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Power and authority in Paul's ministry: a study in 1 Corinthians

Yorkston, Ian Charles

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Ian Charles Yorkston

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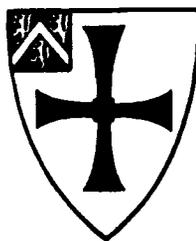
University of Durham

Department of Theology

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Ian Yorkston
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Abstract

Ian Charles Yorkston

Power and authority in Paul's Ministry: A study in 1 Corinthians

MA

Submitted 1998

The object of study is the power and authority used by the apostle Paul in his interaction with the Corinthians as reflected in 1 Corinthians. Working definitions of the two key terms are offered. In Part One, a review was undertaken of the secondary literature related to issues of power and authority. This review was divided into three sections devoted to traditional historical-critical analyses reflecting the period from 1900 to the 1970s, social-scientific approaches and rhetorical-critical approaches, respectively. Historical-critical analyses include the works of Sohm, Harnack, Schweizer, Käsemann, Campenhausen, Dunn and Turner. The Social-scientific survey includes the works of Weber, Berger & Luckmann, Theissen, Schütz, Holmberg, Meeks and Chow. Rhetorical-critical analysis centres on Shaw, Welborn and Mitchell.

Part Two comprised an exegesis of 1 Corinthians 12-14, a large, representative text from the letter, to examine how Paul exerted power and authority on the Corinthians through the text. Paul's use, in practice, of power and authority, as distinct from his own claims regarding power and authority could be observed. Care is taken to allow issues of social context and rhetoric as well as theology to influence the debate as appropriate. Paul's strategic appeal as norms to concepts such as the gospel, the common good, love and upbuilding are noted.

Part Three gives brief consideration to what has been achieved in the present thesis and points to further possible research. The definitions of the two key terms are revisited to incorporate material uncovered in the course of the study.

Chapter One: Introduction

The text of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians presents questions to the late 20th century reader. Direct insight is provided into only one side of a process of interaction between the church established at Corinth and its original founder. The present letter reveals there had been a previous letter from Paul (5.9) as well as some written correspondence in the other direction (7.1). The text of neither of these is available, nor of any other earlier missive. In order to supplement our understanding of 1 Corinthians, therefore, enquiry needs to be made 'behind' the text into the contingent, historical, social, literary, and rhetorical situation into which Paul originally sent the letter.

It may be inferred with confidence that there existed conflict within the church. Divisions (ἔριδες) had been reported by Chloe's people (1.11). Specific divisions (σχίσματα) had also been heard of in the context of the coming together of the group (11.18). These divisions are seen by most commentators as a major theme of the letter, especially in chapters 1-4.

Within Corinthian Christianity, the present study is concerned with the dual and overlapping themes of *power* and *authority*. Although the concept of power is grounded within the text in the word δύναμις, and authority fits ἐξουσία, neither concept is co-terminus with these two words, and each is found in the context of other vocabulary. Issues involving power and authority are raised even where neither of these two Greek terms is found. For example, several authors have noted an equivalence between grace and power.[1]

At the outset working definitions of power and authority need to be established. These definitions are, of course, subject to modification and do not

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[1] So R. Bultmann, *2 Corinthians*, 226, on 2 Cor 12.9, 'here, χάρις and δύναμις are in essence synonymous'; E. Käsemann, 'Ministry', 65, writes 'charis (which in Paul is normally understood as power)'; J. Dunn, *Jesus*, 202f, 'For Paul grace means *power*, an otherly power at work in and through the believer's life, the *experience* of God's Spirit.' Similarly, where grace 'describes the act of God in and through men it overlaps with the concepts "power" and "Spirit",' ibid, 204. As will be seen below, where Paul holds that God acts through the Spirit to impart power by his grace Paul adopts vocabulary centred around χάρισμα.

stand inviolate. Scholarly consensus suggests that power is the ability to cause something to be done. Thus power is characterised by Arnold as 'inherent or derived capability'[2] 'to accomplish a given end.'[3] Similarly, Etzioni defines power as 'an actor's ability to induce or influence another actor to carry out his directives or any other norms he supports.'[4] Δυναμις is derived from and shares a semantic field with δυναμαι, 'to be able (expressing possibility or capability)',[5] which coheres with Arnold's and Etzioni's definitions.

Authority, while closely related to power, is less easily differentiated.[6] For Friedrich, authority has been defined in several ways involving 'a particular kind of power.'[7] Schmidt contrasts authority with power, translating 'ἐξουσία as "right to power" and δύναμις as "expression of power".'[8] Schütz regards authority as the right to exercise power in a social context.[9] Authority can distribute access to power,[10] and is closely bound with legitimacy.[11] A claim may be made that power exercised in a given instance is legitimate. This claim to legitimacy may be rejected by all, revealing an absence of authority. However, where the claim is verified by others, a relationship involving authority may be said to be present.

Some further clarity is necessary for the purpose of this study and so the following preliminary definitions will be provided. Power will refer to one's ability to cause another to act according to one's wishes. Authority will refer to an accepted claim of legitimacy for the exercise of power.

What dimensions of these two concepts are to be examined? Sometimes, persuasive influence may constitute power. In other cases, power is displayed through invocation of authority. This may involve the pulling of rank, the making of

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[2] Arnold, 'Power', *DPL*, 723.
[3] Arnold, 'Power', *ABD*, V:444.
[4] Quoted by Holmberg, *Paul*, 9.
[5] O.Betz in 'Might', *NIDNTT*, II, 603.
[6] 'In common usage, authority is often confused with power or taken to be a synonym of power,' Friedrich, *Authority*, 29. Cf. Schütz, *Apostolic*, 14, 'they [power and authority] are so often found together they can appear to be equivalents, although they are not.'
[7] Friedrich, *Authority*, 29.
[8] Cited in Campenhausen, *Authority*, 5 n.11.
[9] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 10.
[10] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 13f.

claims to a privileged position as over against another party. Such position may be on the basis of alleged divine decision, of appointment to what has come later to be described by the notion of ecclesiastical office. Alternatively, position may be claimed or recognized on the strength of social norms, of holding a certain status within the wider society through familial origins, wealth, or political influence. Power is also the description of certain spiritual endowment, of receiving an impartation of divine strength.

The dimensions of power and authority to be discussed in the present study will comprise Paul's interaction with the Corinthians, as well as his views of what was fitting in the *use of power* (that is, authority) among and between themselves. The focus will be on Paul's use of his power and authority in writing the letter, particularly concentrating on exegesis of chapters 12-14. These definitions and parameters provide the point of departure for study. It may well be that this study itself clarifies these definitions and induces some modifications.

Part I of the current study reviews and interacts with a variety of approaches to the interpretation of 1 Corinthians. These are, in broad terms, traditional historical-critical reconstruction, social-scientific approaches and rhetorical analysis. Part II then examines the text of 1 Corinthians 12-14 exegetically to uncover fresh insights into the power exercised by Paul towards his congregation and the authority he saw himself holding. The review of secondary literature begins with the standard historical-critical approaches used in the period from the turn of the century to the 1970s.

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[11] Schütz, *Apostolic,* 15.

PART I: REVIEW OF SECONDARY LITERATURE

Chapter Two: Historical-Critical Reconstruction

As outlined above, Part II of the present thesis will consist in exegetical examination of 1 Corinthians 12-14. Part I, prior to that, will comprise a review of the secondary literature, to provide a base from which to launch the exegetical analysis. Several key themes have been considered in the existing literature by authors who have followed an historical-critical approach, and some of these themes will be reviewed in turn.

2.1. Charisma and Office

The modern discussion of authority in the Pauline churches in general may be traced back to a debate between Rudolf Sohm and Adolf von Harnack about *charisma* and office (German: *Amt*).[12] This debate[13] began with Sohm's 1892 study of canon law (*Kirchenrecht*),[14] in which he states his thesis that 'the apostolic teaching on the constitution of the ekklēsia is that the organization of Christendom is not a legal one ("rechtlich"), but a charismatic organization.'[15] Sohm considered the 'distribution of gifts of grace (*Gnadengaben*)'[16] to have imparted a task to each Christian as a limb of the body of Christ. The idea of 'charisma' arose from the 'gift of grace' discussed in 1 Corinthians (particularly chapter 12).[17] For Sohm, the

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[12] Detailed reviews of the debate are found in an MTheol. thesis (1991, Durham University) by Carsten Claussen, 'The Structure of the Pauline Churches: "Charisma" and "Office"', and in an excursus on the controversy in H.-J. Schmitz, *Frühkatholizismus bei Adolf von Harnack, Rudolph Sohm und Ernst Käsemann* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1977), 121-26.

[13] Sohm contributed *Kirchenrecht*, I (1892, reissued Leipzig/Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1923) and *Wesen und Ursprung des Kathoizismus* (Leipzig/Berlin: Teubner, 1909, ²1912). Harnack responded in *The Constitution and Law of the Church in the First Two Centuries* (ET London: Williams and Northgate, 1910), although he had already published some of his views on the subject in *Die Lehre der zwölf apostel* (1884).

[14] Sohm's work also influenced another strand of the current study, in providing the groundwork for the distinctive and influential development of the term 'charisma' by Max Weber (below note 173).

[15] Sohm, *Kirchenrecht* I, 26 as quoted in Dunn, *Theology*, 567.

[16] Claussen, 'Structure', 25, summarizing Sohm.

[17] It has long been assumed that charisma was a gift, denoting 'the result of the act of gracious giving', Dunn, *Theology*, 553, and that it was an expression of God's grace. Recently, M. Turner, 'Modern Linguistics,' 155-65 and *idem, Spirit and Gifts*, 262-67, has argued on grounds of lexical semantics that the two meanings of χάρις as gift, namely 'χάρις$_a$ ="act of giving" and χάρις$_b$ ="thing given"' should not be collapsed into the same instance of the word. In answer to this, Dunn, *Theology*, 553, has surely given adequate justification in it being 'only a matter of shorthand to describe charisma as the result or effect or expression of *charis*.' Turner, 'Linguistics', 162f and *Spirit*, 265f, further,

distribution of gifts gives rise to 'subordination and superiority among the members of a congregation.'[18] He defined ἐκκλησία as 'the assembly of the whole of Christendom,' the church invisible and universal rather than the visible, local church.[19] However, the act of coming together of two or three to meet in Christ's name invites the immediate influence of the Spirit on that manifestation of the church.[20] The Spirit then produces order through distribution of gifts to those assembled. This led Sohm to assert that it was God's word that reigned in the church, a word identified not 'by its form but by its inner power.'[21] Thus an antithesis was set up between *charisma* and canon law.[22] For the church to have a legal organization, in particular, offices, would contradict its essential charismatic nature.[23] The church cannot designate certain individuals to roles of leadership or government.[24] Sohm recognized that later church practice (as exhibited in 1 Clement) was at variance with this, and he posited a fall from the pristine, primitive state of Pauline practice.[25]

Harnack regarded the church as influenced by logistical necessity to adopt an organized state that involves church law when the circumstances dictate.[26] However,

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challenges the existence of a "technical" sense of "spiritual gift" rather than simply "gift" in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12. The prevalence of πνεῦμα in 1 Corinthians 12 (12.3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13) give the 'spiritual' adjective fairly secure ground. Turner's case from Romans 12.6-8 is weakened by Paul's use in 1.11 of πνευματικόν to modify χάρισμα functions to alert the Romans to Paul's "technical" use of the term and (as Turner, 'Linguistics', 163 notes) 'to provide such a meaning.' In addition, it may be noted that the close parallelism between 1 Cor 12 and Rom 12 is not limited to χαρίσματα, but includes the explicit linkage to χάρις, the body metaphor, and an emphasis on proper self-understanding. It may be that Paul did not provide enough clarity to be fully understood by the 'foreign' congregation at Rome, but it need not be doubted that he was referring to the same sort of subject matter in Rom 12 as he had done in 1 Cor 12. Designation of charisma as used in 1 Corinthians 12 as pneumatically-mediated "gift of grace" or, 'spiritual gifts of grace' (Holmberg, *Paul*, 77) therefore continues to be justified.

[18] Claussen, 'Structure', 25.

[19] Claussen, 'Structure', 24. 'He started from the church as absolute spiritual reality, the invisible body of Christ, the church whose citizenship is in heaven, which is held together only by common faith and pneumatic *charismata*, which has an external organization therefore neither locally nor otherwise,' Ridderbos, *Paul*, 438.

[20] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 438f.

[21] Claussen, 'Structure', 25, quoting Sohm.

[22] Dunn, *Theology*, 567.

[23] Claussen, 'Structure', 25.

[24] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 438f.

[25] Dunn, *Theology*, 567. Sohm posited 'the existence of a charismatic initial period of the whole of (or at least the Pauline part of) the Church,' Holmberg, *Paul*, 148 n. 56.

[26] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 439.

for Harnack, this necessity did not impact 'the essence of the church.'[27] Harnack distinguished charismatic offices ('spiritual, religious or enthusiastic ministry') functioning as Christians endowed with special charismatic gifts who travelled from local church to local church,[28] from ministries bounded by the local church which involved the effective discharge of administrative functions.[29] Thus what for Sohm was a temporal distinction (primitive versus fallen) between charisma and office was for Harnack a geographical distinction (pan-congregational charismatic offices versus local administrative offices).[30]

What was at stake was whether Paul's original vision for a church where the Spirit organised how functions were distributed as *charismata* had been replaced by a special group of people who gained control of the levers of power and caused the church to develop in directions characterised by tight control and rigidity. Sohm's work gained added importance by being pressed into service by Max Weber as will be seen later.[31]

The Spirit's action is decisively authoritative also in the view of Hans von Campenhausen, whose 1953 study on authority and power[32] examined Christian authority structures from the Jesus material through the times of Paul and Origen to Cyprian in the late third century. The Spirit becomes for Campenhausen (as it was for Sohm) 'the organising principle' of each congregation.[33] He follows Sohm in deducing that 'The community is not viewed or understood as a sociological entity,' so that the Spirit is not confined 'within the framework of a particular church order or constitution.'[34] Because the work of the Spirit is divine, it acts with such authority it

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[27] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 439.
[28] Claussen, 'Structure', 22.
[29] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 439.
[30] Dunn, *Theology*, 567.
[31] Section 3.1.1 below, page 28.
[32] H. von Campenhausen, *Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht* (Tubingen: J C B Mohr, 1953) ET by J.A.Baker as *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (London: A & C Black, 1969, reprint Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997).
[33] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 58.
[34] Ibid. The idea that the people involved in a church are somehow immune to the principles that sociology seeks to elucidate is not one that is widely held in the scholarship at the turn of the millennium. For Campenhausen as for Sohm, the church was a divine creation and therefore not subject to the same forces as organisations assembled by human beings. It would be almost universally accepted now that the church is profoundly affected by the fact that all its visible members are human. The Corinthian church was apparently operating with precisely the kind of elitism and

may be regarded even as sovereign. Those who respond by the right use of their spiritual gifting are part of a 'whole in which and through which the Spirit of Christ shows its power.'[35]

Authoritative action by the Spirit is also mentioned in Eduard Schweizer's study of church order[36] in which he considers views from the various streams of New Testament evidence, one of which is Paul's concept of the church. The impartation of gifts determines tasks. 'Superiority and subordination' (what might otherwise be called power relations) arise 'incidentally' from this distribution.[37] For Schweizer, the very formation of the church is within a tradition created 'by the repeated action of the Spirit.'[38] The Spirit, 'demands obedience' and this demand creates order in the church.[39] Schweizer sees charism[40] and ministry as an 'event.'[41] Service is an action of God carried out with the participation of 'an unqualified person,' so that grace functions as 'a concrete action' which involves a call to serve.[42] A gift of grace comes to each member, thus constituting a call to serve for every member,[43] so that any special activity in the church is a 'ministry or service.'[44] The 'events' with which the Spirit acts create order by obedience to the working of the Spirit. The purpose of such order is to facilitate the Spirit's 'work of edifying the Church.'[45] While for Schweizer authority and ministry are not antonyms, charismatic service and not position is the cause of obedience.[46] Similarly, a person may exercise a form of service not because of a selection process to a position, but because of God's

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disdain for others that Paul's prescription would disallow. Hence the added importance of the social scientific approaches to the questions raised in this study (below, Chapter Three page 27).

[35] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 63.

[36] E. Schweizer, *Gemeinde Und Gemeindeordnung Im Neuen Testament* (1959), ET *Church Order in the New Testament* (1961). In following citations to this work, the ET page reference will be given following the bilingual paragraph number.

[37] Schweizer, *Order*, 7k, 100.

[38] Schweizer, *Order*, 7ι, 99.

[39] Schweizer, *Order*, 7ι, 102.

[40] This is Schweizer's standard translation of χάρισμα. It has been followed in the recent work by Dunn (page 9 below) who now uses 'charism' instead of 'charisma,' in recognition that βάπτισμα is recognised as a technical term translated 'baptism' rather than as a transliteration 'baptisma'. My own view is that 'charism' has itself become something of a technical term in some church circles to refer to something imparted by an ecclesiastical office-holder: that use making it even more difficult for members of modern church communities to re-capture the sense intended by Paul's coining the word.

[41] Schweizer, *Order*, 21g, 180. The event character of charisma is considered below, page 9.

[42] Schweizer, *Order*, 21f, 179. Cf. Käsemann, 'Ministry', 65.

[43] Schweizer, *Order*, 22g, 186.

[44] Schweizer, *Order*, 21e, 178.

[45] Schweizer, *Order*, 7m, 102.

provision of a charism. Church order is to merely make available the possibility to serve.[47] Sometimes this may involve financial assistance to relieve practical anxiety, but the gifts are known and the service begins prior to 'such acknowledgment by the church.'[48]

Ernst Käsemann's essay on Ministry and Community[49] sees charisma describing 'the essence and scope of every ecclesiastical ministry and function.'[50] Charisma is 'the manifestation and concretion' of the power of God.[51] Thus, for Käsemann as for Schweizer, the distribution of power in the church has its origin in the work of the Spirit. Gifts carry with them a task to be done, and move the recipient to action.[52]

Campenhausen, Schweizer, and Käsemann have all been acknowledged[53] as influential on James Dunn's 1975 work *Jesus and the Spirit*, which included three chapters on religious experience in Paul and his churches,[54] of which, three sections are devoted to issues of authority.[55] Dunn interpreted Paul's as a charismatic view of ministry, noting Paul's use of a wide vocabulary to describe activities of service that 'were essentially charismatic ministries,' requiring the Spirit's inspiration and a responsive obedience but 'no further qualification.' All could and should be in some way ministers to others, using their charismatically-mediated authorization to help others. Where such occasional actions coalesced into a regular pattern of the same type of service, it could be recognised by others and appropriate submission to the

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[46] Schweizer, *Order*, 21e, 179.
[47] Schweizer, *Order*, 7m, 102.
[48] Schweizer, *Order*, 7n, 103.
[49] Käsemann, 'Ministry and Community in the NT' in *Essays on NT Themes*, 63-94.
[50] Käsemann, 'Ministry', 64.
[51] Käsemann, 'Ministry', 65.
[52] Ibid. The perception that charisma constitutes power is heightened by the realisation that charisma consists in word or deed, coupled with the explanation by Shaw, *Cost*, 17, 'Any human being who speaks or acts cannot avoid exercising some influence over the words and deeds of others.'
[53] Dunn, *Theology*, 567 n.8.
[54] Dunn, 'The Religious Experience of Paul and of the Pauline Churches' in *Jesus and the Spirit*, 199-342.
[55] Dunn, '§47 The exercise of authority in the community: apostolic authority', '§48 The authority of other ministries within the Pauline churches', '§49 The authority of the community and its criteria of assessment' in *Jesus*, 266-297.

authoritative action of the Spirit given. Paul shows evidence of valuing such regular contributions.[56]

Dunn's recent full length Pauline theology contains sections on the body of Christ and on ministry and authority.[57] Here, Dunn observes that the word χάρισμα did not have much significance prior to Paul, who by his distinctive usage caused it to become a technical term, typically as giftings of speech and action for the assembled church.[58] The character of a charism[59] is shown in 1 Cor 12.4-6 as a powerful divine enabling for serving others. The grace (χάρις) involved in charism is its nature as a 'gift received and enacted' rather than the specific appearance or observable form of the act of ministry.[60] Paul saw a charism as having 'a certain "event" character,'[61] that is the charism is the words being uttered or the action being carried out.[62] Individuals join the congregation through an experience of Spirit shared by the others in the congregation.[63] Thus as each received the Spirit, each thereby received a commissioning and 'engracing for ministry.' Each member was to function in service, and each member was to exercise a charism as a significant part of the whole interaction of the church community. It was specifically in this way that 'mutual interdependence' within the body was demonstrated (1 Cor 12.8-10).[64]

What started as a 'transforming vision' in Paul, the body of Christ as the local church, was subsequently transformed, losing many distinctive characteristics. Thus

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[56] Dunn, *Jesus*, 290, for example, the contribution of Stephanas, below n. 105.

[57] Dunn, '§20 The body of Christ' and '§21 Ministry and authority' in *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 533-564 and 565-598.

[58] Dunn, *Theology*, 553, 554. The lists of gifts (Rom 12.6-8; 1 Cor 12.8-10, 28-30) 'consist basically of charisms of speech and charisms of action,' Dunn, *Theology*, 555.

[59] Cf. note 40, above.

[60] Dunn, *Theology*, 554, 556.

[61] Dunn, *Theology*, 558. Similarly, as Dunn, 568, notes, Käsemann's position, 'Ministry', 83, was that 'authority resides only within the concrete act of ministry as it occurs.' A contrary position is argued on linguistic grounds by M. Turner (cf. discussion above, note 17).

[62] Ibid. Although Dunn has grasped an important point, one aspect of his position remain opaque in his writings. Experiences of feeling that one has been given something to say and yet holding back from saying it are commonplace. Similarly ubiquitous is speaking without any sense of having 'received' the content of the utterance. While neither experience constitutes what Dunn calls a charism, they do highlight two aspects involved in such an 'event' occurring: 1) impartation by the Spirit and 2) co-operation from the individual servant to enact what has been imparted. A charism must be both received and exercised to be effected. The charism coming to fruition might, I suggest, be likened to a pregnancy carried to term.

[63] Dunn, *Theology*, 561f.

[64] Dunn, *Theology*, 560, 556.

'church' came to refer less to the local church and more to the Church universal, and charisma disappeared during the second century.[65] Dunn therefore raises the historical question whether the creation of 'office' and institution are inherent in practical implementation of Paul's vision.[66]

The charisma/office dichotomy has tended to equate charisma with power and office with authority. Charisma is the raw ability to affect others, while office places restrictions on who does what where and opens the way for certain individuals to exercise power over others within particular parameters. An implicit corollary of this process is that the work of the Spirit in providing gifting to the church is seen to require definition and regulation from the church in order to maintain order. As will become clear below, Paul strongly believed order was necessary. Spiritual gifts could be mishandled, perhaps from ignorance, and Paul writes to correct this (12.1). The question arising from the charisma/office debate is whether, over time, there developed an over-emphasis on order which stifled the very freedom which Paul saw as a key correlate of the presence of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3.17; cf. Rom 8.2).

Paul assumed order in the church was necessary, a theme he addresses in 1 Corinthians 12-14. One task ahead then is to discover what kind of order Paul saw as normative. A natural starting point is the arrangement of responsibilities Paul envisioned within the congregation as reflected in 12.

2.2. Order in Corinth: Paul's Prescription

Detailed exegesis of 1 Corinthians 12-14 will be left to Part II of this thesis. However, in the present section, the broad brush-strokes of Paul's approach to the problems of disorder in Corinth over the matter of gifts of the Spirit will be considered. The main arguments used by Paul relate to the body of Christ.

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[65] Dunn, *Theology*, 563.
[66] 'To what extent were "institution," "hierarchy," and "office" integral to Paul's vision from the first, not to say an unavoidable feature of Paul's implementation of his vision in practice?' Dunn, *Theology*, 567. This question is sharpened when one considers the 'routinization of charisma' posited by Weber (below, section 3.1.3).

2.2.1. The Body of Christ and Order

In Dunn's *Theology of Paul* the imagery of the body is traced to a theme familiar in ancient political philosophy: the state or city as the body politic.[67] Paul's message is unity of the whole despite diversity of parts. Since the body is 'of Christ', each part holds common allegiance to Christ, and when heightened in the dealings within the congregation, 'potential factional differences' may be 'transformed into the necessary mutual co-operation for the common good.'[68] Such 'mutual interdependence in Christ' springs from Christ's grace to all.[69] 1 Corinthians 12.28 provides a partially numbered list that might be seen as a 'pecking order' for various functions in the church.[70] 'God has placed in the church first, apostles, second, prophets, third, teachers....' This creates an heuristic outline for discussion of some of the key roles in the working of a local Pauline congregation.

2.2.2. Apostolic Authority

Although Paul in this verse (12.28) is referring to apostles generically, relevant material in his letters refers almost entirely to the particular example of Paul himself as apostle. Since the authority relation between Paul and the Corinthians will provide the core of our exegetical study, the material in the literature will here be broken down further to highlight important aspects of Paul's view and practice of his authority as apostle.

2.2.2.1.   *Paul's commission & scope of authority*

All authors consulted agree that Paul regarded himself as having been called to perform an apostolic ministry. Campenhausen sees Paul's own view of his apostolic ministry as providing the self-confidence to make claims independent of other authority and to consider himself a member of those who were 'apostles before him.'[71] Although Paul regards good relations with the apostles in Jerusalem as very important, he does not subordinate 'his own authority and person to any other of

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[67] Dunn, *Theology*, 550, citing the Menenius Agrippa tradition.
[68] Dunn, *Theology*, 550, 552.
[69] Dunn, *Theology*, 552. The ideas here are very close to the concerns of Eph 5.21.
[70] The evaluation of importance of a ministry and the significance of the individual who serves will be a recurrent theme in the present study.
[71] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 33.

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supposedly higher status' within the wider ecclesiastical orbit.[72] He does not admit dependence on the first apostles.[73] Schweizer similarly traces Paul's sense of apostolic authority to his meeting with the risen Lord,[74] and notes that the churches Paul founds begin and remain under Paul's authority.[75] An apostle has authority not in all churches, but in those he has founded.[76]

Dunn uncovers three decisive past events from which Paul derived his apostolic authority: Jesus' words and example, the risen Jesus' resurrection appearance to him, and the ministry leading to conversions and a congregation assembling. Paul's authority in each of his congregations was not derivative from other apostles or congregations.[77] Apostolic authority covers matters arising from his commission, but on some issues Paul depends on the Spirit as any other person who 'has the Spirit'. Paul's relationship to the communities he founded means 'he stands *within* the charismatic community even as apostle (1 Cor 12.28; cf.5.3).' He encourages the congregation to share in exercising the authority given him, so that they take responsibility for their corporate actions.[78]

Paul believed he had been commissioned to preach the gospel, a commission proved by the formation of churches where he had laboured. He was, by function, apostle to these churches as evidenced explicitly in the case of Corinth (1 Cor 9.2).[79] Although Paul's apostolic role was decisively determined as his original pioneering work while present in the relevant city, his influence comes to the notice of outsiders almost entirely through the preservation of his letters.

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[72] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 35.
[73] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 35.
[74] Schweizer, *Order*, 7g, 97.
[75] Schweizer, *Order*, 7h, 98.
[76] Schweizer, *Order*, 24a, 195, where 1 Cor 9.2 is cited in support. So, also, Schütz, *Apostolic*, 8 and Dunn, *Jesus*, 274, 'Their authority was limited to their sphere of operation, to the churches they founded.' Cf. 2 Cor 10.13-16.
[77] Dunn, *Jesus*, 277.
[78] Dunn, *Jesus*, 279, 278.
[79] Dunn, *Theology*, 572.

2.2.2.2. Paul's Letters

Paul's letters are intended to shape the development of the recipient congregations,[80] functioning as a medium for Paul's apostolic influence.[81] Dunn sees apostolic authority as the most rewarding locus for examining Paul's theology put into practice.[82] The letters to such churches 'are themselves the exercise of his apostleship.' The way he communicates in these letters demonstrates practically what apostolic authority meant for him. Dunn sees the relationship between Paul and his congregations as not characteristically authoritarian.[83] Instead, Paul invites the congregation who by conversion ratified his apostleship to continue to ratify it in their response to his later exhortations. In the Corinthian situation, the misuse of charismatic gifting was exacerbating the divisions in the community, while Paul's apostolic authority, 'not itself charismatic' authority, served to control these charismatic abuses.[84]

In reference to 1 Corinthians, Dunn shows Paul did seek to exercise authority 'as their apostle.'[85] The use of παρακαλέω (1.10) is directive, 'not a weak term', rather, 'typical of a superior addressing inferiors.'[86] However, Dunn recognizes 'a

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[80] Holmberg, *Power*, 80. P.T. O'Brien comments, 'Paul's letters were "more than private"' and 'were intended for public use within the congregations,' 'Letters, Letter Forms' in *DPL*, 551.

[81] So L.E. Keck, '...each of the Pauline letters... ...served the general and fundamental purpose of providing *an apostolic presence* even while the Apostle was physically absent,' Keck & Furnish, *Pauline Letters*, 19, emphasis his.

[82] Dunn, *Theology*, 571.

[83] Dunn, *Jesus*, 278. 'Authoritarian' is described by Friedrich, *Authority*, 29, as 'a pejorative adjective'. Although it may certainly be found functioning that way, it provides a helpful way to express a specific idea. This meaning might be clarified by considering the case of a command given to a recipient whose well-being is subordinated to the wishes of the commander. Such an exercise of power, if accompanied by implicit threats of reprisal for non-compliance, could be described as 'authoritarian'. An authoritarian leader might well adopt rhetoric such as 'this is for your own good' while in practice violating what careful examination would reveal to be the best interests of her subordinates. The sense of fulfilment enjoyed by such a leader may simply lie in the experience of observing her will prevail.

[84] Dunn, *Jesus*, 278, 280.

[85] Dunn, *Theology*, 574. Indeed, 'Paul could address the Corinthians so forthrightly precisely (and only) because he was *their* apostle,' Dunn, *Theology*, 578.

[86] Dunn, *Theology*, 574, changing the emphasis of earlier comments: 'Perhaps the most striking of all [the limits Paul set to the exercise of his own authority] is the word which he prefers to use above all others – παρακαλέω (exhort)... The great bulk of Paul's ethical instructions in his letters are more the exhortations of a fellow believer than the commands of an apostle,' Dunn, *Jesus*, 278. This modification is apparently made in response to a study by Bjerkelund (reference in Dunn, *Theology*, 574, n. 43). However, Dunn's *Jesus* reference includes a citation of Paul's use of the verb 'when addressing the Lord!' in 2 Cor 12.8 to implore removal of the thorn in his flesh. This surely defines Paul's own usage of the word as less strong than as if used in royal exhortation. Paul is certainly keen for a particular result, but surely 'forceful' (n. 43) lands precisely on the wrong section of the semantic

significant degree of restraint' in Paul's use of his authority. Commands are 'of God/the Lord', carefully distinguished from his own advice: he refrains from calling for the Corinthians to obey him. Indeed, he highlights the dangers of 'becoming "slaves of other human beings" (7.23),' and does not want them to regard him with this attitude either. Paul's desire to see the Corinthians take responsibility for their actions sees him encouraging them to do so when, although the way forward is obvious to Paul, he 'seems almost to fall over backwards' not to legislate, instead giving them 'as much space as possible' to choose for themselves. He wants them to show discrimination between the proper and improper use of gifts rather than between the statuses of individuals (14.29) and 'to acknowledge the authority of leadership when it is given (16.15-18).'[87]

2.2.3. Prophets exercise Authority

Dunn describes prophecy as a type of inspired utterance defined as 'a word of revelation.'[88] A prophet would be inspired to speak, and that inspiration would constitute his authority, which would be limited to the resultant utterance.[89] Once that inspiration had passed, he should stop and listen 'to the inspiration of another (1 Cor 14.30).' An individual who was prophesying regularly, might well be described as a 'prophet' subsequently. But the label required the authority of the congregation as a whole, or at least all the prophets within that congregation.[90] In his Pauline theology, Dunn notes that there was in Corinth 'a fairly well-defined circle of recognised prophets.' Those who were most experienced in exercising this charism seem to have 'had a primary responsibility in evaluating prophecies given within the assembly.' The authority of the prophet was still 'subject to evaluation by others.'[91]

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field. Thus the translation in 1.10 'I exhort you' (NASB) is to be preferred over 'I appeal to you' (RSV, NRSV, NIV), the former being stronger, but not too strong. Similarly, 'I strongly urged' (16.12, NIV) captures the upper limit of Paul's intensity when using this verb. Bjerkelund (translated in Holmberg, *Paul*, 85) wrote that Paul used verb 'when the question of authority is unproblematical' when he 'can address the members of the congregation as his brothers knowing that they will acknowledge him as apostle.'

[87] Dunn, *Theology*, 575.

[88] Dunn, *Jesus*, 228.

[89] Dunn, *Jesus*, 281. So also Dunn, *Theology*, 581.

[90] Dunn, *Jesus*, 281.

[91] Dunn, *Theology*, 581, 582. This reconstruction of the prophetic ministry would posit the beginnings of specialisation of authoritative action within particular groups of individuals. However, that action remains limited to a particular spheres of activity: prophetic ministry regulated among the prophets.

