⁴¹¹ Characters in a narrative may be compared using *synkrisis*.

Thesis,⁴¹² which is a verbal enquiry concerning a matter in doubt, differs from *topos*, which is an amplification of a matter in agreement (Theon, *Prog.55* [Kennedy]).⁴¹³ *Thesis* also differs from *prosôpopoeia* in that *thesis* does not reveal personality while *prosôpopoeia* involves the “invention of words appropriate to the persons who are introduced” (Theon, *Prog.55–56* [Kennedy]). The prooemia of *theses* are obtained from maxims, *chreiai*, proverbs, historical reports, or from an *enkômion* for or a *psogos* (invective) against the matter in question. There is no narration after the *prooemia*, which is to be followed by the various headings and supported by arguments ranging from what is necessary, noble, beneficial, and pleasant, and is refuted from the opposite (Theon, *Prog.56–57* [Kennedy]).⁴¹⁴ Those students privileged enough to access advanced education were to include the “evidence of famous men, poets and statesmen and philosophers” and “any histories that agree with what is being said” in such a way so as to amplify the examples rather than merely fill “up the speech with histories and poems” (Theon, *Prog.57* [Kennedy]).⁴¹⁵

If it can be demonstrated that aspects of John 21 betrays a lack of awareness of conventions for ancient narratives, then a stronger argument can be made for the oral-

⁴¹⁰ Persons are compared by first attending to their birth, education, offspring, offices held, reputation, and bodily condition. Then, actions are compared “giving preference to those that are more beautiful and giving reasons why the good qualities of one person are better than the other. In these respects, *synkrisis* is similar to *enkômion* and in both it is better “not to mention hostile criticism” or to do so “as briefly as possible.”

⁴¹¹ It is possible to compare the relationship between characters in John 21’s narrative, such as between the Beloved Disciple and Simon Peter, using *synkrisis* even if all the topics mentioned by Theon are absent in John 21.

⁴¹² Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 55. Regarding *thesis*, Kennedy asserts that Theon’s *progymnasmata* reveals how “logical argumentation was taught at an introductory level” as is therefore in contrast to the “more sophisticated dialectic of the philosophical schools” described by Aristotle and the Neoplatonists.

⁴¹³ Other differences are that *thesis* aims to persuade while *topos* aims to get retribution and that *thesis* is spoken in an assembly or lecture room while *topos* is spoken in a law court.

⁴¹⁴ *Theses* can either be practical (political) or theoretical (philosophical), *Theses* are also composed from whatever topics are possible, so that what is recommended is regarded as being in accordance with human nature, manners, and customs, that it is appropriate, praiseworthy, just, or reverent, “either pleasing to the gods or to the dead,” or that it is necessary, honourable, profitable, contributes to security, and that it will be regrettable if the proposed *thesis* were to be omitted.

⁴¹⁵ Theon finds that, in addition to composing amplifications and digressions, students should also use emotions, characterizations, exhortations, and “nearly all the kinds (*ideai*) of discourse” (*Prog.61* [Kennedy]).

manuscript function of John 21.⁴¹⁶ In the next section, the media-rhetorical approach to the function of literary *aporiae* in John 21 will be outlined, by drawing together the insights from oral-manuscript media properties in § 3.3.3.1 and from Theon's rhetorical conventions in § 3.3.3.2, and then using these in chapter four to read John 21.

3.3.3 Media-Rhetorical Analysis: Rhetorical Criticism in Media Perspective

This study has so far argued that John may have been composed from a complex interplay of modes and registers. Regardless of the literary/oral interplay in the process of composition, it remained important to demonstrate the influence of rhetorical conventions in oral-manuscript communications. Furthermore, oral-manuscript compositions were well adapted to the oral/textual dynamics of the ancient media situation. The media-rhetorical approach will extract the media texture of John 21 and use the rhetorical conventions for the composition of oral-manuscript narratives that readers and audiences, whether literate or not, in Ephesus and Alexandria may have been acquainted with around 100 CE.

3.3.3.1 *Extracting the Media Textures of John 21*

The composition of John reveals an intensification of oral forms of communication that can also be observed when compared to conventions for ancient narratives. It is appropriate to consider that oral-manuscripts reveal compositional features of the media culture of the time. There are certain media implications for understanding the ancient oral-manuscript media texture of John 21.

- i. Oral manuscripts “were regarded as an aid to memorisation of what had been passed on orally by a teacher.”⁴¹⁷ This means that scholars should better appreciate the distinct role that the ancient media culture had on the way that texts were composed and read since literary *aporiae* in oral-manuscripts could have emerged as a result of *literary modes* of composition adapted to fit the *oral register* and continuous nature of live speech, or an or vice versa.

⁴¹⁶ Eddy, “Orality,” 647, asserts that “both in composition and reception, ancient written texts were both oral (spoken) and aural (heard) phenomena.”

⁴¹⁷ Loubser, *Oral*, 121.

- ii. When “oral communications were committed to manuscripts, the conventions of oral communication ... became intensified and condensed.”⁴¹⁸ This may provide a clue as to why certain features of literary processes of composition proposed by Theon could be absent from John. It may also suggest why repetitions and redundancies are found in oral manuscripts such as John.
- iii. Oral manuscripts also reveal “an abundance of chiasms, ring compositions,⁴¹⁹ parallelisms, verbal echoing,” and other “remnants of oral techniques that facilitate memory and enhance verbal performance.” These oral elements are also used to “mark the structure of a manuscripted text.”⁴²⁰ This shows that media concerns influenced the divergences from literary/rhetorical conventions expected for ancient narratives observed in John 21.

A general approach to uncovering the media texture of NT texts is given by Loubser.⁴²¹ In light of the present research into the Gospel of John focusing on the epilogue, the following steps describes how the specific media texture of John 21 will be explored:

- i. First, the text should be located in a specific socio-historical context so as to “form an idea of the available communications technologies.”⁴²² For this purpose, it was argued that Ephesus is a plausible context of reception that composers of John 21 may have at least envisioned. The media culture of Ephesus near the end of the first century CE would provide the closest approximation to the communications media technologies available to John 21’s composers, scribes, reader-performers, and auditors.
- ii. Next is an analysis of the text for “data on orality and literacy” that accounts for implicit data such as “biases toward speaking or writing, and the interaction

⁴¹⁸ Loubser, *Oral*, 121.

⁴¹⁹ Bruce W. Longenecker, *Rhetoric at the Boundaries: The Art and Theology of New Testament Chain-Link Transitions* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 154, uses a three-edition composition history, following John Painter’s model, for addressing Johannine *aporiae* using his chain-link construction to understand John 12:20–50 (p. 122) and in the original transition to John 18, John 14:30–31 (p. 140). He explains that “Johannine chain links highlight particular themes and crystallise the main ingredients of the narrative in a densely compacted form. He assigns chain-link transitions to the macro-structuring level to differentiate it from micro structures such as climax constructions (p. 29). He also considers that “Johannine transition markers” are constructions appear at the beginning of text units and “take their temporal bearings from the previous text units” (p. 149). Ὅτε οὖν ἠρίστησαν (John 21:15) and μετὰ ταῦτα (John 21:1) are examples from John 21, though many more are identified throughout John 1–21.

⁴²⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 121.

⁴²¹ See § 3.2.2.

⁴²² Loubser, *Oral*, 73.

between power/authority and writing.”⁴²³ One should also examine explicit data such as “words implying some form of communication.”⁴²⁴ A special *topos* in the transition to “manuscript-based communications” is the “reflection on the origin of the manuscript.”⁴²⁵ It may be considered that the *sphragis* (John 21:24–25) reveals a specific inclination toward scribality that may or may not be echoed in the first ending *aporia* (John 20:31).

- iii. Another step involves the evaluation of syntactical structures that could allow for certain oral-rhetorical features of narratives to become apparent.⁴²⁶ One device used for rhetorical emphasis is repetition, but these are usually “shorter and syntactically more complex” than methods such as “foregrounding ... the most important word or phrase in the sentence,” chiasms, and sharp dialectical contrasts.⁴²⁷ A comparison with conventions described by Theon may also add to the impression that John contains certain literary *aporiae* due to the nature of oral-manuscript communications, yielding more clues relating to the media-rhetorical function of ancient oral-manuscript texts.

3.3.3.2 *Constructing the Ancient Rhetorical Conventions in John 21*

A consideration of the conventions for the rhetorical composition of narratives toward the end of the first century CE presents important clues in the attempt to uncover the oral-manuscript function of John 21. Although Loubser argues against the need to use specific rhetorical handbooks and categories in the interpretation of NT texts,⁴²⁸ this research has argued, concerning John, that a plausible dialogue can be established between ancient *media* and *rhetorical* perspectives. Elements from Theon’s *progymnasmata* observed in John 21 can

⁴²³ Loubser, *Oral*, 73.

⁴²⁴ Loubser, *Oral*, 73.

⁴²⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 141–42, asserts that it is the Johannine texts that are the “most aware of manuscript culture” in the NT.

⁴²⁶ Loubser, *Oral*, 73.

⁴²⁷ Loubser, *Oral*, 139–40. There is a higher infodensity in manuscript communications than in oral communications as scribes involved in recording the oral composition “were highly skilled in reducing oral speech into the forms conducive to manuscript communication.”

⁴²⁸ Loubser, *Oral*, 142–43, argues that the differences and interplay between oral and manuscript communication and the high level of oral communication conventions present in NT texts means that there is not a “deliberate application of studied rhetorical techniques.” He considers that NT texts do “reflect some stylistic features” found in classical rhetography, but explains this occurrence as a result of the influence of rhetorical forms on the speech conventions and due to the influence of speech conventions on literary forms. Furthermore, the crucial difficulty lies in the uncertainty “of how pervasive certain categories were at specific periods and in specific social contexts.”

contribute to the analysis of literary *aporiae* in John 21. If important aspects from Theon's treatise are not observed or are contradicted in John 21, then it may further demonstrate the oral-manuscript function of John. The following rhetorical considerations for narratives from Theon's *progymnasmata* will be used to examine of John 21:

- i. The conventions for the composition of historically rooted narratives (*diêgêma*) will be used to analyse the composition of the narrative in John 21. Particular attention will be given to the elements (*stoikheia*) of narratives, namely, person, action, place, time, manner, and cause of action.
- ii. The virtues (*aretai*) of narratives in John 21 should also be assessed for *credibility*, *clarity* and *conciseness*. In addition to the reliability of the narrator's point of view, credibility also requires that distressful events are only briefly narrated. Clarity requires an exploration for *tropes*, *archaisms*, *foreign words*, and *homonyms*. Conciseness relates also to *ellipsis*, *repetition*, and *redundancies* and these in turn may indicate the oral-manuscript media properties of John 21.
- iii. As observed in the refutation of *mythos*, a significant level of compositional ability to explain how a certain view came to be held. John 21 contains tradition that some believed that the death of the Beloved Disciple was not to occur. This *distressful* narration of the death of a community leader in John 21:23 will be examined according to this rhetorical/literary aspect.
- iv. *Topos* is composed by assuming a previous narrative and therefore it may be compared to an epilogue. The death of Peter as a brave deed and as a result of the *relecture* of what has already been narrated regarding Peter and the Beloved Disciple are further areas for examination concerning *topos*.
- v. While *ekphrasis* are descriptions which can be illustrated according to the perspective of the narrator in John 21, *prosôpopoeia* concerns the appropriate characterization of persons and the words and actions associated to them. The *enkômion* can build off insights regarding the deaths of Peter and the Beloved Disciple implied in John 21. This is because virtuous action is praised after death. These characters may also therefore be compared to each other.
- vi. *Synkrisis* calls for a comparison between Peter and the Beloved Disciple. In the *relecture* model, these characters are compared earlier in John, but are again compared in John 21 in a new communications situation. The process of

relecture may itself have parallels to *paraphrasis*, but this will not be the focus of the analysis of John 21 in chapter four.

The exercises in *nomos*, *thesis*, and *hypothesis* will not be used in assessing the media-rhetorical function of literary *aporiae* in John 21, but the rhetorical features described in this section will allow an assessment of the extent to which rhetorical conventions from Theon's *progymnasmata* are found John 21. This will help to address the debate over the oral/literary dynamics influencing ancient manuscript communications. Furthermore, a lack of rhetorical conventions may further the argument that ancient texts were composed as oral-manuscripts that functioned primarily in the context of oral performances for live audiences. The rhetorical aspect reinforces the media perspectives developed thus far in this research, making a media-rhetorical approach to the ancient function of John 21 seem more plausible.

4. Media-Rhetorical Function of John 21:1–25 as Oral-Manuscript

In light of the research problem, John 21 is considered a compositional or literary *aporia* as a whole rather than in its individual literary units. Rather than approaching John 21 as a purely literary *aporiae*, the ancient media-rhetorical function of John 21 can also be analysed. There are also certain literary *aporiae* which may have had the ancient function of providing traces of the reader-performers and audiences “inscribed in the text.”⁴²⁹ This is because oral-manuscript compositions provided reader-performers with structuring techniques used in the oral/aural communications environment of John 21’s compositional milieu, like “mnemonic devices.”⁴³⁰ This can also be seen in explanatory interjections, which may have entered the text from the oral composition process, but which also provides audiences with a *credible* narration.⁴³¹ Ancient auditors hearing John’s narrative being performed are therefore also inscribed into the oral-manuscript form of John 21. The text can therefore be used to explore the media culture implied in John 21.

4.1 Ancient Manuscript Media Culture in John 21

Internal evidence for a compositional relationship between John 1–20 and John 21 has been identified in light of the double ending *aporia* shown in John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25. By considering that John 21 was composed to address a communication situation in Ephesus around 100 CE, it should be examined whether John 21:24–25 implies a different media situation than that implied in John 20:30–31, specifically, the relationship between the media dynamics implied in John 20:30–31 and the oral-literary media interplay in 21:24–25.

⁴²⁹ Myers, *Characterizing*, 183–84. The importance of scripture is put forward as the way in which the audience, who has not seen Jesus, could understand the identity of Jesus. Evidence from John is indicated by the beloved disciple not having resurrection faith due to not knowing the scripture (20:9) and by the references to the disciples having discovered that the life of Jesus was reflected in scripture (2:22; 12:16).

⁴³⁰ Loubser, *Oral*, 125.

⁴³¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 130.

4.1.1 Media Situation and the Double Ending *Aporia*: John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25

Scholars debate whether John 21 is literary *aporia* pointing to a composition history between John 1–20 and John 21, but 21:24–25 appears to be a “secondary conclusion” modelled on 20:30–31.⁴³² It is thus plausible to examine whether 20:30–31 represents a media situation showing a preference for oral communication, whereas 21:24–25 addresses a media environment with more diverse sources, oral and literary, of Jesus tradition. The media culture implied in John’s double-ending *aporia* will therefore be addressed in § 4.1.1.1. This media culture will be used to explore John 21’s multimedia gospel environment in § 4.1.1.2.

4.1.1.1 Oral/Literary Dynamics of John 21:24–25 in Relation to 20:30–31

An important aspect that convinces scholars of the double-ending *aporia* of John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 is that the two endings appear different in both their narrative function⁴³³ and their Greek style.⁴³⁴

20:30 Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν, ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ.

20:31 ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεῦτε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

21:24 Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ τούτων καὶ ὁ γράψας ταῦτα, καὶ οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθὴς αὐτοῦ ἡ μαρτυρία ἐστίν.

21:25 ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ ἃ ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἅτινα ἐὰν γράφηται καθ’ ἓν, οὐδ’ αὐτὸν οἴμαι τὸν κόσμον χωρῆσειν τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία.

⁴³² Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 639, find 21:25 to be a “second conclusion” that parallels 20:30–31.

⁴³³ Brown, *John*, 1124–25, excludes the beloved disciple from the “we,” but is “hesitant” to suggest that the “we” is an “authoritative group that did not take part in the writing but is now adding a seal of approval.” He thus regards the “we” as the representative capacity of the Johannine group that added John 21 to the rest of the Gospel. The emphasis on witness (μαρτυρία) and truth (ἀληθής) is Johannine. In light of the indefinite affirmation of the “we” who know that “his testimony is true” (καὶ οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθὴς αὐτοῦ ἡ μαρτυρία ἐστίν), Brown goes against a suggestion that John 21:24–25 is a “seal of approval” or *sphragis*, arguing that there is “no early attestation ... of adding such colophons in Christian writing.” This position contradicts the postulation of Culpepper regarding the literary form of the Johannine *sphragis*, but it is more important in this research to consider what the double-ending *aporia* reveals about Johannine manuscript culture.

⁴³⁴ Brown, *John*, 1126, finds the separate verses in 21:24–25 having “such a close connection” as the verses of 20:30–31, and that John 21:24 resembles 19:35 while 21:25a is a “poor imitation” of 20:30–31.

In relation to the Greek constructions in 20:30–31, Louw and Nida regard the clause ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ (20:30b) as a contrast to Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν (20:30a). The difficulty in 20:31 concerns the referent of “these things” that “were recorded” (ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται), which may either be the σημεῖα mentioned in 20:30, or to the written gospel as a whole.⁴³⁵ Brown finds a “contrast between signs not written down and signs that have been written down” in 20:30,⁴³⁶ implying that more could have been written.⁴³⁷ This points to the possibility that, whether accessible in oral and/or textual formats, diverse Jesus traditions were available to auditors of John 21.

