Alpha

Studies in Early Christianity

1

Warring States Project

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST

2017

Alpha

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ΙΝΑ ΕΠΙΓΝΩΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΩΝ ΚΑΤΗΧΗΘΗΣ ΛΟΓΩΝ ΤΗΝ ΑΣΦΑΛΕΙΑΝ

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Preface

Alpha provides a home and venue for studies of text growth and interaction in the early Christian writings, with attention also to contemporary religious developments, and to Homer and the Hebrew Scriptures as parallel cases of text formation over time. With our sister journal Warring States Papers, which is responsible for classical China (and which exchanges articles of mutual interest with *Alpha*), we seek to demonstrate the applicability of standard philological methods to all fields of humanistic inquiry. What are those methods?

As William L Holladay said in his 1986 Jeremiah commentary, "The first question . . . is the integrity of the passage: is it one unit or more?" We recognize strata, interpolations, and any other signs of text growth that internal evidence may suggest. We remember (with Tischendorf) that, of related passages, the one which is more readily seen as giving rise to the other is likely to be the earlier, and (with Ranke) we prefer the earlier evidence, while being aware that all texts have their own agendas. We apply the test of coherence to individual results, and that of historical plausibility to the gradually emerging large picture.

Proceeding thus has led us to regard several Gospels (not only John) as stratified, and to view the genuine Pauline Epistles as having been improved by Paul's editors. So clarified, the texts attest a humanly intelligible Paul, free of the additions by which he was made less divisive for a future Christian readership, and reveal in the Gospel record a pre-Pauline Christianity which we call Alpha: a Christianity based not on the Resurrection or any other theory of Jesus' death, but on his teachings during his life. This early Christianity, at first little more than a Messianic Jewish sect, continued alongside the later Pauline or Beta Christianity down to the time of Pliny and beyond. Though it has long been institutionally extinct, it still survives in a sort of tacit form, in the practical day-to-day living of many Christians.

Each *Alpha* volume begins with articles of general and methodological interest, and then runs chronologically: early witnesses, the immediate post-Apostolic generation, and later developments including Gnostic tendencies and post-Temple Judaism.

At present, there can be said to be an "Alpha Christianity" community, and papers in this first volume are mostly the work of the founding figures. It is not required that *Alpha* authors agree among themselves, but the editors select what seem to them the best current solutions, and combine them in a Working Chronology at the end of the volume. It will be updated annually. Dates of articles are those of original presentation; most papers have been revised by their authors for their appearance here.

This Volume focuses on what we find to be the key pre-Pauline texts: the earliest layer of Mark, the Epistle of Jacob, and the core of the Didache. The non-Markan material in Matthew and Luke receives special attention; we see no need to conjecture an outside source for it, and find instead a two-way relation between the two Gospels. We also discover a division within Acts, and an unsuspected second Sermon in Luke. We compare Mandaean and Gospel tradition echoes of the John the Baptist movement and begin a consideration of the non-Synoptic portions of the Gospel of Thomas.

Conventions for *Alpha* include the following:

Dates. As a convention which works well in languages other than English, we use a leading zero in place of BC(E). 65 BC becomes 065, while AD 14 is simply 14. The "03rd century" (which can be abbreviated as 03c) is the 3rd BC; "3rd" is the 3rd AD. The advantages of this leading zero over a minus sign are that it allows unambiguous hyphenation of dates which cross the century line (Horace, 065-08; Augustus, 063-14). It also avoids a conflict with astronomers, whose "−65" is *not* the "−65" of historians.

Abbreviations for books of the Bible are mostly standard, though we distinguish Phm (Philemon) and Php (Philippians). For the Epistle of James, we use Ja, which suggests the correct Jacob (as in the OT) and the Anglicized James (in English Bibles in the NT). Jesus, it is now known, was a Jew, and so, presumably, were his brothers (and, as we suspect in connection with that Epistle, the brother of Levi of Alphaeus).