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There has been divergent opinion as to whether prophecy was restricted to a closed specialist group,[92] or whether any Christian might occasionally prophesy at the prompting of the Spirit for the common good.

2.2.4. Teachers exercise Authority

In Dunn's view (1975), a teacher functioned: 1) to pass on tradition and 2) to develop tradition by interpreting it.[93] The former was to act under the authority of the tradition itself: the tradition had authority over both the 'teacher and community'. However, to interpret tradition required charismatic gifting, and the charisma of teaching therefore provided the necessary authority.[94] Paul's juxtaposition of teaching with prophecy (1 Cor 12.28f) demonstrates he viewed teaching 'as an indispensable complement to prophecy.'[95] Similarly, Ridderbos points out that 'in the time when oral tradition was still the primary source for knowledge of the Christian faith, the teachers provided an important ministry for the propagation of that tradition.'[96]

2.2.5. Other Functions and Authority

After the first three in the list in 1 Corinthians 12.28, Paul shifts to descriptions of gifts rather than the person functioning with that gift. Dunn observes that although there were obviously other acts of service carried out in Paul's congregations, the evidence that any apart from those of apostle, prophet and teacher were recognised as 'regular' functions is meagre.[97]

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[92] So, Theissen (who, following Harnack, envisaged wandering, mendicant prophets rather than those who remained in one local congregation – for Theissen see below section 3.3) and Holmberg, *Paul*, 97f, esp. 98 n.14f. Theissen argued that in 1 Cor 14.26 ἕκαστος, 'does not mean that each individual member of the congregation contributes a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, or a tongue, or it would be superfluous to include a word for those who possess no such manifest pneumatic gift (1 Cor 12.4ff),' Theissen, 'Social Integration and Sacramental Activity: An Analysis of 1 Cor 11.17-34' in Theissen, *Setting*, 148. Against this, it may be pointed out that the entire basis for the argument in 12.20-27 is precisely that each and every member of the body participates in the drinking of the one Spirit (12.13). It is foundational to Paul's logic here that pneumatic manifestation (φανέρωσις), under the sovereign direction of the Spirit (12.11), is available to each participant (12.7). If this were not so, the dismissive attitude decried in 12.21 would be justified. The continuing potential for occasional endowment in addition to a recognized group of regular prophets is allowed by Grudem, *Gift of Prophecy*, 205 and Turner, *Spirit*, 212.
[93] Dunn, *Jesus*, 282.
[94] 'Here his authority was more like that of the prophet than that of the apostle,' Dunn, *Jesus*, 283.
[95] Dunn, *Theology*, 583.
[96] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 453.
[97] Dunn, *Jesus*, 284ff.

Campenhausen infers Paul did not want 'organisational chaos' from his inclusion in the list of 'helpers, controllers and administrators.'[98] As mentioned above,[99] evidence will mount through the present thesis that Paul envisaged that the Corinthian church could and should function in an orderly manner. The function of these gifts was not, however, to cause an elite circle of leaders to 'govern' the rest of the congregation. So, even in the disorder of 1 Corinthians, rather than appealing for 'obedience' to those who lead, Paul's admonition is 'that the congregation should "acknowledge" the work of their helpers and administrators' (1 Cor 16.15f).[100]

Both Campenhausen and Dunn find particularly striking[101] that a role of 'leader' of a congregation (outside the apostle who had left to work elsewhere) is thinly attested. Only in Phil 1.1 is 'one single class or group of people' addressed as if he expects 'they were responsible for the organization, worship or spiritual well-being of others.'[102] Even the Philippian example, as Fee notes,[103] is not followed up by any further references in that letter to either overseers or deacons. In 1 Corinthians, where some circumstances seem 'to cry out' for leadership, Paul makes no such appeal to leaders.[104] This implies Paul 'assumed that the charismatic Spirit would provide' leadership for each given occasion. Where a charisma was repeatedly and regularly used by an individual to serve others, recognition should be given by following the lead in that specific area of service. Thus Stephanas (1 Cor 16.16, 18) should be recognized as leading in the areas of church life that he had for some time been actually leading. Stephanas and his household had begun this on their own (ἔταξαν ἑαυτούς), not by appointment from Paul.[105]

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[98] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 64.
[99] Section 2.2.1 page 10.
[100] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 69.
[101] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 63; Dunn, *Jesus*, 285.
[102] Dunn, ibid.
[103] Fee, *Philippians*, 67.
[104] Dunn, *Jesus*, 285. This point has not been given adequate weight in the critique of Dunn by Turner, *Spirit*, 282, who decides the reason for Dunn's positing function rather than office 'eludes scrutiny'. It is not the existence of 'unsubdued chaos in Corinth' that Dunn takes as evidence but the route chosen by Paul to subdue that chaos, namely appeal to the whole church to take responsibility for themselves rather than rousing a few dominant and dominating individuals into corrective action. Cf. page 21, below.
[105] Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 394 and Dunn, *Jesus*, 286. Cf. Campenhausen, note 100 above.

It is widely recognised that the range of charismata that Paul envisaged being exercised in churches is only hinted at by the lists given.[106] Even in those lists, a wide variety of service is envisaged and it becomes clear that there is something to be contributed by as many individuals in the congregation as want to serve others.

2.2.6. Individuals without Authority?

The Pauline view of each member actively participating in the local congregation raises an issue that occasioned conflict in Corinth. As will be seen more clearly below, concerns about status and position became something of an obsession for some Corinthians. Modern psychological models have brought into the open concerns less clearly analysed in Paul's day. To what extent did the individual Corinthian Christian matter to the church as a whole? How did Paul want each part of the body of Christ to regard itself? Were Paul's appeals to the Corinthians constructed with a genuine concern for their well-being, or was Paul cynically manipulating his readers to gain compliance with his wishes?[107]

Campenhausen anticipates the last of these questions, observing that if Paul's dealings with his congregations in matters of their immaturity was only a technique to issue orders or exercise his rule, it 'would amount to nothing more that a certain restraint or mitigation of authoritarian power in the ordinary sense.'[108] Paul's authority is exercised by 'appeal and exhortation' designed 'to compel them...' '...without compulsion' to override their own free will. By calling his congregations back to 'the basic indicative' of God's election in Christ of which they partake, Paul along with his readers 'may in fellowship make from there the step which should and must be taken.' This step is still 'in fear and trembling', mindful that Christ 'speaks to them through the apostle's mouth.' Because Christ is Lord of Paul and Lord of the church, the authoritative tie is not directly of church to Paul but 'to Christ through Paul.'[109] The congregations' receipt of the gospel has caused them to possess 'a life

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[106] Dunn, *Theology*, 557f.
[107] The latter view seems to be that adopted by Graham Shaw (below, section 4.1), whose method of evaluating Paul's authority consciously begins with 'distrust' and 'suspicion', Shaw, *Cost*, 16. Dunn rightly comments that 'Shaw's work is of interest as demonstrating how far an unsympathetic reading or hermeneutic of suspicion can go,' Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 94.
[108] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 50, and cf. note 83 above.
[109] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 52.

that is genuinely "new",[110] a gift given in Christ and experienced 'as a gift of grace by the Spirit.' This new life 'is the soil in which the congregation is planted,' and they must never leave that ground in Christ.[111] When Paul wrote to his churches, a troublesome situation had arisen from certain prominent members becoming conceited, considering themselves 'spiritual' while others came to treat these few with a deference which led to divisions.[112]

Schweizer notes the lack of 'hierarchical character'[113] in the various lists of charismatic gifts (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12). The individual who performs an activity as a result of receiving a charism is a '"servant" or "slave", with God, Christ, or men appearing as those to whom the service is rendered.'[114] The involvement of individual personalities in the service of God along with concomitant responsibility demonstrates the fulness of God's grace.[115] Although the individual is important, forms of service are interdependent, so that each ministry is carried out 'in co-operation with other people', even the ministry exercised by Paul who models 'team-work with fully authorized fellow workers.'[116] Schweizer argues the attitude of the individual Christian who is involved in 'ministry' should be one aware of humble activity, as a servant 'of God and of his fellow-men,' rather than wanting to hold power over others.[117]

The body image indicates to Schweizer that because all are needed, none need experience 'inferiority (1 Cor 12.15-20) nor... superiority (12.21-25)' but, rather, 'joy in the other's gift.'[118] Thus when one prophet is speaking and another is given a word of authority by the Spirit (1 Cor 14.30), the first freely yields to the working of

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[110] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 56.
[111] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 57.
[112] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 71.
[113] Schweizer, *Order*, 7k, 100.
[114] Schweizer, *Order*, 21e, 178. The Pauline view 'sees "ministry" as synonymous with "gift of grace" and "manifestation of power", so that it keeps its character of an event (1 Cor 12.4-6),' Schweizer, *Order*, 25a, 206.
[115] Schweizer, *Order*, 22g, 186.
[116] Schweizer, *Order*, 24k, 203.
[117] Schweizer, *Order*, 21e, 177. It is perhaps a telling commentary on human nature that the same word 'minister' in modern parliamentary democracies has precisely the meaning of one who holds power over others while adopting a standard rhetorical claim to 'only want to serve the people.'

the Spirit in the second.[119] The fundamental feature to be preserved is a continued openness to 'a meeting with the living Lord.'[120] A system of church order should never 'excuse the believer from asking what is God's will' nor substitute for personal submission to the Spirit and Christ.[121] The church as a whole (not the structures introduced) always retain a responsibility for decision.[122] In this connection, Dunn's point that Paul wants the Corinthians to exercise judgment not between individuals' statuses but between the proper and improper use of gifts[123] bears reiteration.

What is of importance here is whether Paul envisioned members of the congregation who never received charisma and whose role in the church was always and only a 'recipient' of ministry by others. Turner has argued that 'the point [of 12.7-10] is not necessarily that all receive gifts, nor even that a high proportion does.'[124] While this may not be *the* point in that text, it nonetheless remains pivotal to forming a determination as to whether Paul considered there would be a 'remainder' whose function was to continue as observers and recipients of ministry rather than included among those who served.[125] Käsemann sees every member as endowed with charisma, there remaining 'no passive membership'.[126] Schweizer points out that every member is called to a ministry of suffering,[127] a calling from

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[118] Schweizer, *Order*, 24k, 204. Similarly, 'no church member can unite all the gifts in himself, and therefore he is freed from any ambitious chasing after other people's gifts of grace, and may be content... ...to fit in with what God bestows on each one (Rom 12.3ff),' Schweizer, *Order*, 7ℓ, 102.

[119] Schweizer, *Order*, n. 378, 7ℓ, 99.

[120] Schweizer, *Order*, 26b, 212.

[121] Schweizer, *Order*, 26b, 213.

[122] Ibid. 'As soon as the Church begins to identify its special nature... ...with a Order that gives it a guarantee, ...through... its own particular hierarchy—then it has overstepped the bounds of the New Testament,' Schweizer, *Order*, 28b, 226.

[123] Above, note 87.

[124] Turner, *Spirit*, 285, n.64.

[125] Turner, *Spirit*, 262-85, critiques Dunn's position on the event character of charisma, finding no justification for Dunn's view that ministry grew from individual occasions of charismatic action ('ministry' as residing in 'short-term functions, never persons,' 263). However, the resistance Dunn offers to an equation charisma=office centres on the fully institutionalised, titularly regimented state reflected so clearly in 1 Clement, not in the regular (=frequent) ministry of an individual who prophesies under inspiration who becomes recognised as a 'prophet' as a descriptive category. Witness the tendency (noted by Turner) by modern individuals who frequently exercise healing gifts 'to deny emphatically that they are *healers*' (ibid, 340, emphasis mine). From the Pauline perspective, securing rank and designation should not prove the decisive motivating impetus for any Christian service, but rather the imitation of Christ in self-giving on behalf of the needs of others (cf. 10.24; Phil 2.5-8).

[126] Käsemann, 'Ministry', 73, who adds, 'Charisma is... ...the common endowment of all who call upon the name of the Lord.'

[127] Schweizer, *Order*, 23d, 191.

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which a 'status as layman' does not exempt her. The choice of the body metaphor, the impossibility of regarding any other as unnecessary (12.21), the mention of God's special honour for parts that lacked it (12.24), and the use of ἕκαστος (12.7)[128] all point in the direction of the active participation of every member. In the absence of watertight proof, the calling to serve of absolutely all is surely the most probable reading of the evidence. But at the very least, all individuals share in the responsibility borne by the whole assembly.

2.2.7. Corporate Congregational Authority

Several authors regard the congregation as a whole as exercising a measure of authority. Dunn in particular emphasizes Paul's attribution of authority to the congregation as a whole.[129] Paul saw the community as having authority to order its worship and activities.[130] In the way Paul uses the parallel of the local church and the body, he 'implies *each member*' has a function within the church and 'a *responsibility* for its common life and worship (cf. 1 Cor 12.25f).'[131] The right use of *charismata* is to be assessed by the community, who as a whole participate in the Spirit, are people of the Spirit (*pneumatikoi*), and are 'taught by God' (1 Thess 4.9). Therefore, the community should understand what is said in worship in order that the 'Amen' reflects the views of those uttering it (1 Cor 14.16).[132] The community's authority to assess internal contributions is exercised with reference to three criteria: the tradition from Paul's gospel, love and οἰκοδομή.[133] Thus the source of authority (charisma) was itself subject to testing and evaluation. It was this 'ongoing dialectic'[134] that was to safeguard both from enthusiastic excess and moribund structure.

Even though prophets carried out 'the most important local ministry', Paul does not call on them to lead in any other respect than the limited scope of 'their

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[128] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 208 n.17 considers it 'presupposed that each Christian has his gift.' On the inclusivity of individual instances denoted by ἕκαστος over πας cf. Turner, *Spirit*, 256.

[129] In addition to the works cited see Dunn's essay, 'The Responsible Congregation (1 Corinthians 14.26-40)' in Dunn, *Christ & the Spirit*, 2:260-290.

[130] Dunn, *Jesus*, 291.

[131] Dunn, *Jesus*, 292, emphasis his.

[132] Dunn, *Jesus*, 292.

[133] Dunn, *Theology*, 595-7; Dunn, *Jesus*, 293-6.

[134] Dunn, *Jesus*, 299.

charism of prophecy and in the evaluation of prophetic utterances.' Instead, he instructs and exhorts 'the church as a whole.' He evidently expected not that a few 'leaders' would take up the comments he made to cause changes implemented through a programme of reform, but that the 'responsibility for responding to such exhortations lay with the congregation as such.'[135] Since Paul understood the local church as body of Christ, each member had, by definition, 'a function within that congregation,' as well as 'a responsibility for its common life and worship.'[136]

Campenhausen, too, insists Paul will not build 'a sacral relationship of spiritual control and subordination,' instead encouraging his readers, 'Do not become slaves of men'[137] (1 Cor 7.23). The congregation was subject directly to Christ and this direct relationship was the aim of the apostle's fellow-working with God. Paul does not introduce freedom for his converts by degrees as they mature: rather their 'freedom is already a fact' when Christians believe, a sign of the working of the Spirit.[138] Since the congregation is 'the vessel of the Spirit', Paul brings his authority 'to bear only with reserve, reluctantly, and, as it were, merely requesting or soliciting compliance.'[139]

By including the Corinthian congregation in church disciplinary measures (1 Cor 5.4), Paul shows he sees the church as a whole, Schweizer writes, 'as the real bearer of responsibility.'[140] Where the church imposes an order in one form of service, it is confirming what God has already decided by distribution of gifts. Such order 'must remain open to God's correction' and not entirely exclude the possibility of others also participating in that form of ministry.[141] It is for God's Spirit freely to choose a pattern of service, and it is for the order developed in response to recognize that pattern.[142]

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[135] Dunn, *Theology*, 593. This conception explains why no 'leaders' are addressed as a group even in 'when a church like that in Corinth was experiencing such disorder,' Dunn, *Theology*, 584. So also Schweizer, *Order*, 7k, 101, and our discussion above, n. 104.

[136] Dunn, *Theology*, 593.

[137] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 46.

[138] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 47.

[139] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 50f.

[140] Schweizer, *Order*, 23e, 192.

[141] Schweizer, *Order*, 24k, 204.

[142] Schweizer, *Order*, 24ℓ, 204. 'Order... ... is therefore functional, regulative, serving, but not constitutive,' ibid.

The exegetical portion of the current study will focus on the way Paul deals with the Corinthian congregation. The dialectic between the Corinthians and their apostle provides the ground for evaluating the use of power and authority. The congregation as recipients of numerous charismata can act as a check on Paul, should he step outside of the limits of his commission to build up (2 Cor 10.8), and attempt rather to tear down God's work in Corinth. Terms of reference for such checks are provided by the gospel, as shall now be seen.

2.3. Authority and the Gospel

Campenhausen notes the appeal which Paul makes to the "gospel" as being able to over-rule even apostolic authority. Paul 'abandons any and every conceivable authority,' when 'it runs counter to the "gospel",' as in the confrontation with Peter (Gal 2.11). For Paul, apostolic authority is over-ruled when it would contradict 'the truth of Christ and of his gospel.'[143] The congregation, since they have the Spirit, must follow the apostle in freedom, and 'recognise in his instructions the "standard of teaching" to which they are committed' – a norm outside the person of Paul to which he 'recalls them.'[144] Paul's authority functions to uphold the truth of the gospel, and not to provide 'a source of legal norms' for church practice.

Schweizer too links 'gospel' with Paul's authority. Paul's authority involves obedience not on the basis of a belief by his churches that Paul has authoritative status, but believing that the words he uses carry truth.[145] Agreement requires true understanding (1 Cor 4.16).[146] Paul brings the gospel, 'the fundamental message' to which he too is subject, with apostolic authority.[147] Applying practical and specific outworking of that gospel is a responsibility for the church.[148] Paul can expect

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[143] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 37.
[144] Campenhausen, *Authority*, 47.
[145] Schweizer, *Order*, 23c, 191. This is particularly so since a guarantee of truth does not accompany 'anyone consecrated from the highest source of authority,' making it 'vital that that the Church as a whole should be taken seriously and not disfranchised,' Schweizer, *Order*, 26a, 211.
[146] Schweizer, *Order*, 23c, 191.
[147] Schweizer, *Order*, 26b, 212.
[148] Schweizer, *Order*, 26b, 212. 'The Church has to realize for itself and on its own responsibility why this or that conclusion must be drawn from the gospel.... There is therefore no guarantee of a correct interpretation that would make possible an obedience that is simply law-abiding without listening to the gospel,' ibid.

'obedience for his message only because he himself is subject to it (1 Cor 15.3).'[149] Conviction by the congregation that the gospel demands obedience is essential.[150]

Dunn sees an important role for the gospel, equating 'gospel' with the content of the paradosis.[151] Apostles are the founders of the church who link the local church with the gospel.[152] Paul regards his apostleship as entirely serving the gospel, so that his authority is subordinate to it.[153] In a section on 'Apostolic Power and Authority' in his short guide to 1 Corinthians,[154] Dunn maintains the gospel has such authority for Paul that it 'provides the foundation for and determines the character of Paul's theology as a whole.'[155] The link between apostleship and gospel was precious to Paul, theoretically and practically, since an apostle not only could not violate the gospel, but his authority was 'conditional upon the gospel and subject to the norm of the gospel.'[156] It was because Paul's congregations were brought into being and shaped by the gospel that his appeals to them had weight. Thus Paul's authority was exercised in his letters precisely by reinforcing this normative role of the gospel on his readers. The gospel along with the common tradition in Paul's churches had a normative role in the function of the communities, and should be able to curb an all-eclipsing value being placed in charisms.[157] Indeed, 'the grace-giving gospel'[158] and the traditions constituted for Paul a criterion for judging the continuing life of that church.[159] Therefore 'the only valid or effective charism is the one tested and received by the church for who it was given.'[160]

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[149] Schweizer, *Order*, 26a, 211.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Dunn, *Theology*, 177, characterises the gospel for Paul as the confessional claim of the death and resurrection of Christ coupled with the application of that claim, especially among the Gentiles.

[152] 'As apostles they provided a link not so much between the local church and other churches elsewhere (the universal church) as between the local church and the gospel,' Dunn, *Jesus*, 275.

[153] Dunn, *Theology*, 572.

[154] Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 91-96.

[155] Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 106.

[156] Dunn, *Theology*, 572.

[157] Dunn, *Theology*, 583. As Dunn has written elsewhere (*Unity and Diversity*, 192), Paul was concerned 'to warn against the excesses of enthusiasm,' an emphasis on 'direct experience of God' (Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 174) to the complete disregard of all traditional or mediated revelations of God. For Paul, axiomatically, according to the gospel he proclaims, God had acted with grace in Christ to achieve salvation for Jews and Gentiles (cf. Rom 1.16, Gal 1.5). Since the gospel was both the revelation of a righteousness of God and a tradition received through Paul (1 Cor 15.3), it provides a traditional and mediated revelation of God.

[158] Dunn, *Theology*, 595.

[159] Dunn, *Theology*, 596.

[160] Dunn, *Theology*, 597.

Dunn closely associates the use of 'gospel' with Paul's use of the Jesus tradition. The authority of the dominical tradition for Paul is shown in 1 Corinthians by his citation of such tradition three times (7.10, 9.14 and 11.23-26). However, this authority is experienced as 'a living authority' and used where the tradition specifically touches the context faced in Corinth as Paul writes.[161] Previously, Dunn had noted the words of Jesus function to control Paul's actions where they have immediate relevance to his contingent circumstance. [162]

2.4. Conclusions from Chapter Two

Charisma has been seen to be a gift of grace, a powerful divine enabling for serving others. The equivalence that came to be made between charisma and power is both unsurprising and justified. This equivalence should be qualified by noting that while all charisma is power, not all power is charisma. Power had been defined as one's ability to cause another to act according to one's wishes. More problematic is the equivalence posited between office and authority. If authority is an accepted claim of legitimacy for the exercise of power, office would seem to fit the description. However, office is itself defined by Brockhaus as fulfilling five criteria[163] in a way that excludes most if not all instances of authority found in 1 Corinthians. Another way of looking at authority will be required to adequately account for the material in Paul's letter.

From the review of the charisma/office debate, it may be seen that distribution of function (determined by charisma) was in Paul's view to be determined by the Spirit. Within that distribution, there was to be a widely based group of those who had the potential to influence others. It was argued that the composition of this group was probably to coincide with the whole congregation. The pattern in subsequent generations seems to have been that circles of those exercising particular prominent forms of service (e.g. prophets) began to close,

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[161] Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 99.

[162] Dunn, *Jesus*, 279.

[163] Quoted in Holmberg, *Paul*, 110f. The five: 1) permanancy; 2) recognition by the church; 3) a position apart given; 4) a regular commissioning; 5) a legal element; are supplemented by Claussen,

leaving many members excluded from the group of active participants and creating an observing audience of laity. The reasons for the occurrence of this change are not readily apparent. The suspicion may be raised that these might be related to patterns observable in the wider sphere of human behaviour.

Another dialectic that might be posited is that of Spirit and church. For Paul, distribution of power is the prerogative of the Spirit. However, Paul does see the church having responsibility to subject charisma to testing and evaluation according to the tradition from Paul's gospel, love and οἰκοδομή. What Paul shows no sign of expecting is that the church should dispense with the distribution of charismata determined by the Spirit. Indeed, it is precisely the Corinthians' failure to ratify the Spirit's *distribution* of charismata that Paul highlights in 1 Corinthians 12-14.

Paul did not appeal to official leaders to bring correction in Corinth, rather he appealed to the congregation as a whole to correct the many serious problems in the church. He recognised the work of the Spirit in enabling the congregation, through charismatic endowment, to perform the functions necessary for order in the church. However, Paul also realised that engaging the will of his converts for the promotion of an agenda for the good of all was an essential objective of his apostolic intervention. The preference for seeking consent and persuading over simple pronouncement and dictat is a function of his recognition of the work of the Spirit even where the overall results had become so unsatisfactory. Paul understood that not only the Spirit but also human tendencies were exerting an influence on events in the church at Corinth.

The questions around issues of power and authority in 1 Corinthians in scholarly discussion moved its axis from charisma and office to consider the context in which these categories were played out: amongst people in a particular social context with social forces being exerted both from within and without. Thus a shift was made to consider questions raised by another avenue of enquiry, interrogation

'Structure', 12f, with a sixth: the possibility of one individual being substituted into the place formerly held by another. Cf. Dunn, *Theology*, 566 n.3.

based on insights from the social sciences. It is this type of approach to which the present survey now turns.

Chapter Three: Social-Scientific Approaches

The second approach to be reviewed that has been applied to the study of power and authority is a social-scientific approach. As mentioned previously, Christians in Corinth were subject to specific social forces that shaped the perception and use of power and authority. Resources offered by the social sciences may be used to reveal the working of some of these forces.[164]

3.1. Max Weber

Max Weber's studies in the early part of the twentieth century were wide-ranging, but his work on authority, in particular 'charismatic authority',[165] has been pivotal in the later application of social-scientific models to the New Testament for the investigation of power and authority.

3.1.1. Weber on Authority

Weber described two related categories, 'domination' and 'authority'. Domination[166] is found as a component at work in a social system, while authority[167] is restricted to a person or a group. One whose relation with others is one of authority will influence the others, who then submit to the influence. It may be observed that following an "order" the recipient "obeys".[168] An assumption is shared by ruler and subordinate that the subordinate has a duty to obey: rule is considered to be legitimate.[169] This invisible component of an authority relation is bound into the existing social order.

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[164] Cf. S.C. Barton, 'Social-Scientific Perspectives', 68, 'To the extent that cultural factors and social forces played a part in the lives of the individuals and groups... to which the NT refers, a sociological analysis is legitimate and necessary.'

[165] Weber is available in ET as *Economy and Society* 3 volumes (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968). All references to Weber are from this translation (in the form Vol:Page).

[166] In German, *Macht*.

[167] German, *Herrschaft*, Weber, 1:53.

[168] Weber, 1:215.

[169] Weber, 1:213.

Weber distinguishes three bases for conferring legitimacy and therefore accordingly three types of authority.[170] Rational grounds produce "legal" authority; traditional grounds, traditional authority; and charismatic grounds, "charismatic authority".[171] Weber derived his idea of "charisma"[172] only indirectly from Paul, through Sohm's work.[173] Weber means by *charisma* 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities... ...not accessible to the ordinary person... ...and on the basis of them the individual concern is treated as "leader".'[174] In charismatic authority, as in the other two types, the ruler claims a 'legitimation' of his right to give an order, while the subordinate recognizes this legitimation as valid.[175] This process, invisible to an external observer, is not normally registered consciously by either party involved, so neither questions the rightness of the overall social order.[176] A social order is only regarded as legitimate where two conditions are met: the arrangement is entered into voluntarily and the parties must regard the authority as legitimate to ensure those involved comply with the requirements of the authority.[177] All authority relations between a leader and a group presuppose the group has some "interest" in obeying.[178] Indeed, Weber regards all authority and willingness to obey as resting on "belief".[179] Where the leader is one who is obeyed because people trust that leader's pronouncements, Weber calls the resultant social structure "charismatic community".[180]

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[170] That Weber's typology is idealised is acknowledged by Weber (cf. Holmberg, *Paul*, 136f), but nevertheless, as Holmberg maintains, provides a helpful analytical tool when applied to 'non-modern historical situations.'

[171] Weber, 1:215.

[172] Weber gives as synonym "the gift of grace", 1:216.

[173] Weber's dependence on Sohm's *Kirchenrecht* is acknowledged at 1:216.

[174] 1:241, cf. 3:1112. It should be noted that there are important differences between the meanings given to the word by Weber and by the apostle Paul. As will be demonstrated in the exegetical section of this thesis (page 41), for Paul: 1) charisma is not the quality of a personality, but a gift imparted to a group through an individual. The gift is not to be understood primarily as an integrated part of the personality. 2) Charisma is given to all in the Christian community, not just to certain "leaders" (although it is recognised that Paul regards charisma in Rom 12.8 underlying a ministry of leadership).

[175] Weber, 1:242.

[176] Ibid.

[177] Weber, 1:36.

[178] Weber, 1:212.

[179] Weber, 1:263.

[180] Weber, 1:243.

3.1.2. Charismatic Authority

This type of authority has a particular relevance to first century Christian polity, and will therefore be discussed in some detail. Weber's category of charisma does not exist in the context of a lone individual. Charisma comes into play not where a leader makes a claim to having authority, but only once others recognize that authority.[181] Those who make themselves subject to the authority may be called "followers" or "disciples".[182] Such a group, once established, is called a charismatic community. Within this group, some are chosen by the charismatic leader to have particularly privileged access to her. This subgroup, called the "staff" of the leader,[183] is chosen on the basis of charismatic ability.[184] The staff act as agents to implement the will of the leader, but there is no hierarchy within the staff.[185] Charismatic authority maintains its legitimacy through the periodic demonstration of the leader's charisma.[186] Legitimation and validity are generated socially (when more than an individual is involved).[187] The adoption of these norms by the parties may be regarded as part of socialisation, certainly in the case of charismatic community.[188]

Recognition of charismatic authority freely given by the subjects and demonstrated as absolute trust in the leader validates its existence.[189] The subjects believe that their duty to recognise the existence of genuine charismatic authority.[190] While this recognition is initially guaranteed by the leader providing proof (in classic formulation, a miracle or other super-natural event), as time passes the leader needs to provide additional proof or bring success, else the authority relation disappears.[191]

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[181] Weber, 1:242, 266; 3:1113, 1125.
[182] Weber, 1:242.
[183] Weber, 1:243.
[184] Weber, 1:243; 3:1119.
[185] Weber, 1:243.
[186] Weber, 1:242; 3:1114.
[187] Weber, 1:31.
[188] Since charismatic community is defined by Weber as 'an organised group subject to charismatic authority' and is based on a type of 'communal relationship,' 1:243, this is presupposed in his definition.
[189] Weber, 1:242.
[190] Weber, 1:242; 3:1113.
[191] Weber, 1:242; 3:1114.

While traditional authority functions well in times of social stability, charismatic authority tends to rise and form a community in times of instability and social dissatisfaction. Thus, there is typically a collective excitement present in those who form a charismatic community.[192] Because charismatic authority rises as a remarkable, atypical phenomenon, it stands in contrast to traditional norms. Weber regards all charismatic authority as operating with the principle, "It is written..., but I say...."[193] For this reason, pure charismatic authority is revolutionary with respect to traditions.[194] Indeed, charismatic authority is opposed to both rational (legal) and traditional authority.[195] In particular, charismatic authority involves repudiation of involvement in the everyday world,[196] which may cause a reorientation of attitudes towards the world.[197] Economic activity is insulated from the outside, and there is no rational means of income, the community relying instead on support from voluntary sources.[198] In the pure form of charismatic community, the staff share in the use of donated goods.[199]

3.1.3.   Routinization of Charisma

Charismatic authority is naturally unstable, and in time this instability will cause a move towards traditionalization or rationalization.[200] There is a shift from emotional turbulence to a concern for material interests which eventually suffocates the charisma.[201] What started as a special event is inherently temporary, but those following the charismatic leader wish for that unusual phenomenology to continue into the future. A change must take place in order to perpetuate the benefits perceived by the presence of charismatic authority. The drive to transform the nature of charisma is strongest from the staff.[202] A way is sought to transform the charisma

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[192] Weber, 3:1121. Holmberg, *Paul*, 145, rightly criticises Weber's typology at this point since Weber seems to equate the excitement 'with an unthinking, frenzied flight from reason and custom,' while this excitement is more likely to be generated from the conjunction of the leader's message with the vital, central, felt needs of the hearers.
[193] Weber, 1:243; 3:1115.
[194] Weber, 1:244; 3:1115.
[195] Weber, 1:244; 3:1146.
[196] Weber, 1:245; 3:1113f.
[197] Weber, 1:245; 3:1117.
[198] Weber, 1:245; 3:1119.
[199] Weber, 3:1119.
[200] Weber, 1:246; 3:1123.
[201] Weber, 3:1120.
[202] Weber, 1:246; 3:1146. Holmberg, *Paul*, 165, argues the charismatic leader himself seeing a need for transformation is a viable option given too little consideration by Weber.

into a permanent form.[203] The charisma must be transformed into a quality which is transferable or able to be acquired personally or attached to the holder of an office. This transformation is given the title "routinization of charisma".[204]

The need for a transformation of the charisma becomes acute at the time of succession of the leader.[205] After routinization, charismatic legitimation is developed to protect the authority of the successors.[206] Leadership and succession are legitimated by what may be described as "routinized charisma".[207] Effectively, through routinization, the organization is transformed into a kind of patrimonial authority.[208] When institutionalization develops, charisma recedes.[209] What started as "I say to you..." becomes, "it has been said to us that...." During the process of transformation, and particularly in the case of succession,[210] the charismatic message adopts a traditional form. This is traditionalization.[211] Transformed charisma is exposed to the power of economic interest[212] which tends to push it further in a traditional direction. Therefore the revolutionary character of the pure charismatic state is lost in traditionalization.[213]

Discipline within the community may be defined as the rationalized, prepared, and precise execution of a received order.[214] Defined in this way, discipline eradicates personal charisma. The key distinctive of the gifts of a charismatic leader is that they are "supernatural" in the sense that not everyone has access to them.[215] Through the loss of a personal foundation for charisma and the concomitant emotional faith in an individual, tradition as an "ever recurring development" becomes a natural replacement for charisma.[216]

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[203] Weber, 3:1121, 1146.
[204] Weber, 3:1121.
[205] Weber, 1:246; 3:1123.
[206] Weber, 3:1147.
[207] Weber, 3:1123.
[208] Weber, 1:251.
[209] Weber, 3:1133, 1146, 1148.
[210] That is, in the second generation, Weber, 1:249.
[211] Weber, 3:1122, 1127.
[212] Weber, 3:1121.
[213] Weber, 3:1122.
[214] Weber, 3:1149.
[215] Weber, 3:1112, 1134f.
[216] Weber, 3:1122.