When John 21:24–25 is compared to the ending in 20:30–31, ἄλλα πολλὰ (21:25) appears to be more “awkward Greek,” unlike the Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα of 20:30.⁴³⁸ Scholars may also argue for a literary *aporia* in the construction ἅτινα ἐὰν γράφηται καθ’ ἑν (21:25), which is regarded as untypical Johannine style,⁴³⁹ but the use of οἶμαι in 21:25 also suggests that 21:25 functioned as an oratorical clause. This can be analysed in light of the media-rhetorical conventions inscribed in the oral-manuscript form of John 21.⁴⁴⁰

Regarding the media aspect of John 21, it may be plausible that John 21 engages a media context where competing oral and textual Jesus traditions were being composed and performed. Brickle, who finds the Letters of John preceding the communication situation of John 21,⁴⁴¹ uses 2 John 12 and 3 John 13–14⁴⁴² to argue that the Letters illustrates a preference for “direct oral communication,” whereas the Gospel shows a preference for oral-manuscript

⁴³⁵ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 620. The aorist subjunctive reading “that you may believe” and the present subjunctive “that you may continue to believe” suggests a nuance between an intended use for outsiders implied by the aorist, and an intended use for insiders implied by the present.

⁴³⁶ Brown, *John*, 1056. The particles μὲν οὖν, which occur only in John 19:24, and the use of καὶ after πολλὰ in πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα “is more characteristic of Lucan than Johannine style” (p. 1055).

⁴³⁷ Brown, *John*, 1057. There is a parallel in 1 Macc. 9:22 worded as follows: “Now the rest of the deeds of Judas have not been recorded ... for they were many.”

⁴³⁸ Brown, *John*, 1125, assigns 20:30–31 to the evangelist and 21:24–25 to a later redactor.

⁴³⁹ Brown, *John*, 1125–26. This is due to the position of the relative pronoun ἅτινα in relation to the conditional clause ἐὰν γράφηται καθ’ ἑν. There is also an awkward construction in having the relative being followed by a conditional clause. The distributive kata, is also found in the non-Johannine addition (7:59–8:11).

⁴⁴⁰ Brown, *John*, 1129, suggests that οἶμαι is best explained “as a rhetorical device in a literary hyperbole.” John 21:25a (ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ ἃ ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς) “repeats somewhat awkwardly” the statement in 20:30 (Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν, ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ).

⁴⁴¹ Brickle, “Hearing,” 14.

⁴⁴² Brickle, “Hearing,” 14, places the Johannine Letters midway on a “continuum from oral discourse to written text” while John is closer to the written text axis.

communication.⁴⁴³ Loubser also finds these oral/literary dynamics in the Letters,⁴⁴⁴ but asserts that Johannine gospel writing culture was mainly “an oral and aural activity” where composers, whether or not this includes the beloved disciple,⁴⁴⁵ regarded themselves as “witnesses to the divine words spoken by Jesus” (21:24).⁴⁴⁶ Brant also views the two endings as implying a “literary composition based on selection.”⁴⁴⁷ This is because the final text was a “written record of the process of regular performances over several decades,”⁴⁴⁸ showing that the performance context is also part of the media culture of John 21.

By comparing the epilogues of John (20:30–31, 21:24–25) to those found in the plays of Euripides⁴⁴⁹ Brant suggests that John 20:30–31 and 21:24–25 taken together function like a “theatrical epilogue” that contains “elements by which the audience is invited to express

⁴⁴³ Brickle, “Hearing,” 14–15. His hypothesis is that “John’s Letters, like the Fourth Gospel, were written as a tactic to exploit the rhetorical power of writing but without the full-fledge authority inherent in work of history.” He finds that “[o]ral discourse had failed to quell the secessionist onslaught.” For this reason, the Letters, which stand in for the coming *Parousia* (2 John 12; 3 John 10, 14), “paved the way for the eventual composition of ... the Fourth Gospel” (p. 14).

⁴⁴⁴ Loubser, *Oral*, 122. He considers that the letters have a “self-conscious emphasis on the verb” γράφω, which is used as a synonym for “command” (1 John 2:7). There is also the indication that writing with ink on paper was “inferior” to direct oral/aural communication (2 John 1:12; 3 John 1:13).

⁴⁴⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 124. While the reference to the beloved disciple in 21:24 could “indicate the voice of a narrator-performer and/or of the writer” who is distinguished from this primary authorial witness, finds that a Johannine emphasis on writing could imply that the “narrator and writer were the same person.” He then argues that the plural “we” in 21:24, οἶδαμεν, points to an authorial team which may have included scribes. These scribes may have had to undertake the oral composition process of recording “an oral performance of the Gospel that had already been formalised and standardised to a high degree” since the manuscript served to “assist performance from memory” (p. 125).

⁴⁴⁶ Loubser, *Oral*, 122, also considers that the first audiences would have understood there to be communal continuity in the “authorial ‘spirit’ of John the Baptist, the beloved disciple, John the apostle, John the elder,” and if Revelation as included as Johannine, even John the seer. Distinguishing between the John’s received no attention in the Johannine texts themselves, implying that “individual writers merge into some form of collective authorship” (p. 124). This collective authorship “is a reflection of the conventions of oral culture, where the traditions supercedes individual creativity.”

⁴⁴⁷ Brant, *Drama*, 64. The use of γράφεται, “these are written” (20:30–31) and γεγραμμένα, “has written them” (21:24–25) points to this aspect. She also posits a specific communication situation implied in each ending of John. For the first ending, the focus is on the specific selection of material about Jesus for a composition that dramatizes the “death and resurrection” of Jesus in such a way that the audience “witnesses the glory of his actions” affirm the composition’s exultation of Jesus. In the second epilogue, the “narrator marshals the opinion of the audience” by affirming καὶ οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθῆς αὐτοῦ ἡ μαρτυρία ἐστίν. Together with 20:30–31, John 21:24–25 undertakes an “exercise in communication” that seeks to influence the audience by alternating the pronouns (“you” in 20:31 and “we” in 21:24), and by offering an opinion, which scholars also consider a literary hyperbole, οὐδ’ αὐτὸν οἶμαι τὸν κόσμον χωρήσειν τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία. She also considers that οἶμαι “invites the audience into the mind of the narrator and casts the assertion into a form of assessment” of the “Herculean labour” of “sorting through the material and weighing it” (pp. 65–66).

⁴⁴⁸ Loubser, *oral*, 127.

⁴⁴⁹ Brant, *Drama*, 64, finds that in the epilogues, the “dramatist makes direct references to the literary and selective nature of the composition.”

approval of the performance just witnessed.⁴⁵⁰ With regard to the performative context of oral-manuscript epilogues,⁴⁵¹ the audience is also “returned to its own time and place.”⁴⁵² Even in John’s textual form there is a focus on the audience with respect to the performative aspects of rhetorical oratory inscribed in the text. Brant finds that 20:31 may be more deliberative,⁴⁵³ while Kennedy’s suggestion that epideictic oratory could also be found in epilogues,⁴⁵⁴ opens up the possibility to read 21:25 as a hyperbole that seeks to persuade the audience to accept the performance just heard. The possible oratorical function of οἴμαι, together with the dramatic and epideictic nature of epilogues seeking to persuade audiences, shows that a concern about the ancient media situation from which John 21:24–25 derived its function is an important aspect to examine.

The argument developed here, however, is that a supposed media crisis was brought on by manuscript technology advancements that began to “affect the communication patterns of the audience.”⁴⁵⁵ The media crisis would have involved a proliferation of interpretations of the Jesus traditions, some of which may have been similar to extant gospels like Mark⁴⁵⁶ and Luke.⁴⁵⁷ There may even have been interpretations of the gospel tradition found noncanonical

⁴⁵⁰ Brant, *Drama*, 64–65, finds that epilogues functioned with relation to the audience evaluation of the performances in Greek theatres. In the plays of Euripides, there were appeals for the favour of the judges that ended with a signal for the audience to applaud the play.

⁴⁵¹ Brant, *Drama*, 69. Euripides changes the meter from iambic to the marching anapaestic rhythm when progressing from dialogue to epilogue (p. 66). There is no change of meter in the epilogues, but John’s epilogues display similarities to the performative aspects of Euripidean prologues. The Johannine narrator concludes in a manner that “consign the characters of the gospel to the past and do not point to a continuation of the action (p. 67). It may be suggested that the lack of continuation shows that the preference for oral communication alone was overtaken by the emphasis on oral-manuscript communications in the media environment in which John 21 was composed and performed.

⁴⁵² Brant, *Drama*, 64.

⁴⁵³ Brant, *Drama*, 234, suggests the purpose of leading the reader to accept or reject Jesus required deliberative rhetoric, but that the gospel of John as a whole is rendered in the epideictic rhetoric similar to funeral and victory orations. She places John among the Greek tragedies as a “tragic commemoration of death.”

⁴⁵⁴ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 74, regards the epideictic species of oratory as “common in proems or epilogues where the need arises to secure a favourable hearing or move an addressee to take some action.” Furthermore, epideictic oratory, which in the earlier Greek forms was used in the funeral oration, the festival panegyric, and the sophistic exercises, was used in the Roman period in private settings as well, such as in “speeches at birthdays and weddings and on the arrival or departure of friends or relatives” (p. 75).

⁴⁵⁵ Loubser, *Oral*, 128, considers that the media crisis may have been that the “stories of Jesus were multiplying at such a rate that the original Johannine reports were in danger of being lost.

⁴⁵⁶ Loubser, *Oral*, 128, states that even if the synoptic gospels “were available in manuscript form to the Johannine authors, the complex and integral manner in which their materials are reflected in the texts demands a theory that composition was done from memory.” This is because composition in the Johannine media situation was a “recording ... done within the context of an oral performance.”

⁴⁵⁷ Paul N. Anderson, “Acts 4:19–20 — An Overlooked First-Century Clue to Johannine Authorship and Luke’s Dependence upon the Johannine Tradition,” *The Bible and Interpretation*, 2010, 1–13 <<http://www.bibleinterp.com/opeds/acts357920.shtml>>, 9–10. He finds that Luke constructs Peter’s words in 4:19 in a way that is characteristic of Peter, and therefore when observing the words in 4:20, the parallel to Johannine literature and the narrative connection between Peter and John the Apostle here alludes to the idea that John the

gospels often dated to the mid-second century CE, such the *Gospel of Peter*⁴⁵⁸ and the unknown gospel *Egerton Papyrus 2*.⁴⁵⁹

4.1.1.2 Multimedia Situation of Johannine Manuscript Culture and Parallel Gospel Traditions

Near the end of the first century CE, a diversity of gospel traditions may have been accessible to at least some of John 21's intended audiences. If composers of John 21 envisioned a wider reception for the final oral-manuscript version, then John 21 may also be understood in light of this broader network of gospel interpretations available to Johannine composers and audiences.⁴⁶⁰ Although scholars debate the possible relationships between the Johannine and synoptic gospels,⁴⁶¹ the *Gospel of Peter* is used by Watson to show that John may have been composed in a period where parallel process of interpretation of the gospel tradition was being undertaken.⁴⁶² Identifying the text of the *Gospel of Peter* remains doubtful for many scholars,⁴⁶³

Apostle could have been the beloved disciple. Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 289, posit a major link between John 21 and Luke is the fishing story in Luke 5:1–11 which involved a partnership between those responsible to fish and a tax network. In the taxation network, fishermen lease fishing rights from the tax collectors based on a certain percentage of the total catch. The remaining catch was often sold to traders who further inflated costs before reaching the end consumer. These tax fishermen worked with partners.

⁴⁵⁸ Watson, *Writing*, 393, looks at the intertextual relationships between John and the *Gospel of Peter*, stating that in the parallels with Mark, these gospels represent different interpretive trajectories in the crucified king of the Jews motif as well as in the “motif of Galilee as the site of the risen Lord’s appearance (p. 393).

⁴⁵⁹ Evans, “Apocryphal,” 164, finds that Papyrus Egerton 2, which consists of four fragments, contains four or five narratives that parallel Johannine and synoptic accounts. The third fragment contains a few scattered words and the fourth fragment has only one legible letter.

⁴⁶⁰ Kruger, *Canon*, 277, uses the argument of Eusebius to show that the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Gospel of Peter* were deemed “heretical books” by the early church. Watson, *Writing*, 355, argues that precanonical gospel literature facilitated a “field within which an indefinite number of closely related texts circulate freely, eventually to be ascribed to Matthew or Peter, Mark or Mary, Luke or James, John or Thomas.” It is only in later centuries that gospel traditions which “previously coexisted in relative proximity to one another” were separated. This is acknowledged in the circulation of a fourfold canonical gospel containing the four canonical gospels.

⁴⁶¹ It was already discussed that Luke 5:7 contains a reference to Simon Peter’s fishing partners which in a tax-fisherman relationship could have been implied to be the toll collector Levi but the Johannine parallel has Andrew and Levi either unnamed or absent from its Galilean fishing trip (21:2). If composers and audiences of John and the *Gospel of Peter* had access to the Markan parallel that Galilee was the site of the appearance (Mark 16:7), then it appears as though this is Galilee motif is reinterpreted in the *Gospel of Peter* and in John as the place where the disciples return to their former lives.

⁴⁶² Watson, *Writing*, 401–2. He also uses Papyrus Egerton 2 or the “unknown gospel” to assert that John 5–6 has a parallel connection with the Papyrus Egerton 2 regarding the view about Moses, the Torah, the Jews, and their relationship to Jesus (pp. 295–96). His approach to early gospel production involves a conception of how a new “gospel rewrites its predecessors, whether that writing takes the form of revision, supplementation, or substitution.” For the synoptic gospels, Watson posits that “Matthew rewrites Mark” by revising and supplementing the “Markan material ... with new narrative and sayings material. Luke rewrites Matthew” especially in his revised temptation account and the substitution of a birth account in response to the Matthean birth narrative (p. 286).

⁴⁶³ Craig A Evans, “The Apocryphal Jesus: Assessing the Possibilities and Problems,” in *Exploring the Origins of the Bible*, ed. by Craig A Evans and Emanuel Tov (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 147–72,

despite the appearance of parallels between the *Gospel of Peter* and John 21. These can be perceived in relation to the Galilee fishing trip and the presence or, in the case of John 21, absence of Peter, Andrew, and Levi.

In the *Gospel of Peter*, the disciples journey to Galilee to “resume their everyday lives” and it is narrated that Simon Peter and Andrew took their nets and went to fish along with Levi son of Alphaeus (*GPet* 14.58–60).⁴⁶⁴ Moreover, in Mark, the tax office of Levi is located on the lake, and it is also to Andrew, Peter, and Levi that the original call to “follow me” was made by Jesus (Mark 1:17; 2:14). In both the *Gospel of Peter* and John 21, there is a possible “reenactment of the original call of the disciples” where Jesus is on the shore (John 21:4–7) and a call to “follow me” is made (John 21:19b).⁴⁶⁵ In John 21, however, the characters of Andrew and Levi named in Mark and in the *Gospel of Peter* are either absent or unnamed. Elements in John 21 absent from the *Gospel of Peter* include Simon Peter’s subordination to the Beloved Disciple, which is an “exclusively Johannine concern” (21:7, 20–24; cf. 13:23–26; 18:15–16; 20:2–10) and the “editorial comments seeking to integrate” the Galilean appearance narrative into the Johannine gospel (John 21:1, 14, 24–25).⁴⁶⁶ Unlike *GPet*, John 21 does not explain how the disciples, last seen in Jerusalem, came back to Galilee and returned to their former way of life.⁴⁶⁷

159–61. Difficulties in the textual witnesses to the ancient work called the *Gospel of Peter* by patristic writers. The ninth century CE Akhmîm fragment has been compared to the finds of Oxryhachus fragments. The differences between the two versions was posited as an indication of composition history, but Evans regards the Akhmîm Gospel fragment as possibly “part of an unknown writing from a period after Serapion in the third century CE” (p. 172). He therefore concludes that “we have no solid evidence that allows us with any confidence to link the extant Akhmîm Gospel fragment with a second-century text, be that the *Gospel of Peter* mentioned by Bishop Serapion or some other writing from the late second century.”

⁴⁶⁴ Watson, *Writing*, 401–2. The association of fishing trips with Peter and Andrew is found in Mark 1:16–20, suggesting that *GPet* may have followed Mark, as Matthew and Luke did. As in Mark, *GPet* does not suggest that Levi was on the fishing trip with Peter and Andrew, as even in Mark 2:13–14 it is suggested that Levi’s tax office was near the lake.

⁴⁶⁵ The location of narratives, such as the lake of Tiberias, may have functioned to further enhance the intended characterization. John 6:23 connects Tiberias with the place where Jesus had given thanks before breaking bread with his friends, which further strengthens the suggestion that John 21 may be a *relecture* of earlier Galilee call narrative (1:35–51) and the fish and bread narrative (6:1–15). This point was made in connection *GPet* and Mark, but as in the omission of Levi and Andrew in John 21’s Galilean fishing trip, recourse does not have to be made that *GPet* is earlier by conforming to the Markan identification of the Andrew, Peter, and Levi in relation to fishing and the call to follow made by Jesus on the shore of the lake.

⁴⁶⁶ Watson, *Writing*, 403. Aspects in John 21 that may have occurred in *GPet* include the miraculous catch of fish (John 21:5–11; cf. Luke 5:1–11), the non-recognition of the risen Jesus (21:4, 7, 12), the cooked breakfast on the beach (21:9–13), and the dialogue between Jesus and Peter (21:15–18; cf. 2 Pet 1:14).