Greek Text. For the NT, we follow the latest edition of the United Bible Societies (UBS) text and the corresponding Nestle-Aland (NA) edition, but are inclined to accept the minority opinion of Bruce Metzger on several points. There has been a drift away from the decisions of Westcott and Hort (1881), including the recent readmission to the text of such stories as "The Woman Taken in Adultery," a tendency from which we prefer to hold ourselves apart. In citing manuscripts, we resist the temptation to abbreviate Vaticanus as V, but use S for Sinaiticus. Papyri are cited with a capital P. Among translations, we suggest the ASV, which preserves Mark's historical presents, but no one version is required of our contributors.

References. Short citations (in the form Surname **Keyword**) are expanded in the Works Cited list at the end of each article. To save space, often cited standard works are not normally included in those lists. For them, and for journals cited by acronym, see the reference lists at the end of the volume. Also at the end of the volume are indexes to subjects and to passages discussed, along with the above-mentioned Working Chronology of texts and events.

Original Venues of these articles include meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Project's own conferences, and several E-lists. Some articles are repeated here from Warring States Papers; they are indicated by a formula such as

Alpha v1 (2017) < Warring States Papers v1 (2010)

at the bottom of the first page.

Contributions from interested scholars are welcome. Our formal Call for Papers will be found at http://www.umass.edu/wsp/publications/alpha/call.html. Except for first serial and database rights, our contributors retain full ownership of their material, and do not require our permission for its further use in any form.

We conclude with the hope that publication of these studies will bring them more effectively to the attention of potentially interested readers, both in the NT field proper and in the wider historical community. We hope they may also serve to suggest that, whether at the level of general methodology or at the more specific substantive level, humanity, and the study of humanity, are ultimately one.

The Editors

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Language, Ambience, and Methodology

Adjectival φαῦλος in James 3:16

Keith L Yoder
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Corpus Paulinum (27 Aug 2013)



Might there be a word play on "Paul" in the final phrase of James 3:16?

πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα "every evil thing"
πᾶν Παῦλον πρᾶγμα "every Paulish thing"

If the name Παῦλος "Paul" appeared within close textual context of Ja 3:16, a word play would be apparent. Obviously, that is not the case. But if Ja 2:14-26 is reacting against a text or reputed teachings of Paul,[1] then "Paul" would be in the echo chamber of James' performance arena.

Phonetics. In this alliterative phrase, the initial "ph" sound of φαῦλον in the written text could naturally be attracted to the "p" sound of the initial consonant of the preceding and following words. Further, the first syllables of all three words contain the same "ah" vowel sound (using the historical Koine pronunciation), which might further encourage attraction to an initial "p" sound for the middle word. See the last three words of Ja 1:2, πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις ("you fall into various trials") for an alliterative triplet using initial "p," as well as other consonance or assonance features. James uses many rhythmic and alliterative doublets and triplets. Dibelius (p37) mentions, among others including the above, these examples:

Ja 1:1,2. χαίρειν ‖ χαράν	grace . . . joy
Ja 1:25. παρακύψας ‖ παραμείνας	having looked . . . having remained
Ja 3:6. φλογίζουσα ‖ φλογιζομένη	setting on fire . . . being set on fire
Ja 3:7. δαμάζεται ‖ δεδάμασται	is tamed . . . has been tamed

[1]For such a proposal, see Hengel **Anti-Pauline**.

To which may be added:

Ja 1:12f. πειρασμόν	πειραζόμενος	πειράζομαι
		testing . . . being tested . . . I am tested
Ja 1:24. ἀπελήλυθεν	ἐπελάθετο	went away . . . forgot
Ja 3:8. δαμάσαι	δύναται	to tame . . . is able

Usage. φαῦλος is used 5 other times in the Greek NT: 2 Cor 5:10. Rom 9:11 (both "evil," in contrast to ἀγαθόν "good"), Tit 2:8 ("[having nothing] evil [to say of us]"), Jn 3:20 ("evil things"), Jn 5:29 ("evil things," in contrast to ἀγαθά "good things"). None of these is in a noun phrase with πρᾶγμα "practices," though both John instances coordinate φαῦλος with a form of the cognate verb πράσσω "practice, do." There are no other Greek NT or Septuagint combinations of φαῦλος and πρᾶγμα. φαῦλος occurs 10 times in the Septuagint (5 in Proverbs, 3 in Job, and 1 each in Maccabees and Sirach), mostly in the milder sense "worthless."