The differences in Weber's and Paul's use of charisma might cause confusion in our present context. Weber's observations might be characterised as a phenomenon of group-formation where excitement, anticipation and high hope are all present and centred on an individual who seems remarkable to the others in the group. As the fervour begins to temper, and the immediacy of fulfilment of promises is perceived to recede, temporal reward and satisfaction becomes sought after within the group, leading to a migration of authority from one individual to the elite followers. A parallel may be seen in the church as the social phenomenon of the move to authority located among an office-holding elite. The starting point for this move is less certain. Although we have Paul's prescriptive view of charismata, we do not see this programme fully implemented. Pauline charisma remains, viewed sociologically, a theory. Its posited source, the Spirit, could potentially renew the provision of charisma continually. Thus the path of 'routinization' so entrenched for the sociological category 'charisma' might not bind the fate of a group were the theological category 'charisma' to be applied to that group over time.

3.2.   Peter Berger & Thomas Luckmann

Foundational principles in the sociology of knowledge were enunciated in Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality*.[217] Definitions provided by Berger-Luckmann have been used by B. Holmberg and others during their studies of power relations in the New Testament.[218] In order to grasp their use of their definitions, some of this theoretical apparatus will be outlined.

Berger-Luckmann explains that socialization involves three components which occur in a dialectic. These are designated, respectively, externalization, objectivation and internalization.[219] Internalization is said to happen when one person observes another person and on the basis of that observation draws an inference about the subjective experience of that other person. If person 'A' sees

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[217] P.L.Berger & T.Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991, reprint from 1966).
[218] See below. Others refer to these definitions in discussing social issues involved in the Corinthian correspondence, most recently David Horrell, *Social Ethos*, 39-45.
[219] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 149.

person 'B' laugh, A decides that something has struck B as funny. An objective event has expressed meaning for A.[220] Externalization is the process by which a subjective idea or decision is converted into an action which affects the surrounding objective reality. When person 'Z' puts an idea into action, and perceives the results, externalization has taken place.[221] Objectivation happens when the products of human activity which have been externalized are recognized by others. My own illustration here is that when a child realizes that she has to go to school, like it or not, because that is an element of growing up in England, she has participated in objectivation.[222] The assertion that these components interact dialectically recognizes that we live in a world where cause-and-effect are of great moment.[223] Thus in socialization, 'the individual not only takes on the roles and attitudes of others, but in the same process takes on their world.'[224]

Berger-Luckmann deal in some detail with institutionalization (encountered above),[225] and presuppose 'habitualization.' Where an action is done one particular way, that way becomes easier the more the original precedent is repeated, leading to the formation of habits.[226] Habitualization reduces the need for decisions, releasing some energy for other endeavours.[227] In a group, certain individuals form certain habits, and function in ways which become characteristic. Other individuals within the same group habitually perform other actions which do not have the same effect within the group as did the former individuals. This is 'typification'. Once the number of individuals involved in a typified pattern grows beyond two, then the perceptions of a habit is pushed into becoming cemented into a shared and now traditional[228] perception such that 'this is the way this is done'.[229]

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[220] Ibid.

[221] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 70. An aphorism they provide for this is, 'Society is a human product,' ibid., 79.

[222] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 78. The corresponding aphorism is, 'Society is an objective reality,' ibid., 79.

[223] For example, persistent anti-social behaviour may well lead to an experience of relative isolation, perhaps as a result of imprisonment. This in turn may contribute to a subjective sense of increased alienation from society at large, or precipitate a crisis of conscience followed by a choice for personal reformation and social rehabilitation.

[224] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 152.

[225] Above, page 31.

[226] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 71. Reflection on what an individual is doing under such conditions is summarised as 'There I go again," ibid.

[227] Ibid.

[228] That is, capable of being passed on to a third party.

Another term, 'legitimation', is characterised as being that process by which new (that is, non-founding) members of an institution have explained to them reasons for the institution's existence, what precipitated the birth of the new institution.[230] This is achieved through stories, which re-tell the events, attaching the appropriate significance to them. A 'legitimating formula'[231] of this kind is found in 1 Corinthians (15.3-8). Theories which serve as legitimating formulae are supplemented by 'pretheoretical' knowledge: 'an assemblage of maxims, morals, proverbial nuggets of wisdom, values and beliefs, myths, and so forth.'[232] These function to convey 'the institutionally appropriate rules of conduct.'[233] Routine activities within the community are divided between particular types of functionally specialised members into patterns which everyone involved recognizes and has come to accept. As Berger-Luckmann put it, "'There we go again' now becomes 'This is how these things are done'."[234] Once such patterns are set, they become difficult to undo.

3.3. Gerd Theissen

Another strand in the application of social-scientific models to New Testament studies is that provided by the ground-breaking work by Gerd Theissen.[235] Theissen recognizes that the New Testament does not contain 'sociological statements' as such, but non-sociological forms of expression: paraenetic, poetic, ecclesiological and historical. He suggests, however, that there is a place for the composition of sociological statements in order 'to describe and explain interpersonal behaviour with reference to those characteristics which transcend the personal.'[236] The interpersonal behaviour may be uncovered by the use of certain form-critical methods of interpretation. Theissen has outlined three such methods: constructive,

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[229] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 72.
[230] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 79.
[231] Ibid.
[232] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 83.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Berger & Luckmann, *Construction*, 77.
[235] Several essays from the mid 1970s involving the Corinthian correspondence have been translated and collected in G.Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark/ Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982).
[236] Theissen, *Setting*, 176.

analytic and comparative.[237] The constructive approach fills in the gaps of the text with inferences. The analytic brings 'questions to texts which are independent of the intention which originally shaped them.'[238] For example, an emphasis on *Haustafel* may indicate an interest in preserving hierarchical social orders.[239] Each member of the household fulfils a role to which are attached certain expectations. These may be broadly in line with the norms for the roles which obtain in the wider social context of the city in which the church has assembled. The third, comparative, approach seeks to find parallels in other groups or other times which may provide an interpretative key by analogy.

Theissen sees sociology applied to the New Testament as yielding a kind of functional analysis, the description and explanation of typical behaviour within early Christian groups.[240] Theissen seeks to elucidate possible social implications from the text of the New Testament: a text which then provides the norm with which to test to validity of his conclusions. Perhaps Theissen's most influential work is his essay on social stratification within the Corinthian church.[241] Theissen argued that the Corinthian Christians were neither all derived from a low socio-economic grouping nor were they all part of 'a socially pretentious section'[242] of the city population. Rather, 'the majority..., from the lower classes, stand in contrast to a few influential members... from the upper classes.'[243] Noble birth (εὐγενεῖς, 1.26) introduces 'a specific sociological category'.[244] Such people are considered in the wider society to be of special importance as over against the 'lower born of the world' (τὰ ἀγενῆ τοῦ κόσμου, 1.28) who are as if they are not (τὰ μὴ ὄντα, 1.28).[245] From this, it may be deduced that there were some who had a secularly recognized reputation (κατὰ σάρκα, 1.26) as wise and powerful, or, educated and influential.[246] This small group was having a disproportionate effect on the congregation as a whole, requiring Paul

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[237] Theissen, *Setting*, 177-194.
[238] MacDonald, *Pauline Churches*, 21.
[239] MacDonald, *Pauline*, 21f.
[240] Holmberg, *Sociology*, 10.
[241] 'Social Stratification in the Corinthian Community: A Contribution to the Sociology of Early Hellenistic Christianity' in Theissen, *Setting*, 69-119.
[242] Theissen, *Setting*, 69, citing a phrase from E.A.Judge.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Theissen, *Setting*, 70.
[245] Theissen, *Setting*, 71.
[246] Theissen, *Setting*, 72.

to devote several sections of his letter to challenging their "wisdom"[247] (2.1-13; 3.18-20; 4.8-13; 6.5). By 'clever interrogation', data of social-scientific relevance may be elicited from the text,[248] such as the search for the 'not many' who were wise, powerful, or of noble birth (1.26f) through prosopographical analysis.[249] Theissen lists four criteria to discern high social status.[250] The 'house' (οἶκος) of Stephanas was baptized along with Stephanas himself (1.16). This might have included slaves, suggesting Stephanas was wealthy.[251] Indeed, Stephanas was one of those who 'supplied your lack' (what you had failed to supply) for Paul on arrival at Ephesus (16.17).[252] Certainly, Stephanas made a journey,[253] also indicating financial prosperity, and so high social status.[254] Theissen argues that most of the named individuals in 1 Corinthians belong to this grouping, so that divisions in the congregation resonate with an underlying socio-economic dichotomy among the Corinthian Christians.[255]

That Paul attracted such converts is consistent with his own social status. Paul, although a cloth worker had, it is claimed, attained Roman citizenship (cf. Acts 21.39).[256] Also, Paul would have needed a large room for purposes of congregational assembly early in his missionary activity in a city, and such rooms were the purveyance of those of higher social status.[257] Theissen suggests that Paul was content to leave the social order intact, while bringing the exercise of love, in particular by those of higher status, to facilitate smooth relations. He gives this phenomenon the name 'love patriarchalism',[258] and sees exegetical justification in 7.21-24 and 11.3-16. In this way, the social status of the 'wise and influential' could

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[247] Ibid.

[248] Holmberg, *Sociology*, 12.

[249] See especially 'Social Stratification' (cf. note 241), reviewed in Holmberg, *Sociology*, 45.

[250] These are 1) Holding civil office in the city; 2) having a 'house'; 3) serving the church or Paul; and 4) making journeys. Listed in Theissen, *Setting*, 73.

[251] Theissen, *Setting*, 83-87.

[252] Theissen, *Setting*, 88, although Theissen here acknowledges that this could alternatively refer to non-material blessing.

[253] Theissen, *Setting*, 91.

[254] Theissen, *Setting*, 92.

[255] Theissen, *Setting*, 96-99.

[256] Theissen, *Setting*, 105.

[257] Ibid.

[258] A concept derived from E.Troeltsch cf. Theissen, *Setting*, 107 esp. n.87.

be retained while the lowly would receive the benefits of Christian benevolence.[259] Theissen thus assigns Paul a place amongst moderate social conservatives.[260]

Theissen's 'love patriarchalism' has been regularly criticised for not giving credit to the Corinthian congregation for responding to each other with love.[261] Also, although many of Paul's arguments in 1 Corinthians point in a socially conservative direction, others indicate a radically different direction. Love patriarchalism does not account for the removal in 1 Corinthians 5 of the immoral brother if, as Chow (section 3.7, below) demonstrates, the brother is a powerful patron.[262]

3.4.   John Schütz

Schütz uses standard historical-critical methods in his monograph on Paul's apostolic authority published in 1975,[263] but also shows sensitivity to sociological factors and includes one chapter which approaches authority using sociological categories.[264] Schütz acknowledges the perceptions of authority in our century are different from those in Paul's.[265] The very existence of the letters of Paul testify to his having 'something to say to "his" communities' and that Paul 'presumed both his right to say it and his effectiveness in doing so.'[266] From this Schütz infers the existence of an authority relation.[267]

Schütz identifies the activity of preaching the gospel as the centre of Paul's own understanding of his apostolic authority.[268] However, Schütz distinguishes the

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[259] 'This love-patriarchalism takes social differences for granted but ameliorates them through an obligation of respect and love, an obligation imposed upon those who are socially stronger. From the weaker are required subordination, fidelity, and esteem,' Theissen, *Setting*, 107.

[260] Theissen, *Setting*, 108.

[261] E.g. Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 60, considers that in the formation of the church, 'genuine love for those who had made the same commitment (brothers) and shared concern for the church's upbuilding could be appealed to with confidence.'

[262] In such a case, asks Chow, *Patronage*, 23, 'would love-patriarchalism still be an adequate description of Paul's theological response in 1 Corinthians?' A full critique of love patriarchalism is provided by T. Engberg-Pederson, 'Gospel and Social Practice'.

[263] J. H. Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*.

[264] Thus Schütz's study is commonly classified along with Holmberg and other sociologically-based studies, e.g. Barton, 'Communal', 415; Dunn , *Theology*, 570.

[265] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 7.

[266] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 8f.

[267] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 9.

[268] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 36-39.

words used in the preaching and the gospel.[269] The gospel contains more than words, it is the content of the prophesied promise of God.[270] Schütz maintains that what is at stake is more than a set of doctrinal propositions.[271] Paul 'avoids making "the gospel" the object of faith.'[272] The noun 'gospel' may be used in a 'pregnant' sense, where its role is seen as an effective force.[273] Although he derives this understanding from Romans, the thesis is also applied to 1 Corinthians 9.23. In implying the gospel can be 'hindered' (9.12b), Paul 'cannot be speaking about hindering the content of the gospel.'[274] Instead, Paul refuses to impede the 'thrust of the gospel toward its own goal,' even where this involves not adopting all his apostolic rights.[275]

Further, Schütz seeks to set the gospel in a context of tradition.[276] Paul's mention of 'my' gospel in Romans 2.16 refers not to a particular message exclusive to Paul but 'to Paul's involvement in the gospel'.[277] That involvement includes continuing in the lives of the communities he has started 'in the gospel.' Here, the gospel (again taken as "pregnant") may be regarded as eschatological.[278] Schütz examines 1 Corinthians 15 in some detail in support of his contention that for Paul the gospel had a traditional dimension.[279] Schütz detects pre-Pauline material in phrases like "all the apostles" (15.7b).[280] In choosing this, Paul is joining his gospel to traditional sources of authoritative preaching. Paul equates "general apostolic preaching with the paradosis."[281] In describing apostolic activity, Paul sees an authority 'so primary that it is nothing other than the expression of the authority of the gospel itself.'[282] Paul identifies the kerygma closely with himself.[283] Both he

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[269] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 39.

[270] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 40, where he refers to Romans 1.1.

[271] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 41.

[272] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 42.

[273] From Romans 1.16f, Schütz, *Apostolic*, 43, argues that 'the gospel is the vehicle through which God brings about a possibility and a reality.' With this same text as my starting point, I have similarly argued in an unpublished undergraduate thesis that the gospel was regarded by Paul as 'the power of God'.

[274] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 52.

[275] Ibid.

[276] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 53-71.

[277] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 77.

[278] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 78.

[279] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 84-113. Another chapter, 114-158, considers parallel evidence from Galatians 1 and 2.

[280] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 96f.

[281] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 102.

[282] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 103.

and the kerygma are conditioned by the presence of death as part of the Christian life, a prerequisite of eschatological hope. Paul defines what it is to be an apostle by an ability to conform to these ideas and to embody them in life. Schütz notes the important absence of appeal to status.[284] Paul has moved along a 'chain of tradition to include his apostolic self-reference.'[285]

Paul's life comes to reflect that same power of God as revealed in the gospel. Just as the gospel provides a norm for apostolic behaviour, so 'the apostle becomes a "norm" for Christians.'[286] The 'word of the cross' (1 Corinthians 1.18) reflects both the weakness and power manifest in Christ. This same weakness-power dialectic is reflected in Paul's life, as exemplified by his continual submission to the demands of the gospel.[287] Because of Paul's proximity to the gospel, the gospel functions for him as the 'source and norm' of his apostolic endeavours. This is because of the gospel's role as a continuing force of God's action, which Schütz goes as far as to describe as 'a central point at which the work of God in Christ and Christ's own work merge.'[288]

It is important for Schütz's argument that the gospel be regarded not merely as initial evangelistic preaching, but also the words that sustain the development of Christian community.[289] Paul's ministry consists in both words and actions. These words and actions reflect both God's weakness and power. Paul's ministry, like the gospel, is not 'confined to one point in the past,' and therefore has a continuing place in 'relationship to the community.'[290]

In summary, Schütz's work begins with a sociological observation that a relationship of authority exists between Paul and the churches (like that at Corinth) which he established. He then locates the reason for this authority relation in a theological category: the gospel. That an authority relation should involve a 'reason'

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[283] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 106.
[284] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 107.
[285] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 111.
[286] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 226.
[287] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 229.
[288] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 232.
[289] Schütz describes the gospel as 'a durative force in history,' *Apostolic*, 259.

at all is salutary, and fits with observations about *ratio*.[291] For Paul's authority to function in the church in Corinth, the authority has to be recognised by the members of the church. Only if the church recognizes goals that are shared by Paul does the church continue to underwrite the authority exercised by Paul.[292] Schütz's argument that Paul's own perception of his authority came from a particular understanding of 'the gospel' is persuasive. Ultimately, therefore, Paul recognizes a norm other than himself from which he derives an understanding of right discourse and action. He expects the Corinthian congregation also to recognize that norm, since the congregation came into being and is sustained under the impetus of the same dynamic work of God: the gospel.[293] While the Corinthians continue to derive their corporate identity from the gospel force, Paul continues to function in an authoritative manner. However, his authority only remains where Paul himself remains faithful to the gospel.[294]

3.5.   Bengt Holmberg

Holmberg's 1978 doctoral dissertation was published as *Paul and Power*.[295] Historical studies into the origin of Christian ministry and its exercise of authority have produced a common pool of 'philological and historical fact', but Holmberg regards any subsequent synthesis of such facts as vastly divergent.[296] Holmberg's method is to examine the Pauline epistles to unearth the structure of authority in the "Primitive Church".[297] Thus after gathering data from the text he analyses how distributions of power into authority structures were regarded.[298]

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[290] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 240.
[291] Page 41, below.
[292] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 11f.
[293] Schütz, *Apostolic*, 229.
[294] Thus, 'The Christian is obedient to the gospel, not to the apostle or the apostle's rules,' Schütz, *Apostolic*, 228.
[295] Subtitled *The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Lund: Gleerup, 1978/Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).
[296] Holmberg, *Paul*, 2.
[297] Holmberg, *Paul*, 3.
[298] Holmberg, *Paul*, 4f.

3.5.1. Historical Data

Holmberg notes that as well as formal relations of superiority and subordination,[299] phenomena may be observed which fit a wider definition of "word-power".[300] Verbal flow within groups is not symmetrical. Some members are heeded more than others because their words are considered as containing a higher quality of information or of evaluation 'and are generally regarded as being wise and weighty'. This discrimination often is further extended into 'rules about who may speak and where.' In particular, words considered to have a divine origin (such as prophecies or impartation of divine wisdom) are only *bona fide* if they are imparted by a class of "word-bearers" whose words are regarded as legitimate on the basis of particular tests or criteria. Selective acceptance ensures that particular utterances do indeed come 'from a transhuman source.'[301]

In this way, Holmberg sees power relations as operating over a spectrum, from, at one end, an extreme of explicit asymmetric distribution of power characterized by 'formal command, unquestioning and prompt obedience', while, at the other end, one might discern that G did influence H, but asymmetry of power distribution is 'not intense and not explicitly expressed.'[302] Holmberg therefore approaches the New Testament texts asking: 'Who is subordinate to the other, and in what degree?'[303] He is interested in power from a phenomenological angle. Holmberg is conscious of the contingent nature of Paul's letters. He makes the important caveat that one should be aware of the special situations, often involving controversy, for which Paul wrote his letters. In addition, he says, it is advisable to 'take account of... ...the special character of Paul's thinking and reasoning.'[304]

Functional differentiation was noted as a key feature of Pauline church polity. Recognising differences in pneumatic endowment, so that 'part of the functional differentiation occurs quite independently of human effort or will,'[305] Holmberg seeks other factors effecting such specialisation. He highlights 'common differences

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[299] E.g. the master/slave relationship.
[300] Holmberg, *Paul*, 10.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Holmberg, *Paul*, 11.
[303] Holmberg, *Paul*, 12.
[304] Holmberg, *Paul*, 13.

in human ability' and, following Theissen, 'social and cultural differences'.[306] Social stratification in Corinth evidenced particularly at the Lord's supper shows a view within the congregation of a spectrum of significance, more particularly of value. Those of high social status may have become hosts for the supper. These hosts 'were likely candidates for leadership.'[307]

How did leadership emerge among such groupings? Holmberg mentions the tendency within a long-lasting group 'for a leading stratum to emerge' to rectify a lacuna of leadership, so that Pauline church structures emerge 'from below'.[308] Notions that this occurred on a 'volunteer' basis evades the vital 'element of holy compulsion (from the Spirit).'[309] God chooses to assign, by the Spirit, a role for each one (1 Corinthians 12.11). Recognition of function may involve the apostle, the individual prospective servant, and the body as a whole. As an individual displays a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (12.7), and continues to do so such that a pattern emerges, this repeated demonstration of χάρισμα is acknowledged by the church and formal recognition may then be given, without specific consultation with the apostle.[310] For Paul, the Spirit is expected to bring about the emergence of the χαρίσματα of leadership in this way.[311]

Holmberg offers a sociological explanation for the admittedly undeveloped nature of offices in the Pauline churches. Since Paul is still alive and actively interested in the progress of his congregations, the churches did not develop into the more structured state of organisational independence which would necessarily arise once "potential accessibility" to Paul had been ruled out, most decisively at his death.[312]

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[305] Holmberg, *Paul*, 103.
[306] Holmberg, *Paul*, 103. Holmberg here reviews Theissen's 'Social Stratification' (cf. note.241) and also draws on other Theissen essays.
[307] Holmberg, *Paul*, 105.
[308] Holmberg, *Paul*, 107.
[309] Holmberg, *Paul*, 107, because although 'where the Spirit is, there is freedom', yet 'the Lord is the Spirit' (2 Corinthians 3.17).
[310] Holmberg, *Paul*, 108.
[311] Ibid. Witness the inclusion of κυβερνήσεις in 12.28 and of ὁ προϊστάμενος in Rom 12.8.
[312] Holmberg, *Paul*, 116.

3.5.2. Social-scientific Evaluation of Data

In Part Two of his study, Holmberg applies sociological categories to clarify the exercise of authority in the Pauline church constituency.[313] Holmberg reviews and critiques Max Weber on authority[314] to fashion his own model to apply to the historical material on Paul and power.

Beginning with Weber's definitions of power and authority, Holmberg distinguishes authority from legality and competence before forming his own definition of authority.[315] He observes that authority is located in a person, where five components are in place. These components are 1) ruler; 2) ruled; 3) a will by the ruler to influence others; 4) compliance; and 5) acceptance of the situation by the ruled.[316] Holmberg includes as a sixth distinctive element 'rationality'. Carl Friedrich's studies on authority in ancient Rome and in everyday relations indicate a connection to rationality, *ratio*, is crucial. An authority relation may mask an inherent element of coercion. Acceptance of this coercion as legitimate comes about through an acceptance of *ratio*, where *ratio* refers to norms which are regarded as reasonable.[317] Ability to reason is credited to one recognized as having authority without that one having to constantly demonstrate it in practice. The mystique of being regarded as able to reason is, for extended periods, sufficient for the authority relation to hold.[318] There must be sufficient 'transparency', to bolster the subordinate's belief, or the subordinate may stumble on evidence of the leader's lack of ability,[319] and the authority relation become nullified.[320] Here our own definition of authority becomes clearer. It was said that authority was an accepted claim of legitimacy for the exercise of power. The element of *ratio* introduced by Friedrich and Holmberg provides a basis both for a claim to legitimacy and the acceptance of that claim.

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[313] Holmberg, *Paul*, 123.
[314] Above page 29.
[315] Holmberg, *Paul*, 124-29.
[316] Holmberg, *Paul*, 130, after Bendix.
[317] Holmberg, *Paul*, 131.
[318] Cf. Friedrich, *Authority*, 37.
[319] Holmberg, *Paul*, 133, cf. Weber, 3:1114.
[320] Holmberg, *Paul*, 133, cf. Weber, 1:242.

The followers of a charismatic leader willingly obey, for they believe the leader's imposition of his will is legitimate, so that not to obey would be illegitimate.[321] The group sees the leader, as does the leader himself, as closer to God than other humans.[322] Holmberg modifies Weber's model by noting the radical, new nature of the message which the charismatic leader brings. This can bring destruction, as a result of negative response to existing norms, but can also provide a 'constructive impulse.'[323] Weber regarded the group, a 'charismatic community', as initiating a new social order.[324] This elite group brings a prophetic statement against existing structures and foreshadows the coming kingdom.[325] While Jesus fitted Weber's description of a charismatic leader, after the birth of the post-Pentecost church this function passed not to another individual but to the gospel.[326] Nevertheless, Paul's authority among his churches does show certain distinctive characteristics of charismatic authority. In particular his call was directly from God,[327] he demonstrated supernatural power (although he portrays this as God's power in the context of his own weakness),[328] and he is the one who brought life to the congregations, a life located beyond Paul in Christ. Paul does have some authority as 'father' of the churches he founded.[329]

Routinization takes place in order to perpetuate the benefits perceived by the presence of charismatic authority. This perpetuation, Holmberg indicates, may be organized by the leader.[330] For Holmberg, routinization is a special case of institutionalization, characterized by motivation.[331] The effect of institutionalization is simultaneously more social control bringing a reduction in freedom and, through organizational efficiency, an increase in freedom, derived from the energy formerly

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[321] Holmberg, *Paul*, 142, cf. Weber, 1:242.
[322] This brings to mind the frequent appeal in neo-Pentecostal circles to 1 Chr 16.22 (=Ps 105.15; cf. 1 Sam 24.6) in connection with attempts to protect leaders from accountability for their actions.
[323] Holmberg, *Paul*, 146.
[324] Weber, 3:1115-17.
[325] Holmberg, *Paul*, 148.
[326] Holmberg, *Paul*, 160f.
[327] Holmberg, *Paul*, 152.
[328] Holmberg, *Paul*, 155.
[329] Holmberg, *Paul*, 156.
[330] Holmberg, *Paul*, 164f. Weber, 1:246, focused on the motivation for this of the elite in the group around the leader.
[331] Holmberg, *Paul*, 174.

dissipated through inefficiency. Institutionalization occurs as roles and generalized consensus develop within any group, including a charismatic community.[332]

Further institutionalization may cause a 'dispersion' or 'diffusion' of charisma during propagation of the message.[333] Traditional forms develop for such propagation, which function as legitimation. Although 'institutionalized', Paul's churches are still charismatic as well.[334] These two forces, although in tension, can co-exist. It might be observed here that one motivation for a continued charismatic dynamic is the protection of the dignity of 'weaker' brethren.

Paul exercises charismatic authority but not on the strength of his own revelations, but of the verifiable *ratio* provided by the gospel he preaches. Indeed the release of this *ratio*, compounded by the availability to the community of access to the Spirit limits Paul's authority further.[335] This is not seen by Paul as a problem, however, since his authority has only the function of helping (of building up) the Corinthians. His aim is to see his churches develop more freedom to follow the Spirit and the gospel independent of Paul's own future interventions. Paul's theology of χαρίσματα emerged in response to certain features of existing institutionalization which Paul wanted to modify.[336] Holmberg notes that social phenomena determined Paul's ideas, not the reverse.[337]

Holmberg asserts that the historical data fits well into his modified version of Weber's model. Authority is basically of a charismatic form, with its centre around the charismatic leader whether as the personal Christ or the personal Spirit,[338] and in a derivative sense around his Apostolic 'staff' among whom Paul comes to be counted after a long period of waiting for recognition from Jerusalem.

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[332] Holmberg, *Paul*, 176.
[333] Holmberg, *Paul*, 179f.
[334] Holmberg, *Paul*, 160.
[335] Holmberg, *Paul*, 155.
[336] Holmberg, *Paul*, 194f.
[337] Holmberg, *Paul*, 195. Thus, Holmberg (205) censures Campenhausen, Käsemann, Schütz and Schweizer among others for allowing some 'unconscious idealism' into their respective studies on authority, particularly in connection with Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 12. Holmberg sees this theological argument as 'a secondary reaction' to the misuse of gifts in Corinth, and thinks these authors 'misinterpreted' this reaction as 'the structuring principle of that social world.'
[338] Holmberg, *Paul*, 195.

Paul may be seen as working in tension with the social tendency towards institutionalization. He seems to want to keep the apportioning of occasional ministry functions as open as possible. This would particularly serve to protect the value accorded to those who would, in the wider society, tend to be looked down upon as having nothing to contribute to the common good (cf. 12.23f).

This charismatic network of authority is already institutionalized by the time of Paul's church-planting.[339] That this was so is confirmed in Paul's own emphasis, not merely on his charismatic gifting, but on 'the gospel', a body of traditional material bound within a fixed historical context.[340] As time goes on, the potential manifestations of authority become more fixed in certain actual manifestations.[341] Thus Paul does not just make formulations of his own without any constraint, but rather they conformed with patterns of tradition which were 'binding even for himself.'[342] Since these traditions were not those of the Gentile (or Hellenistic Jewish) communities in which he established churches, the authority relation should not be classified as 'traditional or rational-legal'.[343]

As founder, Paul carries most authority,[344] but tradition, as he handed it to his converts, itself exercises limitations on Paul.[345] Paul's preaching sets parameters on the acceptability of his own subsequent actions. In the case of the working of prolific pneumatic giftedness (as at Corinth, 1.7), this limitation is emphasized, since direct access to the Spirit emboldens the church members to stand in their own (corporate?) convictions. Such convictions might point them in a different direction from Paul's pronouncements.[346] Holmberg enumerates four further self-imposed factors which curb Paul's authority. 1) Paul emphasizes his authority is derivative, and that the Corinthians have direct access to the source of this authority. 2) Paul chooses

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[339] Holmberg, *Paul*, 181.
[340] Holmberg, *Paul*, 196.
[341] Holmberg, *Paul*, 198.
[342] Holmberg, *Paul*, 183.
[343] Holmberg, *Paul*, 184.
[344] Ibid.
[345] '...once Christians have become fully initiated in the charismatic tradition, they are familiar with it too, and can use it as a means of controlling and criticizing the apostle, or can claim some measure of independence from him,' Holmberg, *Paul*, 185.

"father" as the chief metaphor to describe the authority relation, as over against "prophet" or "head". This emphasizes the 'personal and cordial relationship' he expects rather than stressing obedience.[347] It also suggests his desire for their progression towards independence, even if slower than he would like (3.1f).[348] 3) He declines financial support from the Corinthians. 4) He roots his instruction in the *ratio* of the gospel tradition.[349] This practice encourages his readers to learn to themselves apply this *ratio* to future contingencies.[350] These self-limitations encourage the churches to exercise freedom, rendering apostolic supervision unnecessary.[351]

Institutionalization is at work in all levels of church life, but becomes most evident when the tradition is passed on to newcomers.[352] Holmberg sees this institutionalization as a dialectical process, by no means entirely controlled by the theological or other assertions of the leader, but also deeply affected by sociological considerations which cannot be circumvented.

An example, provided by Holmberg, of sociological factors of this kind regards the social status of those who rendered service as leaders in the community. A slave could not offer as many resources to the church as could a householder like Stephanas.[353] Without Paul arranging who was given what responsibilities, over time, the life of the group as it became institutionalized gave some members more opportunities to serve than others. Where Paul acknowledged such service (e.g.

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[346] Ibid.

[347] Ibid. This is not to suggest that the father-son relationship does not include obedience. However, unlike, for example, in master-slave relationships, over the passage of time the element of obedience becomes less characteristic of the relation.

[348] Holmberg, *Paul*, 186. The Corinthians, from Paul's perspective, needed parental guidance to lead them into maturity.

[349] Ibid. During his conclusion, Holmberg writes, '...proximity to sacred *ratio* is the foremost basis of authority in the Primitive Church. ...Any new custom, invention or revelation must be fundamentally in accordance with existing sacred tradition. Examples of this can be found at all levels of Church life: local custom, prophecy or gnosis must conform to what the apostle considers to be true and upbuilding (1 Cor 5.1-5, 8.1f, 10.23, 14.37f), and must sometimes also conform to the general practice of the church (1 Cor 7.17, 11.16, 14.34). The preaching of Apollos and other teachers in Corinth must accord with the foundation Paul has laid (1 Cor 3.10f), and Paul's own "gospel" must at one point in his career be laid before the notables of Jerusalem to receive their approval,' Holmberg, *Paul*, 197.

[350] '...this builds up the readers' knowledge and capacity for correct analysis and judgment,' Holmberg, *Paul*, 186.

[351] Holmberg, *Paul*, 187.

[352] Holmberg, *Paul*, 197.