⁴⁶⁷ Watson, *Writing*, 404, considers that John 21 has the disciples already experiencing two previous appearances of Jesus prior to the Galilean appearance on shore of the lake (20:19–23), whereas the Galilean appearance of Jesus in *GPet* was the first appearance of the risen Jesus to Simon Peter, Andrew, and Levi.

Despite an argument that the *Gospel of Peter* could provide a datum for understanding competing Johannine and Petrine interpretive dynamics, there are difficulties in affirming the reconstructed text currently used as the *Gospel of Peter*.⁴⁶⁸ In light of the difficulties in identifying extant fragments as the *Gospel of Peter*, it is still worthwhile to consider that multiple gospel traditions, each with their own degree of interpretive trajectories and communicative intentions, were known to Johannine audiences by the end of the first century CE.

Another such gospel with parallels to Johannine gospel tradition is the *Egerton Gospel*.⁴⁶⁹ Scholars have even suggested that the *Gospel of Peter* and Papyrus Egerton 2 is a part of the fragmentary *Gospel of Peter*.⁴⁷⁰ Foster rejects the notion that the fragments used to posit a *Gospel of Peter* can be used as evidence for the text of the work known to Serapion as the *Gospel of Peter*. Evans finds the same “editorial improvements” made by Matthew and Luke in *P. Eger. 2* 32; 39–41,⁴⁷¹ and expressions that reflect “later pious Christian embellishment.”⁴⁷² He concludes that Papyrus Egerton 2 is better considered a second century CE “conflation of Synoptic and Johannine elements.” Watson’s proposal allows that parallel

⁴⁶⁸ Kruger, *Canon*, 279. Kruger accepts that the Akhmîm fragments represent the *Gospel of Peter* even though it was so identified due to it being found in an eighth or ninth century CE tomb alongside fragments of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and Greek *Enoch*. He regards the P.Oxy.2949 as incomplete fragmentary remains that offers little toward the extant text known in the Akhmîm fragments. Evans, “Apocryphal,” 159, also notes the use of P.Oxy4009 as relevant to scholarship on the *Gospel of Peter*. Watson, *Writing*, 393, uses the questionable Fayum fragment to find a parallel between the *Gospel of Peter* and John in the reinterpretations of the “motif of Galilee as the site of the risen Lord’s appearance.”

⁴⁶⁹ Evans, “Apocryphal,” 164. The enumerated references to Papyrus Egerton 2 fragments 1 and 2, such as 22–24, are based on the line divisions, while the additional reference, for example 22a, designates the lines in the Papyrus Köln 255. Specifically, lines 22a and 23a are to be distinguished from lines 22 and 23 of Papyrus Egerton 2 fragment 1 recto. Also, lines 42a–44a of Papyrus Köln 255 are to be distinguished from lines 42–44 of Papyrus Egerton 2 fragment 2 recto. The best fragments of Papyrus Egerton 2, which includes also the related Papyrus Köln 255, presents Johannine and synoptic parallels. Parallels to John include the assertion made by Jesus in lines 7–10 (cf. John 5:39, 45), the reply of the lawyers (cf. John 9:29; 10:31; 7:30; 8:20), the rejoinder of Jesus in lines 20–23a (cf. John 5:46), the attempted stoning of Jesus in lines 22–24 (cf. John 10:31), the declaration regarding the unsuccessful stoning “because his hour had not come” in lines 25–30 (cf. 7:30; 8:20), and the opening statement in lines 45–47 (cf. John 3:2; 9:29) have “echoes” and “allusions” to John.

⁴⁷⁰ Paul Foster, “The Gospel of Peter: Directions and Issues in Contemporary Research,” *Currents in Biblical Research*, 9 (2010), 310–338 <doi:10.1177/1476993X10367603>, 321.

⁴⁷¹ Evans, “Apocryphal,” 165. Compare *P. Eger. 2* 32 with Mark 1:40; Matt 8:2; Luke 5:12 and also *P. Eger. 2* 39–41 with Mark 1:44; Matt 8:4; Luke 17:14.

⁴⁷² Evans, “Apocryphal,” 165–66. An example of the “kind of stories found in the late and fanciful apocryphal Gospels,” such as the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* where the boy Jesus sows some seed that produced a fanciful harvest (*Infan. Thom.* 10.1–2 [Latin]), is also found in *P. Eger. 2* fragment 2 verso. Here Jesus sows some seed on the Jordan River that produces “abundant fruit springs.” This evidence points “against the antiquity and priority of Papyrus Egerton 2.”

gospels existed in the media environment of John 21,⁴⁷³ whether available in oral and/or manuscript form or whether similar or dissimilar to extant noncanonical gospels.⁴⁷⁴

Without more manuscript or other external evidence, scholars will continue to disagree about whether noncanonical gospels demonstrate a literary independence or dependence on the canonical gospels.⁴⁷⁵ The point being argued here is that audiences in the media environment of John 21 at the end of the first century CE had access to parallel oral and textual gospel traditions.⁴⁷⁶ This means that the *Gospel of Peter* will not be used to posit the characterizations intended by the composers and performers of John 21 for the *synkrisis* between Simon Peter and the beloved disciple in John 21, but such parallel gospel traditions,⁴⁷⁷ or earlier forms thereof, may have formed part of the communications situation in which audiences hearing (*akroasis*) the oral performance (*anagnôsis*) of John 21 sought to understand the *synkrisis* between Simon Peter and the beloved disciple.

4.1.2 Oral-Manuscript Media Composition and Ancient Numerical-Literary Structuring in John 21

Textual units are often identified according to literary considerations such as temporal markers, changes in persons, of place and time, and literal repetitions.⁴⁷⁸ Also, ancient oral-manuscript communications were made easier if it was composed with symmetrical

⁴⁷³ Watson, *Writing*, 294–95.

⁴⁷⁴ Watson, *Writing*, 406. For instance, he suggests that the Petrine and Johannine gospels both have access to earlier interpretations of the Jesus tradition, known for instance in Mark. Both John and the *Gospel of Peter* then “represent reinterpretations of earlier renderings of the passion narrative” (p. 391) and of the “inscription on the cross” motif, though each also carries out this reinterpretation differently (p. 384).

⁴⁷⁵ Evans, “Apocryphal,” 171, asserts that the *Gospel of Thomas* and the Egerton Papyrus originated in the second half of the second century CE. The Akhmîm gospel fragment, which may or may not be the *Gospel of Peter* identified by Serapion, cannot be dated before the mid-second century CE. He does find, however, that the *Gospel of Thomas* and the Egerton Papyrus 2 are “very important witnesses to the development of the Gospel tradition in the second century and possibly to early Gospel harmonies” (p. 172).

⁴⁷⁶ Watson, *Writing*, 355, for instance, uses a model of second orality in his understanding of textual production, reception, and reproduction to argue against a rigid understanding of literary dependence in the ancient media environment.

⁴⁷⁷ Other important noncanonical works which may influence how scholars view the exercise of *synkrisis* of early Christian characters may include the *Acts of Peter and Andrew*, the *Acts of Peter and Paul*, the *Martyrdom of Peter*, and the *Martyrdom of Peter and Paul*. It is not argued here that these traditions were specifically known or composed by 100 CE.

⁴⁷⁸ Menken, *Numerical*, 3.

arrangement.⁴⁷⁹ For instance, Hengel argues that the prologue (John 1:1–18)⁴⁸⁰ emulates the Semitic poetry of the psalms, which displays parallelisms and “chiastic-chain” structures.⁴⁸¹ Other scholars have assigned to John 21:1–25 a chiastic structure,⁴⁸² while others argued that the identity of the beloved disciple was inscribed within the chiastic structure of the list of disciples in 21:2.⁴⁸³ In this section, however, particular attention will be given to the aspect of the possibility of a numerical-literary structuring of John 21. If composers of narratives structured their texts to aid readers and audiences, then it is also possible that numerical-literary techniques were a function of the oral-manuscript media in the ancient communications media environment.

4.1.2.1 Ancient Arithmetic and Numerical-Literary Measures

To argue that ancient techniques for composing texts included the use of arithmetical structuring, the notion that the size of the parts of a literary unit plays a role in the structure of that unit will have to be explored.⁴⁸⁴ If this structuring was not required for reader-performers who could remember and recall the composition based on exposure to prior oral hearings and reading aloud, then numerical-literary structuring may still demonstrate how listening auditors receive the parts of the narrative and dialogue in John 21.

Menken, who does not attend to the media aspect of the oral-manuscript form of John and its potential to illumine how these manuscripts could be deciphered, argues that ancient

⁴⁷⁹ Menken, *Numerical*, 3. Scholars have found basic chiastic structures such as the parallel pattern (A-A'), the ring pattern (A-B-A'), the chiastic pattern (A-B-B'-A'), and the concentric pattern (A-B-C-B'-A'). Other structures are simply a sequence of elements (A-B-C-D-E), either according to the rhetorical conventions of narratives such as *prooemia*, narration, or according to other logical, geographical, or chronological concerns.

⁴⁸⁰ Hengel, “Prologue,” 268, regards the prologue hymn climax to be evident in the four words in 1:14, ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. It is also the interpretive “key” to the rest of John 1–21.

⁴⁸¹ Hengel, “Prologue,” 273, finds that individual lines are connected by keywords. These include help guide the reader as to the “progress of the thought” and give the six strophes of the prologue their key themes. Some of the key structuring and thematic words are ἦν, λόγος, θεὸς, ζωὴ, φῶς, σκοτία, κόσμος, ἐγένετο, ἴδια, ἐγένετο, δόξαν, πλήρης, χάριτος (pp. 273–74). These words exclude those sections focusing on Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ are regarded by Hengel as literary *aporiae* indicating a composition history (1:6–8, 15).

⁴⁸² See § 4.1.3 on the literary units of John 21.

⁴⁸³ Stramaral Daniel F. (Jr), “The Chiastic Key to the Identity of the Beloved Disciple,” *St Vladimirt's Theological Quarterly*, 53 (2009), 5–27, 7, says the “identity of the mysterious disciple is cryptically buried in a chiasm.” He then finds that Johannine audiences “familiar with the oral tradition of the community” could discern. According to him, then, the identity of the beloved disciple was once known and can theoretically be recovered again, though his or her identity cannot be “conclusively proven.” If there was a level of information control, then the resulting anonymity would not have been a problem to those in the Johannine community or in Johannine audiences who were in the know. This anonymity may have been a problem for those outside the Johannine communication network who are not in the know concerning the identity of the beloved disciple and eyewitness of this gospel tradition.

⁴⁸⁴ Menken, *Numerical*, 4.

authors used words and syllables as a unit of measure⁴⁸⁵ and that this measurement is applicable to both poetry and prose compositions.⁴⁸⁶ He uses evidence from Isocrates,⁴⁸⁷ Plato,⁴⁸⁸ Aristotle,⁴⁸⁹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus,⁴⁹⁰ Diodorus Siculus,⁴⁹¹ and Sallust⁴⁹² to argue that ancient composers of literary works were to consider the “size and proportion of the parts.”⁴⁹³ Furthermore, a major source for ancient Greek mathematics, Euclid’s *Elements*, is even found in the writings of Philo of Alexandria,⁴⁹⁴ who is located within the same media milieu as John

⁴⁸⁵ Menken, *Numerical*, 25–26. Literary disunity theories can also challenge the numerical-literary approach, but even concerning John 21, Menken considers the question regarding its status as an epilogue that belongs, or an appendix that is redactional, is open to debate. Other challenging literary *aporiae* are discussed as the secondary status of 5:3–4, the sequence of John 5 and 6, the ordering of John 7 and 10, and 7:53–8:11. Scholars have argued that 5:3c–4 and 7:52–8:11 are non-Johannine and that parts of John 7 belonged to John 5.

⁴⁸⁶ Menken, *Numerical*, 12, looks at examples from Isocrates to Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Josephus. He also considers the evidence of papyri containing “stichometric indications,” such as P⁴⁶ and J⁴³. The line count could serve to check whether the text had been copied correctly. According to the measures of stichometry, or lines, a standard prose line for classical Greek and Latin epics was a hexameter (a metrical line of verses containing six metrical feet) containing 15 or 16 syllables. Manuscripts were often priced according to the number of lines, and since each line contained a certain number of syllables, the syllable “was the basic unit of count.”

⁴⁸⁷ Menken, *Numerical*, 4. The example of Greek rhetoricians having views about the “due measure” and the “due proportion” of what was to be said in the oration. Isocrates, in his *Helena* is cited for interrupting his encomium on Theseus halfway through his account of the deeds of Theseus to convey that he has exceeded the “due measures.” In the oration *Panathenaicus*, Isocrates considers himself as “going outside the due proportion prescribed for proemia.” In the same oration, Isocrates considers the choice between neglecting the due measures or omitting important details in his encomium of Agamemnon, but prefers the trade the “due proportion of the oration” so as to provide more details in praise of Agamemnon. As a consequence, Isocrates faces the reproach for the lack of due measures.

⁴⁸⁸ Menken, *Numerical*, 4–5. Plato refers to the “mathematical *termini technici*” of inner and outer measures of proportion seen also in Euclides (*Elementa* 6,16). The expression used in *Phaedrus* (264 C) is similar to the expression used for division according to a golden section.

⁴⁸⁹ Menken, *Numerical*, 5, uses Aristotle’s *Poetica* 1450b–51a to point to an ancient concern for the arrangement of parts, which should be of such size to be preserved within the memory of auditors. He also provides rules for small elements of a discourse such as the period and colon (*Rhetorica* 1409b). Prose was arranged in periods since they could then be numbered, making them easier for readers and audiences to follow and remember.

⁴⁹⁰ Menken, *Numerical*, 5–6. In his *Rhetorica*, he warns against going beyond the due measures and cites an example from Plato’s *Phaedrus* (10,3). He also considers the requirements for the elegant composition () being that cola are woven together to fit into a period, where the length of time for the period is a full breath. He advises against speeches which do not consist of cola, but also against disproportionate cola (*De compositione verborum* 23). Dionysius also mentions that Isocrates “often lengthened parts of his speech with useless expletive words” to gain an “equal size and rhythm in his periods” (*De Isocrate* 3; *De compos* 22). This may also point to the media-rhetorical function of oral-manuscripts like John, composed to meet oral/aural performative demands while not being fully adapted to literary standards of the time due to the intensification of oral forms of communication in the oral-manuscript composition.

⁴⁹¹ Menken, *Numerical*, 6. In his *Bibliotheca historica*, Diodorus conveys that the “size and disposition” of his work was “determined by symmetry and by fixed measures (I 8,10; 9,4; 41,11; II 31,10; IV 5,4; 68,8; VI 2,3).

⁴⁹² Menken, *Numerical*, 6. In his *Bellum Iugurthinum*, Sallust finds “it better to remain silent ... than to say too little,” since the due measures require that he move on to another subject (19,2).

⁴⁹³ Menken, *Numerical*, 5–6.

⁴⁹⁴ Menken, *Numerical*, 27.

21 and Theon of Alexandria at the end of the first century CE. This shows that numerical considerations were important to ancient Greek composers.

4.1.2.2 Significant Numbers and Ancient Arithmetic in John 21

While numerical-literary techniques were applicable mainly to the transmission of oral-manuscript compositions, word and syllable counts may also have been used to structure the communicative units in a way that sought to facilitate the reading performance and audience reception of the composition.⁴⁹⁵ In addition to numerical-literary structuring, composers may also have used repeated symbolism, the “repetition of a similar idea in differing forms” and words as an important “underlying structure”⁴⁹⁶ that could guide the earliest reader-performers and the “immediate audience.”⁴⁹⁷

The following numerical significances have been considered for John. Koester finds that aspects of the narrative composition includes structures of the number seven, but finds other difficulties emerging when specific numerals, such as 200 cubits are cited in John.⁴⁹⁸ Koester suggests that to find the possible significance of a number, it is necessary to determine “whether the meaning would change if the text cited a different number or made a more general statement about quantity.”⁴⁹⁹ For instance, number referring to people may occasionally

⁴⁹⁵ Menken, *Numerical*, 13–15. This is supported by “rhetoric theories” regarding the isocolon (*parison*), which “is a sentence or clause, or a combination of sentences or clauses, which consists of equal cola or members.” The members/cola have an equal number of words and should have “an equal or almost equal number of syllables” (p. 15). Although Theon advised against the use of rhyme and metre for narrative prose and oratory, there is evidence of an ancient game in which participants speak and answer each other based on agreed metrical units, but these metrical units contained a prescribed number of syllables which may have varied in certain milieus. Aristotle (*Rhetorica* 1410a [Roberts]) refers to *parisisis* as “making the two members of a period equal in length.” In *De elocutione*, dated around 100 CE, a reference is made to a heading for “symmetry of members,” under which comes “equality of members” (p. 14). This means that members should contain an equal number of syllables. In the second century CE example from Alexander’s *De figuris* a passage from Isocrates is considered as a *parison*, which is “when two united cola have above all their syllables equal, but obtain also in all their parts equal rhythm” (p. 15). An earlier description from around 50 BCE contended that the isocolon “should consist of an almost equal number of syllables.” This could be so due to the earlier media period having more focus on oral composition than literary composition.

⁴⁹⁶ Koester, *Symbolism*, 13.