Classical usage is milder still; instances of φαῦλον πρᾶγμα are usually translated as "trifling matter/affair," "light task," unimportant business" (Aristophanes Lysistrata line 14, Isocrates Evangoras 59, Plato Republic 2:374e, Plato Phaedo 95e, Plato Symposium 213c, Xenophon Anabasis 6:6).

Comment

Glenn Holland, 2013



I wonder if your argument is bolstered by the Latin equivalent *paulus* "small," which might occur to any audience members familiar with Latin. We might expect that at least some would hear the phrase as "every Paulish thing," whether the author intended them to or not, and the effect on the audience is ultimately more important than authorial intention. This is one reason why the Jesus movement and later the Church acknowledged the role of the Spirit in its work and message.

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Antiochus' Persecution in Josephus' *War*

Chris Seeman
Walsh University

SBL/EGL (17 March 2017)

The persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes marks a watershed in Jewish history. The targeting of cult and culture by a Hellenistic ruler crystalized an ethos of resistance that manifested itself in martyrdom and rebellion. Foreshadowed by the Book of Daniel and commemorated in the Maccabean literature, the Antiochene persecution offered fertile ground for Jewish historiography.

Given its pivotal significance for Jewish history, it's unsurprising that Flavius Josephus showcased it in his *Jewish Antiquities*. What is surprising is that he chose to begin his *Jewish War* with the same event. To be sure, backstories are important for establishing context, but this fails to explain why Josephus felt compelled to reach back nearly two centuries to explain what happened in 66 CE. He might as easily have begun with Herod the Great, to whose reign he devotes most of Book 1 of the *War*. In his prologue, Josephus offers this justification:

> To speak of ancient things in the case of the Jews, in fact – **who** some of these were, **how** they up and fled from the Egyptians, **what sort** of country they encountered while they were wandering, **how many** places they seized in sequence, and **how** they found themselves displaced – I consider to be untimely now and in any case redundant, seeing that many Jews before me have recounted the deeds of our ancestors with precision, and **certain Greeks** have recast those things into their native speech without veering much from the truth. So just where both the historical writers of this group and our **own prophets** finished, from there I shall establish the beginning of my account. (*War* 1:17-18).

On the face of it, this sounds reasonable, but a closer inspection of Josephus' Maccabean narrative reveals clear dependence on 1 Maccabees, thereby undercutting his pretense of filling an historiographical gap. Josephus' rhetorical claim to begin at the beginning, then, is insufficient to account for the presence of the Antiochene persecution in his narrative. A brief review of the narrative itself is in order.

> **Factional strife** arose among the leaders of the Jews at the time when Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes had a quarrel with Ptolemy VI concerning all of Syria. Their ambition was control of the government because each person of rank could not bear being subject to his peers. Onias, one of the high priests, gained the upper hand and drove the descendants of Tobias out of the city. The latter fled to Antiochus and pleaded with him to invade Judea, using them as guides The king, who had long had similar plans, was (easily) persuaded. Having marched out with a very sizable army, he himself took the city by storm and did away with a large number of Ptolemy's supporters.

> In addition, he gave the soldiers license to collect spoils without restraint, whereas he himself not only plundered the Temple but also interrupted the continuity of the daily sacrifices for three years and six months. The high priest Onias, however, fled to Ptolemy and received from him a place in the district of Heliopolis where he founded a small town that resembled Jerusalem, with a similar temple. (*War* 1:31-33)

It is hardly coincidental that the first word of Josephus' narrative proper (stasis, factional strife) is the leitmotif of the whole work. The dynamic with which Josephus opens his history foreshadows the circumstances that will determine Jerusalem's fate.