16.15f), the institutionalization was reinforced with legitimation.[354] His legitimation in Corinth was not of a comprehensive nature, but, rather, especially in his theology of χαρίσματα, served to reverse certain patterns in the institutionalization process, while promoting others.[355]

Holmberg sees a dialectic operating at several levels. Authority itself is based on the coexistence of insight and trust.[356] In the mutual responsibilities of building up, exhortation and submission there is a further dialectic, especially since certain individuals may be expected to go to greater lengths in performance of these things than do others.[357] That Paul used letters for instruction demonstrates a dialectic between what Paul intended and 'social reality' in the church.[358] This recalls the observation that the overall institutionalization process is dialectical: theological statements or authoritative pronouncements inter-play with social forces and consensus generalisation. Holmberg urges that 'a dialectical approach' to analysis of the significance of historical phenomena in New Testament studies can be of great value.[359]

3.6. Wayne Meeks

While not focussed entirely on power and authority, another important study is by Wayne Meeks on social aspects of the developing Pauline Christianity.[360] Following the path pioneered by Theissen, Meeks devotes a chapter to the evaluation of social status within Pauline congregations.[361] Meeks furthers prosopographical study,[362] focussing on 30 individuals for whom some indication of status is provided within the text of the epistles and Acts. He also gives suggestions for revealing further data on the social status of various groups through other, indirect, clues in the

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[353] Holmberg, *Paul*, 193.
[354] Holmberg, *Paul*, 190.
[355] Holmberg, *Paul*, 191.
[356] Holmberg, *Paul*, 199, cf. op. cit., 133.
[357] Holmberg, *Paul*, 199, noting the work of Jaubert.
[358] Holmberg, *Paul*, 200.
[359] 'The interdependence and dialectical development of theology and social structure is the central fact that must be taken as a starting point for historical research,' Holmberg, *Paul*, 203.
[360] Especially, W.Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University, 1983).
[361] 'The Social Level of Pauline Christians', Meeks, *Urban*, 51-73.
[362] Meeks, *Urban*, 55-63.

text.[363] Among these, he thinks it likely that Phoebe (Rom 16.1f) was a patron.[364] Although Pauline congregations represented a convergence of members of many social levels, neither the extreme top nor bottom of the social scale are likely to have been represented.[365]

Meeks modifies Theissen's treatment of the strong/weak controversy in 1 Corinthians 8-10. The "strong" were, in Meeks' view, far more likely to be experiencing a degree of status inconsistency rather than being well integrated into society.[366] Status is not a simple category, but one that combines several social indicators.[367] Meeks' view is that the most prominent members of the Corinthian church (the strong) were probably experiencing less consistency of status than some of those who would register lower on scales of social status.[368]

With respect to power and authority in the Corinthian correspondence, Meeks suggests that the letters paint 'a picture of conflict.' He notes that references to *power* and *authority* in these letters occur in an ironical context, suggesting 'power was important' to the Corinthian Christians and that Paul 'wanted to alter the way power was conceived.'[369] He touches on another strand of our investigation of power, rhetorical practice.[370] In discussing one of the 1 Corinthians texts that addresses conflict (11.17-34), Meeks notes Paul's use of rhetorical questions.[371] Meeks notes that the conflicts at Corinth addressed by Paul are largely 'directly *about* authority'[372] and that the letters were intended to function as a substrate for authority to be exerted. In these letters, Paul uses 'strategies of influence' that he 'thought

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[363] Meeks, *Urban*, 63-72. Dunn offers, as a helpful alternative to 'status inconsistency', 'status dissonance', Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 49.
[364] That this was not highlighted by Theissen is noted by Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 48.
[365] Meeks, *Urban*, 73.
[366] Meeks, *Urban*, 70. The "strong" 'may enjoy a high rank in some dimensions..., but they may be ranked lower in others.'
[367] Meeks, *Urban*, 22f, 54f, 70.
[368] Meeks, *Urban*, 70.
[369] Meeks, *Urban*, 117.
[370] Chapter Four, below page 56.
[371] The rhetorical question "is used when the speaker wants to force his audience to draw conclusions for themselves, here, to acknowledge certain unacceptable inferences from their own behavior," Meeks, *Urban*, 67f.
[372] Meeks, *Urban*, 117, emphasis his.

would be effective.'[373] This observation underpins much of the exegetical study later in the present thesis.

He attempts to infer the underlying authority structures at work in the Pauline mission,[374] and makes the important observation that in situations of conflict, 'the question "Why should I obey?" is more likely to come into the open. Authority distinguishes itself from naked power by its ability to produce acceptable answers to that question.'[375] This again fits neatly into the discussion about the role of *ratio* in theories of authority.[376] Meeks examines the case of charismatic gifts in Corinth to uncover social implications. He notes that because the Spirit 'is no respecter of persons,' the power driving charismatic utterance 'does not usually flow only in the normal channels of authority created by society.'[377] Indeed, this provides another example of the Pauline agenda working in a direction other than that predicted by Theissen's love-patriarchalism.

3.7. John Chow

Chow's monograph *Patronage and Power*[378] could have been placed in Chapter Two under 'Historical Reconstruction'. Although its *methodology* involves standard historical methods, the *results* relate to views about social status in Corinth, which underlies the problems which surface in the letter,[379] while recognizing that any such reconstruction will be tentative.[380] For Chow, it is important to recognize that the actual behaviour of the Corinthian Christians cannot be assumed to be the same as the behaviour which would be dictated by the gospel which Paul preached.[381] It might be misleading, therefore, to depend entirely on Paul's letters to reconstruct the underlying social situation into which they were written.[382] Following

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[373] Meeks, *Urban*, 117.
[374] Meeks, *Urban*, 131-9.
[375] Meeks, *Urban*, 137.
[376] See discussion above, page 43f.
[377] Meeks, *Urban*, 120.
[378] J.K.Chow, *Patronage and Power: A Study of Social Networks in Corinth*, JSNTSS 75 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).
[379] Chow, *Patronage*, 12.
[380] Chow, *Patronage*, 15.
[381] Chow, *Patronage*, 14.
[382] Chow points out, 'All we have are two canonical letters from Paul which were written with the aim of guiding the Corinthians to the goal which Paul saw as appropriate.... Every account of the situation has to depend on Paul's own witness,' Chow, *Patronage*, 29.

E.A.Judge, one of Chow's other main concerns is to ground his reconstruction of the social background to the Corinthian conflicts in the historical 'givenness' of first-century Corinth to avoid distortion of the evidence by modern presuppositions.[383] The work of Gerd Theissen explored stratification within the primitive church, but, Chow notes, simplistic rich versus poor distinctions[384] do not account for '...a kind of united front in the church which stood against Paul...in response to the case of immorality in 1 Corinthians 5.'[385]

Chow accounts for this and for other features of 1 Corinthians by positing the underlying influence of patronage within the social structure of the Corinthian congregation. John Stambaugh had already drawn attention to the *clientela* system in Roman society. This institution formally related social superiors with their inferiors:

> the influential "patron" provided protection and support to dependent "clients." The clients in turn provided votes at election time and ...helped demonstrate to the world how important he was.[386]

Chow explains that those who become involved in patronal ties, although from different strata in society and with unequal measures of personal influence, do so because each can provide something which the other wants.[387] While there is a voluntary element to the continuance of such an arrangement, frequently in practice, one or other party is virtually forced into perpetuating it to avoid devastating consequences.[388]

Since Corinth was a city within the wider Roman empire, 'a study of the church there may not differ much from a study of other social phenomena in the Graeco-Roman world.'[389] Chow studies the historical data indicating the prevalence and role of patronage within the first century Roman empire, in particular, literary

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[383] Chow, *Patronage*, 18.
[384] Stephen Barton, in reference to social-scientific criticism of the gospels, notes that 'it is not necessarily the case that documents reflecting an hostility to wealth come from a community of the poor,' Barton, 'Communal', 425.
[385] Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 22.
[386] Stambaugh, 'The Ancient Economy' in Stambaugh and D. Balch, *Social World*, 63.
[387] 'They are bound together mainly because their tie can serve their mutual interests through exchange of resources,' Chow, *Patronage*, 41.
[388] 'Of course, under certain circumstances, a client may have no other choice but to turn to the patron for help,' Chow, *Patronage*, 32.
[389] Chow, *Patronage*, 28.

and inscriptional data which, where directly applicable, throws light on the specific circumstances of patronage in Corinth.

Roman emperors' involvement in patronage is comprehensively documented. Just as the emperor acted as patron to the other major centres of population, so he was Corinth's patron also.[390] Although the emperor might act with great benevolence to the city, his great power held the threat of a later reversal.[391] Benefits from the patron emperor carried with it a price of uncertainty and fear of displeasure. From the emperor, networks of patronal links are carefully uncovered in Chow's research. In Corinth in particular, economic boom in the early first century,[392] enabled more than usual to become rich. This, Chow suggests, motivated competitive attempts to achieve status, and for some of this wealth to demonstrate honour to the emperor by various means.[393] Patronal patterns are uncovered within the workings of associations[394], the household[395] and the judiciary.[396] These patterns lead Chow to deduce:

> ...in a way, social relationships in Roman Corinth, from emperor to freedmen, may be seen as networks of patron-client ties through which power, honours and favours were exchanged, and that patronage can be found at work in different levels of the society.[397]

Chow sees this pervasive influence as having some impact on people within the Corinthian congregation. To imagine that these Corinthians, although self-consciously Christians, were in no way affected by patronage would be stretching credulity. Although it might be thought the gospel precluded such involvement, the existence of 1 Corinthians may be traced to a desire on the part of Paul to alter an existing state of affairs through an appeal to a conceptual ideal,[398] rather than giving apostolic sanction to every aspect of their current attitudes and actions. Patronal

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[390] Chow, *Patronage*, 41.
[391] Chow recounts how Nero decreed freedom to the city of Corinth, but 'there was no guarantee of how long it would last.' In the event, 'the freedom granted...was nullified by Vespasian,' Chow, *Patronage*, 45f.
[392] 'In Paul's day it [Corinth] was a wealthy modern commercial city, a centre of trade,' Bornkamm, *Paul*, 68.
[393] Chow, *Patronage*, 63.
[394] Chow, *Patronage*, 64-68.
[395] Chow, *Patronage*, 68-75.
[396] Chow, *Patronage*, 75-80.
[397] Chow, *Patronage*, 83.
[398] Chow, *Patronage*, 36.

influence can assist in understanding both the bonds of relationship in the church and at least some of the issues which Paul felt it necessary to address in his letter.[399]

Chow peers through the Pauline texts to discover what he can about individuals in Corinth. Two results deserve mention here. If the standard thinking that the place of origin of Romans was Corinth is accepted,[400] it may first be deduced that "Gaius", named in Rom 16.23, is recognized by Paul as the host (ξένος) of the whole church from where he writes, that is, Corinth. Gaius' house could not have been small, and Gaius was probably wealthy.[401] Also from Rom 16.23, an "Erastus" is described as the οἰκονόμος of the city (again, of Corinth). An inscription from Corinth mentions an Erastus who was appointed *aedilis*.[402] If this refers to the subsequent ascendancy of the same individual it would confirm the impression of high social status for Erastus which is provided by the title in Romans. Chow therefore classifies Erastus among the 'powerful few in the church' alluded to in 1.26.[403]

In the light of Chow's study, what may be deduced about Paul's attitude to patronage as an extant societal norm? What does this reveal about Paul's approach to social issues within his church communities? Did Paul seek to preserve existing structures of power, or did his agenda include a counter-cultural critique of and challenge to the *status quo*?

Chow has demonstrated (convincingly, in my view) the likelihood of patronal ties influencing the attitudes and actions of some in the Corinthian church. Chow suggests that the injunction in 16.22 to love the Lord[404] may be to counteract patronal allegiance. Similarly the stress in 7.23 and 6.19f on a higher allegiance was perhaps intended to contrast with that owed any human patron.[405] Also if the injunctions

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[399] Chow, *Patronage*, 82.
[400] Cf. e.g. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, xliv.
[401] Chow, *Patronage*, 90. Cf. '...prob. because he furnished space for its meetings,' BAGD, 548.
[402] Meeks, *Urban*, 48, 58.
[403] Chow, *Patronage*, 93. Cf. the thorough discussion of the status of Erastus in Theissen, *Setting*, 75-83.
[404] Chow, *Patronage*, 169f. The use of φιλεῖν here (for Paul, unique) may be because the word 'can carry patronal overtones', ibid (footnote) (cf. Jn 19.12).
[405] Chow, *Patronage*, 170.

aimed at the 'strong' (8.10; 10.14, 20) to have no part in idolatrous feasts was directed particularly at patrons,[406] the warning in 10.22 that they are not stronger than the Lord may be emphasizing Christ's precedence over all those of social influence.[407] Paul further flouted patronal expectations by refusing to accept financial support.[408] Some of the tensions in Corinth arose from conflict with traditional norms 'to pledge loyalty to human patrons', while Paul regarded the higher claim to loyalty to the new Lord as eclipsing these.[409] Chow regards the body metaphor of 12.12-27 as being used to ameliorate the distinction between the more and less powerful members of the church.[410] This is particularly likely in view of the separation afforded by conventional social distinctions which are challenged in 12.13.[411] While patron-client ties were vertical and asymmetric, Paul's body imagery, with its less divided image of mutual dependence 'can be seen as carrying subversive implications.'[412]

3.8. Conclusions from Chapter Three

There are undoubted parallels between Weberian charismatic authority and Paul's relationship with his churches. However, as Holmberg has demonstrated, the fit is incomplete, and assumptions about Paul should not be read into the text simply because they are predicted by Weber's model. Social development in Corinth occurred by the same broad processes as elucidated by Berger-Luckmann's sociology of knowledge. Institutionalisation occurred from the earliest years of the church.

The concept of *ratio* has given further clarity to the meaning of authority. Norms which are regarded as reasonable may be used both to frame claims to legitimacy for exercising power and to evaluate the claim and accept it. Schütz' understanding of the gospel provides a specific historical locus for that *ratio* in the Corinthian church.

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[406] Chow suggests that the feasts in question may have been 'feasts related to the imperial cult and held with the intention of acquiring public honour and power,' Chow, *Patronage*, 171.
[407] Ibid.
[408] Chow, *Patronage*, 172.
[409] Chow, *Patronage*, 175.
[410] Chow, *Patronage*, 177.
[411] Ibid.
[412] Chow, *Patronage*, 187.

Social factors in Corinth gave establishment of a community in Christ hurdles to overcome including elitism and acceptance of patronage. The Corinthian church may be seen as moving from the first flush of charismatic community to a more stable pattern of ministry. Modern sociological theory accurately predicts this trend in retrospect. Before harmful patterns are cemented, however, Paul seeks to concentrate the Spirit-endowed gifting to the task of building the people who are the church.

John Elliott characterises the point of sociological exegesis as asking of a text 'how and why that text was designed to function, and what its impact upon the life and activity of its recipients and formulators was intended to be.'[413] What Paul was doing (and intending to do) when he wrote 1 Corinthians is thus made more transparent through insights brought through sociological study. Another conceptual tool to reveal 'how the text was designed to function' that has been applied to the study of 1 Corinthians in recent decades is the skill brought through rhetorical-critical analysis, and it is the place of rhetoric that the current survey now considers.

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[413] Quoted in Barton, 'Social-Scientific Perspectives', 68,

Chapter Four: Rhetorical-Critical Approach

The third approach which is being reviewed that has been applied to the study of power and authority is a rhetorical-critical approach.[414] Rhetorical criticism might be classified as examplifying the hermeneutics of suspicion.[415] There has been no clearer example of this than the work of Graham Shaw.

4.1   Graham Shaw

Shaw, in his 1982 study, *The Cost of Authority*, wrote a sustained attack on what he sees as the self-justification of corporate expressions of Christianity. He asks whether 'the language of Christianity' functions as a disguise for the exercise of power.[416] Shaw starts by viewing authority as 'always a bid for power over other human beings.'[417] However, he regards 'the exercise of power' as 'unavoidable' since speaking and acting exerts 'some influence over the words and deeds of others.'[418] Words are used not only to communicate but also to conceal.[419] 'Oppressive use of authority' centres around seeking 'to perpetuate a position of power... ...threatened by an instability it cannot ultimately evade.'[420] To put this concept in terms used above, it could be said that oppression takes over from authority when the *ratio* on which it is based is obfuscated and concealed from comparison. Healthy authority, for Shaw, 'recognizes the temporary nature of its position of power' and so is able to offer 'a much more open and inclusive social stance.'[421] Thus such authority 'encourages the independence of others.'[422]

Having constructed this helpful conceptual framework, Shaw reads Paul in general and 1 Corinthians in particular without detecting any signs of health in Paul's

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[414] For a good, recent summary of the application of rhetorical criticism to the Corinthian correspondence, see Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995), esp. 48-67.
[415] Other readings of 1 Corinthians utilising a 'hermeneutic of suspicion' include the feminist perspectives of E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, and A. Wire, *Corinthian Women Prophets*.
[416] Shaw, *Cost*, 12.
[417] Shaw, *Cost*, 15.
[418] Shaw, *Cost*, 17.
[419] Shaw, *Cost*, 16.
[420] Shaw, *Cost*, 17.
[421] Shaw, *Cost*, 21.
[422] Shaw, *Cost*, 22.

use of authority. Far from expressing 'the invulnerability of the writer [Paul] to criticism,'[423] Paul explicitly invites judgement of his words (10.15). Shaw interprets 'the outpouring of the Spirit' as threatening Paul's authority in a way 'both embarrassing and fundamental.'[424] The body imagery (12.12-27) is taken to suppress 'the individual consciousness.'[425] In the same context, Shaw maintains argument is difficult 'against such an author'[426] but that seems a function of Paul's robust argument rather than any privileged position he adopts in framing it. In general, the vividness of Shaw's theories is not matched by the care shown in his exegesis.

4.2 Lawrence Welborn

Lawrence Welborn has published a number of essays on rhetorical issues within the Corinthian correspondence.[427] In 'Discord in Corinth', Welborn notes Paul describes the setting into which he writes using terms characteristic of Greco-Roman historians' accounts of 'conflicts within city states'.[428] Rather than seeking an 'essentially theological' cause for the conflict evident in 1 Corinthians 1-4,[429] Welborn argues for a *Sitz im Leben* of 'power struggle, not a theological controversy.'[430] The slogans in 1.12 ('Εγὼ μέν εἰμι Παύλου,'Εγὼ δὲ 'Απολλῶ, κτλ.) have not been satisfactorily explained in terms of theologically-based rivalry.[431] The forms are, however, typical of the principle of political parties of the time, which were 'named after the individuals whose interests they served.'[432] 'Personal alliances... ...blood relations, clients and friends' were grouped around a few who 'contended for power' in the face of a system permeated by social stratification.[433]

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[423] Shaw, *Cost*, 64.
[424] Shaw, *Cost*, 90.
[425] Shaw, *Cost*, 91. Shaw's interpretation at times seems a wilful refusal to understand Paul. Witness, 'The eye cannot say... nor the head... Precisely: they cannot "say" – they have no self-consciousness,' ibid.
[426] Ibid.
[427] Collected and updated as Welborn, *Politics & Rhetoric in the Corinthian Epistles* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997).
[428] Welborn, *Politics*, 3. In particular, Welborn highlights Paul's use of σχίσματα (1.10), ἔριδες (1.11), ζῆλος (3.3) and μεμέρισται (1.13).
[429] Welborn, *Politics*, 6.
[430] Welborn, *Politics*, 7, although, Dunn thinks theology is relevant, 'Welborn and the others have underplayed the theological dimension. ..."wisdom" is used in several senses [in 1 Cor 1-3], ...only one of which is to be immediately identified with rhetoric,' Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, 43.
[431] Welborn, *Politics*, 8.
[432] Welborn, *Politics*, 9.
[433] Welborn, *Politics*, 10.

Excavations in Pompeii revealed many hundreds of party slogans painted on walls.[434] These slogans promote the name of the leader, without any reference to issues, promises or performance.[435] Many slogans were painted by individuals, but others are the work of groups such as trade associations.[436] Welborn claims the formula for a factional slogan was 'a personal pronoun, the verb "to be" (expressed or implied), and the genitive of a proper name.'[437]

Welborn sees clear 'contempt of the rich for the poor' in 11.21f.[438] Tensions between rich and poor were frequently regarded in antiquity as important in civil strife.[439] Welborn demonstrates there was widespread awareness that the exploitation and inequality underlying contemporary economics was in large part the wellspring of strife that would threaten the prosperity of the *polis*.[440] Welborn regards the vocabulary of 1.26f as describing the 'major class divisions involved in στάσις' (revolt).[441] Welborn suggests the Corinthian Christians considered themselves allied to one or other of the influential, high status individuals in the congregation.[442] He suspects Paul of seeking to steer the majority of the Corinthian church into his own faction.[443] Against this, it could be argued that Paul is bringing the Corinthians back to the *ratio* behind their acceptance of his authority, the tradition regulated by the gospel.

'In 1.17-2.5, Paul contrasts the "speech" and "wisdom of the world" with the "word of the cross" and the "wisdom of God."'[444] Welborn contends that this is Paul's attack against the misuse of language in the Corinthian church to divide.[445]

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[434] Welborn, *Politics*, 11.
[435] Welborn, *Politics*, 12.
[436] Welborn, *Politics*, 12.
[437] Welborn, *Politics*, 12, 16 here, 16 n.51 disagreeing with Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 83-85 (see discussion below n. 502 page 64), and noting her criticism.
[438] Welborn, *Politics*, 16. Welborn notes (n.53 page 17) such social stratification is a conclusion also arrived at by Theissen and Meeks through the application to the text of social-scientific methods.
[439] Welborn, *Politics*, 17.
[440] Welborn, *Politics*, 20.
[441] Welborn, *Politics*, 21. At the close of his essay, Welborn notes, *Politics*, 40, the interpretation of 1 Clement 47.4 of events point to πρόσκλισις ("partisanship"), fitting the case he has constructed.
[442] Welborn, *Politics*, 23f. The parallels with the work of John Chow (section 3.7, above) are strong here as Welborn *Politics*, 25f, highlights the client's political support of his patron.
[443] Welborn, *Politics*, 28.
[444] Welborn, *Politics*, 28f.
[445] Welborn, *Politics*, 32.

Rhetorical practice had been used to foster division rather than concord. Similarly, Welborn links the emphasis on claims to knowledge (2.6-3.3) with political control of the church by leaders of Corinthian factions.[446] Finally (4.1-21), Paul advances his claim to be 'a conciliator of the factions'.[447] The law courts were associated with political strife because judicial process was carried out in the public arena, where crowds could be influenced.[448] Paul regards an over-inflated view of oneself as a prime factor in strife,[449] and so seeks to deflate such notions (4.6, 18f).

Paul does not just intend to end dissension but to dissuade them from interest in achieving improved life through political allegiances, instead advocating reliance on the salvation offered by the gospel.[450] Welborn notes Corinth was historically well-acquainted with factionalism,[451] and some of its inhabitants may have been converted in the hope of obtaining 'some of the δύναμις and ἐλευθερία of which they had heard the apostle speak.'[452]

In his essay on 1 Corinthians 4.6,[453] Welborn identifies the unit 1 Cor 1-4 as deliberative rhetoric,[454] specifically 'that which is customarily entitled περὶ ὁμονίας.'[455] Welborn exemplifies this by highlighting Paul's parody of Corinthians slogans,[456] his describing them as '"babies", fed with milk rather than solid food' (3.1f),[457] his use of a building metaphor (3.9-15)[458], the accusation of destroying God's temple (3.16f),[459] and the presentation of himself and Apollos 'as examples of harmonious conduct.'[460] He regards the discussion of "wisdom" (1.17-2.5) as

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[446] Welborn, *Politics*, 35.
[447] Welborn, *Politics*, 36.
[448] Welborn, *Politics*, 36.
[449] Welborn, *Politics*, 38.
[450] Welborn, *Politics*, 40.
[451] Welborn, *Politics*, 41.
[452] Welborn, *Politics*, 42.
[453] Welborn, 'A Conciliatory Principle in 1 Corinthians 4.6' in *Politics*, 43-75.
[454] Welborn, *Politics*, 57.
[455] Welborn, *Politics*, 58.
[456] Welborn, *Politics*, 60.
[457] Welborn, *Politics*, 61.
[458] Welborn, *Politics*, 61f.
[459] Welborn, *Politics*, 62.
[460] Welborn, *Politics*, 62.

centred around σοφία λόγου ("cleverness in speaking", 1.17),[461] arguing that 'those engaged in factional struggles suffer from a lack of genuine understanding.'[462]

4.3   Margaret Mitchell

Margaret M. Mitchell has given a great boost to the material available for the study of 1 Corinthians with *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*.[463] Mitchell sets out to discover 'the overall genre, function and composition' of the letter.[464] Her thesis is that the entire letter is devoted to addressing the problem of factionalism in the Church, with the aim of its cessation.[465] The genre of writing, she proposes, is one of the categories of ancient rhetorical discourse, namely, 'deliberative rhetoric'.[466]

Mitchell sees 1 Corinthians as a single, unified composition, and believes that its integrity should be demonstrated on literary rather than theological grounds.[467] Betz had recognized that material in Paul which evidently forms arguments could be compared with the conventional formulation of argument within rhetorical works from the Greco-Roman milieu.[468] Mitchell seeks to build on this insight, using stringent methodological controls to produce the most accurate results available from her investigative process. These controls are: 1) to use a historical approach to the rhetorical materials; 2) to consult not only ancient handbooks of rhetoric but also actual examples of rhetorical materials from available ancient manuscripts; 3) to work deductively from Paul's text to rhetorical designation (rather than inductively from a given form and then attempt to force the text to conform); 4) to demonstrate what makes a particular rhetorical form an appropriate designation for the content of

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[461] Welborn, *Politics*, 64, citing BAGD, 759.

[462] Welborn, *Politics*, 65.

[463] Subtitled, *An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) / Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991).

[464] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 1.

[465] 'Paul's rhetorical stance throughout 1 Cor is to argue that Christian unity is the theological and sociological expectation from which the Corinthians have fallen short, and to which they must return,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 1, n. 1.

[466] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 1..

[467] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 2, 5.

[468] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 6. In English-speaking scholarship, Betz's influence was felt by his commentaries in the Hermeneia series (Philadelphia: Fortress Press) first on *Galatians* (1979) and subsequently on *2 Corinthians 8 and 9* (1985).

the material; 5) to examine as rhetorical units sections which are already compositional units.[469]

That Mitchell considers her analysis as fitting under a heading of historical-critical study sets it apart from that of some other advocates of rhetorical criticism.[470] Mitchell's work could therefore have been included when considering the historical approaches in general.[471] Instead, because 'rhetorical criticism', which developed as a subdivision of literary criticism, is becoming one of the fastest-growing branches of New Testament study in its own right, it has been chosen to treat it separately. Mitchell's approach resists anachronism as evidenced by her deliberate non-use of "New Rhetoric" which she regards as studying human interaction in general throughout time.[472]

Mitchell's third constraint, not to presuppose any rhetorical designation of the text, is observed with impeccable thoroughness. Over half of her book is devoted to the question of what makes deliberative rhetoric the correct designation of 1 Corinthians, prior to a compositional analysis of the text being undertaken.[473]

Mitchell adduces the principle of literary criticism that form and content are inter-related.[474] First, the content of the book is demonstrated to deal in various forms with arguments rooted in factionalism, and therefore to be appropriate for the use of deliberative rhetoric as shown both in the handbooks and extant letters and speeches.[475] By comparing the terms and themes (*topoi*) used in 1 Corinthians with those found in ancient political materials that were concerned with factionalism, 1 Corinthians is demonstrated to fit the parameters of deliberative rhetoric.[476]

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[469] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 6.

[470] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 8, n. 24, mentions the approach propounded by W. Wuellner as exemplifying this. Mitchell herself describes her method as that of 'historical rhetorical criticism,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 296, cf. 300, n.7.

[471] Chapter Two, above, page 4.

[472] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 7.

[473] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 12f, referring to 20-183 before 184-295.

[474] Cf. Dunn, 'This rhetorical dimension to the issues in 1 Corinthians 1-3... had been largely lost to sight... partly because rhetoric itself was understood too narrowly and negatively as concern with mere form, a cultivating of expression at the expense of content,' *1 Corinthians*, 41.

[475] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 15.

Literary critical principles also dictate that the limits of the literary unit under examination should first be established.[477] Mitchell's analysis maintains the entire letter as one unit comprising a deliberative rhetorical argument to urge re-unification of the Corinthian Christians, in contrast to the piecemeal consideration of parts of 1 Corinthians often offered as the fruit of rhetorical analysis.[478] Mitchell cites early Greek commentators on 1 Corinthians, who read the letter with an understanding of important *topoi* that fit with the proposal that the whole was written to combat factionalism.[479]

4.3.1 Deliberative Rhetoric

The argument that 1 Corinthians is deliberative rhetoric is made over against the letter being unstructured 'instruction or paraenesis without adherence to any logical or rhetorical scheme.'[480] Deliberative rhetorical argument has four characteristic elements: 1) looking to future events; 2) the use of a particular cluster of ends, most distinctively the appeal to advantage (τὸ συμφέρον); 3) proof using example (παράδειγμα); 4) suitable subjects, 'factionalism and concord' being particularly common.[481]

The rhetorical handbooks maintain that deliberative address exhorts the hearers to or warns against 'a specific course of action in the future.'[482] A main argument recognised in the handbooks is *utilitas* in Latin, τὸ συμφέρον in Greek.[483] To persuade to a particular future action, 'one must demonstrate that it is to that audience's advantage.'[484] Commonly, this strategy is modified by presenting possible alternatives and then weighing 'a greater future advantage and a present immediate but ultimately lesser advantage.'[485] Mitchell provides numerous examples

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[476] Mitchell identifies 'deliberative' rhetoric as 'political', Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 15.
[477] Ibid.
[478] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 16f.
[479] Mitchell mentions in particular 1 Clement, the Muratorian Canon, Origen and John Chrysostom, *Rhetoric*, 17-19.
[480] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 296.
[481] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 23.
[482] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 25.
[483] Ibid.
[484] Ibid.
[485] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 28.

of these techniques in ancient speeches,[486] and then discusses the use of συμφέρειν and its cognates in 1 Corinthians (6.12, 7.35, 10.23, 10.33 and 12.7).[487]

Deliberative speech according to the handbooks involves adopting past examples (παραδείγματα) of persons or actions in order to suggest how future conduct should proceed.[488] The point here is that 'people deliberately choose to do "all things that those whom they admire deliberately choose to do".'[489] The adumbration of negative examples was employed to persuade against a particular course.[490] A 'proof' is constructed on the basis of examples. One key form of example is the call to imitate.[491] In 1 Corinthians, Paul employs the example of the children of Israel in the desert (10.1-13).[492] The body is used as an example (6.12-20, and throughout 12), a common example in Greek political thought to discourage factionalism.[493] Most obviously, perhaps, Paul appeals to himself as an example to imitate (4.16 and 11.1).[494] Beyond these explicit references, Mitchell sees Paul's putting himself forward to the Corinthians as an example as 'the unifying rhetorical strategy of the letter.'[495] One instance Mitchell highlights is chapter 13, where she notes 'how much Paul talks about *himself* in this chapter.'[496] Although the compositional unity of 1 Corinthians is not a concern of the present study, all this has a bearing on Paul's exercise of power in 1 Corinthians. Paul's use of the body but also of himself as example (11.1) and elsewhere undoubtedly form part of Paul's rhetorical pattern of persuasion.

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[486] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 29-32.
[487] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 33-39.
[488] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 39f.
[489] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 41, citing Aristotle.
[490] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 40.
[491] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 42-46.
[492] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 48.
[493] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 48, a point already seen in the work of Dunn, above (n. 67 page 11).
[494] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 49f.
[495] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 54. 'The frequency of the references Paul makes to himself in 1 Corinthians is... ...outstanding. These self-references are spread consistently throughout the letter; they are not merely clustered in a particular part of it,' ibid, 59.
[496] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 58.

4.3.2 Themes and Rhetorical Language

The terminology and *topoi*[497] used in the urging of re-unification within groups during the Greco-Roman empire are found frequently throughout the text of 1 Corinthians.[498] Not only are there structural similarities between these deliberative rhetorical texts urging concord and 1 Corinthians, but the function of these terms and *topoi* also exhibit repeated parallelism.[499]

Mitchell demonstrates that 1 Corinthians 1.10 is replete with terms and phrases typical of pleas for political unity, specifically, τὸ αὐτὸ λέγειν, σχίσμα, καταρτίζειν, and ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοΐ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ.[500] Mitchell concludes that 1.10 is the thesis statement (rhetorical πρόθεσις) for a deliberative argument.[501] Mitchell also observes distinctive terminology in 1.11-4.21 including ἔρις (1.11, 3.3) and the slogans (1.12).[502] A key *topos* Mitchell identifies is that of a building (οἰκοδομή) describing the community, introduced in 3.9 and revisited 'again and again throughout the epistle.'[503] The image is then further specialised in the 'temple of God' (3.16f).[504] Here Paul strongly warns 'all Corinthian factionalists to cease their community-threatening divisive behavior.'[505] Mitchell finds vocabulary

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[497] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 67, n. 8, defines a *topos* as 'literally the "region" from which arguments are drawn,' and *topoi* as '"commonplaces" specific to deliberative arguments, and especially those which urge concord.'

[498] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 296.

[499] Ibid. Mitchell regards it as a 'methodological principle that one cannot simply look for and identify isolated rhetorical *topoi* from Greco-Roman parallels, but must ground that comparative study in the overall argument. It is especially important that one demonstrate the parallel *functions* of the *topoi* in the NT and Greco-Roman parallels,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 297, n.1.

[500] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 68.

[501] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 297.