⁴⁹⁷ Koester, *Symbolism*, 18–19, suggests, contrary to anti-society socio-scientific approaches to the Johannine community, that the earliest audiences of the final form of John was intended for an array of readers who came “from various backgrounds and approached the text” with differing interpretive interests.

⁴⁹⁸ Koester, *Symbolism*, 311–12, notes the thirty-eight year illness, the Samaritan woman’s 5 husbands, and the 153 fish. In John 21 there is also the mention of 200 cubits. There are seven σημεῖα (John 2–12), seven ἐγὼ εἶμι sayings in the context of bread (6:35, 51), light (8:12; 9:5), door (10:7, 9), shepherd (10:11, 14), resurrection and life (11:25), way, truth, and life (14:6), and the vine (15:1, 5), and at times seven scenes symmetrically arranged are used in a literary unit (9:1–41; 18:28–19:16). In John 21:2 there is a list of seven disciples of Jesus who witnessed his third descent since his ascension.

⁴⁹⁹ Koester, *Symbolism*, 313–14.

contribute to the symbolism of a scene,⁵⁰⁰ and numbers referring to specific times may at times “contribute to the symbolic significance” of the literary unit.⁵⁰¹ Some numbers seem to be only descriptive so that a different number would not alter the meaning of the passage.⁵⁰² These numbers function descriptively rather than symbolically in the narrative.⁵⁰³

There is also a difference in how numerals are narrated in John 21, either as a specific number, such as 153, or as an approximation, prefaced with ὥς, as seen in 21:9 where the boat is “about 200 cubits” from the shore (ὥς ἀπὸ πηχῶν διακοσίων).⁵⁰⁴ John 21:11 refers to a specific number ἑκατὸν πεντήκοντα τριῶν which has since sparked interpretations ranging from symbolic to geometrical and mathematical readings.⁵⁰⁵ Brown confirms that “[t]riangular numbers were of interest both to Greek mathematicians and to the biblical authors.”⁵⁰⁶ A gematrical exercise based on numerical value of Σίμων is 76 and of ἰχθύς is 77, which when added is 153 has also been posited as both of these Greek words occur in 21:11.⁵⁰⁷ Kiley

⁵⁰⁰ Koester, *Symbolism*, 314. On the one hand, the Samaritan woman having five husbands suggests a national history of Samaria having five empires ruling the area. No other number symbol would suggest this echo to the history of Samaria (4:18). On the other hand, the observation that Jesus fed five thousand highlights, or amplifies, that Jesus fed so many from so little (6:9–10), but the effect would have been the same if four thousand was reported (Mark 8:6–9).

⁵⁰¹ Koester, *Symbolism*, 314. John 19:14 describes the crucifixion of Jesus as shortly before the sixth hour on the day of Preparation. The use of the number helps the reader or audience to consider the time when the paschal lambs were slaughtered. The mention of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the sixth hour may be a connection to the tradition of Jacob meeting Rachel at the well at midday (Gen 29:7). Other times include the tenth hour (1:36, 39), a number associated with temple sacrifice, prayer, and perfection/fulfilment. An hour of seven could also imply perfection, as the seventh hour mentioned in 4:52. Koester thus argues that for these passages, it would not matter if the ten and seven were interchanged in the narrative contexts.

⁵⁰² Koester, *Symbolism*, 315. It took forty-six years to build the temple (2:20), and the invalid was sick for thirty eight years (5:5, 6). A slightly different number would not change the emphasis. Lazarus was dead for four days to indicate the finality of his death (11:3, 6, 17).

⁵⁰³ Koester, *Symbolism*, 315. Distances such as that Bethany was fifteen stadia from Jerusalem is descriptive (11:18), as are quantities such as the six water jars (2:6). The division of the clothing of Jesus into four parts is part of a symbolic scene, but the number four is itself not symbolic since the focus is on the allusion to Psalm 22.

⁵⁰⁴ Brown, *John*, 1074. This is also seen in 1:39; 6:10.

⁵⁰⁵ Brown, *John*, 1074. He finds that Augustine’s position that the meaning of the 153 is a mystery did not prevent ancient interpreters from seeking the meaning in the number. Jerome’s commentary on Ezekiel 48:6–12 mentions that Greek zoologists noted 153 different kinds of fish, suggesting that the Johannine usage symbolises the Christian mission. (cf. Matt 13:47). Brown challenges Jerome’s interpretation as it would imply that the Johannine writer was aware of this zoological theory. Problems with Jerome’s theory has become evident to scholars, who now find that Jerome’s zoological source, Oppian’s *Halieutica*, actually lists 157 kinds of fish. Pliny only knows 104 kinds of fish and crustacea (*Natural History* 9.43). Augustine attempted a mathematical interpretation to 153, which is the “sum of all numbers from 1 to 17.” This is the triangular number of 17.

⁵⁰⁶ Brown, *John*, 1074. For this reason, Brown suggests that 153 is the numerical symbolism for perfection, being the triangular number of 17, which is then constituted from the numbers 10 and 7 which are “two numbers symbolic of completion” and which were “important in contemporary Jewish thought.” This pointed is backed up by the observation of 7 disciples in the fishing trip and breakfast.

⁵⁰⁷ Brown, *John*, 1075–76. Another suggestion is based on Ezekiel 48, but Brown cautions against implying that John’s readers and audiences would have expected gematrical meanings from the number 153. Instead, he connects the number with the emphasis on the “authentic eyewitness character of what has been

suggests a gematrical exercise where the digits of the Greek letters for 153, γ (3), ρ (100), ν (50), form the consonantal spine for “old” in the verbal γηράσῃς applied to Peter in 21:18.⁵⁰⁸

The exact number 153, the triangular number of 17, may have been cited to contribute to the *credibility* of the beloved disciple’s witness for the listening audience.⁵⁰⁹ The mathematical centre of 21:1–14 is at 140 words based on the SBLGNT.⁵¹⁰ This makes 21:7 a focal point in 21:1–14. The central phrase are words 139 to 141, which is the *prosôpopoeia* uttered by the beloved disciple in recognition of Jesus, Ὁ κύριός ἐστιν.⁵¹¹ A numerical significance in 21:15–23 is that 21:15–19 contains 136 words, the triangular number of 16. Also, 21:15–17 and 21:20–23 contain 91 words, the triangular number of 13, and 90 words respectively, showing that the formulaic *prosôpopoeia* and narratorial clarification occupy a focal position in 21:15–23. The argument for 21:24–25 being modelled in 20:30–31 in a numerical-literary sense is that 20:30 and 21:24 contain 20 words and 40 syllables each while 20:31 and 21:25 contain 23 words and 47 syllables each, making the double ending *aporiae* to consist of 43 words and 87 syllables each. When 21:1–25 is considered together, 21:1–13 and 21:15–25 both contain 269 words, balancing with the 11 words in the narratorial description of this failed recognition scene as the third appearance of Jesus (21:14).

These numerical significances may not have been intentionally used in composing the oral-manuscript structure of John 21, but reader-performers equipped with numerical skills may have used these to help structure the *scripta continua* style of John 21. Scholars should be

recorded (21:24), as he reported that blood and water flowed from the side of Jesus (19:35) and who reported the position of the burial clothes (20:7).

⁵⁰⁸ Mark Kiley, “Three More Fish Stories (John 21:11),” *JBL* 127 (2008), 529–31, 529–30. Another option is that 153 is obtained by the sum of 8 and 9 multiplied by 9 (17 × 9). This is an “increase and multiply” dynamic that alludes to Gen 1:28 LXX. The sum of the digits in 153 is 9. There are nine characters suggested by Kiley in John 21, as he considers the beloved disciple distinct from the two unnamed disciples in 21:2, whereas the crucifixion scene (19:18, 25, 26) had 8 characters present (Jesus, the beloved disciple, two others, ἄλλοις δύο, crucified with Jesus, the mother of Jesus and her sister, Mary of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene). Adding 8 and 9 gives 17. Multiplying 9 and 17 gives 153. Kiley also suggests that the number 9 also occurs in the word count of the high point of Peter’s answer in 21:17, which then leads to the saying about Peter when he is old, the Greek gematrical number of 153 (21:18).

⁵⁰⁹ Jey J. Kanagaraj, *John: A New Covenant Commentary* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013), 208, suggests that the exact number of fish “bears the stamp of an eyewitness and historical accuracy.”

⁵¹⁰ Menken, *Numerical*, 274, uses numerical-literary analysis to determine the “mathematical centre of a passage,” which is often the main point of the textual unit, thereby assisting exegetical questions (p. 274). For instance, John 6:35b is the centre of John 6 when the number of syllables are considered.

⁵¹¹ Additional numerical-literary significance in 21:1–14 is that the theme of mystery in failed recognition of Jesus contains 17 words (21:4), which is reversed after the miraculous catch of fish occurs (21:6). This number 17 is connected to its triangular number 153, the number narrating the exact number of large fish caught. The connection to the confession of the mysterious man being Jesus is the number 140, the exact location of the word κύριός, but a factor of 140 is the number 14. This number appears connected to the meals with Jesus, as both 21:9 and 21:13 contain 14 words, which is also a factor of 7. The other verse with the phrase “it is the lord” is 21:12, which readdresses the theme of recognition, contains 21, another factor of 7.

cautious about inferring meanings or functions to numerical symbolisms such as the 153 fish (21:11),⁵¹² as Koester finds “no evidence that the symbolism of the catch of fish depends on interpretive techniques not needed elsewhere in John, such as numerology or gematria.”⁵¹³ Numerical significance may be artificial, yet it is possible that ancient oral-manuscript communications involved certain literary measures to rhetorically communicate the narrative to audiences. Exact word and syllable counts do not have to be found for there to be an appreciation of how measures were used to structure the sections for readers and audiences to follow the oral/aural communication.

In John’s media-rhetorical environment, there may have been certain audience-sensitive measures given to different parts of John 21 that could aid the communications process. From a media perspective, it was considered that ancient manuscript technologies had a space limitation, hence the need for the economy of the *scripta continua* style of oral-manuscript writing. Since a variable number of words and syllables could be fitted onto a manuscript, composers producing an oral-manuscript form may not have used precise numerical values to structure the literary units for reader-performers. This is because oral-manuscript compositions were best deciphered through vocalised readings rather than through the silent study and decoding that is commonplace in modern communications media cultures.

To facilitate the discussion on John 21’s oral-manuscript properties, it is necessary to consider the literary units that structure John 21 into units such as 21:1–14, 21:15–23, and 21:24–25. These divisions can then be used to show that despite the appearance of literary *aporiae* in John 21, there are also signs that John 21:1–25 was composed to function as a coherent message that can also be analysed from a media-rhetorical perspective.

4.1.3 Literary Units in the Oral-Manuscript Structure of John 21

The first indicator that John 21 is a narrative unit is found in 21:1, where Longenecker suggests considers that “Johannine transition markers,” Μετὰ ταῦτα (John 21:1) and Ὅτε οὖν ἠρίστησαν (John 21:15), are constructions that appear at the beginning of text units and that

⁵¹² Koester, *Symbolism*, 316. Koester posits that an “effective interpretive framework ... must be able to identify various possible meanings while distinguishing the plausible from the implausible.” This openness and scepticism is needed since “interpretations of Johannine symbolism can impoverish the meaning by venturing to say too little, and they can empty it of any meaning by trying to say too much.” He explains further that there may have been many numerical symbolisms held by ancient audiences, but the composed meaning of the numerals within the narrative context cannot just mean anything.

⁵¹³ Koester, *Symbolism*, 316.

“take their temporal bearings from the previous text units.”⁵¹⁴ It is debated, however, whether 21:1 forms a “close temporal and narrative link to the preceding chapters,”⁵¹⁵ or whether it suggests a weak temporal connection unlike the temporal indicators in John 20.⁵¹⁶ Louw and Nida affirm, however, that John 21 can be regarded as an epilogue that “balances with the prologue” (1:1–18), consisting of 21:1–14, 15–19, 20–24 and a conclusion (21:25).⁵¹⁷

In John 21:1–14 there is a repetitive use of ἐφωσεν.⁵¹⁸ In light of media-rhetorical aspects, this repetition in 21:1 and 21:14 structures John 21 for its reader-performers and auditors. Brown divides John 21 into three parts consisting of 21:1–14, which describes the appearance of Jesus and the miraculous catch of fish, 21:15–23,⁵¹⁹ which consists of sayings of Jesus to Peter, and the “redactor’s conclusion” in 21:24–25.⁵²⁰ On a structural marker level, οὗν is used in a Johannine way John 21 so that an important marker occurs in 21:9, pointing the audience to a new section within 21:1–14, namely, 21:9–13 on the meal of bread and fish. Malina and Rohrbaugh, who also agree with a basic threefold division (21:1–14, 15–23, 24–25), suggest concentric and chiasmic structures for 21:1–14, pivoting on 21:9,⁵²¹ and for 21:15–23.⁵²²

⁵¹⁴ Longenecker, *Chain-Link*, 149. The difficulty in applying the concept of chain-link transitions to John 21 is that this macro-structuring tool of composition requires an analysis beyond the scope of the present investigation.

⁵¹⁵ Moloney, “John 21,” 242. He references John 2:12; 3:22; 5:1; 6:1; 7:1; 19:28, 38 in support.

⁵¹⁶ Brown, *John*, 1067, affirms that 21:1 opens with a weak temporal indicator compared to 20:26.

⁵¹⁷ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 623, finds that 21:1–14 is about a post-crucifixion “Galilean appearance” of Jesus, while 21:15–19 is “loosely attached” to 21:1–14. John 21:20–24 then concerns the “fate” of the beloved disciple, followed by a “brief conclusion.”

⁵¹⁸ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 623. Of the nine occurrences in John, three occur in John 21:1–14 alone. Other uses are in 1:31; 2:11; 3:21; 7:4; 9:3; 17:6. The verb also occurs twice in 1 John 1:2.

⁵¹⁹ Brown, *John*, 1112–17. He also attends to the connecting verses (21:20–21) between the saying about Peter and the sayings of Jesus to Peter about the beloved disciple. Here, Brown argues that the communication situation addressed concerned the deaths of Peter, who was celebrated as a martyr, and the beloved disciple, who did not die a martyr (p. 1120).

⁵²⁰ Brown, *John*, 1082.

⁵²¹ Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 318. They suggest an A-B-C-D-E-F-G-F'-E'-D'-C'-B'-A' pattern where 21:9 is the central unit. The sections are divided as: A (21:1–2), B (21:3), C (21:4), D (21:5), E (21:7), F (21:8), G (21:9), F' (21:10), E' (21:11), D' (21:12a), C' (21:12b), B' (21:13), A' (21:13–14). They do not point out where 21:6 fits into the chiasmic structure.

⁵²² Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 319. They regard the theme in 21:15–18 as Peter’s reconciliation and the theme in 21:19–23 as the fate of the beloved disciple. In 21:15–18, a structure of A-1-2-3-A' is suggested and in 21:19–23, a structure of A-B-C-D-A'-B'-C'-D' is posited. In 21:15–18, the sections are as follows: A (21:15a), 1 (21:15b), 2 (21:16), 3 (21:17), A' (21:18). In 21:19–23, the sections are divided as: A (21:19), B (21:20), C (21:21), D (21:22a), A' (21:22b), B' (21:23a), C' (21:23b), D' (21:23b).

There is a relationship between the subdivisions of 21:1–14 and 21:15–23 in that the dialogue between Jesus and Peter is introduced in references to the breakfast in 21:1–14.⁵²³ This position is affirmed by Kanagaraj, who describes 21:15–23 as a last reference to Peter and the beloved disciple.⁵²⁴ More subdivisions are found within the major divisions of John 21.⁵²⁵ It will be suggested that a division of 21:1–8 and 21:9–14 be followed for 21:1–14 since 21:9 makes the meal theme implied in 21:5 explicit. A division of 21:15–23 into 21:15–19 and 21:20–23 will also be followed regardless of how these units add up according to numerical-literary measures.⁵²⁶ Although we find literary units within John 21, it remains that the chapter as a whole has no internal *aporiae* and that only John 21 itself is an *aporia*. In the next section, we will outline the aspects of oral-manuscript conventions and then apply it verse-by-verse to the text of John 21:1-23.

4.2 Function of John 21 as Oral-Manuscript Communication

The appearance of oral forms of communication in the literary form of the manuscript is a function of the media culture of John's milieu. To better facilitate the oral communication process, the oral-manuscript form encoded aspects of oral/aural communications into the text so that audiences hearing a reader-performer could better understand and remember the text, to recall to memory earlier parts of the text, and to mark off one unit from the next. In the oral-manuscript culture where texts required inscribed references to the reader-performers and

⁵²³ Brown, *John*, 1083. Peter and the Beloved Disciple serve as a further unifying element in the subdivision of 21:1–14 and 21:15–23. Other themes that parallel earlier narratives include the meal of bread and fish in John 5:11, which is then echoed in 21:9b, 12–13 (pp. 1098–99).

⁵²⁴ Kanagaraj, *Covenant*, xii, agrees with a threefold division of John 21 (21:1–14, 15–23, 24–25).

⁵²⁵ Brown, *John*, 1065. Brown calls 21:1–8 the “fishing scene,” 21:9–13 the “meal on the land,” and 21:14 as a parenthetical observation. He then distinguished 21:15–17 from 21:18–23, which is then further subdivided into 21:18–19 (Peter's martyrdom), 21:20–22 (the saying about the beloved disciple), and 21:23 (a comment on the meaning of Jesus's saying). The second conclusion is separated into 21:24 (true witness of the beloved disciple) and 21:25 (many other deeds of Jesus).