Josephus continues:

> For Antiochus, however, neither the unhoped-for conquest of the city nor the looting with so much slaughter was sufficient. So, lacking control over his passions and remembering what he had suffered during the siege, he tried to force the Jews both to keep their infants uncircumcised and to sacrifice swine on the altar, thus **abolishing ancestral customs**. All disobeyed these dispositions, and those who were most esteemed were slain. (*War* 1:34-35)

While Josephus' description of the persecution is unremarkable, the idiom he employs to sum up the event – abolishing ancestral customs – is a charged expression in *War*. In fact, most of Josephus' use of the verb καταλύω pertains only to political or military disruption. Only at the center (Book 4) and the ends (Books 1 and 7) of the work is the verb applied to the overthrow of the laws. It would seem then that (as many scholars have observed) Josephus deliberately chose to begin the *War* with the chronologically remote Antiochene persecution because it allowed him to highlight factional strife, constitutional overthrow, and Jerusalem besieged – all fundamental themes of his work – at the very outset.

To borrow an expression from Steve Mason, the Antiochene persecution serves as a "signpost of symmetry," not only at the macro level of the whole *War*, but also within Book 1 where the event itself takes place. Book 1 is framed at the other end by the story of Jewish opposition to Herod the Great's ornamental eagle on the Temple facade. What is noteworthy is how the resistance expresses itself. Scholars of the ancestral laws incite some "daring" youths to tear down the eagle:

> They mentioned to their acquaintances that now was perhaps the most appropriate time to avenge God and tear down the artifact put up in violation of their ancestral laws, for it was unlawful for the Temple to contain either images or busts or a work representing some living creature. Even so, the king had set up a golden eagle above the great gate. It was this creature which the learned men at that time exhorted [the youths] to knock down, arguing that **it was a noble deed to die for one's ancestral law**. (*War* 1:649-650)

In contrast to the *Antiquities*, which features multiple instances of the "Herod as violator of ancestral custom" trope, the golden eagle incident at the close of Book 1 is the only such instance in the *War*. Its placement, coupled with the Antiochene persecution, seems deliberate on Josephus' part.

Another important Antiochus appears in Book 7. Josephus introduces him early:

> It happened about this time that the remnant of Jews at Antioch were incriminated and in danger of extermination, the Antiochene community having been greatly incited against them in consequence not only of the false accueations now laid to their charge, but also of certain incidents which had taken place not long before. (*War* 7:41-42)

> The Jewish race, densely interspersed among the populations of every part of the world, is particularly numerous in Syria, where intermingling is due to the proximity of the two countries. But it was at Antioch that they especially congregated, partly owing to the greatness of the city, but mainly because the successors of King Antiochus had enabled them to live there in security. For although Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes sacked Jerusalem and plundered the Temple his successors on the throne restored to the Jews of Antioch all such votive offerings as were made of brass, to be laid up in their synagogue, and moreover granted them citizen rights on equality with the Greeks. Continuing to receive similar treatment from later monarchs, the Jewish colony grew in number, and their richly designed and costly offerings formed a splendid ornament to the Temple. Moreover, they were constantly attracting to their religious ceremonies multitudes of Greeks, and these they had in some measure incorporated with themselves. (*War* 7:43-45)

Josephus continues:

> Now just at the time when war had been declared and Vespasian had recently landed in Syria, and when hatred of the Jews was everywhere at its height . . .