[502] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 84. On the subject of the slogans, Mitchell interacts with Welborn (cf. page 58, above) on the form of the slogans. Mitchell claims 'Welborn has not produced one example of an ancient political slogan which has the same formula' as those in 1.12. Mitchell accepts that party affiliation was clustered around particular leaders. However she distinguishes well-attested partitive genitives from political slogans, and also claims saying '"I support Marius for aedile" is not the same thing as to say "I belong to Marius", ' ibid. Genitives in association with a proper name have been found linked to affiliation to a party, but 'no instance has been found of the first person pronoun plus such a genitive in a slogan or party-cry,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 85. Thus the views of these two authors are not very far apart, although for Mitchell, Paul does not dignify the position of the Corinthians by giving them credit for the 'political sophistication' (Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 86) of forming true parties. Cf. Dunn, 'It is principally on Welborn's conclusions that Mitchell... has so effectively built in her overarching thesis that the letter was not against particular parties or siding with a particular party, but against factionalism,' *1 Corinthians*, 43.

[503] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 99.

[504] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 103.

[505] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 104.

throughout the letter which she ties into the stability suggested by a building.[506] Thus, a convincing case is made that the first four chapters of the letter do show numerous signs of a concern with the issues of factionalism and concord.

Mitchell's project continues by locating references to matters connected with Corinthian divisions within chapters 5-16.[507] She then catalogues the results of all this research. 31 phrases or words appropriate to deliberative discussions of factionalism and concord are highlighted[508] and 10 *topoi* are listed which were used in appeals for concord as well as by Paul.[509] Mitchell infers that the content of the letter is appropriate for the deployment of deliberative rhetoric and that it fits with the thesis statement of 1.10 being an 'appeal for concord and cessation of factionalism.'[510]

4.3.3   Composition of 1 Corinthians

Mitchell analyses 'the epistolary and rhetorical structure of 1 Corinthians.'[511] She notes that the book is mostly a letter body containing a single rhetorical argument.[512] Mitchell remarks that there were ten subjects in Paul's mind when he came to write the letter.[513] Either he moved from subject to subject 'by way of juxtaposition' or he found a way to bind them into a whole 'by a logical or moral gradation.'[514] Mitchell is convinced that the book is 'not merely a list of loosely connected topics.'[515]

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[506] These include βεβαιοῦν (1.6, 8), steadfast exhortations to 'stand firm' (15.58; 16.13) and 'be strong' (16.13) and immovable (15.58), Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 105-111.

[507] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 111-179. She does this by considering in turn 1 Corinthians the remaining chapters, but taking 8-10 as a unit. With respect to the material highlighted in the exegetical part of the present thesis (Part II, pages 69-81), she designates ch. 12 as 'The Body Metaphor for Unity', ch. 13 as 'Love as the Antidote to Factionalism' and ch. 14 as 'Disunity at Worship'.

[508] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 180.

[509] These are: a) appeals to instances of "one"; b) appeals to seek what is advantageous; c) appeals to 'building' as an example; d) appeal to a social 'body'; e) appeals to characterising factionalism as 'human' rather than divine; f) appeal to the existence of unity amongst 'leaders' of factions; g) appeals to the fact of the destructive effects of factionalism; h) appeal to examples of peoples who suffered as a result of factionalism; i) emphasis on the distinction between the body and "outsiders" to reinforce group loyalty; j) urging the maintenance of the *status quo* for stability. Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 180f.

[510] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 182.

[511] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 184-295, here 297.

[512] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 184, 186f, specifically referring to 1.10-15.58 as the 'Epistolary Body'.

[513] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 184, citing Godet.

[514] Ibid.

One of the issues arising is Paul's repeated use of περὶ δέ (7.1, 25; 8.1; 12.1; 16.1, 12). Is this Paul churning through a list of subjects as set out in letters from the Corinthians? Or is Paul merely marking that he is moving on to a new subject 'readily known to both author and reader.'[516] Mitchell here refers to her journal article on the subject in support of her adoption of the latter position.[517]

Having identified 1.10 as the 'thesis statement', 1.11-17 becomes a 'statement of facts' followed by several 'proofs' (1.18-15.58) and a conclusion to the argument (15.58).[518] The proofs are then subdivided into four sections: 1) the existence of factionalism (1.18-4.21); 2) the need to keep the church whole against external contamination (5.1-11.1); 3) the display of factionalism when 'coming together' (11.2-14.40); and 4) unity in the tradition (15.1-57).[519] In the third section of proof, one sub-section 'Spiritual Gifts and Unity' (12.1-14.40)[520] is further divided into two 'treatments' separated by an 'exemplary argument'.[521]

The insistence on the Corinthians being 'one' is certainly central to Paul's argument in 12-14, but there is a distinctive source of the unity, namely that derived from the Spirit (12.13) and from God and Christ (cf. εἷς θεός... ...καὶ εἷς κύριος, 8.6). The gospel that Paul preached was, he believed, derived from the plan and will of this one God. Therefore if that gospel has become a decisive norm (ratio) for the existence and conduct of the church, it is unsurprising that the effective working of

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[515] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 187.

[516] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 191.

[517] Mitchell, 'ΠΕΡΙ ΔΕ' seeks to advance the view that the phrase functions *simply* as a topic marker, but does not necessarily correspond to the content of the letter received by Paul. Commonly it has been assumed 'that the letter's composition was to be understood as merely reflecting the course of events which led to its creation, rather than its own rhetorical purpose or coherent plan,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 297. She continues, '...we see a Paul himself in control of his material and his medium, not a Paul enslaved to the order or logic of his communiqués from Corinth.' Mitchell's case is persuasive: Paul surely did control the arrangement of his material. What may be at stake here is whether Paul's rhetoric is intended to function interactively or just directively. Is Paul interested in responding to the concerns of the Corinthians, or is he merely steaming through with his recommendations irrespective of their sensitivities? Paul does not have to be 'enslaved' to be mindful of Corinthians' concerns, especially if he believes responses he supplies can function to allay certain fears or untangle some genuine confusion.

[518] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 184.

[519] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 185.

[520] Cf. the exegetical Part II (pages 69-81, below).

[521] Mitchell's structure, *Rhetoric*, 185, here reads:
i)   12.1-31a First Treatment. The Body of Christ: Corinthian Unity in Diversity
ii)   12.31b-14.1a Exemplary Argument: The Gift of Love as the Antidote to Factionalism

that norm would produce a community united in its response to the equipping work of the one God. It could be argued that Paul's concern was the entire program of community formation which he saw as integrated with his apostolic commissioning rather than merely concern for community coherence.

Mitchell looks beyond the content of the letter, and beyond a reconstruction of hypotheses about which parts of the letter are responses to what kind of contingent event, to the rhetorical strategy being adopted by the writer of the letter. She seeks to answer the questions, 'What response was Paul seeking to elicit through his letter? What is his plan to encourage unity?'[522] Although Mitchell's answers to these questions come down to Paul's using a deliberative rhetorical argument against factionalism and in favour of concord, she does allow for a theological motivation behind this.[523] The response Paul was seeking to elicit through his letter is a vital consideration at the outset of the exegetical section of the present thesis.

4.4 Conclusions from Chapter Four

Shaw highlighted the need for the *ratio* underlying authority to be available to those under authority in order to keep the relationship from becoming toxic. Shaw was concerned that language should not be used in a way that conceals power. Rhetoric arguably involves some subterfuge in use of power, and Paul's language is certainly peppered with rhetorical techniques.

Mitchell has demonstrated that Paul used a literary technique of his day (deliberative rhetoric) appropriate to the situation involving disunity and factionalism in the Corinthian church. This factionalism within the church does not preclude there also developing at the time a divide between the apostle and many within the church. The existence and subject matter of 2 Corinthians would fit the theory that this was indeed the case.[524]

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iii)   14.1b-40 Second Treatment. Unity in Diversity of Language.
[522] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 297. The questions are my own formulations.
[523] In Paul's 'rhetoric of response he presents their factionalism as a deficiency and shortcoming from their theological calling to Christian unity and concord,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 303.
[524] Cf. the argument advanced by Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 6-15. Mitchell, while maintaining that Paul did not defend himself in 1 Corinthians, 'not even in 1 Cor 9', acknowledges, 'He may have needed to, but

Perhaps Paul's rhetorical practice can be distinguished from his theological belief. It is possible to regard the way in which he uses power through his rhetoric as open to a charge of inconsistency. On a cursory reading one might cite 2.1-5[525], the example in which Paul disclaims rhetorical argument. However this in itself forms part of a very carefully constructed rhetorical argument[526] designed with a keen eye for its persuasive power.[527] More convincing as a charge for inconsistency would be an appeal to 1.17, where Paul claims he was sent by Christ to preach 'not in "cleverness in speaking"'[528] (οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου). Here the nature of Paul's original commission could be presumed to be unchanged over time. However, as Welborn points out the σοφία regarded by Paul as dangerous is not necessarily simply rhetoric.[529] Welborn suggests Paul was wary of the misuse of language to promote discord.[530]

Having surveyed the secondary literature on power and authority with reference to 1 Corinthians, the preparation is complete for detailed exegetical investigation. The remainder of the study will hinge on exegesis from Paul's letter.

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he did not, either because he misdiagnosed the situation, was ill-informed, or because he chose to avoid the facts,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 302.

[525] A specific instance of such language is Paul's claim in 2.4 that his word and preaching was "not in persuasive words of wisdom" (οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς σοφίας λόγοις).

[526] Welborn, *Politics*, 28.

[527] This text is a weak weapon with which to attack Paul along the lines of inconsistency or hypocrisy. The weakness as a weapon lies comes from the dimension of time. 2.1 explicitly states Paul is recounting (at least in 2.1-5) the approach he used when he came to Corinth (ἦλθον, aorist). What he did in the past does not mean that he has now decided to adopt a different approach during his ensuing communication with the Corinthians.

[528] Lawrence Welborn, *Politics*, 29, quotes approvingly this rendition of σοφία λόγου in BAGD, 759.

[529] Welborn, *Politics*, 30.

[530] Welborn, *Politics*, 30-32, adducing Thucydides and other ancient Greek authors. "Like these authors, Paul warns and reflects; he wishes to curb the misuse of language in the Christian ἐκκλησία," ibid, 32.

PART II: EXEGESIS: 1 CORINTHIANS 12-14

The text within 1 Corinthians which has been chosen for particular scrutiny is chapters 12-14. The choice is directed by a number of factors. First, a clustering of terms may be observed in 12.1-3 which *prima facie* suggests an attempt by Paul to influence his readers in a particular direction. Second, Paul spends both chapters 12 and 14 on the subject of the use of spirit manifestations in the context of gatherings. Spiritual gifts, their operation and regulation, therefore constitute a key theme within the book as a whole. Traces of Paul's use of authority and power might therefore be expected in this part of the letter. Third, since spiritual gifts are tightly intertwined with issues of "who does what?" it would be logical to look here for dynamics both of the extant operation of power and authority, and of Paul's correctives to such operations.

In chapter 11 Paul has been commenting on matters arising out of their assemblies in Corinth, particularly head coverings and the communal supper. In chapter 15 Paul will return to the foundations of the tradition supporting the gospel, focussing on questions surrounding Christ's resurrection and its implications. The theme for the whole letter seems to be set in 1.10 where Paul urges there be no internal divisions (σχίσματα) but rather unity of decision and purpose (voΐ and γνώμη). He is apparently writing into a *Sitz im Leben* involving a polarization within the Christian community in Corinth. Theissen has argued that this polarization involved, among other factors, social status.[531] Such "social stratification" is probably most visible to us in the discussion about the Lord's supper (11.17-34).[532]

It would seem that some, probably of high social status, regarded themselves as an elite who did not require any interaction (cf. 12.21) with certain others, probably of low social status, in the congregation. In these chapters it seems to be Paul's concern to promote the removal of these divisive notions of independence from within the congregation.

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[531] Theissen writes of "the internal stratification... ...in the social structure," Theissen, *Setting*, 70.

[532] See Theissen's essay, 'Social Integration and Sacramental Activity: An Analysis of 1 Cor. 11.17-34' in *Setting*, 145-174.

Paul's motive for this concern is not necessarily self-evident. Does Paul believe that the quality of life for both groups would be improved by mutual recognition? Does Paul see a travesty of the intended operation of God's rule within this community, and is he concerned that God is thus being deprived of glory of which God is due? Does Paul have concern for potential diminution of his own sphere of influence and fear that if the community loses its coherence, he will lose his own sway over them, thus eroding the magnitude of his apostolic authority? In order to have any chance of uncovering Paul's motivation at this point, it will be necessary to give close examination both to the theory of how, according to Paul, power should be used in the church, and to the practice of what Paul does in power language, strategies and techniques as seen in the formulation of our text.

In other words, a determination will be made about whether there is any distinction between what Paul did and what Paul claimed to be doing, or perhaps what he intended to do. What kinds of tactics did Paul employ? Did he cajole? bully? manipulate? shame? parody? If so, how did he cause these manifestations of power to be conveyed? Rhetorical persuasion? Deliberative rhetoric? Ethical implications may also be examined. Did the end (change of Corinthian attitude and conduct) justify any and all means? Was Paul seeking change at all costs? What limits did Paul place on himself when deciding how he would mediate change? It is known from the letter that Paul regards his own freedom (ἐλευθερία) as important (cf. 9.1). Did his esteem of freedom extend to apply to the freedom of the Corinthian congregation as well, or did he regard such ἐξουσία (9.4f) as reserved for an apostle and not for other Christians?[533]

Commonly in Pauline studies it is noted that Paul's theology is occasional, that he will take a theological premise and then mould it to fit the need of the situation.[534] Some have concluded because of this that Paul's theology was

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[533] Shaw, *Cost*, 90, has argued 'throughout the letter Paul endeavours to discipline the freedom he has proclaimed, and in so doing to reassert his continuing control.'
[534] E.g. J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: Paul's Legacy in the New Testament and in the Church Today*; idem, "Recasting Pauline Theology: The Coherence-Contingency Scheme as Interpretative Model," in J.M.Bassler (ed.) *Pauline Theology*, I, 15-24.

inherently incoherent.[535] Another way of looking at the same material raises another question. What needs to be looked at for my study is to what degree is power and authority coherent in what Paul says and the way he says it.

Mitchell's thesis[536] depends on Paul's adoption of a consistent and coherent rhetorical strategy throughout the letter as defined by contemporary conventions of deliberative rhetoric. Alert to the questions just outlined, it would be instructive to examine a significant unit within the letter. From this unit the implications for Paul's use of power may be extracted. In so doing any disjunction between statements which elaborate Paul's views of the place of power and his use of power expressed in rhetorical manoeuvres or devices may be uncovered. For example, instances of what amounts to what is now called legitimation may be encountered.

My objective is to apply my own method, as just outlined, to the text. The aim will be to help us understand what Paul was doing, and how he set about doing it. This should lay bare something of Paul's use, in practice, of power and authority, as distinct from his own claims regarding power and authority. Indications will also be sought of whether Paul is aware what he is doing. In other words, if he is using rhetorical techniques which effect authority-mediated or power-mediated responses, is he aware of the "power" of such techniques. Thereafter, reflections on my model will be offered and an assessment made of whether that same model would be likely to produce helpful results if applied to other texts.

Initially, the approach just outlined will be applied to chapters 12-14. Each of these chapters provides a distinct unit within the whole. Chapters 12, 13 and 14 will therefore be considered in turn.

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[535] For example, "Paul is... ...first and foremost a missionary, a man of practical religion who develops a line of thought to make a practical point, to influence the conduct of his readers; in the next moment he is quite capable of putting forward as statement which logically contradicts the previous one when trying to make a different point," H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, 267.
[536] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 1.

Chapter Five: Power Relations in 1 Corinthians 12

In this chapter, Paul proceeds on the basis that the recipients of his letter hold his opinions in some regard. If, for the sake of argument, this text had been written not in its historical place in the continuing interaction between Paul and the early Christian congregation at Corinth[537] but in isolation as Paul's only contact with that church, Paul's approach may be open to being read as "pretentious". As it is, Paul is instead engaging in communication in accordance with some mutually recognised rules of behaviour.[538] That Paul assumes that the Corinthians were interested enough in what he had to say, in itself speaks, according to sociological criteria, of the presence, *prima facie*, of some kind of authority relation between Paul and the church.[539] This assumption is demonstrated by examples at various places in the letter (5.11; 6.18; 16.1f).

Chapter 12 allows division into four main sections: 1) 12.1-3; 2) 12.4-11; 3) 12.12-26; and 4) 12.27-31. Section 3 may be further subdivided into three: a) 12.12-14; b) 12.15-20; and c) 12.21-26.

5.1   1 Corinthians 12.1-3

5.1.1   Rhetorical Analysis

In 12.1-3, there is a convergence of terms of persuasion unlike anywhere else in the letter. Such a concentrated cluster of such formulae in his address raises the possibility that this section might shed light on how Paul seeks to persuade those he addresses. In this way a clearer definition of the relationship of authority recognized between Paul and his readers may be provided.

In particular the occurrence in 12.1-3 of several conventional forms of address may be noted. These are περὶ δέ, θέλω ὑμᾶς, οὐ... ...ἀγνοεῖν, οἴδατε ὅτι, and γνωρίζω ὑμῖν. 12.1 begins with περὶ δέ, a construction widely interpreted as

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[537] On the point that 1 Corinthians was actually one in a series of such communications along these lines cf. Hurd, *The Origin of 1 Corinthians*.

[538] Here it should be made clear that this evaluation is made phenomenologically. What Paul is doing may be demonstrated to comply with, for instance, conventional contemporary rhetorical practice.

[539] Cf. above, page 37.

referring to the separation of certain items in the letter from Corinth to Paul[540]. The phrase is used six times in 1 Corinthians. It is not found until the turning to address "that which you wrote", at 7.1. After this, the phrase occurs again at 7.25; 8.1; 12.1, 16.1; and 16.12. Whatever the reason for using this phrase (whether the agenda was lifted from the letter received from the Corinthians or reflects his own agenda) Paul uses this formula in a way that introduces the reader to a new subject. As he does so, there can be no doubt that Paul expects his readers to have interest in what he had to say about each new topic. The subjects with which Paul deals may be safely assumed to have been of pressing importance to at least some of the Christians at Corinth.

Also in 12.1, is found the form θέλω ὑμᾶς. When considered in isolation, the phrase itself suggests the presence of some kind of authority. There is a wish on the part of party A that party B would be in a given state. In this text it is combined with ἀγνοεῖν, as also in 10.1.[541] However the phrase may be further observed in conjunction with other forms both in positive and (as here) in negative constructions. The phrase occurs in 7.32; 10.20; 11.3; 14.5 and 16.7. In all these cases (except 16.7 where the force is that Paul holds a preferential alternative to a fleeting visit to Corinth), Paul seems to be seeking to persuade his readers to adopt voluntarily the perspectives which he is advocating. Specifically, he wants them to be free from anxiety (7.32),[542] not to share with demons (10.20), and all to speak in tongues (14.5). It may be noted that the use in 11.3 with εἰδέναι functions in a manner closely corresponding with the meaning in 12.1 and 10.1. Paul uses the construction

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[540] So e.g. Fee, *First Corinthians*, 267; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 204; Robertson/Plummer, *1 Corinthians*, 259; Hays, *First Corinthians*, 110. Witherington, *Conflict*, 253 suggests the Corinthian report of this subject may have arrived orally. Mitchell, 'ΠΕΡΙ ΔΕ' dissents from this consensus, see above p. 66.

[541] In this case the authority relation is seen because party A is presuming to wish that party B were not in a state of ignorance.

[542] It may not be immediately obvious that Paul is encouraging freedom of choice in his readers. However, his argument centres around the premise that marriage for a believer extends areas of concern from just 'the things of the Lord' (τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, 7.32) to those of attending to a spouse (7.33f). As such, remaining unattached can be better (κρεῖσσον, 7.38) since it is likely to involve less anxiety-producing stress. However, Paul stresses that in his recommendation to celibacy (in the case of the unattached individual who is contemplating marriage) it is the benefit of that individual he has in view (7.35a). He encourages each to do what he has decided: both in the case of someone who decides to marry (ὃ θέλει ποιείτω, 7.36) and someone who decides not to do so (7.37). In this latter case he specifies that the individual has authority concerning his own will (ἐξουσίαν δὲ ἔχει περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου θελήματος).

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"I want you to know" in 11.2 instead of the 'negated' negative,[543] "I do not wish you to be ignorant", observed in 12.1 (and 10.1). The use of the phrase in 12.1 therefore corresponds to the use in 11.2 and pursues the same rhetorical function.

Fee is right that 'almost certainly' the force of the phrase οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν does 'not intend to give new information, but an additional slant, or a corrective, to their understanding.'[544] Paul is raising with the Corinthians issues which he expects they will recognise from the content of his teaching when with them (and perhaps also subsequently). Spiritual gifts in themselves were not an aberration that began after Paul's departure from the church. They would have been present during Paul's apostolic ministry in Corinth. Correction involves a recognition of continuity with the present state, and Paul could agree with the Corinthians that the things of the Spirit were important and necessary. Without this shared assumption correction would need to be entirely replaced with confrontation. Open attack is not Paul's tactic at this early stage of his argument.

Here, therefore, the language of persuasion, of seeking to change something in others, has been encountered. The question which needs to be asked at this point is how such language is to be evaluated. What might generally be categorised as "persuasion" takes many forms, such as torture, coercion, fostering shame, manipulation, coaxing, recommendation, outlining options, or suggestion. Such means of persuasion may be regarded as having a common end: change on the part of the recipient. Nevertheless, within this spectrum, it does not necessarily follow that Pauline ethics will allow indiscriminate use of all these means. Specifically, Paul shows a reluctance to resort to some such means, while exhibiting a readiness to adopt others. Where Paul draws the line in these matters will be of crucial importance in our effort to ascertain his own view of the meaning of his authority.

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[543] I employ this awkward terminology to avoid suggesting that a double negative in Greek causes the overall meaning of a construction to be restored to the state in which the verb would be without negatives. Of course, far from cancelling the negation, doubling a negative in Greek actually *intensifies* it (cf. e.g. Jay, *NT Greek: An Introductory Grammar*, 240).

[544] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 576.

In 12.2, Paul starts his sentence with οἴδατε. This verbal form is also used in 3.16; 5.6; 6.2f; 6.9; 6.15f; 6.19; 9.13; 9.24; and 16.15. In all these, the verb is supplemented with ὅτι, and, except in 16.15 and 12.2, used in the negative as an interrogative: "Do you not know that...?" The frequency of this formula points to the likelihood of its use as a rhetorical device. The information that Paul assumes his readers need to know (or already know[545]) in this way ranges widely: of their status as God's temple and dwelling place of God's spirit (3.16; 6.19); yeast spreads through dough (5.6); saints will judge the world, even angels (6.2f); the wicked will not inherit the kingdom (6.9); Christians' bodies are members of Christ but engaging the services of prostitution renders them one with the prostitute (6.15f); the temple provides for the priests (9.13); only one runner wins a race (9.24); the faithful service of the household of Stephanas (16.15). So it may be deduced that Paul in 12.2 is employing one of his standard rhetorical phrases in order to ensure the Corinthians' attention is stimulated.

Οἴδατε is not quite as transparent as θέλω ὑμᾶς, but both serve much the same function. There could perhaps be a hint of shame in "You know...,"[546] suggesting a corollary, "Well, if you don't know, then you ought to." The phrase might thus disguise an implicit rebuke. Whatever the case, again evidence exists of the language of persuasion. The phrase serves to highlight the existence of a common platform between Paul and the Corinthians. This *terra firma* he trusts will support the further elements in the argument which he is about introduce.

Against this background, the use of γνωρίζω ὑμῖν in 12.3, connected by the conjunction διό, is suggestive. This is particularly so when combined with the realisation that Paul returns to the phrase in 15.1, where it functions as a subject marker in the transition from order in public worship to the content of the gospel, specifically resurrection. Moreover, his other use of the phrase, in Gal 1.11, comes

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[545] It is quite feasible that Paul is here wanting to bring back the minds of the Corinthians to subjects on which he has already taught them. By phrasing his rhetoric "Do you know..." rather than something akin to "If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times...", Paul could be attempting to spare the blushes of his readers. That Paul expects some common understanding between himself and his readers over these matters is demonstrated by the construction οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν in 12.1 as discussed above.

[546] Such a hint is admittedly more evident in the negative constructions as e.g. 6.2f.

when he claims a divine rather than a merely human origin for his gospel.[547] Here is Pauline theology using bold lettering. Paul wants the reader to know and *to be in no doubt* concerning the matter in hand. In other words, here is subject matter that forms a lynch-pin for Paul's theological agenda. The centre of Paul's preaching of Christ is found in his gospel. So it should be no surprise to find that he returns to this formula at key moments of building on the foundation of that gospel. Consequently, it may be understood that here, in 12.3, Paul is emphasising that a great deal would be at stake were one to allow that the Spirit of God could inspire someone to curse Jesus, or that acknowledgement of lordship can come other than by the working of the holy Spirit.[548]

Paul's desire for recognition of this assertion by his readers is strong and definite. We cannot go along with speculation[549] that Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς had been offered as an utterance in the context of a church gathering in Corinth and that some at least had interpreted this as a saying inspired by God. If things were to degenerate that far, Corinthian christological reflection would necessarily prove problematic to say the least![550] Precisely where the wrong conclusion would open the door to strategic and unbridled confusion, Paul does not hesitate to reach for more potent words in his semantic stock. In choosing γνωρίζω ὑμῖν, in addition to merely for example, οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, Paul is opting for more emphatic and forceful language.[551]

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[547] The verb also occurs in the negative in Phil 1.22, but here the object is self-referential. The question in the middle of Phil 1 is what to choose between continued life with persecution or early death to join Christ. Paul cannot possibly produce a definitive ruling on such a question, and so emphatically delivers this open verdict.

[548] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 204, notes the use of 'chiastically modified parallelism' constituting 'a powerful touch of style.'

[549] *Contra* Dunn, *Jesus*, 234. The utterance ('one of Paul's most emphatic and didactic utterances,' ibid, n.176) was probably formulated by Paul to signify the strongest possible opposite to the traditional confession of 'Jesus is Lord.'

[550] Shaw, *Cost*, 90 sees this as 'not primarily a piece of evidence for the development of Christology,' but as a buttress for Paul's apostolic authority. Since the Spirit's work recognises Jesus' authority, Shaw argues, recognition of Jesus' apostle must follow. This seems to be resorting to eisegesis. Such a connection between the Lordship of Christ and lordship of Paul is entirely absent from this text.

[551] This fits with one's own life experience, for example at school, where a drastic mistake elicits more emphatic correction than does a minor, largely inconsequential, oversight. A linkage of this kind, where the strongest measures are taken in the case of the most threatening dangers would be recognised by many as the proper occasion and function for the exercise of power. It is precisely where divergence from a prescribed path would cause harm to the wanderer that discipline needs to be at its most rigid. A child roaming near a cliff-top needs urgent, perhaps physical, restraint. A

What else within these verses may hold indications of the exercise of power in Paul's rhetoric? In 12.1 Paul uses the form of address "brothers" (ἀδελφοί). This is doubtless a deliberate choice at various points in the letter.[552] Up to this point, he has already used this form of address 11 times: in 1.10 and 11, 1.26, 2.1, 3.1, 4.6, 7.24, 7.29, 10.1 and 11.33. Our present instance in 12.1 is one of five uses in the three chapters presently under consideration, 12-14 (viz. 12.1, 14.6, 14.20, 14.26 and 14.39), and Paul uses the address another four times in the final two chapters, 15 and 16 (viz. 15.1, 15.50, 15.58, 16.15). Thus Paul addresses the Corinthians in this way a total of 21 times in this letter. This compares with 11 times in Romans[553], nine times in Galatians[554], six in Philippians[555], three in 2 Corinthians[556], but 13 times in 1 Thessalonians.[557] Thus, along with 1 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians has the most frequent use of the address of the Pauline corpus. The approach using "brothers" may be interpreted as a play for a sense of equality. Paul himself becomes a "brother" more than "father"[558] or "master". The choice of word would no doubt be calculated to lessen barriers between Paul and his audience rather than raise them. At the outset of this lengthy argument Paul wants the Corinthians to be as receptive as possible to his message.[559]

The use of "dumb idols" (τὰ εἴδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα, 12.2) would surely function to be dismissive of the former belief system of these Gentile Christians. It may be surmised that Paul would be comfortable for the Corinthians to adopt such a dismissive attitude also, carrying them along with his own presuppositions so that

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psychotic mass-murderer with a gun requires forceful (and, arguably, potentially lethal) action to be used to disarm him.

[552] Although issues of familial relations have been the object of recent study (e.g. S.C. Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew*), it is not my purpose here to add to those discussions, just to note the use of "father" in the context of Paul's rhetorical vocabulary.

[553] Romans 1.13, 7.1, 7.4, 8.12, 10.1, 11.25, 12.1, 15.14, 15.15, 15.30 and 16.17.

[554] Galatians 1.11, 3.15, 4.12, 4.28, 4.31, 5.11, 5.13, 6.1 and 6.18.

[555] Philippians 1.12, 3.1, 3.13, 3.17, 4.1 and 4.8.

[556] 2 Corinthians 1.8, 8.1 and 13.11.

[557] 1 Thessalonians 1.4, 2.1, 2.9, 2.14, 2.17, 3.7, 4.1, 4.13, 5.1, 5.4, 5.12, 5.14 and 5.25.

[558] Paul does of course adopt this imagery in 4.14-15 when introducing an exhortation to imitate him. The fact that the parental role is found only in these few verses and is absent from the remainder of the letter strongly suggests that in general Paul thought "brother" was a more effective approach to adopt towards the Corinthians than "father".

[559] Shaw, *Cost*, 94, rightly characterises Paul's tactics here as winning 'the consent and sympathy of his readers.'

they become theirs also. No person would want to admit they were interested in following instructions from one unable to communicate effectively. By contrast, Paul's communication is forceful and immediate. To be led by his persuasive arguments would surely be a better course.

5.1.2. Theological Analysis

The theological content of these verses is probably best uncovered by examining the theme of utterance, specifically utterance originating in Spirit. In 12.1, Paul introduces the subject of πνευματικα.[560] The choice of this word over χαρισμάτα (cf.12.4) imparts emphasis to the central role served by the Spirit in the corporate Christian expression at Corinth. It is the Spirit under whose influence they have now come. Previously, they were "led about even to idols." The contrast is made between the way they are to live now with the way they lived before coming to Christ.[561] From the outset of these three chapters then, Paul locates the issue at hand as one of proper relationship with the Spirit.

For Paul, an easily verified symptom of this relationship is that of utterance. What is it that the Corinthians are saying? What kind of verbal expression do they typically give themselves to? Do they speak ill of others? Do they pour scorn on those within their own congregation? Paul is implicitly asking them to listen to themselves and evaluate the fruit of their lips.[562] How bad does behaviour need to get for them to realize what they are doing? Would they have to curse Jesus before realizing that they were steering along an unnatural path?

The contrastative force of 12.3 from 12.2 probably serves to emphasize the difference between Christian faith and idolatry.[563] The concern of 12.3, then, is to demonstrate (employing *reductio ad absurdum*) that at some point those who follow the Spirit should display by their actions some evidence of a link between that Spirit

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[560] Taken as neuter, not masculine, after Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 204.
[561] Cf. Fee, *First Corinthians*, 574, 'The structure of the argument verifies this. He begins by telling them "I do not want you to be ignorant," which is followed by a reminder of something about which they are not ignorant, namely what it was like to be pagans... . In light of that experience, therefore, he now makes known to them the proper criterion for what is genuinely the work of the Spirit of God.'
[562] To use the NT language of Heb 13.15.

and themselves. If they act in ways no different to their former life as pagans, then Paul is compelled to point out to them that there seems to be a problem in need of attention.[564] Earlier in the letter, Paul has contrasted the spirit of the world and the Spirit from God (2.12). It is the Spirit from God whom "we received" for the purpose of "knowing the things freely given by God" (ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν). Of course, from chapter 12, "the things given freely by God" is a an apt description of χαρίσματα. Thus the Spirit is the one who, among other things, imparts perception of spiritual gifts.[565]

Mitchell sees 12.3 as making the claim that each Christian is "a spiritual person" because each Christian can make the acclamation of Jesus as Lord through the Spirit.[566] She also suggests (citing Meeks) Paul is arguing "for Christian unity in separation from outsiders."[567] Mitchell is right to see this as an appeal for unity. However, she seems to have misapprehended the argument put forward by Meeks, that unity among worshippers was a visible witness to monotheistic belief. Such unity was "the desired social expression of faith in the one God."[568] Mitchell's view is that Paul was concerned to address "the underlying political nature and consequences"[569] of Corinthian divisiveness. As seen above,[570] Mitchell sees 1 Corinthians as composed according to Paul's agenda (promoting political unity), independent of the particular concerns of the Corinthians.[571] It may be that Paul's desire to correct a political problem of disunity was motivated by a desire to maintain

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[563] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 577, n. 35. Cf. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 205, n. 11, 'a variation of the schema once – but now.'

[564] Compare Paul's dilemma expressed in 3.1, of not being able to address the Corinthians as πνευματικοῖς but as σαρκίνοις.

[565] Another link is thus forged between charisma and Spirit (*contra* Turner cf. note 17, above). Cf. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 207.

[566] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 267f.

[567] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 268, n.453.