⁵²⁶ Menken, *Numerical*, 26–27. Regarding the size of the literary unit, there is often a round number of words and syllables. The “direct discourse or the narrative of an episode” may contain round number of words or syllables, but a significant part of the literary unit such as a saying of Jesus or a scriptural citation might contain “exactly the number of words or syllables which the unit has above the round number.” Menken calls this the “surplus-technique.” Also, corresponding parts in a literary unit “are of equal length, or their sum total amounts to a round number of words or syllables, or their word/syllable counts have a common factor.” Finally, particular “basic numbers” are used in the literary unit where the word/syllable counts are multiples of the same basic numbers.

audiences, a narrator/reader-performer could perform the composition in a context-sensitive manner.⁵²⁷

While a previous hearing (*akroasis*) of the oral/aural performances was required to make sense of the oral-manuscript composition, there were structural tools that ancient readers could use to help them understand the text and that audiences could use to better remember and understand the reading-performance of John 21.⁵²⁸ This is because the elements of chiasm, parallelism, repetition, symbolic markers, and other transitional markers together function as a guide for readers and audiences of the oral-manuscript.

4.2.1 Encoded Oral/Aural Media in John 21: Elevating the Audience through Repetition, Variation, Redundancies, and Ellipses

In John, we find oral-manuscript components embedded in the text which is a function of the manuscript communications milieu in which the text was composed. Loubser argues that the explanatory notes or asides in John reveals the “adaptation of an oral text to a new medium.” This is because the restrictions of oral-manuscript *scripta continua* and the oral-literary dynamics in John’s processes of composition.⁵²⁹ Crucial to a media-rhetorical focus is the view that at least the discourses of Jesus was composed with the kind of “repetition” and “poetic redundancy,” which “indicates that the material may have been written to be read aloud.”⁵³⁰ By considering the place of “mnemotechnical poetics,” an oral-manuscript understanding of the literary *aporiae* in John 21 can be observed.⁵³¹ It was shown in § 3.3.3.1 indicators of oral-manuscript media include repetitions, ellipses, redundancies, micro-structures such as

⁵²⁷ Loubser, *Oral*, 127. The reader-performers were to orally perform the manuscripted form while the audience was to participate in the “live performance of the words of Jesus” (John 20:30–31).

⁵²⁸ The attempt to discern numerical-literary structuring was explored in § 4.1.2.

⁵²⁹ Loubser, *Oral*, 130–31, argues that the interjection in 4:2 could have been inserted at 3:22–26 since 4:2 relates to this incident. It could be for the purposes of suspense that the audience is led to assume that Jesus was baptising in 3:22–26, but Loubser finds it to be a function of the “confines of manuscript writing” and oral composition. This is because 4:2 would have been inserted as an interjection into the continuous text, “exactly as it would have happened in an oral performance and thus the recording of the live performance would not be able to backtrack to insert 4:2 into 3:22–26. This could have been rectified at a later stage, but in order to function as an oral-manuscript composition, it may be argued that literary *aporiae* such as narratorial asides could be a function of the media environment and the role of oral-manuscript communications.

⁵³⁰ Kysar, “John,” 915.

⁵³¹ Loubser, *Oral*, 129–30. Features such as chiasms, inclusions, extended antithesis, irony, sharp contrasts, and mnemonic aids such as “heavy rhythmic, balanced patterns, repetitions and contrasts, extended forms of alliteration and assonance, formulaic expressions, series of standard thematic settings, proverbs and parallelisms” (p. 130).

chiasmus, parallelism,⁵³² and macro-structuring tools such as a “circular story line” that facilitates the memory of the listening audience.⁵³³

Scholars have noted that inconsistent repetition in John complicates the issue of the function of word choices as synonymous or as part of Johannine misunderstanding, irony, and double entendre.⁵³⁴ The debate in Johannine gospel studies regarding the use of synonyms reveals that a rhetorical function or stylistic purpose is sufficient to explain the use of synonyms. Ancient narrative composers were to avoid an overuse of synonyms that may confuse auditors and readers, but repetition that distracts auditors was to be avoided through a variation in word choice could stimulate their attention and recollection.

Johannine scholars have undertaken various studies on repetition in John. Margada, uses the perspective that reader-performers and audiences listening to the text being read aloud were taken into account by the composers of John through incorporating repetition, variation, and amplification.⁵³⁵ The main function of this repetition was to assist auditors in remembering and recalling parts of the narrative. It is also possible to consider the word choices in John 21 in light of earlier parts of the narrative. This then facilitates the audience’s understanding of the communication enacted when the textual composition, with its repetition, variation, and amplification, is read aloud.⁵³⁶

⁵³² Kysar, “John,” 915–16. Scholars have also found “numerous chiasmic structures in both the speech and narrative sections” as well as inclusios on micro and macro levels of structure. Chiasm in John 6:36–40, inclusios in 6:51–58 (ἐάν τις φάγη ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in 6:51b and ὁ τρώγων τοῦτον τὸν ἄρτον ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in 6:58c) and larger-scale inclusion between 1:18 and 20:28 in that the logos is described as god and that Thomas confesses Jesus to be god (μονογενῆς θεὸς ὁ ὢν in 1:18 and Ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου in 20:28). Other stylistic features include the interrelation between narrative and discourse material, the use of irony and double entendre, symbolism, and characterization (p. 917).

⁵³³ The *relecture* perspective proposes that John 21 was composed to complete part of John 1–20, thus its narrative will contain references to earlier parts of the narrative in John 1–20.

⁵³⁴ Brown, *John*, 1102, notes that John 10 repeats the same word for sheep (πρόβατα) fifteen times that 21:15–17 contains two different verbs for “to love” (ἀγαπᾷς and φιλεῖς/φιλεῖς), “to know” (οἶδας and γινώσκεις), “to feed or tend” (βόσκει/ ποιμαίνει), and two different nouns for sheep (ἀρνία/πρόβατα).

⁵³⁵ Hellen Mardaga, “The Repetitive Use of ὑπόσω in the Fourth Gospel,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 74 (2012), 101–118, 101–2. She uses the perspective from Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* to assert that readers and writers were aware that “repetition, variation, and amplification ... facilitates the process of reading, listening, and understanding. This also “helps an audience to remember important parts of the reasoning” (p. 102). She therefore regards that audiences in general would have been acquainted with repetition, variation, and amplification in the use of key words in a literary unit.

⁵³⁶ Margada, “Repetitive,” 110, uses the perspective of semantic domains to argue that while words may be repeated through words with similar semantic domains, this does not imply a synonymous usage of the term. For instance, in John 12:32–34 the repetition of ἄνεμος has a subtle variation. This is in line with the principles of semantic analysis that even synonyms “differ in their connotative or associative meanings.”

There are two passages in John where auditors are invited to find the double *entendre* in the repetition and variation.⁵³⁷ These are the interplay between ὑψωσεν and ὑψωθῆναι in 3:14 and between ὑψωθῶ and ὑψωθῆναι in 12:32–34.⁵³⁸ In cases where variation occurs, audiences may have understood these interchanges of word choices as purely synonymous or they may even have understood the double *entendre* encoded within the subtle variation in the repeated word.

The issue of redundancy in John that supports the notion of synonymous rhetorical exchange of words is considered as part of Johannine “overlexicalization.” Malina and Rohrbaugh find that the antilanguage in John makes use of redundancy to give words used in John’s milieu a new meaning that is to be found in light of John’s gospel narrative. This kind of redundancy is what they call overlexicalization, which occurs in John due to the stylistic feature where a broad range of words and phrases are used to communicate an important topic such as believing in Jesus mentioned as the purpose of John (20:30–31).⁵³⁹ The redundancies thus serve to elevate the audience to find the ironies, misunderstandings, ambiguities, symbolisms, and deeper meanings within the narrative to better understand the rhetorical point being argued.

The narrator is also responsible for the presence of redundancies in John.⁵⁴⁰ This can be considered *ekphrasis*, which is narrative description with references to objects, time, and place. On the other hand, the narrator goes beyond *ekphrastic* descriptions by providing redundant information to the listening audience.⁵⁴¹ This redundancy is best construed as a function that fosters the reception process by facilitating the memory of the listening audience rather than providing information for characters in the narrative. Brant, though, does not find

⁵³⁷ Margada, “Repetitive,” 111–12.

⁵³⁸ Margada, “Repetitive,” 113. The generic meaning “to lift up” can be inferred in ὑψωσεν, but the double *entendre* is captured in the passive ὑψωθῆναι, which means “to exalt.” This more clearly brings out the comparison between the serpent being “lifted up” (ὑψωσεν) giving life to those who could view it, and between Jesus who must be “exalted” so that those who believe it will receive eternal life. She finds the “grammatical repetition of the same verb introduces amplification in the meaning of the verb,” where the generic meaning of “to lift up” is amplified as “to exalt” through the ambiguous passive form (p. 114). This verbal form is ambiguous in that it points to an “undesirable element” such as the cross event. This follows a rhetorical convention that auditors prefer to hear narrations about distressful events or the death of protagonists that are not graphic in its description thereof.

⁵³⁹ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 4–5. Examples of this are the array of words used in John to explain the topic of believing into Jesus, which includes following, abiding, loving, keeping his word, receiving him, having him, and seeing him.

⁵⁴⁰ Brant, *Drama*, 109, has also considered redundant narration as a function of the Johannine narrator that takes into account the audience reception context.

⁵⁴¹ Brant, *Drama*, 110. This is especially evident in cases where the audience could provide the same narratorial comment based on the dialogue or action of the specific narrative unit.

that the narrator is less “omniscient” in John⁵⁴² than in the synoptic gospels⁵⁴³ but the Johannine narrator “reports action that occurs largely through dialogues rather than narration.”⁵⁴⁴ By comparing the Johannine narrator to a Euripidean messenger on the Athenian stage, Brant is able to consider how the Euripidean messenger and the Johannine narrator include the motivations of characters in their reporting of events, actions, and speech.⁵⁴⁵

Narratorial asides are also important aspects in the text that serves the narrator’s contemporary communication situation.⁵⁴⁶ While it may be impossible to say if the earliest audiences of the oral-manuscript form of John 1–21 would have understood the function of John’s narratorial asides as a sign of *credibility*, Brant urges a view that the audience would not have thought of the narratorial attribution of inner dispositions and motives as a sign of omniscience,⁵⁴⁷ but rather as a distinctive feature of his storytelling.⁵⁴⁸ However, if the narrator’s reliance upon the witness of the Beloved Disciple gives the narrator a distinct identity as a secondary witness, then this narratorial witness would have to provide a *credible* narration so that ancient audiences unaware of the identity of the beloved disciple would accept the Johannine characterization of the beloved disciple and Simon Peter.

⁵⁴² Brant, *Drama*, 204–5. Diverging from the “other gospel narrators,” the Johannine narrator explains the motives and inner dispositions of Jesus and his actions (4:43–44; 6:15; 7:1; 11:5–6, 54; 19:28), the motivations of other characters, some of which seem “innocent” (4:8; 6:2; 11:31; 18:18) or “ignoble or suspect” (5:18; 7:13; 9:22; 12:6, 42–43; 13:27; 18:28; 19:8, 31, 38; 20:19), and is also interested in the “interior disposition of belief” (2:11, 22; 4:50, 53; 12:42; 20:8).

⁵⁴³ Brant, *Drama*, 202. In the comparatively longer narratives of the synoptic gospels, the narrators “describe action rather than interior dispositions, which is then to be inferred by the reader. In Matthew, she finds an example where the reader is to infer the motive of the crowd (Matt 4:23–25), but does find exceptions in the narration of Herod’s internal conflict (Matt 14:5) and in the description of the thoughts of the chief priests and Pharisees (Matt 21:45–46) which shows signs of omniscient narration (p. 206).

⁵⁴⁴ Brant, *Drama*, 202. Just as the “Euripidean messenger, the Johannine narrator violates the limits of his own witness by claiming the ability to see into the minds of others.” Brant argues that the beloved disciple is the author and narrator.

⁵⁴⁵ Brant, *Drama*, 203. Similarities found by Brant include that the Johannine narrator “begins and ends the gospel with explicit self-reference and then refrains from referring to himself for the bulk of the narration, allowing the audience to receive the story as though they were witness to its unfolding action.” By “reporting characters’ thoughts and motives, the narrator provides more than an objective witness would know.”

⁵⁴⁶ Brant, *Drama*, 207, argues that the narrator is identified with a later generation than the generation of disciples with Simon Peter by narrating twice how the disciples only came to remember and understand the words of Jesus in a later period (2:22; 12:16) and also narrates the inability of the disciples to understand the scripture before the resurrection event (20:9). Moreover, she then finds that the narrator “steps out of narrative time to explain how the report spread that the Beloved Disciple would die (20:23).”

⁵⁴⁷ Brant, *Drama*, 207. This is because the “attribution of motives is ... tied to the narrator’s role as a witness to the heroic contest” in the death of Jesus. The motivations of Jesus supplied by the Johannine narrator undermines “any possible shame or cowardice” in the actions of Jesus, who “avoid the crowd because he does not desire public honors,” that his “thirst does not signify desire but the fulfilment of Scripture,” and that he “evades arrest because it is not his time to die.”

⁵⁴⁸ Brant, *Drama*, 208.

It appears, in light of the virtue of *conciseness*, that redundancies expand the composition. The size constraints of ancient manuscripts also work against the Johannine propensity for seemingly unnecessary redundancies in narration. For this reason, it can be considered a function of elliptical constructions to fit the composition within accepted measures for the physical manuscript form.⁵⁴⁹ The interpretive challenge that emerges from elliptical constructions could also be a function of Johannine irony and double entendre. In light of repetition and variation where two words are used interchangeably to communicate the same meaning, it should also be considered that the choice of words with multiple meanings, or double entendre, may be a function of Johannine misunderstanding.⁵⁵⁰ This ambiguity is also a means by which the narrator is able to communicate a “profound depth of meaning.”⁵⁵¹ This shows how the oral-manuscript media was composed in a way that it amplifies the oral/aural communication process between reader-performers and audiences.

4.2.2 Elevating the Listening Audience: Media-Rhetorical Properties of Oral-Manuscript Composition in John 21

This section will analyse the media-rhetorical function of redundant narration, elliptical constructions, and the use of repetition and variation in John 21. To undertake this task, the literary units in John 21 were considered in § 4.1.3. Without implying compositional disunity posited by scholars finding literary aporiae within 21:1–14 and between 21:1–14 and 21:15–23. These units will be used heuristically to examine John 21 in light of the relevant properties pointed out in § 4.2.1. It will then be shown how the audience is taken into consideration in the oral-manuscript form of communication. Literary aporiae can thus be construed as a function that invites the listening audience to recall other narratives in the multimedia situation in which John 21 was composed, published, and performed. It will also be argued that these literary units are interwoven in a manner that indicates a unity in John 21 despite the possibility that the

⁵⁴⁹ Elliptical constructions may not only be a function of live speech. It may also aid composers to compress the text, which is often expanded with redundancies and repetitions in order to capture the characteristics of live oral/aural speech.

⁵⁵⁰ Kysar, “John,” 916.

⁵⁵¹ Kysar, “John,” 916–17, posits that John’s “ambiguous language teases the reader into contemplation of meaning of the Christ revelation for human existence.”

narrative and dialogue in John 21 are literary *aporiae* composed from earlier sources about a catch of fish and a meal of fish and bread.⁵⁵²

4.2.2.1 Oral-Manuscript Conventions in John 21:1–8

21:1 Μετὰ ταῦτα ἐφανερώσεν ἑαυτὸν πάλιν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης τῆς Τιβεριάδος· ἐφανερώσεν δὲ οὕτως.

Important aspects of redundancy can be found in what scholars identify as narratorial asides. The narratorial aside in 6:1 identifies that the Lake Galilee was also known as Lake Tiberias, but in 21:1 it is called Lake Tiberias.⁵⁵³ This repetition may help the audience to recall John 6 when hearing John 21:1–14. There is also structural redundancy in the repetition of ἐφανερώσεν helping auditors to be aware of ἐφανερώσεν in 21:14 where a variation in the way information is conveyed occurs. The second use of ἐφανερώσεν lends itself to awkwardness as the audience would have expected οὕτως to refer to what preceded, as in 18:22 which refers back to 18:20–21. In 21:1 οὕτως refers to what is to follow.⁵⁵⁴ Such constructions may have been a function of the process of oral/aural and literary composition and recording.

21:2 ἦσαν ὁμοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος καὶ Ναθαναὴλ ὁ ἀπὸ Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ οἱ τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ ἄλλοι ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ δύο.

In 21:2 there are cases of redundancy and new information provided in narrating the fishing group of John 21.⁵⁵⁵ New information about the sons of Zebedee and a reference to two unnamed disciples (ἄλλοι ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ δύο) may confuse some auditors. This complicates the issue over whether the beloved disciple should be distinguished from the

⁵⁵² These earlier traditions are both found within John 6, which narrates a meal of bread and fish (6:1–15) and an episode where the disciples do not recognize Jesus walking on the Sea of Tiberias (6:16–23) followed by a discourse about the bread of life (6:24–59), and in Luke 5:1–11, which describes a miraculous catch of fish as part of the call for Simon Peter to follow Jesus.