Note how Josephus chronologically displaces this backstory, which refers to the outbreak of the First Revolt narrated back in Book 2 of the *War*, to the beginning of this post-war survey in Book 7. This four-year time lag is transparently designed to set the events he is about to narrate parallel to the Antiochene persecution in Book 1:

> . . . a certain Antiochus, one of their own number and highly respected for the sake of his father, who was chief magistrate of the Jews in Antioch, entered the theater during an assembly of the people and denounced his own father and the other Jews, accusing them of a design to burn the whole city to the ground in one night; he also delivered up some foreign Jews as accomplices to the plot. On hearing this the people, in uncontrollable fury, ordered the men who had been delivered up to be instantly consigned to the flames, and all were forthwith burnt to death in the theater. They then rushed for the Jewish masses, believing the salvation of their native place to be dependent on their prompt chastisement. Antiochus further inflamed their fury, for, thinking to furnish proof of his conversion and of his detestation of Jewish customs by sacrificing after the manner of the Greeks, he recommended that the rest should be compelled to do the same, as the conspirators would thus be exposed by their refusal. The test being applied to the Antiochenes, a few submitted, and the recalcitrants were massacred.

> . . . Antiochus, having next procured the aid of troops from the Roman general, domineered with severity over his Jewish fellow-citizens, not permitting them to repose on the seventh day, but **compelling** them to do everything exactly as on other days, and so strictly did he enforce this, that not only at Antioch was the weekly day of rest **abolished**, but the example having been started there spread for a short time to the other cities as well. (*War* 7:46-53)

Conclusion

Josephus' decision to include the Antiochene persecution in his narrative serves at least three purposes:

(1) It introduces a cluster of motifs that figure prominently in his account of the First Revolt: civil strive as a precipitant of national calamity, threats to Jerusalem and its shrine, and the overthrow of the ancestral laws. All these themes reach their crescendo in Book 4, the center of his seven-voume history.

(2) The Antiochene persecution showcases the archetypical response to sacrilege: a daring drive to avenge God and country. The Maccabees, in this capacity, prepare Josephus' audience to comprehend the psychology of the vandals who dare to tear down Herod's golden eagle from the Temple facade at the end of Herod's reign, thus providing framing elements for Book 1

(3) The pre-war persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes parallels the post-war persecution of the Antiochene Jewish community by one of their own. The juxtaposition of these stories, I suggest, invites reflection on the part of the reader/hearer. When Titus visits Antioch following the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Judeophobic Antiochenes petition him to expel the Jews or at least strip them of their citizenship, the victorious general declines, leaving the community untouched. The Romans, suggests Josephus – or at any rate the Flavians – are not like Antiochus Epiphanes, in spite of their sharing with him the opprobrium of having ravaged Jerusalem.

Another moral the Antiochene persecutions deliver is that the Jews' deadliest enemies are not – or need not be – Greeks or Romans; the enemy may be within (a major theme of Josephus' retelling of the tragedy of the First Revolt).

Josephus' point is not naively propagandistic. As a Jewish aristocrat writing for his educated Roman counterparts, Josephus' goal is to build a bridge of empathy. Jews and Romans alike can appreciate the sort of political debacles that can lead to the madness of an Antiochus, whether that Antiochus be a Macedonian monarch or a Jewish magistrate.

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Four Gospel Trajectories

E Bruce Brooks
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Synoptic-L (14 June 2006)

One kind of evidence for sequence in time is plausible developments: trajectories. I here identify four trajectories in the New Testament Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and find that they imply the sequence Mk > Mt > Lk > Jn.

1. The Divinization Trajectory. Jesus in **Mark** is a man. He first makes contact with God at his Baptism (Mk 1:10, "Straightway . . . he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him"). His divine power is drained in use (Mk 5:30, "perceiving . . . that the power from him had gone forth"), renewed by prayer (Mk 9:29, "This kind [of demon] can come out by nothing, save by prayer"), and lost at his Crucifixion (Mk 15:34, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"). **Matthew** gives Jesus a divine birth (Mt 1:18, "Mary . . . was found with child of the Holy Spirit"), thus making him godlike from the beginning. **Luke** tops this by giving his cousin John the Baptist also a divine birth (Lk 1:36f, the angel to Mary: "And behold, Elizabeth thy kinswoman . . . hath conceived a son in her old age"), and by having John acknowledge Jesus prenatally (Lk 1:41, "When Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb"). In **John**, Jesus exists from the beginning of the universe (Jn 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word;" 1:14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us"). Founders are often aggrandized by their followers, and nothing could be more natural than this increasing divinization of Jesus, and the associated reluctance to ascribe to him any human feelings or shortcomings.[1] The implied order is Mk > Mt > Lk > Jn.