[568] Meeks, *Urban*, 166. The exclusivity in worship that Meeks argues existed is that of excluding any hint of worship of any others except the one true God, in contrast to "the many lords and gods of paganism," ibid.

[569] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 266.

[570] Note 517, page 66.

[571] Mitchell is, however, careful not to overstate her claims. She emphasises Paul is not bound in his letter by the *sequence* of issues raised by the Corinthians in their previous correspondence with Paul. She is careful not to claim that Paul was not interested in addressing the issues which had been raised, only that he is not shackled into a particular set of numbered items on an agenda. The sequence of the agenda is controlled by Paul, not by previous correspondence. However, Mitchell's approach does leave the door open to an interpretation that Paul's political motivation is independent of particular concerns which cause anxiety among the Corinthians themselves.

appearances. He might consider divisions among the Corinthian Christians may reflect negatively on Paul to outsiders. On the other hand, the appeal to unity can easily be understood according to the theologically-driven need to argue for a single status imparted to each believer by the Spirit. Paul would no doubt agree that monotheistic Christians should worship in unity. However, it need not be for external political opinion that Paul is concerned that the Corinthian situation should change. The motivation could be the welfare of the Corinthian Christians, that they should indeed be established for the end (βεβαιώσει ὑμᾶς ἕως τέλους, 1.7) and be found blameless at eschatological judgment. The motivation could arise from concern for them. This consideration might even be stronger than Paul's personal desire to look good. Here Paul is using the rhetorical prescription for fostering unity, but he may be doing so eclectically, taking up *topoi* and techniques which happen to coincide with the agenda dictated by his theological instincts.

Paul may be seen in our present context as offering help. There is no sign in these verses of Paul of his imposing, or threatening to impose, some form of sanction in the event that the Corinthians choose not to adopt the perspectives which Paul is advancing. From the first three verses it might be taken that the response Paul is hoping to elicit in the Corinthians is something like, 'That is helpful, you have clarified something which had become a bit blurred.' Here, then Paul may be seen to be adopting a gentle approach[572] to this subject which he feels warrants a significant portion of the letter.

5.2.   1 Corinthians 12.4-11

5.2.1. Rhetorical Analysis

In 12.4, and again in 12.5 and 6, Paul uses the bald indicative third person plural of the verb to be. He is asserting as fact, "This is the way things are," his implicit message. Such a formulation is advisable only where some confidence exists that the recipients of the correspondence would read such assertion without registering dissent. If these observations were a matter of controversy, it would be a foolhardy strategy to seek to persuade by employing simply εἰσιν. It may reasonably

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[572] As contrasted with possible implications of the choice given them by Paul in 4.21.

be deduced, therefore, that Paul expected the Corinthians to accept as self-evident that within the congregation diversity exists in spiritual gifts, ministries and workings.[573]

Although this diversity was self-evident, it was not necessarily something which the Corinthian readers had consciously registered. Once Paul states it, they acknowledge the veracity of the observation, although Paul's concern in this paragraph is not the observation in isolation, but the significance he draws from it. It is the co-existence of differences in the context of a single whole that Paul highlights. Paul is saying there are differences in gifting, but a single purpose. There are manifold ministries, but a single source. There are diverse ways of working but only one who initiates the working. The sameness or unity of the source in each diverse case - the same spirit, the same lord, the same God - does not nullify the differentiation of workings. For it is God who works all of these in all cases (12.6).[574] Paul is exposing the absurdity of division. If God is the origin of all the various giftings, divisions arising from the diversity indicate that the origin of the giftings, God, is being overlooked. If God (rather than the Corinthians) is the source of the gifts, then it is God's agenda which needs to be heeded rather than their own. The gifts are to be used for the function designed by God: the common good (τὸ συμφέρον, 12.7).

Here then lies potential tension between the narrow interests of the Corinthians and the wider agenda of enhancing the common good. The former Paul associates with his correspondents, the latter with the will of God. In constructing his argument in this way, Paul enables his readers to perceive the will of God as better *for them* than their own will up to this point. Paul is introducing the possibility that there is a way for all to benefit, while each plays his part. If each takes what is given and allows that gift to serve to show the working of the Spirit (ἡ φανέρωσις

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[573] From the preceding discussion, it seems clear that in 12.1-3 Paul has already built some common ground in introducing the subject of spiritual gifts. This would have the effect of making later stronger statements less likely to be rejected out of hand.

[574] The phrase "all in all" (τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν) occurs here and again in 15.28, where it is again God who fills the role when the end comes. There are only two further occurrences of the phrase in the NT. In Eph 1.23, Christ is characterised as filling all in all, and in Col 3.11, Christ again is the all in all for members of the new (eschatological) humanity.

τοῦ πνεύματος), the result will be good things shared by all. At the same time, the work of the Spirit can be understood to be good for all.[575] In this way the potential tension mentioned may be resolved in a harmonious co-operation.[576]

In 12.7-10, Paul chooses to adopt the passive voice. To each "is given" (explicit, δίδοται, 12.7), "is given" (δίδοται, 12.8), "is given" (implied 12.9 & 10). These third person presents are introduced as *fait accompli*. Paul could hope for his argument to be sustained among his hearers if they could assent to this assumption. Their experience of assembling to worship would have had to include the scattering of diverse giftings among various congregational members. They could recall a single occasion of meeting during which, for example, person F began to prophesy, person G spoke in a tongue and person H was able to bring about a healing. The Corinthians would not necessarily, however, have been thinking of these events in terms of the verb that Paul chooses (to give, διδόναι). This is probably the main corrective that Paul is bringing in this passage. The ability to perform pneumatic acts is not inherent within the individual, it is received from the Spirit and then may be acted on. The passive is a divine passive. God would be the subject of 'gives' were it indicative.

In 12.8, Paul begins a list with a μὲν... ...δὲ construction modified to ...ἄλλῳ δὲ. Perhaps in order to emphasise that diversity is found from each person to the next, he inserts an ἑτέρῳ in 12.9 as a variation. Here (12.8-10) Paul catalogues nine gifts, focussing on the gift (and the giver) rather than the recipient. His rhetorical strategy seems to be to de-emphasise the specific individuals who receive the gift, so that the Corinthians may be able to see it is not the individual who is primarily designed to benefit from the distributed giftings, but the church as a whole. Where some Corinthians' agenda may have centred around themselves, Paul emphasizes that God's agenda is to benefit the whole Christian community through a multiplicity of gifts.

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[575] This is perhaps Paul's wider agenda. Throughout his travels he is promoting not primarily human potentiality but the good news of God in Christ, mediated by the witness fostered by the Spirit.

[576] These competing themes of conflict and community so permeate the situations addressed in the Corinthian correspondence that they have been chosen as the title for Witherington's commentary, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*.

The very selection and indeed sequence of gifts-in-grace[577] may convey something. The list Paul gives reads: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing gifts, prophecy, differentiation between spirits, kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues. Much has been written concerning the possible significance of this list.

The exercise of power is implied within the items in the list. To see that this is so, one may look at healing gifts (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, 12.9). The impartation of healing to a suffering human being clearly involves a use of power. A person in the grip of disease has already battled unsuccessfully against it. The (largely inadequate) remedies of the time will have been tried, but the condition persisted despite this. The stricken individual, or perhaps family members involved in the Corinthian congregation will have made known something of the suffering involved. At this point some gifting was apparent by which a cure, or at least recognisable improvement of symptoms, would be imparted. If other NT evidence is to be enlisted at this point, this impartation probably involved a laying of hands on the afflicted individual.[578] Whatever the form or logistical mechanics of this event, the advent of healing would attract attention. The former sufferer would know that a force greater than that causing the disease had been at work. Attribution of the origin of this force could easily be made to the individual or group of individuals whose hands were laid on. Paul points away from this gifted individual to the giver, whom he sees as imparting the gift by the Spirit of God. To whomever the recipient of healing power attributes its source – human agent or divine benefactor – healing power has been discerned as present. Such power may have been interpreted in a society permeated by patronal relations[579] as a favour for which indebtedness is accrued. This might be manifested along such lines as, "God healed me so I need to pay him back for it," or, "Stephanas healed me so I should obey his future requests without question." Through this sort of conclusion, attention might come to be focussed on the charismatic "healer". This raises a concomitant possibility that those

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[577] After R. Martin, 'Gifts, Spiritual', *ABD*, II:1016.
[578] This practice seems rooted in the Jesus tradition, c.f Mk 6.5, Lk 4.40 and is also attributed to Paul's ministry (Acts 28.8).
[579] Cf. the review of Chow in section 3.7, above.

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graced with the exercise of this gift might store the considerable significance of such events within their own self-view. Clearly potential exists for an inflated self-understanding and the development of delusions of grandeur. This grandiosity may be shared by others, who could come to consider the one operating with gifts of healing as of greater worth than other believers.[580]

Once it is realised that a similar series of events could happen with respect to, for example, prophecy (12.10), then the potential for emergence of a gift-specific factionalism becomes clearer. It is perhaps less readily accessible to us to probe why those speaking in tongues would be regarded in a correspondingly inflated way. However, such does seem to have been the case. The standard explanation involves the close connection perceived between the "language of angels" (13.1) and the life of perfection. This is viewed by many scholars as some variation on an "over-realized" eschatology.[581] Dale Martin has raised the possibility that the practice of glossolalia would have been seen as 'a valued status indicator.'[582] Martin demonstrates the existence of a view that 'different beings use different languages' so that human communication with divinity might involve use of 'a higher language'. This participation in 'that language is to share the status that goes with it.'[583] Whatever the train of thought which led to the conclusion of superiority, the fact that its existence had come to the surface within the congregation is largely undisputed.

5.2.2. Theological Analysis

Here lies the central issue which Paul was confronting regarding the operation of power within the congregation as evidenced by 1 Corinthians. This issue is

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[580] Although not directly described in the text, the existence of this sort of attitude might be hinted at in 13.4f.

[581] E.g. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *NTS* 24 (1977/8), 510-526; Fee, *First Corinthians*, 12;

[582] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 88. Richard Hays adopts Martin's reading and suggests an identification of the Corinthian tongues-speakers with 'the same "strong," affluent persons who were claiming special knowledge that set them apart from the community in various other ways as well,' Hays, *First Corinthians*, 212.

[583] Martin, *Body*, 91. One intriguing text Martin cites is the *Testament of Job*, where Job's daughters are given no property but instead access to singing and speaking in heavenly examples. Such utterances are portrayed as "superior to humans," ibid, 89. However, Spittler, *OTP* 1:834, has suggested this part of the *Testament* is a later insertion under Montanist influence.

elitism.[584] In the present case, spiritual elitism is displayed. God's gifting was being regarded as commensurate with value and worth in the sight of God. Such hierarchical distinction left those who did not find themselves speaking in tongues disenfranchised on this basis from full participation in the life of the Christian community.

In 12.7 Paul presents what may be termed a teleology of spiritual gifts. These gifts are given, whichever examples of gifts one may care to enumerate, to contribute to the same end. For Paul this end is the common good (τὸ συμφέρον). Mitchell interprets this as an "appeal to advantage."[585] She notes 'the term's widespread use in deliberative rhetoric.'[586] While Paul initially uses the term (at 6.12) to appeal to individual self-interest, by 12.7 (and indeed before this in 10:23-11.1) Paul changes the meaning to encompass 'a new standard of "common advantage".'[587] Mitchell rightly recognises this redefinition as "at the heart of the entire argument" in the epistle as Paul demonstrates where the "true best interests" of the Corinthians lie.[588] However, contra Mitchell, the motivation for Paul is not necessarily unity for its own sake. Paul may be seen as having a strong theological incentive for the promotion of this unity.[589] The language of the common good constitutes an attack on Corinthian factionalism.[590] Specifically, Paul is confronting an elitism which measures "advantage" on either an individualistic or a partisan basis. Any subset of the entire congregation, whether one individual or a group of individuals, cannot provide a

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[584] That a form of elitism occurring in the Corinthian congregation concerns Paul is evident from the outset of the letter. Paul opens the substance of the letter with an exhortation against divisions (σχίσματα, 1.10). Theissen's analysis of 1.26ff demonstrates social elitism present in the Corinthian congregation. A remedy for elitism is given in 4.6. Division according to status is visible again in 11.22 in the attitude towards eating to excess while others have to go hungry in the meetings where the Lord's supper is celebrated. Paul prescribes waiting for one another to be ready to eat (11.33) and eating at home beforehand if feeling too hungry (11.34).

[585] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 33.

[586] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 34.

[587] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 35. 'The redefinition... ...is shown to be complete in 12:7 where the spiritual gifts are described,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 38. Cf. above p. 62.

[588] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 36.

[589] This is discussed below, page 117.

[590] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 145. Mitchell assumes that Paul's use of τὸ συμφέρον in 12.7 connects this 'appeal to the common advantage with the body metaphor for the political organism,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 146. In fact, as shall be seen, Paul does not introduce the σῶμα metaphor until 12.12. Paul's use of σῶμα emerges as an elaboration and clarification of the point he has already made with his redefinition of τὸ συμφέρον. Again Paul's language is not dictated by the conventions of deliberative rhetoric, rather he selects *topoi* from its vocabulary only when such selections conform to the shape of his developing theologically-driven argument.

reliable measure of what is best for the whole. Paul is not advocating evaluation according to the wishes of the most prominent group, nor even according to mere consensus:[591] Paul appeals for the needs of *all* to be considered. Such unity of purpose is radical and challenges the Corinthians to achieve the highest standard of mutual consideration.[592]

Fee has noted that the structure of the list (from a lexico-grammatical viewpoint) of gifts in 12.8-10 is generally in line with standard Hellenistic practice, but that slight deviations from such practice may be deliberate. In particular, before "faith" (πίστις, 12.9) and "tongues" (γλωσσῶν, 12.10), ἑτέρῳ is used instead of ἄλλῳ δὲ.[593] This variation allows the gifts to be grouped into three: wisdom and knowledge[594], five items involving "a supernatural endowment of some kind"[595], and the gift under particular scrutiny in this chapter (sorts of tongues) along with their interpretation. This reading is adopted by Hays, who sees an implication by Paul "that the gifts on which the Corinthians are fixated are by no means the only gifts operative in the church."[596] If so, Paul's choice, to list gifts that provide a readily observable manifestation of divine power, acquires significance. Paul does not discount these gifts. Paul regarded further actions as gifts of the Spirit, as in other lists in his writings.[597] Nevertheless, Paul shows determination not to allow certain giftings to afford unmerited status among those who valued some manifestations of the Spirit but ignored or despised others.

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[591] Certain modern church structures modelled on a democratic principle of majority rule would not have escaped Paul's censure were they operative within the Corinthian congregation at the time of Paul's writing.

[592] As in 8.11 and 4.10, one suspects that the main intended audience of Paul's rhetoric is the group who regard themselves as "the strong" (cf. τὰ ἰσχυρά, 1.27).

[593] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 584 n.9.

[594] These two 'held high court in Corinth,' Fee, *First Corinthians*, 591. This view is supported by the prominence of γνῶσις in 1 Corinthians 8 and of σοφία in 1.17-2.16.

[595] Ibid. The faith in the list 'refers not to ordinary Christian faith in God but to the sort of special faith that can... ...perform miracles,' Hays, *First Corinthians*, 212. Cf. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 209, 'apparently the ability to perform miracles.' Fee, *First Corinthians*, 593f, links this faith with the moving of mountains (13.2), as referring to 'the working of a miracle.'

[596] Hays, ibid.

[597] In Romans 12.7-8 Paul includes serving (διακονίαν), teaching (διδάσκων), encouraging (παρακαλῶν) and showing mercy (ἐλεῶν) among a list of gifts according to grace (χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν, Rom. 12.6).

Again the intent of Paul's writing conflicts with the practice and perspectives of certain of the Corinthian congregation. As 12.11 makes clear, the overall message of 12.4-11 is that *charismata* function as an expression of the one Spirit, and it is that Spirit who determines how these expressions are to be distributed throughout the congregation. Divisions among the congregation leading to dismissal of the contribution of others within the congregation are therefore not the work of the Spirit. These divisions constitute an aberration from the right functioning of *charismata*. The elitism which fosters such division is here opposed by Paul.

5.3. 1 Corinthians 12.12-26

5.3.1. 1 Corinthians 12.12-14

5.3.1.1. Rhetorical Analysis

Paul works to undermine these elitist attitudes in the "oneness" language of 12.11. The oneness theme is then picked up and elaborated in the "body" language of 12.12-26 and 26-31. That in turning to the body imagery at this point Paul has in mind the diversity of giftings is evidenced by the return to a list of utilisation of gifts in 12.28-30. The immediate application Paul makes to the inter-dependence of limbs in a body is the parallel inter-dependence of types of gift-mediated service within the church community. Inter-dependence is clearly implied[598] to be meant to operate within a context of a shared dependence on the provision of God. It is precisely by recognising the hand of God over and through the various gift-mediated acts that the fellowship of the believers with one another can be understood as a work of the Spirit. This point will be revisited later.[599]

12.12 comprises a fairly complex argument. It might translate:

For just as the body is one and has many parts, but all the parts of the body - being many - are one body, so also is Christ.

Analysing the argument, it may be seen that Paul first asserts that the body is a single unit rather than unconnected fragments. He goes on to accept that of course

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[598] So for example 12.6.
[599] See page 106.

the body is not all composed of only a single part. There are many parts in any body. Having conceded that there are a multiplicity of parts, however, that is not Paul's main point here. Paul re-emphasizes, starting from the parts, that they all form just one body.[600] By analogy (οὕτως καὶ, so also), Paul then applies the many parts/one whole phenomenon to Christ. Again, Paul is appealing to "the way things are". His use of the indicative third person of the verb 'to be'[601] twice in this verse alerts us again to the non-controversial nature of the statement. However the verbal form is used in this verse to discuss the phenomena of σῶμα without it having yet been applied to Christ. This shift in application at the end of 12.12 is immediately defended in 12.13.

12.13 begins with καὶ γὰρ, a construction found in 5.7, 8.5, 11.9, 11.19, 12.14,[602] and 14.8. In 5.7, Paul is justifying the analogy of the Corinthians as unleavened bread on the basis of Christ's death constituting a passover sacrifice. In 8.5, Paul has just asserted that an idol is nothing, and uses the phrase when he goes on to defend this position while conceding the point that there may be (εἴπερ) those called "gods". In 11.9, having asserted the sequence of male/female creation, Paul takes a stand on the *purpose* of the creation of woman, that it was for the male (διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα). In 11.19 (where the wording is reversed), Paul has just acknowledged the existence of σχίσματα in the Corinthian church and is now turning the presence of such αἱρέσεις into a stick with which to rebuke them ironically. At 14.8, Paul has been arguing for the importance of intelligibility, specifically intelligible sound. To illustrate the point he has been grasping for parallels from the intelligible playing of musical instruments. He then uses a clearly more persuasive example of a trumpet blown to prepare for war. Without clarity in the sound, the actions of the army in response could be catastrophic. It is in the shift to this altogether more persuasive example that he uses the phrase under examination.

This brief survey of the use of the καὶ γὰρ device in the letter shows that it is employed in instances where Paul is stepping up the level of persuasion, whether

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[600] He returns to recapitulate the same point in 12.20, thus making it possible to regard 12.12-20 as an *inclusio*.
[601] as in 12.4, 5, 6 as noted above.

because his previous argument needs bolstering (as in 14.8) or because he has just made an assertion which would undoubtedly arouse some demurring, (as in 5.7, 8.5, 11.9, 12.13) or because he is taking a report of Corinthian behaviour and using it to accuse them (11.19). Thus in moving from 12.12 to 12.13 Paul is exerting more rhetorical power on his readers.

12.13 makes some bold statements in contradiction to the kind of views apparently held within the Corinthian congregation. Paul holds that the inclusion in the one body by the one Spirit (linked with baptism) has broken down the effect of certain distinctions. These he lists as the Jew/Greek distinction and the slave/free distinction.[603] In largely gentile Corinth, his readers would probably be happy to agree with the first form of non-discrimination. They would be aware that Christ and his followers had come from the occupied territory of Palestine, where the first followers were exclusively Jewish. Paul, their apostolic founder was also a Jew. Therefore, as non-Jews they would be liable to be thought of as less than pristine. Paul's gospel, however, has promoted acceptance of all by grace received through faith. This work of grace comes without the need for non-Jewish converts to observe the works of the law. That Paul sees no distinction between Jews and Greeks would be seen as good news by the Greek Christians. However, to assert that the inclusion in the body is irrespective of slave/free status would surely be vigorously resisted by certain of the high social status members of the Corinthian congregation. Here is a highly contentious, even inflammatory claim.

It is with little surprise, then, that καὶ γὰρ is read at the outset of 12.14. Paul returns to the undisputed bedrock of his argument: the body is not one part but many. The oneness of that body is also confirmed experientially. The last clause of 12.13 points out that all were given to drink of one Spirit. Paul may suspect that arguments from experience are likely to prove influential for the Corinthians.

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[602] For this text, see page 89, below.

[603] As is regularly noted, a similar passage in Gal. 3.28 includes a third distinction abolished in Christ: male and female. D. B. Martin considers this distinction is held by Paul 'eschatologically and ideally', but that Paul's 'writings confirm the Greco-Roman gender hierarchy,' Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 199.

The flow of the argument from 12.12 to 12.14 is instructive. The main clause of 12.12 is the Καθάπερ... ...οὕτως καὶ construction. The parallel is made between an aspect of the body (its multiple membership) and Christ. Here Paul does not make a direct identification of "Christ" and "the body", but argues by analogy according to the particular characteristic (plurality of parts) of the body. Within the first part of the main clause, the main remaining elements form a chiastic structure.

	τὸ σῶμα ἕν ἐστιν	[A]
καὶ		
	μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει,	[B]
δὲ		
	πάντα τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος πολλὰ ὄντα	[B']
	ἕν ἐστιν σῶμα,	[A']

Here the characteristic ABB'A' form of a chiasmus may be discerned. The A element comprises "one body", while the B element is "many parts". The two halves of each of these cannot be interchanged without corrupting the meaning. In particular Paul does not refer to "many bodies". His argument for unity depends on the referent of "many" remaining "parts" and not becoming attached to "body". This scheme is carried over into the structure of 12.14.

καὶ γὰρ		
	τὸ σῶμα	[A]
	οὐκ ἔστιν	
	ἕν	[C]
	μέλος	[D]
ἀλλὰ		
	[μέλη] πολλά.	[B]

Paul puts "one" (marked element C) next to "part" (marked D) and they do not stay together, but the link is negated (οὐκ ἔστιν). "One part" cannot be given as a fitting description of "body". Thus C remains a derivative of A while D stays firmly connected with B.

Theological Analysis

The way Paul formulates his argument centres on the observation that one body is a whole but comprises a multiplicity of parts: as with a physical body, so with those included in the one body by drinking of the one Spirit, who become "parts". More than one individual is involved in making up the body "in one Spirit" (ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι, 12.13), and no one individual can provide a substitute for the one body. The way Paul has constructed the argument makes it clear that "parts" are subsumed under a greater category "body". By appealing to an order of organisation larger than any one individual, Paul has rhetorically removed the possibility of any individual having an authoritative controlling role over what happens in the congregation. For someone to defy Paul's argument would be to invite comparison with a body part that has grown into grotesque proportions: imagery to be invoked in 12.17 where one individual part has hypertrophied to all-encompassing dimensions.

As Dunn has emphasised, the familiar political body imagery is given a distinctive slant through the link Paul forges between body and Christ.[604] The small groups of believers in Corinth and elsewhere are transformed into 'equally manifestations of and in direct continuity with "the assembly of Yahweh".'[605] This ecclesiological reflection would support Paul's argument both by giving the down-trodden a sense of dignity (being able to form part of something with lasting significance) and by warning the haughty of the serious nature of the arena in which their elitist attitudes are being enacted.

5.3.2. 1 Corinthians 12.15-20

5.3.2.1. Rhetorical Analysis

Paul continues with an argument from experience. In 12.15f, he exposes an attitude which doubtless was being acted out in Corinth. This attitude is that of self-disqualification. He suggests a picture of a foot claiming not to be of the body

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[604] Dunn, *Theology*, 551f.
[605] Dunn, *Theology*, 538.

because it does not have a manual nature. Similarly he posits an ear excluding itself because its design is not ophthalmic. In neither case does such a claim or even belief change objective status within the body. In each case, says Paul, "Not for this is it not of the body," the negation of self does not demand nullification. The part still remains very much within the body.

Paul is appealing to those whose view of themselves within the context of the gathering is degradingly low. They would be able to enter into the picture of Paul's metaphor and smile at the ludicrous nature of such a self-dismissive attitude. This would give them the opportunity to rehabilitate their own "self-image" in order to begin to develop an appropriate level of confidence. Paul refutes their self-negation by pointing to their inclusion among those who were made to drink one Spirit (12.13). Paul is pointing these individuals to untapped resources of power. This coheres with his stated understanding of the purpose of his own authority to build up rather than tear down.[606]

In 12.17 Paul progresses from physique to function. The reason parts are needed, his argument implies, is that they *do* things to the benefit of the whole body. There are particular parts essential for hearing and smelling. Every individual in the congregation, even (in the Corinthian social context) a slave, contributes something which benefits the whole. That this is so Paul attributes in 12.18 to deliberate placement by God. God's wish, his will, is then shown to be wise. In 12.19 Paul considers the absurdity of things being otherwise. If there were only one part, how could this constitute a body? 12.20 provides the contrast, this is the way it is, this is the way it has to be: many parts, one body. Here is a kind of bookend to the section beginning with 12.12. Two paired terms were recognised there: an A σῶμα ἕν, and a B μέλη πολλά. This AB sequence is again repeated, but in reverse order to produce an elongated chiastic structure.

By displacing the μὲν...δὲ device in 12.20 to position these elements ahead of their referrents the careful sequence of the main wording may be seen more clearly:

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[606] Cf. above, page 22.

12.12

τὸ <u>σῶμα ἕν</u>   [A]
ἐστιν

καὶ

μέλη πολλὰ   [B]
ἔχει,

12.20

νῦν δὲ
μὲν

πολλὰ μέλη,   [B']

δὲ

<u>ἓν σῶμα</u>.   [A']

Again the chiasmus ABB'A' emerges. The presence of chiasmus is an index of entering into argument to persuade. At 12.12 the Corinthians would not read Paul's argument as a challenge. By 12.20, however, implications have been relentlessly stacked on the common premise, and as Paul revisits that premise (albeit in the opposite sequence) it has become laden with several potentially far-reaching corollaries. These corollaries would now have started to have a bearing on his readers. Elitist attitudes were entrenched prior to Paul's writing. As was demonstrated by Chow, social pressures in Greco-Roman Corinth would have only served to reinforce such attitudes. For this reason, Paul faced formidable resistance when challenging these attitudes. In meeting the objections of resistance, Paul has deployed a sophisticated weapon of persuasion. Not unlike the Trojan Horse, Paul has bypassed some of the defences of those complicit in elitist attitudes.

5.3.2.2.   Theological Analysis

The device in 12.15f of body parts speaking is described by Mitchell as "rhetorical use of personfication."[607] As with other details of Paul's language throughout 1 Corinthians, she appeals to ancient rhetorical parallels. This example is built into her wider thesis that the unity of 1 Corinthians comes from Paul's aim to promote unity using deliberative rhetoric. The existence of parallels neither restricts nor predetermines Paul's own strategy. Although Paul's present argument is for unity, I would contend that his concern is not primarily the promotion of unity *per se*,

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[607] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 159.

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but to confront the underlying elitism that is resulting in extant divisions. For Paul disunity is an observable symptom of the disease elitism. In this way, I continually find myself wanting to refine the conclusions drawn in Mitchell's elegant research.

It has been stated that 12.15f is addressed to those who feel themselves marginalised. If one ponders from a sociological perspective what sort of individuals are likely to fit the present category, slaves certainly should be considered. As seen in 12.13, Paul makes an inflammatory claim about the status of slaves among those who have been incorporated into the body. Indeed it may well be that not all those who experienced low social status were slaves, although at least some would have been. From the background to the Lord's supper in 11.21f, there is evidence of those "who have nothing" (μὴ ἔχοντας, 11.22) being humiliated (καταισχύνετε).[608] Commenting on that text, Theissen notes "those not so well off came face to face with their own social inferiority at a most basic level."[609] Theissen then offers a profound insight, "This in turn elicits a feeling of rejection which threatens the sense of community."[610] The feeling of rejection is just that which has affected those Paul addresses in 12.15f. Not only that, but this very feeling of rejection exacerbates the disunity being lived out by the Corinthians.

Here again elitism may be seen to be a central concern for Paul. Elitism is exacerbating the divisions which are still so much a part of the cultural narrative prevalent in Corinth. If what was discussed before may be termed "spiritual elitism,"[611] this present phenomenon might be described as "social elitism."

The manifestation of elitism, other than some being marginalised, begins to resurface in 12.17. Paul illustrates that diverse parts are required for diversity of function. A subtext, for those of tender conscience but errant practice, is to undermine the stance of those who have come to regard their own participation in an unduly inflated manner. Where the value of others is overlooked, the value of the self has been distorted upward. For those who are alert to this early salvo, 12.18

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[608] Cf. Theissen's essay on 'Social Integration' in *Setting*, 145-174.
[609] Theissen, *Setting*, 160.
[610] Ibid.
[611] See p. 85 above.

would seem even more confrontative. Paul implies such a state of self-importance is contrary to the design of God. Their activity is no less aberrant than counter to what is καθὼς ἠθέλησεν.

5.3.3. 1 Corinthians 12.21-26

5.3.3.1. Rhetorical Analysis

12.15f considered the subject of self-deprecation. In 12.21 Paul tackles perhaps the more dangerous practice of one part not despising itself, but despising another part. As just mentioned, this has been prefigured by undercurrents found in 12.17f. Paul asserts in 12.21 that one part "is not able" (οὐ δύναται) to do this. To the Greek mind it may be that this verb would still awaken the image of "not having power to". Certainly, Paul would not disagree with such a connection. In 12.18 he has just claimed that the ordering in the body is something determined by the will of God. How could a few Corinthians hope to overthrow such a powerful constituting force?

Eye cannot decide that hand is superfluous. Head cannot dismiss feet as unnecessary. Paul then (12.22) highlights the parts of the body "seeming to be weaker" and claims they are necessary. That those of low social status are tending to have the worse of things in Corinth does cohere with this emphasis. The poorer members of the congregation could indeed be said to "seem to be weaker" than the rich patrons.

In 12.23 Paul introduces the bestowal of honour.[612] We may think of a part in terms of less honour, but then surround that part with a specially great honour. Our private bodily parts, argues Paul, have specially great modesty. By contrast (12.24), our more presentable bodily parts have no need (of this special treatment). Again, Paul re-iterates the authorial role of God in all this. God brought all these parts together, he arranged the body, giving specially great honour to the one lacking. By analogy, this constitutes a strong appeal to authority. The natural order of things

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[612] It may be that here τιμή has the force of "value", "worth" or "importance" cf. Louw & Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, I, 620.

according to the design of God is difficult to gainsay. Paul has increased the persuasive power of his language to a distinctly stronger level.[613]

The use of ἵνα μή at the start of 12.25 links the subject of 12.24b (God) to the negation of σχίσμα in the body. Paul's sub-text reads something like "If you think that division in the body is acceptable, realise that it directly contravenes the bringing-together (συγκεκέρασμαι[614]) activity of God." Paul maintains his very persuasive language against the maintenance of division. Paul is implying that fostering or cooperating in division is not an offence merely against those with whom the division is forged, but an offence against God himself.

Paul then turns to a positive prescription for healthy interaction in the body: the parts should care the same on behalf of one another. In 12.26, he extends this principle to two particular situations, those of one part suffering and of one part being exalted. When one part suffers, all the parts suffer alongside. When one part is exalted, all the parts rejoice alongside. This kind of fellow-experience can only happen where there is commitment[615] to regarding oneself as a part of a single whole.[616]

Paul holds up a mirror for the Corinthians to see what he regards as their current state. Parts of the body are suffering. Individuals are suffering. As these individuals suffer, the whole is affected. If the whole suffers then, by extension, each part experiences a measure of suffering. Paul omits the central section of this argument, perhaps regarding it as self-evident. What he includes is a picture of a positive future[617]: one part receiving honour and all parts joining in rejoicing. The "honoured" part in 12.26b may be presumed to be the same part that had been suffering in 12.26a! Otherwise the text contradicts the anti-elitist thrust of Paul's wider argument in the chapter.

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[613] Paul prefigured this tactic in 12.18

[614] The perfect tense denotes a past action with enduring results.

[615] This resonates with the kind of faithfulness sought in marriage vows: for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health.

[616] For Hays, binding the privileged with the weak is 'the underlying concern of the whole chapter,' Hays, *First Corinthians*, 220.

[617] Cf. page 62 above.