⁵⁵³ While Theon warns against the use of archaic words for communicating to one's auditors, Brown, *John*, 1067, notes that the use of "Tiberias" would have been more acceptable to a Greek-speaking audience than 'Genessaret.'" Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 1.70, also finds the construction to reflect Semitic usage. This means that Greek-speaking Johannine audiences may have expected the use of λίμνη instead of θάλασσα.

⁵⁵⁴ Brown, *John*, 1067.

⁵⁵⁵ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 624. The narrator's list of disciples in 21:2 includes the mention that Thomas was also called the twin (Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος), but this was already communicated in 11:16 when Thomas is first introduced into the narrative. A recollection of the Cana cycle may also be implied in the new information narrated concerning Nathanael's origins from Cana in Galilee (Ναθαναὴλ ὁ ἀπὸ Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας).

unnamed disciple as auditors may recall a similar construction in 1:35–39. Scholars even debate whether or not the beloved disciple is part of the list in 21:2.⁵⁵⁶

21:3 λέγει αὐτοῖς Σίμων Πέτρος· Ὑπάγω ἀλιεῦειν· λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Ἐρχόμεθα καὶ ἡμεῖς σὺν σοί. ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἐνέβησαν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ νυκτὶ ἐπίασαν οὐδέν.

In light of the phrase καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ νυκτὶ ἐπίασαν οὐδέν, auditors in John 21's multimedia culture may have been aware of other gospel traditions about a failed fishing expedition such as found in Luke 5:1–11. The occurrence of elliptical constructions contributes to the infodensity found in oral-manuscript media. It conserves space in the limited media taken up by redundant narration, but so does the narrative virtue of *conciseness*. For instance, the narrator does not specify the manner of fishing and neither specifies whether there was absolutely nothing, not even debris, in the nets.⁵⁵⁷ Auditors would be aware of the narrator's strange reference to the failed fishing attempt. This is because ἐπίασαν, which also occurs in 21:10, is repeated six other times in John to refer to the arrest of Jesus.⁵⁵⁸ It is used in John 21 to refer to catching fish, which may indicate to auditors a double *entendre* or symbolism.

21:4 Πρωῖας δὲ ἤδη γενομένης ἔστη Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὸν αἰγιαλόν· οὐ μέντοι ἤδεισαν οἱ μαθηταὶ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν.

The word choice of Πρωῖας in John 21 is a variation of πρωῖ (18:28; 20:1). It is also debatable whether the construction εἰς τὸν αἰγιαλόν indicates a classical Greek function where the verb “to stand” was a verb of motion and so could be used with εἰς.⁵⁵⁹ It is possible that Johannine auditors and reader-performers may have been more interested in Johannine *anagnorisis* or recognition scenes rather than in literary or compositional *aporiae*. In John 21 the disciples encounter a man on the shore of Tiberias who remains unrecognised until after the catch (21:7). The audience would have been aware of failed recognition in 20:1–29.

21:5 λέγει οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Παιδιά, μὴ τι προσφάγιον ἔχετε; ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ· Οὐ.

Important Johannine repetition and variation is found in the use προσφάγιον, which can be a reference to a dish that included fish,⁵⁶⁰ but the importance of repetition and variation in

⁵⁵⁶ Kanagaraj, *Covenant*, 206, thus argues for eight rather than seven people present at the breakfast on the beach of Lake Tiberias. Most Johannine scholars find the beloved disciple as either part of the “sons of Zebedee” or as one of the two unnamed disciples in 21:2.

⁵⁵⁷ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 625.

⁵⁵⁸ Brown, *John*, 1069. This verb would not normally be used to refer to catching fish, but Rev 19:20 and Luke 5:5 as parallel examples of this Johannine usage.

⁵⁵⁹ Brown, *John*, 1069–70. Uses of the verb with *eis* is found in 20:19, 26 in narrative contexts where Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples.

⁵⁶⁰ Brown, *John*, 1071.

the fish vocabulary of John 21 will be addressed later. An idiomatic expression asking whether the disciples (Παιδιά)⁵⁶¹ had a successful fishing trip (μή τι προσφάγιον ἔχετε)⁵⁶² would seem ironic to audiences acquainted with traditions⁵⁶³ about the failure of the disciples to catch fish without the help of Jesus. John 6 also contains a failure of the disciples to provide a meal.⁵⁶⁴ It may also be possible to consider that auditors could question the beloved disciple's *credibility* due to his absence in traditional accounts of feeding and fishing.

21:6 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Βάλετε εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μέρη τοῦ πλοίου τὸ δίκτυον, καὶ εὐρήσετε.
ἔβαλον οὖν, καὶ οὐκέτι αὐτὸ ἐλκύσαι ἴσχυον ἀπὸ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν ἰχθύων.

While Johannine repetition and variation occurs here,⁵⁶⁵ awkward Greek constructions here also point to the way in which live performances are encoded into an oral-manuscript form. The construction also contains ellipses in the reference to εὐρήσετε,⁵⁶⁶ which is a vague reference.⁵⁶⁷ The rest of 21:6, is paralleled in Luke 5:6–7 just as 21:3b is paralleled in Peter's statement (Luke 5:4), but in Luke a second boat helps bring the catch of fish to shore.

21:7 λέγει οὖν ὁ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνος ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ Πέτρῳ· Ὁ κύριός ἐστιν. Σίμων οὖν Πέτρος, ἀκούσας ὅτι ὁ κύριός ἐστιν, τὸν ἐπενδύτην διεζώσατο, ἦν γὰρ γυμνός, καὶ ἔβαλεν ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν·

It is uncertain whether or not the audience would have regarded the beloved disciple as being part of the list of disciples in 21:2. The audience is reintroduced to the presence of the beloved disciple through a construction found elsewhere in John. The *credibility* of the beloved disciple was enhanced by his recognition of Jesus,⁵⁶⁸ which depended on the catch of fish (21:6)

⁵⁶¹ Brown, *John*, 1070. The Johannine diminutive plural Παιδιά is used only here in John as an address to the disciples, but there is a possible synonymous-rhetorical variation in the use of diminutive noun τεκνία (cf. 13:33). These diminutives seem synonymous in the repetition and variation of 1 John 2:12, 14.

⁵⁶² Brown, *John*, 1071. According to classical Greek rules, the prefix μή requires a negative answer, but scholars find it unnecessary to push for a classical usage here.

⁵⁶³ This is also implied for those auditors familiar with the Lukan tradition of the miraculous catch of fish in Luke 5:1–11 which leads to a catch (21:6, 11) that apparently sparks the recollection of the beloved disciple to recognise Jesus (21:7).

⁵⁶⁴ In light of John 6:1 being recalled in 21:1, it is also possible that auditors would recall the lack of ability for the disciples to provide something for the crowd to eat when Jesus asks Philip any food (6:4). It is also narrated that Jesus had knowledge of their lack of ability to provide a meal even when Andrew finds five loaves and two fish (6:8), and that he would perform a feeding sign (6:5), adding to the dramatic irony.

⁵⁶⁵ The case of repetition and variation in the fishing terms will be analysed in § 4.2.2.2 along with the rhetorical variation in ἐλκύσαι and σύροντες (21:6, 8).

⁵⁶⁶ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 626, suggest supplying this object in translation, for example, “you will catch some fish in your net,” since εὐρήσετε has no expressed object.

⁵⁶⁷ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 626–7, find the Greek does not require an object for “so they threw” (ἔβαλον οὖν), which makes this appear to the English reader as an ellipsis requiring a translated object such as “so they threw the net out.”

⁵⁶⁸ It is interesting to note the speech of the beloved disciple to Jesus in 13:25 (Κύριε, τίς ἐστιν;) in comparison to his words to Peter in 21:7 (Ὁ κύριός ἐστιν).

before becoming a Johannine symbol (21:11).⁵⁶⁹ Auditors are also aware of Johannine misunderstanding (21:4) and are encouraged to recall 13:4–5 where Jesus girds (διέζωσεν/διεζωσμένος) a towel around himself in the foot washing scene.⁵⁷⁰

21:8 οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι μαθηταὶ τῷ πλοιαρίῳ ἦλθον, οὐ γὰρ ἦσαν μακρὰν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἀλλὰ ὡς ἀπὸ πηγῶν διακοσίων, σύροντες τὸ δίκτυον τῶν ἰχθύων.

Repetition and variation concerning the words used for boat in 21:1–8 are similar to John 6, which contains a scene of a miraculous meal of fish and bread. John 21 uses τὸ πλοῖον (21:3, 6) and the diminutive τῷ πλοιαρίῳ (21:8).⁵⁷¹ In John 6, both πλοῖον (6:17, 19, 21, 22, 23) and τὰ πλοιάρια (6:22, 23, 24) is used.⁵⁷² While the sinking boats and broken nets from Luke 5:1–11 is eliminated in John 21, an audience could still question the *credibility* of the nets used to capture and drag along⁵⁷³ 153 large fish not tearing.⁵⁷⁴ Awkwardness in the reference to the distance between the boat and the shore is better placed at the end of 21:7.⁵⁷⁵

4.2.2.2 Oral-Manuscript Conventions in John 21:9–14

21:9 Ὡς οὖν ἀπέβησαν εἰς τὴν γῆν βλέπουσιν ἀνθρακίαν κειμένην καὶ ὀψάριον ἐπικείμενον καὶ ἄρτον.

One aspect argued in a *relecture* perspective is that the mention of charcoal fire (ἀνθρακίαν) in 21:9 serves to point the audience to the denial scene in 18:15–27, where there

⁵⁶⁹ Brown, *John*, 1096, posits that Johannine recognition may have been the initial function of the catch of fish in John 21, but that this later took on a symbolic level of meaning as well. Due to his focus on literary *aporiae*, Brown posits that in the earlier meaning the appearance was to Peter and thus it was Peter who recognised Jesus, yet in John it is now the beloved disciple who first recognises Jesus after the catch of fish.

⁵⁷⁰ Brown, *John*, 1072. ἐγείρεται ἐκ τοῦ δείπνου καὶ τίθησιν τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ λαβὼν λέντιον διέζωσεν ἑαυτόν· εἶτα βάλλει ὕδωρ εἰς τὸν νιπτῆρα, καὶ ἤρξατο νίπτειν τοὺς πόδας τῶν μαθητῶν καὶ ἐκμάσσειν τῷ λεντίῳ ᾧ ἦν διεζωσμένος (13:4–5). This could also explain the redundant narration about the beloved disciple in 21:20 as the narrative in 13:23–27 is also brought to the attention of the audience in 21:18.

⁵⁷¹ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 625.

⁵⁷² It is interesting that the reference “that other boat” (ὁτὶ πλοιάριον ἄλλο) in 6:22 assumes it to be a companion boat to the boat (πλοῖον) used by the entire group of disciples in 6:17. These accord with what auditors familiar with Luke 5 could recall concerning the boats in the miraculous catch of fish scene (cf. Luke 5:3, 7. It is possible that the other boat (5:7) owned by the Lukan Sons of Zebedee could be viewed as the partner boat that came to help Peter when he called for help using the boat they owned as tax-fishermen in a network with Peter. They were thus part of the fishing miracle and thus their being named in 21:2 should not be surprising.

⁵⁷³ John 21:8 also contains the variation in the reference to “boat” in John 21, and unlike the Lukan method, which may have been known to some audiences of John 21, of taking in the net of fish on board the two ships (Luke 5:7), John 21:8 narrates that the net of fish was dragged along (σύροντες τὸ δίκτυον τῶν ἰχθύων). John 21:2–3 indicates that the main boat used was the one owned by Simon Peter and that the Sons of Zebedee were on the same boat. This means the variation of words for boat are synonyms for Peter’s boat in John 21.

⁵⁷⁴ Brown, *John*, 1071. John 21:6 contains the only typical Johannine usage of ἴσχυον which is normally referred to by δύνασαι thirty-six times in John (cf. 13:36).

⁵⁷⁵ Brown, *John*, 1072–73. This is found in a textual variant.

was also a charcoal fire (ἀνθρακιᾶν) used by Peter to warm himself (18:18). Repetition and variation is also seen in the words used to refer to fish. While the same word was used in 6:9, 11 to refer to dried fish, it is used in John 21 to refer to freshly caught fish, indicating a synonymous usage that serves a rhetorical function.⁵⁷⁶ The repetition and variation in word choices used for fish in 21:5–13 (προσφάγιον, ἰχθύων, ὀψάριον) “reflects the combination of two stories.”⁵⁷⁷ Johannine scholars have recognised that John 21:1–14 was composed from two narratives,⁵⁷⁸ 21:9 provides a narrative unity within 21:1–14.⁵⁷⁹ Since synonymous-rhetorical variation facilitates the concentration of the audience,⁵⁸⁰ it is possible to consider, however, that the word choice in 21:9 was meant to facilitate the memory of auditors to recall the meal of bread and fish in 6:1–15 and use it as a means to follow the narrative argument.

21:10 λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἐνέγκατε ἀπὸ τῶν ὀψαρίων ὧν ἐπιάσατε νῦν.

This verse may strike auditors as untypical of John’s style, but what remains Johannine in the opinion of Brown is the noun ὀψαρίων.⁵⁸¹ Repetition and variation is thus observed in Johannine references to fish, but this had both a synonymous function and a memory function of oral-manuscript compositions where auditors were invited to interpret this narrative about fish in light of John 6. This verse also links the narrative about a miraculous catch of fish (21:6) with the requirements for the meal which was first sought by Jesus in 21:5.

21:11 ἀνέβη οὖν Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ εἴλκυσεν τὸ δίκτυον εἰς τὴν γῆν μεστὸν ἰχθύων
μεγάλων ἑκατὸν πενήκοντα τριῶν· καὶ τοσοῦτων ὄντων οὐκ ἐσχίσθη τὸ δίκτυον.

Possible numerical symbolism for auditors in John’s media culture included gematria, and ancient arithmetically significant numbers to interpret the number of large fish caught.⁵⁸² Auditors familiar with ancient tax-fishing networks would know a head fishermen would count

⁵⁷⁶ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 629.

⁵⁷⁷ Brown, *John*, 1073, argues that ἰχθύων was part of the story of the great catch of fish (cf. Luke 5:6) while ὀψάριον was part of the meal of bread and fish story (cf. John 6:9).

⁵⁷⁸ Brown, *John*, 1085, postulates a “combination of two strands of narrative, one concerned primarily with a catch of fish, and the other with a meal of bread and fish.”

⁵⁷⁹ Even if John 21:1–14 is a major literary *aporia* composed from two narratives and a first Galilean appearance story, the unity in 21:1–14 can be seen in that though 21:9 explicitly signals the setting of a meal, and though 21:6 explicitly narrates a miraculous catch of fish, these themes are interlinked in each section. A meal is implied in 21:5 and a miraculous catch is referred to in 21:11 also. Otherwise, most of the meal narrative occurs from 21:9 while most of the fishing narrative occurs from 21:3–8.

⁵⁸⁰ Margada, “Repetitive,” 105.

⁵⁸¹ Brown, *John*, 1073, notes non-typical Johannine style in the use of the aorist imperative form Ἐνέγκατε rather than the more standard present imperative form used in 20:27. There is also a peculiar partitive use of ἀπὸ in the construction ἀπὸ τῶν ὀψαρίων, as John normally has the partitive *ek* construction.

⁵⁸² See § 4.1.2.

the catch before splitting it in the tax network,⁵⁸³ but auditors focusing on the arithmetical significance of the cited numerical count of 153 and the unbroken net may find in 21:11 an “enacted parable in which the large catch of fish may symbolize the ingathering of many new converts from all nations.”⁵⁸⁴ The reporting of the number as witnessed by the beloved disciple may serve the rhetorical purpose of providing *credibility* to the narrative as well as a symbolic meaning for Johannine audiences near the end of the first century CE.

The repetition of the verb “to draw” in 21:11 further reinforces the symbolism of the great catch of fish for Johannine audiences,⁵⁸⁵ who would be prompted to recall the misunderstood passage earlier in John with ὑψωθῶ accompanied by ἐλκύσω (12:32), implying that Jesus will draw in people after being lifted up (ὑψωθῶ).⁵⁸⁶ Audiences would have noticed the Johannine double *entendre* in the variation from ὑψωθῶ (12:32) to ὑψωθῆναι (12:34).⁵⁸⁷ A possible clue signalling this double sense for auditors is the narratorial clarification given in (12:33),⁵⁸⁸ which seeks to give the listening audience interpretive clues when hearing the narrative being performed aloud. There is also repetition of the verb “to tear” (ἐσχίσθη) in reference to the unbroken net, which reminds auditors about division narrated earlier in the oral/aural communication.⁵⁸⁹

21:12 λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Δεῦτε ἀριστήσατε. οὐδεὶς δὲ ἐτόλμα τῶν μαθητῶν ἐξετάσαι αὐτόν· Σὺ τίς εἶ; εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ κύριός ἐστιν.

It appears redundant for the narrator to tell the audience that the disciples were afraid to ask the man on the shore who he was (21:12), because subsequent to the failed recognition of Jesus by the disciples (21:4) the beloved disciple recognised Jesus (21:7) which prompted Peter to gird himself and jump into the Sea of Tiberias.⁵⁹⁰ It was also possible that auditors would recall the part of John 6 that narrates the fear of the disciples when they could not recognize the man walking on the Sea of Tiberias as Jesus (6:16–23).

⁵⁸³ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 289.

⁵⁸⁴ Kanagaraj, *Covenant*, 208.