2. The Mary Trajectory. Mary is rejected by Jesus in **Mark** (Mk 3:33f, "Who are my mother and brothers?"). In **Matthew**, Mary is favored by God to be Jesus' mother (Mt 1:20f, the angel to Joseph: "Do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"). In **Luke** Mary reacts fully and eloquently to the news that she is to be so favored (Lk 1:46f, the Magnificat). Luke adds a childhood narrative of Jesus in the Temple, where Mary speaks to Jesus (Lk 2:41-51). In **John**, for reasons above noted, there is no birth scene, but Mary is part of Jesus' ministry. She persuades him to perform his first miracle at Cana (Jn 2:3f, Mary to the servants: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it"), and at the end is touchingly commended by him, from the very cross, to the care of a disciple (Jn 19:26f, "Jesus . . . saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother"). It is emotionally unlikely that the later Jesus tradition increasingly *disdained* Mary. The implied order is Mk > Mt > Lk > Jn.

[1]For a long list of instances where Matthew shows greater respect for Jesus in passages parallel to Mark, see the commentary of Willoughby C Allen (3ed Clark 1912) xxxi-xxxiii.

3. The Baptism Trajectory. In **Mark**, Jesus is simply baptized by John (Mk 1:9). In **Matthew**, John protests that Jesus should baptize *him*, and is persuaded to proceed only in order "to fulfil all righteousness" (Mt 3:15). In **Luke**, the baptism is mentioned but not described (Lk 3:21b). As in Mark and Matthew, Luke's verb is the passive "was baptized," but John is not specified as the *agent* of the verb. In **John**, the baptism is not even reported; only the detail of the Spirit as a dove resting on Jesus (Jn 1:32f). Jesus' baptism may have been offensive as implying that John was Jesus' spiritual superior, or that Jesus had sins to be forgiven. The gradual attenuation of the baptism in the Gospel accounts is compatible with the divinization trajectory noticed above, and with the theological idea that Jesus' death had the power to atone for others' sins because Jesus was himself without sin. The implied order is Mk > Mt > Lk > Jn.

4. The Jerusalem Trajectory. In all the Gospels, Galilee is Jesus' home country; his first preaching is done there. Jerusalem figures in the Jesus story in different ways. In **Mark**, Jesus visits many Galilean towns, and goes to Jerusalem only to be crucified. The disciples return to Galilee, and though the ending of Mark is missing in our text, it is predicted (Mk 14:28, 16:7) that Jesus will appear to them there. In **Matthew**, some of Jesus' preaching is done on his journey to Jerusalem, and three Galilean towns, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, are cursed as unbelieving (Mt 11:21-24); the risen Jesus first appears in Jerusalem, to the Women at the Tomb (Mt 28:9-10), though there is also a later Galilean appearance, of the kind that was predicted if not displayed in Mark (Mt 28:16f). In **Luke**, the risen Jesus not only appears on the road from Jerusalem, but orders the disciples to *remain* in Jerusalem (Lk 24:15f); there is no Galilee appearance. **John**, like Luke, limits the appearances of the risen Jesus to Jerusalem;[2] he has Jesus visit Jerusalem repeatedly before that, and often preach there. The Jerusalem shift in the Jesus story is thus furthest advanced in John.

A Galilee-to-Jerusalem shift in the history of Christianity is attested by Paul, who never mentions Galilee, and who visits Jerusalem (not Galilee) to meet with Peter, and incidentally one Jacob whom he thinks of as the brother of Jesus (Gal 1:18). It seems that the Gospels increasingly project that later administrative shift back into Jesus' lifetime, so the least Jerusalemized Gospel will probably also be the earliest Gospel. The implied order is Mk > Mt > Lk > Jn.