5.3.3.2. Theological Analysis

At 12.24b-25, as seen above, Paul's language is highly persuasive. What precisely is the character of the persuasion being used? Paul is certainly making a suggestion. But surely he is also coaxing, and it could be argued that he is stepping over the line and into manipulating his readers. His technique is to find some common ground of belief. From there the readers are led through small increments of argument. Mental assent is gained from the readers to each of these steps, and the steps, in turn, are built into a series. Then he turns on the readers with a stark but unwelcome implication arising from the progression already presented.[618] Often, this final conclusion[619] takes the shape of "God's will is clearly anti-'A'", while the extant practice is 'A'.[620]

Paul knows that he is treading on toes. 12.26a is not a hypothetical thought-experiment, it is a picture of the present state in Corinth. Because some sections of the church are suffering, Paul has been alerted to the existence of a problem. His estimate of the severity and potential consequences of that problem has led him to respond with this large portion of the letter. Those who had been attending Corinthian congregational gatherings would be in a position immediately to identify the scene Paul evokes as reflecting those meetings. In a sense, the original readers had a far greater immediate grasp of Paul's import than can hope to be achieved through modern reconstruction and rhetorical analysis. Paul is producing not dry theological abstraction, but sociologically astute preaching for a contingent situation.

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[618] This technique has been recognised above (page 93) in 12.12-20. There the persuasive rhetoric reaches an apex of confrontation that would be measured at a far lower level. It could be argued that the subtlety of the earlier volley renders it even more effective in motivating change. A subtle persuasive concept may be likened to a successful virus entering a foreign body. The body does not detect its presence until the viral effects have radically altered the activity of the body.

[619] This conclusion is analogous to the "punchline" of a joke. When it is delivered, several carefully arranged previous thoughts are drawn together in a way that captures the imagination. The similarity ends there, since Paul's remarks would be unlikely to be taken as a source of amusement.

[620] This form of what might be termed "theological manipulation" is rampant in church congregations in our time. It is easily recognized in connection with appeals for money. The preacher demonstrates that the scriptures teach the giving of money (frequently, tithing), and therefore if the congregation wants to be good and not disobey God, they should give more than they are at present. Frequently this is handled far more vigorously than just outlined.

The message however is not entirely one of rebuke. Paul is keen for the Corinthians to change their attitudes and for this to show in their practice. Paul holds up a picture of honour for the hitherto dishonoured occasioning general rejoicing. He therefore sets a choice before them: suffering or rejoicing. Paul clearly regards the latter as preferable.[621]

Mitchell has drawn attention to the similarity of 12.25 to 1.10.[622] The relevant portions of the two verses read:

12:25   ἵνα   μὴ ᾖ   σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι...

1:10   ἵνα... ...μὴ ᾖ   ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα....

The difference (ἐν τῷ σώματι for ἐν ὑμῖν) arises because of the equivalence drawn between body and church.[623] This parallel strongly supports Mitchell's thesis of the coherence of the entire letter. However, it also demonstrates that the main problem addressed by the letter (in my view, Corinthian elitism) comes to particular focus here in 12-14. Paul regards his influence as necessary in addressing this issue. He sees this persuasive task as warranting deployment of an expression of his power. There can be no doubt that Paul wishes to influence behaviour. Paul seems even more concerned that Corinthian attitudes should be changed. He cannot countenance a continuation of the present pattern of elitism. This may be the reason he chooses to address not a small group within the congregation, but the entire congregation. The present state of social division needs to be confronted from both sides of the divide, altering the opinions both of those who under-estimate their own significance as well as those who are puffed up. Also, by addressing all, the few whose attitudes attract particular censure may escape from a catastrophic loss of honour which might follow a dressing down aimed directly at them. Thus Paul draws a large circle around everyone in the congregation. This inclusivity affords a degree of anonymity to those

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[621] Paul's embracing of suffering (e.g. 2 Corinthians 12:10) is not uncritical. Where no other considerations are involved, Paul can judge rejoicing preferable to suffering.
[622] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 70 n.27.
[623] Ibid.

who repent of their ways and start to co-operate with pursuit of what helps everybody, joining them to their fellows through unity of purpose.

5.4. 1 Corinthians 12.27-31

5.4.1. Rhetorical Analysis

In 12.27 Paul makes the application of the body picture direct and explicit.[624] "You Corinthians are [a] body of Christ, each of you a part of it."[625] What has so far been pointed analogy has now been solidified into, at least, binding metaphor. The transition was begun in 12.12, where Paul drew the analogy of body to Christ, but he now completes it.

How does this statement function at this point in Paul's argument? First, contrary to some modern homiletic applications, it should be emphasised that the pronoun is plural: you (ὑμεῖς, plu.) are body of Christ. The inclusion in this body of Christ is not by decision of those wise according to flesh or those powerful or well-bred (1.26). It is not for the few with most influence to designate who is acceptable in their eyes. That decision lies with God. As Paul has asserted in 12.6, the same God works all of these "spirit-things" in all. And it is the Spirit who provides the means of entering into one body (12.7), as being the one whom all were given to drink.[626] The oneness of Spirit is thus emphasised twice over in the verse that spells out the process of incorporation into Christ. Therefore by 12.27 the message will have come across: "You are one body because of one Spirit." Since the Corinthian believers cannot deny the shared experience of Spirit, it would be hard for them to resist Paul's conclusion that they are *all* one body. It is perhaps because of their particularly acute awareness of the working of Spirit that Paul highlights this aspect of their new lives.

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[624] A connection between Christ and bodies has already been made in 6.15. In that context, though, it is only the bodies of the Corinthians are said to be parts of Christ and not their whole beings. The point is focussed on actions done using their bodies (specifically with prostitutes).

[625] For this rendering of καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους see Fee, *First Corinthians*, 618.

[626] This last passive is of course a divine passive, which could equally be translated "and God gave all one Spirit to drink".

That all of them constitute this body of Christ,[627] that none are detachable is not what some of the Corinthians want to hear. Here is confrontation of any form of social apartheid being practised among members of the congregation. Paul has raised the stakes on his own position in the eyes of the social elite. Would they continue to accept his perspectives, or would they decide that the historic ties between themselves and Paul had been stretched irrevocably?

To press his claim, in 12.28 Paul launches into a description of that which God has already laid down, which cannot be changed, within the church. God has placed (aorist) some in the church first, second, third, and then subsequent placements. The roles mentioned are apostles, prophets and teachers followed by a list of other roles.

The placing of "apostles" (plural) at the head of this list is enigmatic. What is Paul saying here with reference to his own authority? Paul certainly sees himself as an apostle. He was called to be an apostle (1.1). This is not just a calling, a potential function, it is a fact established in his track record.[628] This is Paul's argument in 9.1f: "Are you not my work in the Lord?" And even if others have doubts about his apostolic function, the Corinthians know better for "you are the proof of my apostleship".[629]

The rhetorical function of placing "apostles" at the head of the list seems to include an authoritative claim by Paul. He is reminding the Corinthians just who it is who addresses them, and their dependence on his prior work. Is Paul here pulling rank? It would seem that he probably is doing just that. There is no false modesty here. Paul's role in the overall existence and survival of the congregation should not

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[627] For the case for interpreting Paul's concern as inclusion of absolutely everybody cf. above, page 19.

[628] Cf. above page 12, section 2.2.2.1.

[629] This text is among those giving us the clearest *definition* of what Paul considered an apostle to be. Lexically, of course, it can be demonstrated to mean "one who is sent", but sent by whom, where, for what? Apostles considered themselves sent, of course, by the risen Christ. Paul claims to have been sent (first to the Jews and then) to the Gentiles (Rom 11.13, Gal 2.8 cf. the witness in 1 Tim 2.7). Paul includes in one of these passages an abbreviated job description, namely, preaching the gospel (Gal 2.7). What becomes clear from Paul's ministry, however, is that a true apostle would see results from this work rather than merely preaching and not being heeded. The visible and verifiable result of

be underestimated. Paul probably faced personal undervaluing of just this type in Corinth.

In 12.29f Paul alludes to the absurdity of regarding one person as all that is needed for the functioning of the church. Not each individual is an apostle, nor a prophet, nor a teacher. Not all exhibit the other gifts mentioned in 12.28, and not all interpret. Paul's phrasing is in negative rhetorical questions beginning μή and with a meaning "surely not all... ...do they?" Here Paul is returning to the point first made in 12.12. One body has many parts - but the many parts are nevertheless part of the same one body. Paul is now asking the Corinthians to examine this pattern against their own experience. They would not pretend that each individual exercises an apostolic ministry or even a prophetic ministry. So, Paul argues, how could they maintain that one who does not speak in tongues in the assembly is not truly a part of the same church? The addition of "All don't interpret, do they?" is a subtle questioning of why those who find such benefit in their own glossalalia do not all interpret their utterances for the benefit of those in their hearing. That they do not, Paul would maintain, argues for the need of others' contribution to make their glossalalic utterances helpful to all (πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον, 12.7), the very point of the provision and working of these gifts.

In 12.31, Paul urges fervent desire by all of them for the greater gifts, apparently (from the reprise in 14.1) meaning greater than speaking in tongues, especially prophesying.

5.4.2. Theological Analysis

What in 12.28 does the ordinal numbering system signify? There are two possibilities. One is that they refer to some kind of ranking. Prophets are important, but prophets would have no one to address without the working of apostolic ministry to gather people into community. The other possibility is that the numbers are

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apostolic ministry, the proof (σφραγίς) in 9.2, is the formation of a Christian congregation in a new field of mission.

temporal references.[630] First an apostle gathers people together to form a church in the first place, then prophets are needed to give direction from the Lord as to how to express the life of Christ in the current circumstances, then teachers give a wider public context to the sayings of prophets by rooting them within the context of the traditions, including the traditional written scriptures and the oral Jesus traditions. Certainly the former interpretation has historically been favoured,[631] and it is surely the more natural reading of the verse.

What are the implications of this ranking of ministries? Is Paul saying that some people are better than others? Is he recognizing that some individuals have more effect than others? It should be noted in the context of our egalitarian modern ideals that Paul has nowhere implied that each person makes an *equal* contribution to the whole. What he has clearly said is that each one makes a contribution which is *of value* to the whole, and therefore to each member of that whole.[632] For Paul, however, a notion of ultimate value does not come from the amount of working in the church, it comes from Christ. Indeed in 6.2, Paul asks if you are to judge the world are you unworthy (ἀνάξιοί) of very small judgments? Here the status of the Corinthian believers is eschatologically determined. Because of the final justification by God, they will be accorded significant worth.[633]

As an antidote to an autocratic view of church ministry however, Fee's point is well made that 'none of these "ranked persons" is addressed in this letter, nor are

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[630] Hays considers both possible, 'The numbering... ...may also indicate something about the temporal order in which these gifts come into play in the construction of the Christian community,' Hays, *First Corinthians*, 217.

[631] So Fee, *First Corinthians*, 619; Martin, *Body*, 102.

[632] Scott Bartchy points to the change and improvement in self-understanding that involvement in Christian communal activity would have imparted particularly to women who 'as Christians were encouraged to participate according to their gifts in the expanding Christian mission and in the person-affirming life of the new congregations. There is no indication in ...1 Corinthians 12... that the gifts of the Spirit were sex-linked,' Bartchy, 'Power, Submission and Sexual Identity among the Early Christians' in C. R. Wetzel (ed.), *Essays on NT Christianity* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1978), 50-80, here 67.

[633] Of course, this does not for Paul mean that their work is unimportant. In 3.13 Paul says that those whose work is of a kind which can be easily destroyed by the fire of God's judgment will suffer loss, but ultimately they themselves will still be saved. At the same time, whether the works are of silver and gold or of hay and stubble (3.12), they are only relevant for evaluation if built on the only foundation: Jesus Christ (3.11).

they assumed to be "in charge" of the worship...."[634] The congregation is seen by Paul as an eschatological community under the direction of the Spirit (just as he wills 12.11). Paul's approach is striking, as noted by Holmberg and Campenhausen,[635] and leads Holmberg to posit the lack of love and unity was most pronounced among the leading stratum in the Corinthian church. It might be cogent to suggest[636] Paul would have appealed to local leadership to exercise control if that leadership had been willing to co-operate with his directives. However, the mutuality inherent in the body of Christ metaphor becomes so entrenched in the expressions of ecclesial order we find in Paul (cf. Rom 12.6-8) that it remains the more likely interpretation that Paul did not envision such a rigidly hierarchical flow of power.

After the first three ministries in the list two things change. First, Paul stops numbering and just uses "then" (ἔπειτα) for two more items and then omits the separator altogether. Second, descriptions of roles are replaced by names of activities, activities which may be recognized from earlier in the chapter as gifts of the Spirit. The list here comprises powers, gifts of healings, helps, leadership, and kinds of tongues. The first two and the last are surely carried forward from the list in 12.9f. Thus "powers" refer to the working of miracles. Helps and leadership are introduced, both as hapax legomena for the NT.

The lack of numbering suggests that after the first three the "importance" of the working of these gifts is relatively similar. It would be tempting to emphasize that Paul places tongues at the foot of the list.[637] However, this temptation should be modified in the light of the claim which will be made in 14.18 that Paul himself values (indeed he thanks God) that he speaks in tongues more than all of them.[638] On the other hand, it should be conceded that he does not reckon the value of tongues as very high in the context of the congregation.

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[634] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 620.
[635] Cf. above page 14 section 2.2.2.2.
[636] As does Holmberg, *Paul*, 114.
[637] As does Martin, *Body*, 102f.
[638] Cf. Turner, *Spirit*, 229.

It is perhaps of note that leadership (κυβερνήσεις) is not included among the first three (apostles, prophets, teachers) in the list. Leadership for Paul is primarily located in the Spirit who distributes the various giftings according to his will. This type of leadership resides in a category on a level wholly superior to the entire group of functions catalogued in 12.28. Similarly the initiation by God of a believing community in Corinth and his placing of individuals within that community is taken as presupposition and as of a different order of importance to the works carried out by the Corinthian congregation.

There remains ambiguity in the wording of 12.28: "God placed in the church first apostles...." Is Paul including himself "in the church"? He is not there at the time of writing and has not been for a few years.[639] Does he consider that he is present there, as he has claimed he would be "in spirit" (5.4)? If "apostles" in 12.28 is self-referential, then why has he used the plural? Does he recognize one or more "apostles" present within the congregation living in Corinth? If there is another "apostle" currently in Corinth, why does Paul make no specific mention of him?

Apollos had been prominent in the congregation earlier than this, but Paul seems to classify Apollos' role as distinct, and therefore perhaps different from his own: "I planted, Apollos watered...." (3.6). On the other hand, later in the same chapter Paul lists Apollos along with himself and Cephas (3.22), which points towards possible apostolic status.[640] However, the tradition about Apollos (Acts 18) clearly describes him as a convert who went from Ephesus to Corinth and made a great contribution to those who had believed through grace (Acts 18.27). This means he was not with Paul at the initiation of the Corinthian church. Whatever the case, Apollos too has left Corinth and is reportedly, at the time of writing, reluctant to return (16.22).

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[639] E.g. Fee, *First Corinthians*, 5, estimates 1 Corinthians was written about three years after Paul's departure.

[640] Such an interpretation may help to solve the mystery of the place of Peter in the Corinthian congregation. The problem has centred around the lack of access to Peter that the Corinthians would have had. There is certainly no evidence that Peter ever visited Corinth. So why would Paul be bringing in the name of Peter? There has not been any satisfactory explanation advanced, but perhaps

Because of the lack of any clear evidence of anyone other than Paul functioning as an apostle to the Corinthian church,[641] the likelihood seems to be that Paul is using a general formula, applicable to any church, not just Corinth. Since not every church was founded by the same person, "apostles" seems a natural designation for the people involved.

5.5. Evaluation of Power relations in 1 Corinthians 12

What has this study of chapter 12 demonstrated about power relations in Corinth, particularly from Paul's perspective? First, before he writes, Paul assumes that he will be able to exert a degree of influence. He expects the congregation to listen to him. However, he does not resort simply to a series of edicts. He provides *ratio* on which the Corinthians can reflect in order to assess the validity of his assertions. Chief among these is the device of the body, a gradually solidifying metaphor originally mooted as helpful analogy. Starting gently from common observations and beliefs, Paul begins to make applications that can be assumed to be designed to challenge some fundamental assumptions about legitimate attitudes held by some in the congregation regarding others. For Paul the most seriously harmful of these assumptions was that certain members of the congregation are important whereas certain others are so unimportant as to be irrelevant to the operation of the church.

Paul founds his correctives on the assumption that the Corinthian believers have now come to live as those led by the Spirit. Thus what the Spirit wants to do becomes their authoritative prescription for conduct. And the Spirit, Paul claims, sees fit to distribute gifts in a diverse manner (12.4, 11). Not only that, the distribution to each by the Spirit is for the benefit of all. This is a position from which Paul does not retreat, even though it is not convenient for some of his hearers.

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the reputation of Peter as a pillar helps to clarify the meaning of the apostolic status claimed by Paul, especially if Apollos is being fitted into the same classificatory box.

[641] This is added to by the willingness Paul shows in 9.2 to accept the evidence of the existence of the Corinthian as evidence of his own (μου, singular) apostolic status. If there had been another apostle working alongside him when in Corinth, surely this would have been an ideal place to have acknowledged that, unless of course his aim was to emphasise his own apostolic status as over against that claimed by another. In 13.1-3, Paul places prophecy and other ministries in a context where they are downplayed in the light of ἀγάπη. If other apostles had been present in Corinth, Paul would have

Paul has thus entered into a deliberate posture of confrontation. It is here that Paul uses the body imagery to help the Corinthians come over to the understanding he has just outlined. He is arguing from the natural order created by God.

The force of his argument lies in a shared assumption of a theistic view in relation 1) to the arrangement of a human body and 2) to the arrangement of individuals within the eschatological community at Corinth. Paul accepts these two arenas of divine activity, and his argument requires these activities to be accepted by those who would be convinced by that argument. The first assumption would have been no problem to inhabitants of the Greco-Roman world of the time. The second assumption (that God has arranged the eschatological community in Corinth) might be less self-evident, particularly in light of the striking linkage of body to Christ.[642] Throughout the letter leading up to this chapter, Paul is seen promoting this idea. In 1.2 he refers to the church of God in Corinth. He presupposes a call to be holy, based on the lordship of Christ. In 1.9 he explicitly names God as the one through whom they were called into his Son's fellowship. In 1.30 Paul claims that they are in Christ from the action of God. In 3.16, they are described as having been made into a temple of God. The "calling" they had experienced is attributed to God (7.17). This calling is treated as an event (ἐκλήθη, 7.18; κέκληταί, 7.18; ἐκλήθη, 7.20; ἐκλήθης, 7.21; ἐκλήθη, 7.24), thus taking place at a recognisable time rather than a state with indefinite beginning, but resulting in their inclusion in the congregation.[643]

They are not to walk[644] κατὰ ἄνθρωπον (3.3), but according to the Spirit. This will require change. The way things are at present, there is "among you" jealousy and strife (ἐν ὑμῖν ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις, 3.3), indicating a living according to merely human instincts. This had to change, and by following the lead given by the Spirit, the results would be very different.

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been able to de-emphasise apostolic ministry in the same way. That he did not provides further support for an absence of any apostolic figures from Corinth.

[642] Cf. discussion at note 604, above.

[643] Clearly if they had not been included in the congregation, they would not be recipients of Paul's appeal in this letter! The fact that Paul writes in this way demonstrates that such at least is his own understanding of this phenomenon of divine calling.

[644] For Paul the pharisee, to "walk" was standard semitic idiom for "live".

Chapter Six: Power Relations in 1 Corinthians 13

Paul keeps pursuing his theme to address the conduct of assemblies in Corinth. Their meetings at present, in his opinion, "do more harm than good" (11.17 NIV). This situation cannot elicit praise but rather censure and correction. This is the wider task Paul faces in writing all the material to the end of chapter 15. His strategy[645] demands careful building of precept upon precept. He wants to carry the understanding and agreement of the Corinthians where he can so that any change his persuasion produces is action based on consent and agreement. This strategy is in line with the expectation (discussed in Part One) that the exercise of authority involves provision of *ratio*.[646] Before he launches into a full exposition of the relative merits of prophecy and tongues, Paul provides, in chapter 13, a framework to undergird the principle that emerged in 12.7 of common good which leads easily into the principle of edification (cf. 14.3, 5, 12, 26). The principle of edification cannot be discussed if an understanding of the foundational principle of love is not yet in place.[647] Paul's tactic is to buttress the *ratio* already shared by his Corinthian converts.

The history of exegetical investigation into this oft-studied chapter is reviewed in an article by J. T Sanders[648], but Fee[649] presses also for the significance of an additional three-volume work by Spicq.[650] Although it is often suggested that the unit had an existence prior to inclusion in this letter, many of the references within 13.1-3 and 8-13 "make sense *only* in this context."[651] Mitchell sees the section as an exemplary argument within the flow of Paul's deliberative rhetorical

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[645] As was seen exemplified above, page 97.

[646] See pages 43f and 105.

[647] Dunn, *Jesus*, 299, rightly regards love and edification as 'the criteria of kerygmatic tradition.' In other words, and as Schütz might put it, love and edification provide measures of faithfulness to the gospel, and the presence of these two benchmarks legitimates words and actions in the community.

[648] J. T. Sanders, 'First Corinthians 13, Its Interpretation Since the First World War,' *Interpretation* 20 (1966), 159-87.

[649] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 625 n.1.

[650] C. Spicq, *Agape dans le Nouveau Testament*, 3 Vols (Paris: EBib, 1959), ET *Agape in the New Testament* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1965).

[651] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 627 n.9.

argument.[652]   More recently, Hays has classified the chapter as "an epideictic interlude," in praise of love.[653]

6.1.   Rhetorical Analysis

The exhortation (12.31a) to "eagerly desire the greater gifts" is contextualised by 31b. Paul is to show them a more excellent way.[654] This way, it becomes clear early in chapter 13, is the way of love (ἀγάπη). Paul chooses to make himself the subject of the verbs in 13.1-3, perhaps to show that his evaluations are irrespective of to whom they apply: even if Paul himself were to proceed in the ways outlined, his actions would be worthless.

The structure of Paul's argument in 13.1-3 involves three cycles of propositional statements. Each cycle begins with "if" or a close variant (ἐάν, καὶ ἐάν, κἄν). The first part of each conditional, although varying in its detail, highlights the practice of a prominent charismatic act which would have been valued highly within the Corinthian congregation. The second part of each conditional is identical in all three cycles. This second part is ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, "but I do not have love". The precise repetition focusses the reader on the essential role that the fulfillment of this condition (or, strictly, non-fulfillment of the negative condition) plays.

That Paul sees as grotesque a disjunction between charismatic expression and absence of love may be evidenced by the choice of examples in 13.1-3. His first example is that of speaking in tongues (13.1). The Corinthians would have understood readily what he meant from their experience of their own meetings. From this gentle beginning he progresses to a case of having prophecy to the degree of fathoming all revelations (μυστήρια πάντα) and all knowledge (πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν) (13.2). Such extreme, absolute language could be said to constitute hyperbole, functioning here as *reductio ad absurdum*. From the extreme extent of revelatory experience, Paul moves to a parallel extreme, that of mountain-moving

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[652] Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 270-77.
[653] Hays, *First Corinthians*, 221.
[654] With the metaphor "way" (ὁδόν) Paul continues his semitic paradigm of walking to mean living.

faith.[655] Despite the magnitude of the events envisaged, Paul's claim is that the one performing them without love is "nothing". For the final pair of examples, Paul turns to acts of apparent self-denial – voluntary poverty and self sacrifice[656] (13.3). For many of Paul's hearers, the renunciation of all worldly goods would be a consideration likely to prove shocking. And yet for Corinthians in search of the admiration of others, such an activity may just have an appeal. Could this example have autobiographical origins? Does 4.11 allude to Paul's experience of poverty in order to serve others? If so, then it explains his use of the subsequent example, "If I hand over my body so that I may boast." Paul has already mentioned (9.15) his own "boasts" regarding the foregoing of certain apostolic ἐξουσία, namely financial support from the Corinthians. This self-denial he sees as giving him benefit in eschatological evaluation.[657] Even if financial self-denial were extended into entire bodily self-sacrifice, without love, there would be no consequent "boast" gained (ὠφελοῦμαι, 13.3) at judgment day. This example is therefore likely to have been deliberately extreme to throw the issue into the sharpest possible relief.

The rhetorical force of these opening verses of the chapter is to make the notion of practising charismatic manifestation outside the parameters set by love difficult to retain. Paul's approach to the subject almost borders on ridicule. He leaves the reader in no doubt that love is essential to the workings of a Christian congregation. Here Paul is making assertions that are not open to modification. He is laying down the law. It may not cause surprise that the occasion of this law-giving pertains to the law of love.

Having established the importance of love in 13.1-3, Paul immediately turns in 13.4ff to the action of love. Paul is effectively defining love. This definition he largely establishes with verbs. Love suffers long, shows kindness, puts up with all

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[655] There can be little doubt that there is an echo here of the Jesus tradition (cf. Mt 17.20).

[656] What Fee calls a "truly difficult" textual choice is presented here between καυθήσ[ω/ο]μαι and καυχήσωμαι: 'I give my body... ...to be burned' or '...that I might boast.' Fee, *First Corinthians*, 629, n.18 & 633f comes down in favour of the latter. If Paul had written about giving of one's body to the fire, however, that would constitute martyrdom, for which no Corinthian evidence this early is extant. "That I might boast" would be intelligible if it refers to eschatological judgment, as discussed in the main text (below). Καυχήσωμαι can mean something positive rather than pejorative, so that giving up one's body (in self-sacrifice) would win recognition on judgment day.

[657] Hays, *First Corinthians*, 225. Cf.2 Cor 11:23ff, 12:10: Fee, *First Corinthians*, 635.

things, hopes all things, and endures all things. What is perhaps most revealing for our study is what Paul says love does not do. Love is not self-seeking, does not boast[658] nor occasion arrogance nor behave improperly. This negative list would stand out to anyone paying close attention to the contents of the letter thus far. Paul is surely hardly veiling his assessment of specific actions reported in Corinth. If these allusions are detected by those reading the letter centuries later, how much more forcefully will the point have come across to the original readers. For them the references will have functioned powerfully as rhetoric. This rhetoric acts to throw into relief certain of their practices and to cause questions about those practices to be considered. Thus all these references would have a cumulative effect. Analysis of each in turn is required for us.

Three negative and one positive constructions stand out in this respect. First, φυσιόω, to be puffed up. Some Corinthians, Paul has been saying, have precisely been puffed up (ἐφυσιώθησάν, 4.18) at the thought of Paul not coming to Corinth. Paul has promised to know the power of these ones (4.19). There were those who were puffed up over the *porneia* being tolerated in the congregation (5.2). There are two other references to the action, first regarding inflating one leader above another (4.6) and second the result of mere knowledge as distinct from love (8.1). This last reference underlines the essential role of love in Paul's theology of practice as church.

The second construction is the verb ἀσχημονεῖν, to behave improperly. This occurs in the discussion of concessions regarding the place of marriage in the congregation. Paul uses the verb to describe what one may think one would be doing by failing to follow through on contract of marriage once entered into. In such a case, the undertaking should be fulfilled (7.36). Fee suggests the offence here is disregard for the remainder of the Christian community.[659] This is the least striking of the four constructions describing the non-practices of love.

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[658] Unlike καυχάομαι which may be used either approvingly or with censure as noted above (n. 656), περπερεύομαι and φυσιόω cannot.

[659] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 638.

The third construction is that of seeking one's own interests (ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, 13.5). Paul has mentioned this practice twice: once in an exhortation (10.24) and once in recounting his own practice (10.33). The clear implication in this second occurrence is to reinforce the earlier exhortation. Here is authoritative injunction reinforced by example from the figure in authority. The force of the injunction seems to be the provision of assistance to others (in order that the many may be saved, 10.33) rather than any particular virtue in ascetic reluctance to care for one's own affairs.

A fourth construction of note is that love πάντα στέγει (puts up with all things, 13.7). Again Paul places value on this practice through the vehicle of his own actions. He claims in 9.12 to put up with all things in order to keep the way to the gospel clear for all.

Thus Paul's language in 13.4-7 is chosen to have more effect on his Corinthian readers than it would on those listening to a reading of the "love chapter" in a 20th century wedding service. His vocabulary is framed in the exigencies which he has addressed throughout the letter. His purpose would seem to be to alter the attitudes and behaviour of his correspondents.

In 13.8, Paul contrasts the permanent nature of love with the relative transience of certain *charismata*. Prophecy, tongues and knowledge are used as examples. Prophesying and speaking in tongues are the object of detailed attention in chapter 14, and their inclusion here gets the reader orientated to the subject before that section begins. Knowledge is less prominently discussed by Paul, although it seems to have been a particularly esteemed quality in Corinth (see 8.1, 10f). Paul more than once does link γνῶσις with prophecy. This is apparent in 13.2, where along with fathoming mysteries having knowledge describes prophetic activity, and in 14.6, where Paul will interchange γνῶσις with revelation and prophecy. Thus the inclusion of knowledge here is not entirely unexpected. Indeed a contrast between love and knowledge has already been seen in 8.1 where the actions of the two are οἰκοδομεῖ as against φυσιοῖ.

Prophecies, says Paul, will be abolished. The same abolition (καταργέω) will come to knowledge (again suggesting a link between these two). Tongues will cease. Paul is debasing the currency used in Corinthian meetings by introducing a new gold standard: love. When love is considered, all spiritual gifts are re-categorised to a relatively low value. Paul does this so successfully here that many have received the impression that Paul believed spiritual gifts were not important.[660]

In 13.9, 10 and 12 Paul extends the end of tongues and prophecy to the eschatological cessation of all charismatic manifestations. Unlike the limits placed on gifts, the Pauline triad of faith, hope, and love[661] will always persist (13.13). Thus Paul is claiming to see spiritual gifts as provisional and temporary, while love (and faith and hope) are eternal. Using the first person in 13.9, 11 and 12 enables Paul to suggest that his readers emulate him in this. The explicit invitation in 4.16 to imitate him lends weight to the suggestion.[662]

Paul's choice of language throughout chapter 13 has worked towards demonstration that love should fulfil an essential role among the members of the congregation. Love for Paul is the backdrop for the operation of spiritual gifts. Love is the canvas on which spiritual gifts are to be applied, to produce a work of art inspired by the Spirit. That love is the *sine qua non* of the operation of spiritual gifts is explicitly stated. Just how essential he sees love is demonstrated through his choice of rhetorical techniques. To make his point he uses hyperbole, *reductio ad absurdum*, almost to the extent of ridicule.

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[660] Consideration of the many positive statements about the right use of *charismata* throughout chapters 12-14 should dispel this impression.

[661] Dunn, *Colossians*, 58, describes the linking of these three as a 'distinctive feature of Pauline teaching (1 Cor. 13.13; Gal. 5.5-6; 1 Thes. 1.3; 5.8; cf. Rom. 5.1-5)', referring in turn to A.M. Hunter's *Paul and His Predecessors* (London: SCM, 1961²), 33-35.

[662] For Elizabeth Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 103, 1 Corinthians 4.16 is a bald power play by Paul, 'a call to sameness which erases difference and, at the same time, reinforces the authoritative status of the [*mimesis*] model.' Castelli has seen in Paul's call to imitate him an inherent claim to authority which was captured by the use of mimesis in antiquity. I would argue that Paul's use of ancient rhetorical conventions did not mean he was necessarily pursuing the conventional goals of those techniques. Paul could adopt a rhetorical device to suit his own aims and then trope that device into a new form. Not only can Paul do this with rhetoric, he can also use loaded religious vocabulary and transform it into a new set of referrents. For example, as mentioned above (n. 587) Mitchell observes that 'Paul redefines the central term συμφέρειν,' Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 35. Some of Paul's authority may lie in this ability to synthesise from pre-existing literary or rhetorical components. Castelli comes across as

Following this, Paul defines love carefully crafting his definition to highlight what he sees as a sharp contrast between love and certain characteristics of the behaviour of some among the Corinthian congregation. Paul surely intends to throw these into relief in order to encourage repentance and change. By then emphasising the longevity of love as against the relatively temporary function of *charismata*, Paul is redirecting the Corinthians to devote relatively more of their attention and energy towards love. He reinforces this steering by suggesting that such a shift is a sign of maturity.

6.2.   Theological Analysis

Love can be seen as foundational to Paul's own overall theology. He defines the love of neighbour as the one word of the law (Gal 5.14). The only debt owed is to love one another, and the one who loves fulfils the rest of the law (Rom 13.8). Explicitly he goes on to describe love as fulfilment of law (Rom 13.10).

In 1 Corinthians 13.1-3, Paul places the "having" of love as of a higher order than the other activities. For Paul an absence of love negates the activities for the person who engages in them. That is, if a member of the congregation speaks in tongues but does not have love, the sound becomes jarring rather than appealing. Again, in the case of one who is able to exercise profound prophetic insight but does not have love, that one is as nothing. Paul clearly implies that for the activities to be pursued with an absence of love is an aberrant rather than proper state. It is not that the activities in themselves are aberrant,[663] but the lack of love is aberrant. Without love the activities take on an almost grotesque complexion. Things which should be permanently intertwined have, Paul argues, alarmingly become disassociated.[664]

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defensive regarding any claim to authority, even baulking at the validity of "apostolic tradition" as a norm for Christian development, Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 113.

[663] Notice Paul's claim in 14.18 that he himself speaks in tongues "more than you all". Paul is in no way discounting the value of speaking in tongues or prophesying *per se*, but he is highlighting the absurdity of engaging in these activities while not holding tightly to the quality he calls love.