⁵⁸⁵ Brown, *John*, 1097. He finds that as in Luke 5:10, this symbolises the apostolic mission that will catch people rather than literal fish.

⁵⁸⁶ John 12:32 reads κάγω ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἑμαυτόν.

⁵⁸⁷ John 12:34 reads ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ ὄχλος· Ἥμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ πῶς λέγεις σὺ ὅτι δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;

⁵⁸⁸ John 12:33 reads τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἠμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν.

⁵⁸⁹ There was a σχίσμα among the people over Jesus (7:43; 9:16; 10:19) and in the symbol of unity regarding the tunic of Jesus was not σχίσωμεν (19:24).

⁵⁹⁰ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 630, find that the disciples may have sought to ask Jesus more questions about his identity since they may have wanted more confirmation from him as seen in 20:1–29.

21:13 ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ λαμβάνει τὸν ἄρτον καὶ δίδωσιν αὐτοῖς, καὶ τὸ ὀψάριον
ὁμοίως.

It is important that audiences notice the further similarity in the composition of 21:13 and 6:11,⁵⁹¹ which further supports the notion that 21:1–14 also includes the multiplication of bread and fish narrative from John 6. The other narrative the auditors would have recalled was the miraculous catch of fish like that narrated in Luke 5:1–11, where two boats were used and where nets broke,⁵⁹² although it is not certain whether composers of John 21 were aware that audiences would have recalled the Lukan account of a miraculous catch of fish in 21:3.⁵⁹³ It is more certain, however, that audiences of John 21 would at least recall the meal of bread and fish and failed recognition of Jesus from John 6.

21:14 τοῦτο ἤδη τρίτον ἐφανερώθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν.

Scholars utilizing *literary aporiae* in John 21 regard the narrative in 21:1–14 as not only a composite of two traditional stories, but also as a displacement of the first appearance narrative to its present location as the third time Jesus descended to his friends.⁵⁹⁴ The failed recognition is then attributed to the displacement of this Galilean appearance narrative from being the first appearance (cf. Mark 16:7) to the third (John 21:14).⁵⁹⁵ A way for auditors to accept the *credibility* of 21:14 is that the recognition scene with Mary occurs prior to the ascent (ἀναβέβηκα/ἀναβαίνω) of Jesus (20:17).⁵⁹⁶ Auditors also remember how a Johannine character

⁵⁹¹ Brown, *John*, 1099, points out the similarity between ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ λαμβάνει τὸν ἄρτον καὶ δίδωσιν αὐτοῖς, καὶ τὸ ὀψάριον ὁμοίως (21:13) and ἔλαβεν οὖν τοὺς ἄρτους ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εὐχαριστήσας διέδωκεν τοῖς ἀνακειμένοις, ὁμοίως καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀψαρίων ὅσον ἦθελον (6:11).

⁵⁹² Brown, *John*, 1069, notes that some textual variant for Luke 5:1–11 supports the use of the diminutive form as well, just as is found in John 21.

⁵⁹³ It was already considered that John 6 is alluded to in 21:1 so that the audience can consider the bread and fish meal as part of the materials used to compose John 21:1–14.

⁵⁹⁴ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 625, note that a “failure to recognize Jesus was also mentioned in the appearance to Mary Magdalene” in 20:14, where the distance and low visibility of the early morning played no role. This shows how the recognition theme is present in these appearance narratives in John 20–21.

⁵⁹⁵ Brown, *John*, 1070. The indication of this third appearance scene 21:1–14 being composed from a first appearance is that the difficulty of recognition was not only narrated in 21:4 where a lack of light and the distance of the shore would naturally impede recognition of Jesus, but is repeated in 21:12 where there was closer proximity as well as additional light from the narratively significant charcoal fire (21:9).

⁵⁹⁶ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 281, assert that 20:19–23 and 20:24–29 are the first and second descents of Jesus since here he “offers himself for examination” by showing them his hands and side, and by allowing Thomas to examine his body as “proof that Jesus has ascended to the Father and has now descended to appear to his disciples.” The narrator also elevates the audience by specifying that Thomas was absent from the first descent (20:24) and that he rejected the witness of the disciples (Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν κύριον) by claiming that Ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω μου τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω (20:25).

or group⁵⁹⁷ does not initially recognise Jesus (20:14; cf. 21:4) until an action of Jesus (21:6) or a word from Jesus (20:16) causes the character or group to recognise him.⁵⁹⁸

4.2.2.3 Oral-Manuscript Conventions in John 21:15–19

Symbols may point audiences to recall other parts of the Johannine gospel. While 21:1–14 repeats the combination of bread and fish as ἄρτον and ὀψάριον, there are also variations in the words referring to the catch of fish (21:3–8, 11).⁵⁹⁹ There is, however, new symbolism applied to Peter in 21:15–17, where sheep and feeding symbolism is used.⁶⁰⁰

21:15 Ὅτε οὖν ἠρίστησαν λέγει τῷ Σίμωνι Πέτρῳ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Σίμων Ἰωάννου, ἀγαπᾷς με πλέον τούτων; λέγει αὐτῷ· Ναί, κύριε, σὺ οἶδας ὅτι φιλῶ σε. λέγει αὐτῷ· Βόσκει τὰ ἀρνία μου.

21:16 λέγει αὐτῷ πάλιν δευτερον· Σίμων Ἰωάννου, ἀγαπᾷς με; λέγει αὐτῷ· Ναί, κύριε, σὺ οἶδας ὅτι φιλῶ σε. λέγει αὐτῷ· Ποίμαινε τὰ πρόβατά μου.

21:17 λέγει αὐτῷ τὸ τρίτον· Σίμων Ἰωάννου, φιλεῖς με; ἐλυπήθη ὁ Πέτρος ὅτι εἶπεν αὐτῷ τὸ τρίτον· Φιλεῖς με; καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Κύριε, πάντα σὺ οἶδας, σὺ γινώσκεις ὅτι φιλῶ σε. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Βόσκει τὰ πρόβατά μου.

John 21:15 contains an ellipsis that may have been understood differently by the earliest audiences. It may be a function of Johannine ambiguity for auditors to consider whether Jesus is asking “do you love me more than these others do” or “do you love me more than these

⁵⁹⁷ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 282, distinguish between a “group appearance,” where the “disciples, gathered as a group, gradually come to recognize the resurrected Jesus and interact with him” and a “singular appearance,” where Jesus “appears in a sudden and unexpected manner to one or two individuals who are somewhat distraught, and he addresses them so that eventually they come to recognize him.” In John 21:12 it is narrated that those from 21:2 have all recognised Jesus though they are too afraid to say so (p. 288).

⁵⁹⁸ Malina and Rorhbaugh, *Social-Science*, 280–81, posit that after Mary responds to the “sky servants, she turns and has a vision” but she does not recognise Jesus (20:13–14), mistaking the “object of her vision” as a gardener. It is only after Jesus says her name that she turns and responds in Aramaic “My Great One” or *Rabbouni* (20:15–16). After 20:18, the appearances in 20:19–29 are then seen as two descents of the ascended Son of Man, making the appearance (ἐφανερώσεν) in John 21 the third descent. This implies that 21:14 is redundant in describing John 21 as the third appearance of Jesus to his disciples unless there would have been a question raised by auditors concerning the placement of this Galilean appearance narrative after John 20.

⁵⁹⁹ It is noteworthy that 21:11 also refers to the miraculous catch and due to the numerical symbolism of 153, 21:11 should be seen as a link between the miraculous catch story and the miraculous feeding story known to audiences of John 21.

⁶⁰⁰ Brown, *John*, 1084, argues that “fishermen do not take care of fish the way shepherds take care of sheep. Brown asserts that no redundancy occurs in the symbolism applied to Peter in 21:1–14, where fish symbolism is employed, and in 21:15–17, where sheep symbolism is used. A connection between Peter and shepherd imagery is also found in 1 Pet 5:1–5.

things.”⁶⁰¹ Variation occurs in the words used to for love (Φιλεῖς/ἀγαπᾶς),⁶⁰² feeding/herding (Βόσκει/Ποίμαινε), and sheep/lambs (πρόβατά/ἀρνία). An apparent redundancy in 21:17 concerns the interplay between οἶδας and γινώσκεις,⁶⁰³ but this variation, rather than functioning only in a synonymous way, allows auditors to perceive an amplification in 21:17. Auditors are also able to recall earlier parts of the narrative when particular words are used despite their synonymy.⁶⁰⁴

It then seems redundant for the information about Peter’s father, to be repeated in each of the questions asked by Jesus. This manner of referencing Peter echoes the first words spoken by Jesus to Simon Peter in 1:42 (Σίμων ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου). A redundant narration in 21:17 is when the narrator repeats the reason why Peter was grieved after three questions, helping audiences again recall prediction of Jesus in 13:38, showing that Jesus knows all things (cf. 18:17, 25, 27).⁶⁰⁵ Variation and amplification in 21:17 also expressed in the use of Φιλεῖς and γινώσκεις in the addition to the phrase Κύριε, πάντα σὺ οἶδας.

21:18 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ὅτε ἦς νεώτερος, ἐζώννυες σεαυτὸν καὶ περιεπάτεις ὄπου ἠθέληες· ὅταν δὲ γηράσῃς, ἐκτενεῖς τὰς χεῖράς σου, καὶ ἄλλος σε ζώσει καὶ οἶσει ὄπου οὐ θέλεις.

If 13:38 is to be remembered by auditors in 21:17, then this is confirmed in 21:18, which uses the exact formula ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι. The formula also echoes the opening words

⁶⁰¹ Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 632. Scholars debate whether this is an ellipsis that should be understood in the sense of “do you love me more than these others do,” or as a reference to the boat, nets, fish, and other aspects to support his daily life. The other “things” would then refer to boats, nets, and his occupation as a tax fisherman. They find this to be a far less satisfactory interpretation than to posit an ellipsis pointing to the “greater love” of the noble shepherd in contrast to the rest of the group mentioned in 21:2.

⁶⁰² Variation in words used for love was already encountered when references to the beloved disciple throughout John 13–21 are considered as well as the references to the “beloved ones” (John 11:3, 5). Although Peter responds by using φιλεῖς/φιλεῖς, the question put by Jesus is regarded within the narrative itself as having equivalent meaning. This is indicated in the narratorial affirmation that Jesus asked Peter if he loved him three times (λαπήθη ὁ Πέτρος ὅτι εἶπεν αὐτῷ τὸ τρίτον· Φιλεῖς με;) in 21:17 despite ἀγαπᾶς being used in the first (21:15) and second (21:16) questions, and φιλεῖς being used the third (21:17).

⁶⁰³ The significance of οἶδα will be explored in § 4.3 in light of Johannine recognition.

⁶⁰⁴ David Shepherd, “Do You Love Me?” A Narrative-Critical Reappraisal of Ἀγαπάω and Φιλέω in John 21:15–17,” *JBL* 129.4 (2010), 777–92, 777–78. In his narrative-critical approach to the question of stylistic variation of synonyms, Shepherd considers that the alternation of verbs in John 21:15–17 is “narratively significant” even though a semantic differentiation in ancient Greek is impossible to establish. By accepting a *relecture* model for John 21 being composed from John 1–20, he posits that John 21 addresses the “topic of the death of Peter and the Beloved Disciple.” (p. 780).

⁶⁰⁵ So Labahn, “Relecturing,” 342, finds the significance of Peter’s nakedness in 21:8 to be a recollection of John 18 in the rehabilitation of Peter’s sin, which was left unresolved in the earlier story of John 1–20. In light of the narratorial communication, the explanation of why Peter was naked (ἦν γὰρ γυμνός) in 21:7, Labahn has considered this as an indication of Peter’s shame as there is already an explicit pointer toward the threefold denials of Peter (John 18:17, 25, 27) in the use of “charcoal fire” (18:18), which was described after the first denial in John 18 and before the threefold dialogue between Jesus and Peter in John 21:9.

(ἀμὴν ἀμὴν) of the noble shepherd discourse (10:1),⁶⁰⁶ reinforcing the perspective that 21:15–17 requires audiences to use the “greater love” topic and the noble death of the shepherd to understand 21:15–19.⁶⁰⁷ Scholars have noted other difficulties in attempting to interpret 21:18. Brown finds an age contrast (ὅτε ἦς νεώτερος ... ὅταν δὲ γηράσῃς) in that the verb “to gird” is applied to both Peter girding himself when he was younger (ἐζώννυες) and to when he will be girded by another when old (ζώσσει).⁶⁰⁸ Another contrast between the younger and old Peter is in going where he wishes to go (περιεπάτεῖς ὅπου ἠθέλες) and being taken where he does not want to go (ἄλλος σε ζώσσει καὶ οἴσει ὅπου οὐ θέλεις).

The audience may connect the reference to Peter’s γυμνός in 21:7, where he girds himself (διεζώσατο) and chooses to go where he wants to go (ἔβαλεν ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν), with the content of 21:18. Of the contrasts in 21:18, there is variation in that the reference to the old Peter stretching out his hands (ἐκτενεῖς τὰς χεῖράς σου) since this has “no contrasting action” on the part of the younger Peter.⁶⁰⁹ Auditors can perceive this variation as amplification and as a reference to crucifixion⁶¹⁰ that accords with Theon’s conventions about not distressing auditors. Audiences listening to 21:18 being read aloud may have understood this as an ambiguous *prosôporoeia* of Jesus.⁶¹¹

21:19 τοῦτο δὲ εἶπεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ δοξάσει τὸν θεόν. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν λέγει αὐτῷ· Ἀκολούθει μοι.

An important theme in John is referenced by Ἀκολούθει μοι, which stands out from the words of the narrator as a continuation of the saying of Jesus from 21:18. The saying being *clarified* (21:18) was itself composed in a manner that is cryptic or ambiguous both to Simon

⁶⁰⁶ While the formula ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν used in John 10 occurs many times elsewhere in John (1:51; 3:3, 5; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:26, 32, 47, 53; 8:34, 51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:16, 20, 21; 14:12; 16:20, 23), the exact formula ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι used in 21:18 is found only in 3:11 and 13:38. The context of 3:11 concerns the Johannine saying about important topics such as knowing and witness (ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ὅτι ὁ οἶδαμεν λαλοῦμεν καὶ ὁ ἐωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν, καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἡμῶν οὐ λαμβάνετε). Compare 3:11 with John 21:24 which contain οἶδαμεν and μαρτυρῶν/ μαρτυρία, and also 1 John 1:2 which contains ἐωράκαμεν and μαρτυροῦμεν.

⁶⁰⁷ This is reinforced by the repetition and variation in words used for love, as well as in the reference to the beloved disciple at the supper scene in John 13.

⁶⁰⁸ Brown, *John*, 1106–7.

⁶⁰⁹ Brown, *John*, 1107.

⁶¹⁰ Brown, *John*, 1108. If there is a positive reference to the crucifixion in 21:18, then Brown thus argues that the composer used a “hysteron proteron” where the phrase “stretching out of the hands” was placed first in order to draw the audience’s attention “to it, precisely because it was the key to the whole interpretation.” This would then constitute the earliest evidence for Peter’s martyrdom, which is also found in *1 Clement* 4, and in Tertullian’s *Scorpiace* 15 though probably reliant upon John 21:18.

⁶¹¹ Brown, *John*, 1107, argues that “vague, obscure predictions by Jesus that could not be understood until after the event” are typical of Johannine style (cf. 2:19; 3:14; 9:50).

Peter as a character in the narrative, who has to be emphatically reminded *σύ μοι ἀκολούθει* (21:22), and to the audiences hearing the *prosôporoeia* of Jesus in 21:18 so as to warrant a *clarifying* interpretation by the narrator. The reference to the undesirable element of Peter's death in 21:18 (*ἐκτενεῖς τὰς χεῖράς σου*) is described as *δοξάσει* in 21:19.

4.2.2.4 Oral-Manuscript Conventions in John 21:20–23

21:20 Ἐπιστραφεῖς ὁ Πέτρος βλέπει τὸν μαθητὴν ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀκολουθοῦντα, ὃς καὶ ἀνέπεσεν ἐν τῷ δεῖπνῳ ἐπὶ τὸ στήθος αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν· Κύριε, τίς ἐστὶν ὁ παραδιδούς σε;

The opening of this section uses *ἐπιστραφεῖς*, a word indicating an emphasis on *turning about*, but in reference to a “point or area where one has been before.”⁶¹² This affirms the view of Brown, who asserts that “no play on the idea that both Peter and the beloved disciple were following” is implied since the contrast is that Peter must follow Jesus in the death while the beloved disciple is to remain.⁶¹³ This argument can be refuted if Johannine irony, symbolism, and double *entendre*, where a phrase that can function generically within the narrative could signify (*σημαίνων*) something else (cf. 21:19), are considered.

By virtue of repetition, the construction in 21:20 would have been sufficient, but it here is separated from the typical construction by the word *ἀκολουθοῦντα*. Due to this placement of the keyword between the reference to the beloved disciple, as well as the reference back to 13:25 points to the importance “following” for the characterization of the beloved disciple for audiences, who would be constructing their identity of the beloved disciple precisely through the *synkrisis* in John 21.

Another nuance for auditors contained in the word choice *ἐπιστρέφω* is that after the command of Jesus for Peter to follow him, Peter turns from his beliefs,⁶¹⁴ marking his character

⁶¹² Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 15.90.

⁶¹³ Brown, *John*, 1108. Textual witnesses also support a reading of Ἐπιστραφεῖς [δὲ] ὁ Πέτρος βλέπει. Despite the nearly even division in textual witnesses to either reading, Brown suggests that “then” translates the sense in light of the narrative movement toward the beloved disciple. This is because he doubts that the contrast with the beloved disciple being described as “following” means that the writer implied that the beloved disciple was already doing what Simon Peter had been told to do. Neither does he find an “innuendo that the Beloved Disciple is also following Jesus to death.” (p. 1109).

⁶¹⁴ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 31.60, posit that *ἐπιστρέφω* could also mean “to change one’s belief... with a focus upon that to which one turns,” “to cause to change one’s beliefs” (31.61), or “to change one’s ways” (41.51). It is closely associated with *στρέφομαι*, which can also mean “turn around” (16.13), “come to believe” or “come to accept” (31.60), to “change one’s manner of life” (41.50), to “shift one’s association to someone else” (34.25).

transformation.⁶¹⁵ It is elsewhere used in the simple form στραφεις elsewhere in John where Jesus turns to look at the two disciples of John (cf. 1:38).⁶¹⁶ Its placement in 21:20 occurs in a way that could refer to the act of Peter turning toward the beloved disciple, but also to Peter changing his way and beliefs in light of 21:15–19.

It is also plausible to consider that auditors would identify the variations in how the beloved disciple is referenced in 21:20,⁶¹⁷ using two phrases that specifically recalls 13:23–25 for the audience, so that the placement of ἀκολουθοῦντα in relation to the narrator’s new two-fold reference for the beloved disciple elevates listening auditors toward 1:35–39. Rather than positing only a generic meaning of following behind someone to the use of ἀκολουθέω in 21:20 as Louw and Nida do,⁶¹⁸ it is not accidental that the word chosen and placed between the amplified reference to the beloved disciple is ἀκολουθοῦντα. The emphasis on ἀκολουθοῦντα can imply a physical following and proximity between the beloved disciple and the dialogue between Jesus and Peter, but can also function as a double *entendre* pointing to discipleship⁶¹⁹ such as when addressed to Philip (cf. 1:44).⁶²⁰ The use of ἀκολουθοῦντα together with ἐπιστραφεις creates a dramatic effect on auditors that facilitates the *synkrisis* between the beloved disciple and Simon Peter while also recalling an earlier part of the oral-manuscript where μένει was used (1:35–39), elevating them to listen carefully to 21:22.

21:21 τοῦτον οὖν ἰδὼν ὁ Πέτρος λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ· Κύριε, οὗτος δὲ τί;

⁶¹⁵ This seemingly redundant narration often considered as a literary *aporia* could indicate to the audience that the beloved disciple is also the one who had the most *credible* access to information regarding the betrayer’s identity, thus forming an important part of the *synkrisis* between Simon Peter and the beloved disciple in John 21.

⁶¹⁶ See for instance the narration with Jesus as actor in 1:38a, στραφεις δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ θεασάμενος αὐτοὺς ἀκολουθοῦντας, and compare it to Peter as actor in 21:20a, Ἐπιστραφεις ὁ Πέτρος βλέπει... ἀκολουθοῦντα. Here, repetition, variation, and amplification allows audiences could recall the dialogue between Jesus and the two disciples who first followed Jesus, Andrew and the “other disciple” (1:35–39). Peter seems to take over the role of Jesus. It is interesting that here is internal evidence that affirms the “other disciple” as being the beloved disciple of 21:20 since the protagonist, Jesus, links this disciple with the two disciple of John who “remained” with him in his home prior to him having met and renamed Simon (1:40–42).

⁶¹⁷ Brown, *John*, 1109, finds this reference is a “mosaic” from 13:2, 21, and 25, but questions why the Johannine parenthetical reminder is given in 21:20 rather than 21:7. He considers it possible that the redactor had more compositional freedom in 21:20–23 than in 21:1–13.

⁶¹⁸ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 15.144, where it means “to come/go behind or after someone else.”

⁶¹⁹ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 15.156. It can mean “to follow or accompany someone who takes the lead in determining direction and route of movement,” differing from the sense of 21:20 in that it specifies the “factor of accompaniment rather than merely going behind.”

⁶²⁰ It can also mean “to be a disciple of” (36.31). See for instance when Jesus tells Philip to follow him in 1:44, Ἀκολούθει μοι, whereupon Philip goes and finds Nathaneal (1:45) and also tells him to “come and see” Ἐρχου καὶ ἴδε (1:46), paralleling the construction Ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε in 1:39 though with variation in the verb “to see” which indicates synonymy according to Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 24.1.

The immediate redundancy in 21:21 occurs when the narrator repeats that Peter was seeing (ιδὼν) this anonymous disciple. The variation between βλέπει (21:20) and ιδὼν (21:21) points to a synonymous-rhetorical function,⁶²¹ which matches the interplay between ἐμβλέψας and Ἴδε in 1:36–37, though in 1:38–39 uses θεασάμενος, ὤψεσθε, and εἶδαν as verbs for seeing. Auditors are assisted to not only remember the interplay of words for seeing in 1:35–39. But also to recall the redundant variation of βλέπει in the verb ιδὼν, which is also used in 19:26 where Jesus sees his mother and the beloved disciple (Ἰησοῦς οὖν ιδὼν τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν παρεστῶτα ὃν ἠγάπα λέγει τῇ μητρὶ). This repetition and variation illustrates the redundancy of overlexicalization⁶²² while elevating the audience by avoiding an overuse of words that distract auditors. The repetition and variation can also point auditors to nuances such as that Jesus turning and beholding the two disciples of John who were following him (στραφεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ θεασάμενος αὐτοὺς ἀκολουθοῦντας) in 1:38,⁶²³ whereas for Peter, Jesus only looks (ἐμβλέψας) at him (1:42).⁶²⁴ This assists auditors in understanding how the *synkrisis* characterises the beloved disciple in relation to Simon Peter.

The elliptical construction οὗτος δὲ τί requires further elaboration for readers and auditors through the addition of verbs such as “to become.”⁶²⁵ Auditors may assume that Peter is asking Jesus for a comparison between his own predicted fate, which is connected with δοξάζω, and the fate of the beloved disciple, which is connected with μένω. Peter’s question does not imply a competitive contrast for Johannine audiences against Petrine tradition, since in the narrative context Peter is undergoing a transformation of character after his confession of greater love (21:17). He does, however, receive a response from Jesus using the ambiguous words μένω and ἀκολουθέω, indicating that Peter’s transformation was not as yet completed.⁶²⁶

⁶²¹ Brown, *John*, 1109, posits “no particular distinction” between βλέπει/ιδὼν in 21:20–21

⁶²² Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 24.9, find that in 1:36, ἐμβλέπω, which means “to direct one’s vision and attention to a particular object” may be synonymous to from βλέπω in 1:29. Another sense of ἐμβλέπω is “to process information by giving consideration to various aspects” (30.1).

⁶²³ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 24.14, find that θεασάμενος used here points to observing “something with continuity and attention, often with the implication that what is observed is something unusual.” Another sense of θεάομαι is overlaps in meaning with one of the senses of ὁράω that implies going “to see a person on the basis of friendship and with helpful intent” (34.50).

⁶²⁴ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*,

⁶²⁵ Brown, *John*, 1109. Newman and Nida, *Translator’s*, 636, render the expression “but this man what” as “what will this man experience,” or “what is he going to undergo.”

⁶²⁶ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 36.31. A close synonym is found in one of the senses of μαθητεύω, where it describes a “follower or a disciple of someone, in the sense of adhering to the teachings or instructions of a leader and in promoting the cause of such a leader.” It could also refer to the activity of causing others to become followers (36.37).

This prepares auditors for the emphatic repetition of ἀκολουθέω in 21:22, pointing to a double *entendre* in the use of this word in 21:20.

21:22 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἐὰν αὐτὸν θέλω μένειν ἕως ἔρχομαι, τί πρὸς σέ; σὺ μοι ἀκολουθεῖ.

This *prosōpoeia* of Jesus does not involve the formulaic expression used in 21:18, but instead contains a conditional clause that presumes the certainty, from the writer's perspective, that the event described will be expected to happen in the future.⁶²⁷ Here again in 21:22 is the repetition of a key term μένειν, providing the audience with another means to link the other disciple in 1:35–39 with the beloved disciple, since they ask Jesus ποῦ μένεις; (1:38) and they are invited by Jesus Ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε, whereupon it is narrated ἦλθαν οὖν καὶ εἶδαν ποῦ μένει (1:39).⁶²⁸ In light of the uses of μένω,⁶²⁹ the beloved disciple being given the responsibility for the mother of Jesus (19:26) by taking her into his home (ἔλαβεν ὁ μαθητὴς αὐτὴν εἰς τὰ ἴδια) could be viewed in relation to his narrative *credibility* from 1:38–39 where it is narrated that he stayed (μένει) where Jesus dwelled (μένεις).⁶³⁰

Auditors may have difficulty in deciding on the double *entendre* in θέλω, since it either has the connotation of “desire” or the re-lexicalized meaning of “purpose, will.”⁶³¹ Another instance of Johannine misunderstanding, similar to the irony of Johannine failed recognition, is found in the repetition μένω. In 21:22 it can mean either “to stay alive,”⁶³² which is plausible if the topic of death is valid as *synkrisis*.⁶³³ Scholars do, however, argue that μένειν means “to remain alive” since 21:23 distinguishes between not dying and remaining.⁶³⁴ It can also show that *synkritic* language was used since 21:22 makes an emphatic reference for Peter to follow

⁶²⁷ Brown, *John*, 1109, finds that the writer rejects this literal interpretation or rumour in 21:23.

⁶²⁸ Here in 1:35–39 and 1:40–42 are passages in which the other disciple and Peter feature. Variation occurs in references to seeing, but with “to remain” there is repetition without variation.

⁶²⁹ Some instances in John include μένειν (21:22, 23), μένη (15:4, 6, 16), μένω (15:10), ὁ μένων (14:10, 25; 15:5), μένητε (15:4), and μένει (1:39; 3:36; 6:56; 8:35a, 35b; 9:41; 12:24, 34; 14:17). An important usage of this verb for understanding the *synkrisis* in John 21 occurs in 1:35–39, a unit narrating that two disciples of John, one of whom remained anonymous, “followed” Jesus and “remained” (1:39) with him in the place where he “abode” (1:38). John 1:35–1:51 may therefore be important inner-texts that audiences were to recall when hearing John 21 being performed aloud.

⁶³⁰ Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 85.55, regard the use here as “to remain in the same place over a period of time.” Other nuances of μένω that could be known to Johannine auditors include “to remain in a place and/or state, with expectancy concerning a future event,” which overlaps with one of the senses of προσδέχομαι (85.60), “to continue to exist” (13.89), and “to continue in an activity or state” seen also in 1 John 2:10 and 2 John 9, as well as in the form, ἐπιμένω in John 8:7, which implies continuing to stand in a place (68.11).

⁶³¹ Brown, *John*, 1109.

⁶³² Brown, *John*, 1109.

⁶³³ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 211–12.

⁶³⁴ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 636.

Jesus (σύ μοι ἀκολουθεῖ).⁶³⁵ It is possible that this saying was composed⁶³⁶ with a rhetorical concern to demonstrate for auditors that the saying was difficult for Johannine audiences to interpret without a narratorial *clarification* in 21:23. Along with the rhetorical effect of the conditional clause indicated in 21:22, difficulties arising from the use of ambiguous words and constructions elevates auditors concerned with the *credibility* of this *prosôporoeia* of Jesus despite the death of the beloved disciple.⁶³⁷

21:23 ἐξῆλθεν οὖν οὗτος ὁ λόγος εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὅτι ὁ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνος οὐκ ἀποθνήσκει. οὐκ εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι οὐκ ἀποθνήσκει ἀλλ'· Ἐὰν αὐτὸν θέλω μένειν ἕως ἔρχομαι, τί πρὸς σέ;

While 21:23 is without a repetition of the command to follow (σύ μοι ἀκολουθεῖ), which is emphatically constructed in 21:22 as opposed to 21:19 (Ἀκολουθεῖ μοι), it appears that part of the clarifying interpretation in 21:23 consists of a repetition of the ambiguous saying in 21:22. When introducing the clarification, the phrase οὐκ εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς involves an unusual construction of δέ.⁶³⁸ This could function as an indication of rhetorical force or emphasis for auditors listening to this placement of δέ. The possibility exists that τί πρὸς σέ is a later scribal imitation of 21:22, but is found in the best textual witnesses to the text of the final form of John.⁶³⁹ The inclusion thereof may have indicated to auditors that a hypothetical point was implied in this saying.

It can be argued that a media-rhetorical perspective cannot exclude the possibility that the rhetorical force of the saying composed in 21:22 was actually intended to reinforce the theme, σύ μοι ἀκολουθεῖ, to further characterise Simon Peter, since this theme relates to the δοξάσει his death would bring to τὸν θεόν. The saying should not have been interpreted as an indication of the beloved disciple's comparative death, pointing against it being interpreted as

⁶³⁵ Brown, *John*, 1110, uses this to argue that the function of the emphasis is to contrast “Peter with the Beloved Disciple who will not follow Jesus to death in the same way that Peter will follow.”

⁶³⁶ Brown, *John*, 1109–10. Auditors encountering the construction τί πρὸς σέ may realize that the use of τί πρὸς with a pronoun like σέ mirrors classical usage and is found in 2:4 (Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι) though lacking the πρὸς.

⁶³⁷ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science*, 212, affirm that by the time John 21 was composed, “both Peter and the beloved disciple had died.”

⁶³⁸ Brown, *John*, 1110, finds similar reflective asides in 2:22 (ὅτε οὖν ἠγέρθη ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἐμνήσθησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι τοῦτο ἔλεγεν, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῇ γραφῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ ὃν εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς) and 12:16 (ταῦτα οὐκ ἔγνωσαν αὐτοῦ οἱ μαθηταὶ τὸ πρῶτον, ἀλλ' ὅτε ἐδοξάσθη Ἰησοῦς τότε ἐμνήσθησαν ὅτι ταῦτα ἦν ἐπ' αὐτῷ γεγραμμένα καὶ ταῦτα ἐποίησαν αὐτῷ). These verses contain a repetition of μνησθεσθαι, which according to Louw and Nida, *Semantic*, 29.7, means “to recall information from memory, but without necessarily the implication that persons have actually forgotten.” Another sense is “to recall or be aware of information, and as a result to respond in an appropriate manner” (29.16).

⁶³⁹ Brown, *John*, 1110.

a prediction like the death of Peter narrated in 21:18–19.⁶⁴⁰ The apparent manner in which Peter does not directly answer the questioning by Jesus about his love in 21:15–17 is replicated in that now Jesus avoids directly answering Peter through a saying that plays on the ambiguous idea of μένειν ἕως ἔρχομαι.⁶⁴¹

It is apparent to auditors that the σύ μοι ἀκολουθεῖ from 21:22 is not repeated in 21:23, which now concerns a saying, ὁ λόγος, of Jesus about the fate of the beloved disciple that originated εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς. The argument was made that the *prosôporoeia* was intended to further characterise Peter for auditors by also making reference to the beloved disciple's death by allowing the audience to recall 1:35–39, and also in 19:26–27, where the beloved disciple suddenly appears after it was narrated that only women were at the cross (19:25). Even in John 21 it is difficult to determine if the beloved disciple was part of the list of disciples in 21:2. The audience being considered at the end of the first century CE may not be acquainted with the beloved disciple especially if had no relationship to the communication network implied in 21:23. For these auditors, the characterization techniques of *synkrisis* could be used to better grasp the characterization of the anonymous beloved disciple in light of Peter, and of Peter in light of the beloved disciple, in John 21.

⁶⁴⁰ Newman and Nida, *Translator's*, 636, posit that 21:23 was written to explain that the words of Jesus “were a hypothetical statement and not a prophecy that would actually take place.”

⁶⁴¹ The misunderstanding encoded in the oral-manuscript form involves the double *entendre* of μένειν since it is narrated that the community which knew the identity and witness of the beloved disciple thought this meant he would not die but remain alive until the *parousia*.

5. Conclusion

In this study, we have undertaken to determine if a media-rhetorical perspective that takes into account the media texture of the text provides deeper insights into the function of *literary aporiae* in John 21. The research found that there is not more than one *aporia* in John 21 as John 21 as a whole constitutes a single *aporia* in the context of the Gospel of John. The paper argued that John 21 was composed in a new manuscript media culture after John 1-20 was completed. The appearance of oral forms of communication in the literary form of the manuscript is a function of the media culture of John 21's milieu. To facilitate the oral communication process, the *oral-manuscript* form encoded aspects of oral/aural communications into the text so that audiences hearing a reader-performer could better understand and remember the text, to recall to memory earlier parts of the text, and to mark off one unit from the next.

It was also shown how the audience is taken into consideration in the *oral-manuscript* form of communication. *Literary aporiae* can thus be construed as a function that invites the listening audience to recall other narratives in the multimedia situation in which John 21 was composed, published, and performed. We then analysed John 21 in a media-rhetorical perspective by looking at aspects such as repetition, variation, amplification, redundancy, symbolism and double *entendre*, ellipsis, mnemonic devices, and found that there are indeed elements of oral-manuscript culture embedded in the text. This means the function of *literary aporiae* in the text can be analysed from a media-rhetorical perspective, although this is almost impossible to prove due to a lack of direct evidence.

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