[664] 'Paul implies that it is all too possible to experience charism without love, and he goes out of his way to stress that charism divorced from love is useless.' Dunn, *Theology*, 596.

Paul nowhere suggests the *charismata* expressed in Corinth are other than genuine. He does imply that even such a good thing as a charismatic gift from God can be twisted and distorted by being used without love. The nature of the charisma may be impressive, but it becomes entirely useless in the absence of love.[665] The relationship of love to charisma might be likened to water to a boat or air to lungs. To describe love (accurately) as 'essential' seems almost understatement.

In 13.9f and 12, Paul suggests an abolition of these gifts at the eschaton.[666] Life now is characterised by imperfect and partial perception, but life in the full-blown eschaton will be complete, "face-to-face". There can be little doubt that Paul here alludes to the consummation when he will be with God. That Paul regards this as a stage in development is suggested in 13.11. Paul is working to encourage perception of the needs of others[667] as more mature than merely perceiving the presence of words to utter. If one takes the view that spiritual gifts are everything, and that the demands of love are trivial, then one has the lack of maturity expected in a child. Once one understands the overarching place of love in the life of the church community, then one is able to begin to deal aright with the whole arena of spiritual gifts. When Paul opened 12.1 with "I do not want you to be unaware" he might well have substituted "I do not want you to be immature".[668] Paul claims in 13.11 to have abolished (καταργέω) such childish ways. It should be noted that here Paul cannot be claiming to have ceased his personal practice of the spiritual gifts. As noted earlier,[669] Paul claims in 14.18 to speak in tongues "more than all of you."

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[665] '...even genuine charismata of the most striking nature when exercised without love made for strife within the community and stunted the growth of the body,' Dunn, *Jesus*, 271.

[666] A contrived interpretation of "when the end comes" (ὅταν ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, 13.10) as referring to the completion of the NT canon is unwarranted. In his discussion of the view first posited by B. Warfield, Fee comments, 'It is an impossible view..., since Paul... could not have articulated it,' Fee, *First Corinthians*, 645 n.43. Note also 'This interpretation is simply nonsense,' Hays, *First Corinthians*, 229. For a refutation of the Warfield position cf. Turner, *Spirit*, 286-302.

[667] Cf. Paul's practical application of love in Phil 2.4.

[668] Although honest, this approach of course would not have fitted into his rhetorical pattern of persuasion. Such a statement would doubtless have engendered no small measure of hostility and defensiveness among the Corinthian congregation, making his message far less likely to be heard much less acted upon.

[669] Cf. page 103.

Chapter Seven: Power Relations in 1 Corinthians 14

Paul writes continuing his strategy of persuasion to discourage the Corinthian Christians from certain patterns of conduct and thought-patterns in their meetings towards a different cluster of behaviour and attitude. As mentioned above (page 107), in this chapter Paul gives a fuller exposition of the relative merits of prophecy and tongues. As an extension of the principle of common good (12.7), Paul has provided a portrait of love (chapter 13). From here, he progresses smoothly to using an associated principle, edification.

7.1.   1 Corinthians 14.1-33

Since this section of Paul's discourse is long, a brief summary of his approach might be helpful. Paul seeks to subvert their understanding of tongues in the assembly as a more important manifestation of the Spirit than prophecy. He asserts a contrary position in 14.1-5 and then offers some *ad hominem* arguments to support this in 14.7f and 14.10f. He applies these arguments directly to the Corinthian situation in 14.8 and 14.12. He then (14.13) switches the subject slightly to the interpretation of tongues and the function that such interpretation plays in the assembly. He discusses (14.14-17) the operation of tongues, in particular the limitations of uninterpreted tongues. Paul claims (14.18) superior personal pneumatic experience. Paul uses (14.19) a quantitative metaphor to emphasise the priority of tongues over prophecy. 14.20 functions as an invitation to discard immaturity, indicating Paul's claim to have a more mature attitude than that of the Corinthians. A theological justification for the function of tongues is offered (14.21) based on a scriptural quotation. This justification is followed (14.22-25) by an application of this function within the Corinthian congregation. Rules are made (14.26-31) to govern the practice of prophetic utterance in the assembly. Paul emphasises (14.32-33) human responsibility in prophetic utterance with a theologically-based argument.

7.1.1. Rhetorical Analysis

In 14.1 Paul urges what should be self-evident after chapter 13. He uses the imperative "pursue" (διώκετε) love. He then ties this to another imperative, "eagerly desire" (ζηλοῦτε) the things of the Spirit.[670] In pursuing love, argues Paul, it is right to eagerly desire spiritual gifts. Here, however, Paul picks out from the gifts in general one gift in particular. Eagerly desire gifts in general, "but all the more that you might prophesy" (μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε). Paul here is raising the gift of prophecy above the others, while reinforcing that even prophecy would be rendered useless (or worse) without the continual pursuit of love. In particular, he justifies the prominence of prophecy over another gift involving utterance, speaking in tongues.

In raising the profile of prophecy, Paul is certain to elicit comment or question. The pre-eminence of prophecy would not be self-evident from the preceding sections of the letter. Therefore Paul immediately (14.2) offers a justification for this assertion.

The difference in the operation of tongues and prophecy lies in the recipient of the utterance. A tongue is directed not to men but to God. It becomes evident that Paul's assumptions affect his conclusion. The Corinthians may well have considered that an utterance directed towards God would be more spiritual than an utterance aimed at mere mortals. Since God is more important than human beings, speech directed towards God is more important than speech directed towards people. The Corinthians might even quote the Scriptures to reinforce their view.[671] Paul assumes that what happens in the congregation (when they come together, συνέρχομαι, 7.5; 11.17f, 20, and 33f) should primarily be for the benefit of one another. This is a radical viewpoint. Church is for people, even more than "for God". How can Paul justify this position? It may be noted that Paul does not justify the conclusion theologically. He does not appeal to the character of God[672] or to the history of

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[670] In resuming the structured argument about Spirit-inspired utterances it is unsurprising that Paul returns to the terminology with which he introduced the whole section. Thus as in 12.1 his term of choice here is πνευματικος.

[671] In Isaiah 43.21, the Lord gives the reason for the formation of his people as proclaiming his praise. The Psalms include exhortations to praise the Lord in the assembly (e.g. Ps 149.1).

[672] As he will when it suits him in 14.33.

Israel[673] or to a dominical saying of Jesus.[674] Instead he introduces as his justification the principle of edification (οἰκοδομή). This may be seen as a rhetorical move rather than a theological explanation.

As mentioned above, the principle of edification flows easily from the previous principles first of common good and then of love. Tracing these backwards, Paul would be able to root the first of the sequence to the very purpose for which spiritual gifts are given. As seen above (pages 81 and 85) in 12.7 manifestations of the Spirit are given for the common good (πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον). Thus Paul's rhetoric is (at least indirectly) undergirded by his own theology, while his explanation would only elicit recall of theology for those sensitive to and sympathetic towards his message.[675]

14.3 has the first use of οἰκοδομή since 3.9, when Paul characterised the Corinthian believers as God's field and God's building. The verb, οἰκοδομέω, will appear in 14.4, but has already been introduced in 8.1 (what love does in contrast to knowledge), in 8.10 (referring to an inappropriate strengthening of resolve), and in 10.23 (used while subverting an apparent Corinthian slogan).

Here in chapter 14, these words are concentrated in a cluster unique in the letter. The noun occurs four times (14.3, 5, 12, 26) and the verb three times (14.4 [twice], 14.17). Paul's argument involves asking the question "What is the result of the utterance?" If the answer is the church is edified, then the value of the utterance is increased. Thus in 14.3, the one who prophesies speaks to people and speaks edification (also encouragement and comfort). A speaker in a tongue is not understood by those who hear (14.2) and therefore the only person who can be edified is the speaker (14.4). In contrast, one who prophesies edifies all who hear, for they may all understand, and thus the church as a whole is edified.

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[673] As he already has in 10.1ff.

[674] As he did when commenting on the conduct of the Lord's supper in 11.22ff.

[675] The sort of people whom Jesus might describe as "those who have ears to hear."

In 14.6 Paul addresses the Corinthians as "brothers" for the first time since 12.1. Here he is taking the role of their peer. Again, this functions rhetorically to make his advice easier to follow, so increasing the rhetorical power of his discourse. He casts himself in an imaginary role as tongues-speaker. He asks them what they would gain if he came to them and then did only that. The answer to this rhetorical question is "nothing". His utterance only would benefit others if its content were known by those others, through revelation, knowledge, prophecy or teaching. The result of this strategy is to make the Corinthian tongues-speakers consider how they would react if they were put in the position of those around them who are not speaking in tongues, but are not understanding what is being said either. "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Mt 7.12) seems to be the principle at work here.[676] Paul is therefore appealing for benefit to be given to the congregation through an appeal to the self-interest of the public tongues-speakers, an appeal that increases Paul's persuasive power.

Paul then expounds the theme of intelligibility. In 14.7, he begins to marshal an argument for the importance of intelligibility, specifically intelligible sound. He grasps for parallels from the intelligible playing of musical instruments. This is by itself a subtle and so rather opaque argument. He then specifies a trumpet blown to prepare for war. Without clarity in the sound (14.8), the response of the army might prove disastrous. He then (14.9), *mutatis mutandi*, applies this principle to utterance in the Corinthian congregation. Paul looks for an utterance to be easily understood (εὔσημος).[677] Again the imposition of this criterion implies that current Corinthian utterances are not always easily understood. That Paul has raised this as constituting a problem may have surprised some Corinthians. They may have assumed that tongues-speaking was meant to function as participation in angelic realms, and that there was nothing more about it to be understood. Paul's vision of the use of gifts however takes account of those who are present in the congregation around the one

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[676] It is interesting that Matthew's summary of the Law and the Prophets (Mt 7.12) should be so closely related to the two love commandments (Mt 22.40), namely love of God and love of neighbour. If Paul was aware of these traditions it would not surprise us that he suggests a corollary of "pursue love" to evaluate the practice of spiritual gifts. Further, Paul's position on the value of edification of the church as outweighing individual address towards God (page 116, above) tends to suggest that he regarded love of God as effectively carried out in the context of love of neighbour.

speaking. Such a neighbour must be able to participate in the process of utterance in a way that imparts meaning. Otherwise there is no fellowship, no participation with the other member of the congregation. Rather than allow tongues as inherently heavenly, Paul implies that on its own, speaking in a tongue is merely speaking "into air" (εἰς ἀέρα).[678]

This is a controversial and potentially provocative position. Paul needs to provide support for his emphasis on intelligibility. He does this using the analogy of foreign languages. Although many languages are present throughout the world (14.10), none are incapable of communicating (none are "without sound"). If Paul does not know (14.11) the force (δύναμις) of the words then to the speaker he will be a foreigner and the speaker will be a foreigner to him. Language has δύναμις, but that effect is lost if there is no meaning attached to it by the hearer. Paul then applies this principle to the Corinthians (14.12). He asserts that they eagerly desire the things of the Spirit. He directs them to excel in the edification of the church. They would know that for gifts of utterance this instruction implies intelligibility. Although he uses a bald imperative, the context makes this seem like a gentle urging with their opinion already orientated in this direction. Paul seems to regard his argument as strong enough to have won them over by this point.

If the merits of the argument by analogy with foreign languages are examined, it becomes clear that the argument need not compel at this point. If the presumed Corinthian position (that tongues were a language of angels in praise to God) were correct, then glossalalia would be taken out of the category of foreign human languages. Paul seeks to draw his circle of definition larger to encompass tongues under what he regards as a wider category: language or utterance. Paul has presented no compelling reason why the Corinthians should accept this definition. Here Paul's power over his readers becomes temporarily lessened.

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[677] Although used only here in the NT, the word is well attested as 'easily recognizable, clear, distinct,' with examples of application to speech, BAGD, 326.

[678] Although this might in isolation be regarded as a dismissive attitude towards tongues, the wider context points in another direction. From 14.10f Paul is pointing out that language without a hearer who understands loses its force. Therefore, in the context of private prayer, where others are absent but God is present to hear the tongue, there is a place for its practice. That tongues may be used in

In 14.14-17, Paul examines the functions and mechanism of praying in a tongue. In 14.14, Paul again uses himself as an example. He thus invites the Corinthians to imagine him as one who speaks in tongues for purposes of prayer. Those in Corinth who do speak in tongues would therefore have the opportunity of thinking of Paul as like them rather than alien. They might then be more receptive to his message. Here again Paul subverts potential opposition through identification. However, Paul gives a rational evaluation of the practice. This provides further *ratio* to bolster Paul's authority.[679] His spirit prays, but his mind (νοῦς) is "unfruitful", it is not engaged in the activity. What (14.15) is he to conclude from this analysis? He regards prayer as involving spirit and mind.[680] He talks about making music to God in the same way. Praying consciously and praying in tongues are therefore both practices he endorses. However, put in context of the assembled congregation, the activity does raise certain problems. Thus, now dissociating himself from this practice by reverting from the first to the second person (14.16), Paul suggests that the person who does not understand the tongue but is present in the room will not know to add his agreement to what is said. "How will he say Amen?" is the problem Paul wishes the Corinthians to see. A note of understanding and conciliation is struck in 14.17. Anticipating the possibility of some feeling their sincerity was being questioned, Paul assures them he knows they may in fact be genuinely praising God. Paul's rhetorical purpose here is not to alienate those with whom he has sympathy. Having made this concession, however, Paul presses on with his main point. He expresses the wish that gatherings serve to build up the other people. In the absence of understanding, corporate edification is not possible.

In 14.18 Paul seems to resort to boasting. He claims to be a tongues-speaker beyond all their tongues-speakers. The thanksgiving to God in this context is probably a rhetorical device rather than an account of his personal worship. It would catch the attention of the manifestation-minded Corinthians that Paul claimed such

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prayer is made clear by 14.14. This is probably the meaning of his positive statements in 14.5 and 14.18.

[679] Shaw, *Cost*, 93, finds 'surprising' the 'stress on the importance of rationality' made here. Shaw's view of Paul's exercise of authority precludes *ratio*, leaving his analysis of this text inadequate.

[680] Paul's Jewish tradition would have ingrained in him that the love of the Lord is to be carried out with both all one's heart and all one's soul (cf. Deut 6.5).

prolific glossalalic experience. He is doing this for effect. Rhetorically, this functions as an implicit claim to authoritative pronouncement on Paul's present subject. If anyone knows about the use of tongues, it would be its most prolific exponent. Having established his credentials on the matter, he goes on to de-emphasise the significance of the gift in the group context. He explains that when he is in the church congregation (ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, 14.19), instead of speaking in tongues, speaking instruction is far more appropriate.[681]

In 14.20, Paul takes up the "brothers" mode of address once again. He tells them not to be children in their perceptions. Using "brothers" is less painful for his readers than to have addressed them as simply "children". Here is an echo of his claim about his own break with immaturity in 13.11. What was implicit persuasion by example then has now become explicit persuasion by precept. Paul is harnessing the power present in an appeal to his own actions without making the appeal explicit.

In 14.23 Paul constructs a scenario where the church is gathered and everyone is speaking in tongues. In that context, an ordinary man or an unbeliever walks in from the street. Paul suggests the visitor would come to the conclusion that the Corinthian Christians were out of their minds. On the other hand, Paul suggests (14.24) that in a similar case where the activity was not tongues but prophecy, that same visitor is brought under conviction by everyone[682] and everyone witnesses his change of heart (ἀνακρίνεται ὑπὸ πάντων). The subsequent falling facedown in worship (14.25) and the profession of the presence of God would appeal to the desires of the Corinthians. For someone to testify, "God is indeed among you" would be very welcome for those whose flaunting of spiritual experience has become so distastefully excessive for Paul. Thus Paul is acknowledging the aims of the Corinthians (for recognition), and is in effect saying, "Your methods are all wrong. If you were, in your gatherings, to switch from an emphasis on tongues to an emphasis on prophecy, then the sort of recognition you seek might well follow." Thus again, Paul has understood the Corinthians' self-interest and found a way of

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[681] "Five words with my mind" (πέντε λόγους τῷ νοΐ μου) probably refers to the utterance of a short sentence.

[682] From the context, this means brought under conviction by *what each person prophesies*.

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appealing to them through that self-interest. This appeal affords Paul's argument increased persuasive power.

From 14.26-33 Paul gives practical instruction on the exercise of gifts in the assembly. This instruction comes in the form of rules. For example, he imposes a maximum of two or three speakers in tongues at one meeting, and only in the context of interpretation being provided. Again only two or three should prophesy in a meeting, and these prophets are to take turns.

The rhetorical implications of this prescriptive ruling are considerable. Paul is here making authoritative pronouncements without inviting discussion on the subject from the Corinthians. That he does so at this point stands out because it has by no means been his usual approach throughout chapters 12 to 14. Far more often he has sought to persuade, discuss, invite reflection or appeal through an appreciation of irony. As will be seen below, this uncharacteristic, bald directive approach will be continued in 14.36-38.

The second half of 14.33 may be read as part of 14.34f,[683] but would be intelligible if read as part of the same sentence as the first half of 14.33.[684] I am arguing for the latter position. Particularly when 14.34f are regarded, on other grounds, as an interpolation, the connection between 14.33 and 36 remains smooth. This connection will be specified below in the comments on 14.36ff.

7.1.2. Theological Analysis

In 14.26, Paul summarises the proper use of spiritual gifts in a congregational setting. In coming together, each has something to give for the benefit of the group: a song, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation. Paul urges that all these be done for edification (πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν). Here Paul has returned to the themes of diversity of contribution within the unity of the congregation working under the direction of the One Spirit which he so carefully developed from 12.4 onwards. 14.26 is reminiscent of 12.8-10.

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[683] As UBS³, RSV, NRSV, NIV, REB.
[684] As KJV, NASB, also Fee, *First Corinthians*, 697.

Paul prescribes some ground rules regarding tongues and then prophecy. As for tongues (14.27), two or a maximum of three should speak. Someone should interpret. In the event of absence of interpretation (14.28), he should keep quiet in the congregation, but instead speak in himself and to God. In the case of prophecy (14.29), again two or three should speak and the others should evaluate the utterances. Another procedural rule (14.30) seems to be designed to ensure that one individual should not say more than he needs to. If a revelation comes to one who is seated while one is prophesying, the first one should be quiet. The point seems to be that recognition should be given to others and the one speaking should make sure the next one to prophesy is quickly given an opportunity to do so. Paul suggests (14.31) each one of the congregation may be eligible to prophesy, but should do so in turn, and all may thereby learn (perhaps, learn to prophesy) and be spoken to. Paul asserts that the prophets are in control of their spirits (14.32), since God prefers peace to confusion (14.33). Here Paul has opted for a theological justification for an assertion. Theology is invoked in providing further *ratio* to support his authority.

7.2.   1 Corinthians 14.34-35

As our text in its present form has it, from here Paul becomes very direct. It might be suggested that from the catalogue of major problems he thought he needed to address in this letter, he felt the role of certain women was best addressed without equivocation. While on the subject, Paul notes that congregational "peace" is in all the churches of the saints, including the peace induced by the silence of women (14.34). Here Paul is prescriptive according to current practice and according to legal injunction. Women are not permitted to speak, but are to remain in obedience. The reference to the law is perhaps to Gen 3.16, where Eve was told her husband would rule over her. The two verses 14.34 and 35 are widely recognised as interpolation. These verses also break up a theme which in their absence flows far more naturally. In 14.27-33, Paul has been making explicit rules about the use of prophetic utterance in the assembly. 14.36-38 may be read as addressing those who regard themselves as gifted, perhaps as prophets, but have chosen to regard Paul's contribution as not worth heeding. Paul insists his message carries the authority of the Lord. It would weaken the force of Paul's argument to combine it with a rebuke about women

speaking. This injunction must be regarded as far more likely to be interpolation.[685] The working of prophetic utterance has been discussed rather fully throughout chapter 14, so Paul's move to pronouncement has some introductory foundation. The topic of female speech, on the other hand, appears here out of nothing, and to introduce that subject in a context of legislation is quite out of keeping with Paul's careful strategy of persuasion up to this point.[686]

If, however, the verses are not interpolations, what do they tell us about Paul's use of power and authority. In the context, the silence of women would have to be linked to the role of prophecy in the assembly.[687] The most plausible reconstruction involves the period of evaluation immediate following a prophetic utterance being interrupted by certain women prophets who had started to ask questions at that point in proceedings. Such interruptions turned Christian worship 'into a question-and-answer session'[688] Paul's instruction does not seem to indicate objection to questions being asked, rather the location where such questions are appropriate.[689] He directs the questions not to be aired in the assembly, but to be taken back to the home (14.35). The extremely bald use of power here may be because of the threat to social order represented by this displacement. Stephen Barton has shown how these verses highlight the importance of Paul's 'sense of place.'[690] Paul regards such behaviour not so much as religious deviation but social anarchy, which is outlawed out of hand. Religious deviation, however, he seeks to counter by appeal to the *ratio* provided in evaluative criteria, particularly love and οἰκδομή. Barton rightly observes, 'The content of the rule about wives speaking is

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[685] The arguments against regarding the verses as original are well marshalled by Fee, *First Corinthians*, 699-702. Cf. P.B.Payne, 'Fuldensis, Sigla for Variants in Vaticanus and 1 Cor 14.34-5' *NTS* 41 (1995): 240-262.

[686] Contra, Shaw, *Cost*, 94, 'The strong emphasis on order (14.33) leads naturally to the silencing of women.'

[687] So Witherington, *Conflict*, 287f and idem, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus*, 129.

[688] Witherington, *Conflict*, 287.

[689] Ibid. Witherington suggests the 'questioning' had emerged as a possible (but for Paul, inappropriate) parallel to the pagan understanding of prophecy exemplified by the Delphic oracle. Paul's instruction seems most intelligible if the women were married women, who could ask their husbands at home.

[690] Barton, 'Paul's Sense of Place', 229-234. Barton notes, 227, that a social 'boundary is a *locus of power*: for it is there that most *control* is required if the social order is to be maintained.'

more uncompromising than the regulations for verbal and non-verbal utterances of other kinds.'[691]

7.3. 1 Corinthians 14.36-40

The final section of the chapter is short. In this section Paul raises the stakes on the issue of authority and issues a bold challenge to those who think they are kings in Corinth to recognise the Lord's authority, and Paul's own participation in it in writing to them.[692] Having claimed authoritative status, Paul summarises his injunctions on the operation of gifts in the assembly.

7.3.1. Rhetorical Analysis

A link was suggested (above, page 122) between 14.33b and the present paragraph (having extracted the interpolation of 14.34f). An appeal has been made to the pattern of conduct in "all the churches" (14.33). Then, in 14.36, Paul sets up a contrast in the form of two rhetorical questions. Both halves of 14.36 begin with "or" (ἤ) used with adversative sense.[693] The effect is to contrast the monolithic body of evidence from "all the churches" with alternatives proposed by some Corinthians. This gives the paragraph a continuity which it lacks where 14.34f are regarded as original.[694]

In choosing this dichotomy, Paul adopts what may be regarded as sarcasm. He may be feigning surprise at the revelation that the word of God came from the Corinthians, and had reached only them and no other churches. It would be entirely unfair of Paul to adopt this approach unless some at Corinth had demonstrated that sort of attitude. The other half of the equation, a setting out by the Corinthians of their own position is unobtainable. What may be gleaned by reading Paul's response must suffice. From 14.37, it is likely that there were individuals who had made grand claims. Someone regarded himself as a prophet or as a spiritual person. If that is so

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[691] Barton, 'Place', 230.

[692] Shaw, *Cost*, 94, overstates his case in claiming that Paul's authority 'is identical with God's.' As seen above (page 46), Paul imposes curbs on his own authority.

[693] Fee, *First Corinthians*, 697f.

[694] As Fee points out, however, even if 14.34f are admitted as original, the flow of the rhetorical argument would remain as just stated.

(and the likelihood here seems strong[695]) a mystique may have developed such that the Corinthians regarded the revelations that were coming through such individuals were of a type that prescribed normative practice for worshippers of Christ. If the interpretation of these revelations had resulted in general disorder in the assembly then it is unsurprising that Paul offers different conclusions.

In 14.38 Paul may be aiming a barb at a particular individual. If there was one person known for these types of attitudes and activities this could be addressed to her. Paul seems to be saying if there is someone who doesn't understand what I mean, then that person can carry on in their lack of understanding. If the person concerned took Paul's point then she could learn from it and change. If she understood but felt resistant to being corrected, Paul's remark might then look like accurate prophecy. Rather than pursue this line and risk humiliation, she might modify her pronouncements in future. Either way, Paul's aim of change of behaviour would have been achieved. It should be added that there is no reason to dismiss the possibility that the one person addressed is a device to address a small group of individuals rather than just one.[696]

In 14.39 Paul returns to addressing the congregation as a whole. He again addresses them "brothers". He summarises the main point he has made in this chapter. He returns to what he had said in the second part of 14.1. He urges the Corinthians to eagerly desire (ζηλοῦτε) to prophesy. Also he urges them not to ban speaking in tongues. What he would want to happen is summed up in 14.40. Let everything (prophecy, tongues, and many other giftings, cf. 14.26) be done (γινέσθω) but decently and according to good order.

7.3.2. Theological Analysis

Paul claims his present writing represents the command of the Lord (14.37) and that the presence of the working of the Spirit in an individual would confirm within them that was so. Conversely for an individual to ignore Paul's writing would

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[695] The strength of the likelihood is revealed by asking the question, 'If this were not so, what reaction would Paul be expecting from 14.36f?' If the Corinthians merely shook their heads puzzled, their opinion of Paul's credibility would surely be greatly reduced and his authority diminished.
[696] This is made more likely by the use of the plural form of 'you' (ὑμῶν / ὑμᾶς) in 14.36.

be to invite being ignored (14.38). Having claimed an authoritative vantage point, Paul uses his perspective to promote the practice of prophecy and of a diminished role for tongues. Over both these and other practices (seeing here in πάντα [14.40] a theological implication of inclusivity) he imposes a blanket rule of decency and right order. There is a parallel between this text and others in 1 Corinthians, particularly 4.18-21, 11.16 and 15.31-34. The parallel consists in the high degree of authority claimed and the modesty of his subsequent pronouncement.[697]

What causes the increase in rhetorical power used in 36-40? It seems in 36f, Paul envisages a belief in prophetic utterance of a more authoritative nature than the traditional material brought with Paul's apostolic ministry. Here then is a simple challenge: the authority of some Corinthian prophets versus the authority of Paul. In order to resolve the challenge, Paul appeals to an external norm to evaluate claims to power. It is only this decisive *ratio* that can confer legitimacy on such rival claims to power. Paul appeals to the congregation to exercise their authority to test prophecy.[698] The onus is placed back on the Corinthians to 'acknowledge' (14.37) Paul's position as originating in the Lord's command. Inspired speech is always to be 'checked'[699] and the tools to exercise such checks and to evaluate the speech have already been imparted to the Corinthians. Paul's challenge is for them to make use of what is already available to them. The 'what I am writing to you' (14.37) refers not merely to the immediate context, but to the overall argument of the chapter. Paul remains confident that any sane evaluation of his argument will conclude the controls and criteria he has highlighted (τὸ συμφέρον, love and οἰκοδομή) are endorsed by

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[697] In 4.18ff Paul raises his rhetoric until he issues a challenge to demonstrate power in his presence. He asks whether they want him to come as a chastiser. Having raised the stakes he then objects to their handling of a case of notorious sexual misbehaviour within the congregation. One would not need to claim a particularly high authoritative position to challenge the apparent inaction of the Corinthians faced with this circumstance. In 11.16 Paul cites as normative the practice of all the other churches. This strong potential criticism is directed to a directive regarding the practice of women's head covering. 15.31ff emphasises the sacrificial commitment of Paul to his mission. This is painted in extreme form "I die daily" (15.31) to raise Paul's profile as a servant leader. Having claimed such a place, he then issues the instruction for the Corinthians to "stop sinning" (μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε, 15.34). This is hardly controversial within the ethical imperative which permeates Paul's teaching and indeed the Jesus tradition. Thus Paul may be seen assembling his strongest arsenal when making pronouncements unlikely to occasion outrage or surprise or shock.

[698] So Dunn, 'Responsible,' 279, 'the inspired utterance must accord with the foundation message on which the community of believers itself was established.'

[699] Dunn, 'Responsible,' 274-78.

the Lord. It is up to the Corinthians themselves to 'own' these values and accept the persuasive force of Paul's argument.

7.4. Evaluation of Power relations in 1 Corinthians 13-14

What may be added to the picture of power relations in Corinth by the study of these two chapters? By the use of love in chapter 13, Paul uses a form of language that acts to recommend consideration for others in a compelling and highly persuasive manner. He engages his readers at a motivational level to harness their own decision-making and desire to bring the outcome of mutual co-operation and concern for their fellows which he seeks. He gives a temporal boundary to the spirit manifestations which they find so appealing, restricting these to before the eschaton. He encourages the Corinthians to put aside their present childish ways of selfish boasting by a rhetorical appeal to his own development and maturity.

In chapter 14, he seeks to undermine the pre-eminence of glossalalia by the introduction of the forceful criterion of edification. Edification is used as an heuristic tool for the Corinthians to consider the outcome of their glossalalic utterances rather than just focussing on the experience of speaking. As well as promoting a re-examination of glossalalia, Paul takes the Corinthians through a process of assessing the role of prophetic utterance in the context of the assembly. Using the same criterion of edification, Paul highlights the benefits of prophecy. Overall he seeks to adjust the relative prominence of these two giftings within Corinthian church practice. By extension from prophetic utterance to apostolic statement, Paul arms the Corinthian congregation to evaluate Paul's own pronouncements and thereby reinforces their corporate authority.

PART III: DISCUSSION

Chapter Eight: Evaluation

This study of 1 Corinthians 12-14 has given a clearer understanding of how Paul used his power in relation to the Corinthians. At the outset of the exegetical section, it was suggested that Paul's practice of power language, strategies and techniques should be observed. Some of these will now be reviewed.

Paul uses hyperbole and *reductio ad absurdum*, perhaps even ridicule. He draws a cartoon of a single-membered body. He holds up several themes of Corinthian self-satisfaction against the love standard to demonstrate the inadequacy of these attitudes. He relativises the importance of charismatic endowment, limiting charisma to the present age. He tests congregational events according to the criterion of building up. Where he brings a provocative perspective, he works to buttress it with examples which could be readily accepted. His form of address sometimes uses the first person to exploit a sense of common ground, and the formula "brothers" is sometimes adopted to suggest exhortation among family members across the same level. On occasion, Paul enumerates rules, and once unilaterally imposes the law of love. He makes an appeal to the Lord's commands.

Where the wrong conclusion at a strategic juncture would provide potential for unbridled confusion, Paul switches to stronger persuasive language. He appeals to the Corinthians' common experience to gain agreement over shared assumptions. He uses a teleology of spiritual gifts to realign their perspectives. He deploys beliefs in divine design to ensure acceptance of the principles involved in 'the body of Christ.' Paul uses many techniques as vehicles for power, exhibiting great versatility. Chiasma are used to persuade regarding certain corollaries. He moves forward gradually from firm shared beliefs so that differences are rendered almost imperceptible as his persuasion invites agreement at each step. He then arrives at a conclusion logically coherent with these steps. Appeal to command from the Lord is used as a last resort, but even where this is done (14.37) Paul encourages the

Corinthians to evaluate his writings to see whether they cohere with the Lord's commands.

Thus, Paul's persuasion ranges from a subtle undermining of the ground holding mistaken beliefs to forthright condemnation of some of the worst excesses, from brotherly exhortation to command of the Lord. Paul will employ whatever rhetorical means are necessary to persuade. Paul clearly sees great authority at his disposal, but again and again he is seen using this to produce effects which, if implemented, should indeed produce results helpful not just to himself or one group within the congregation but to the Corinthian church as a whole.[700]

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[700] However, little evidence has been uncovered in this study of Paul's abandoning his own beliefs in order to win an argument. He does seem to maintain integrity in this matter.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

The present study sought to uncover aspects of power and authority in Paul's ministry through asking the text questions and letting the text speak to answer the questions on its own terms. By a detailed exegetical study of a large unit of 1 Corinthians, Paul's concerns were allowed to be heard. By listening for language related to social factors underlying the situation addressed by Paul, insights from social-scientific approaches could be retained. Similarly, by carefully noting the rhetorical function of Paul's language and the construction of his arguments, the decisive rhetorical dimension always present in the letter has been brought into sharper relief. At the same time, awareness that Paul had an agenda driven by his theological concerns was retained.

The working definition of power as one's ability to cause another to act according to one's wishes does not need modification in light of the study. However, the definition of authority may be refined to include the concept of *ratio* encountered at several points in the study. Authority is *an accepted claim of legitimacy for the exercise of power based on some* ratio *external to the participants*. For Paul, that *ratio* was provided by the gospel.

From my earliest readings of Paul, I have been impressed with Paul's intellect and carefully structured bursts of discourse. He seems to me at once both sane and passionate. These assumptions about Paul have in no way been overturned by undertaking the present study.

The model used was to come to the text having taken into account theological, social and rhetorical factors. This produced an awareness of the multi-dimensional situation faced by Paul and so has brought into sharper relief Paul's use of power and his authority in 1 Corinthians. This model might well be suited to examine power issues in other Pauline texts, and indeed throughout the New Testament.

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