Conclusion. More examples might be given, but these show how the winds are blowing. All the winds blow in the same direction. They amount to three trends: (1) increasing respect for Jesus and his family, (2) reduction in the prominence given to John's baptism of Jesus; and (3) an administrative shift of the later Jesus movement from Galilee to Jerusalem. It is these trends (the first predictable on general grounds) that differences in the Gospels seem to reflect. Complications there surely are, some due to growth processes in one or more Gospel, but the overall pattern is clear.

Such developments are strong evidence for the Historical Jesus. Enthusiasm (as for Mary) proves nothing, but embarrassment (as concerning John) is quite another matter. If there was no baptism, why do the Gospels increasingly minimize its importance? And if John baptized him, then there probably was a Jesus there to be baptized.

[2]Save for the inconsistent, and clearly later appended, final chapter, Jn 21.

Evidence for Interpolation in Paul

William O Walker Jr
Trinity University

(August 2001)

EDITORS' NOTE: Pages 15-90 of **Interpolations in the Pauline Letters** (Sheffield 2001) are here greatly condensed and slightly revised, with the permission of the author, to make them more directly available to our readers.

Definition. A *gloss* is an explanatory note or comment, generally written in the margin or between the lines of a manuscript by a reader, scribe, or the author of the document. A later scribe might copy a gloss into the document, assuming that it was meant to be part of it. Unlike a gloss, an *interpolation* is foreign material inserted deliberately and directly into the text.

A Priori Probability of Interpolations. That interpolations were introduced into many Classical writings cannot be questioned. Ancient critics believed that Homer had suffered interpolation, and that it was possible for critics to recover something like the original text.[1] Zenodotus, the first head of the library in Alexandria (03c), relied on four principles of criticism: Interpolations could be detected (1) if they broke the continuity of the poem, (2) if they lacked poetic art or were unsuitable to the characters of gods and men, (3) if they contained errors about ancient events, (4) if they differed from the usual style of the poet.[2] Maurer has asserted that 'the fact [of interpolations in Homer] is notorious,'[3] and Bolling has identified numerous interpolations in the texts of the Iliad and the Odyssey.[4] Interpolations have also been detected in the works of Hippocrates, Aristophanes, Euripides, and Thucydides.[5] Of direct relevance to the question of interpolations in the Pauline letters is the almost certain presence of interpolations in precisely the genre of ancient literature most closely akin to those letters: the letters of philosophers (eg Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and Seneca), and particularly those 'letters of exhortation in which teachers seek to guide and mold the character of disciples.'[6] The Epicurean correspondence, for example, 'has been heavily edited by Epicurus' followers who amplified the master's teachings and adapted them to later situations.'[7] This provides a close parallel to the letters of Paul, which can also be seen as 'letters of exhortation in which [a teacher] seek[s] to guide and mold the character of disciples.'

[1]Grant **Letter** 17.

[2]Grant **Marcion** 211; cf Pfeiffer **History** 108-113.

[3]Maurer **Thucydides** 181.

[4]Bolling **External**.

[5]Grant **Heresy** 21-22 and 61-66; Maurer **Thucydides**.

[6]Stowers **Greek** 292.

[7]Stowers **Greek** 292.

Beyond this, there is evidence that early Christians introduced interpolations into Jewish writings. It is widely agreed, for example, that material was added to the Greek text of Josephus to create non-Christian testimony to the messiahship and resurrection of Jesus.[8] Similarly, Celsus charged that Christians had added interpolations to the Sibylline Oracles to provide pagan support for the truth of the Christian religion.[9] Other Jewish texts in which Christian interpolations have been identified are the Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah, and 4 Ezra.[10]

The presence of interpolations in other ancient literature would lead us to expect, on a priori grounds, that the Pauline letters may contain non-Pauline interpolations.

The Lack of Manuscript Evidence. Apart from two passages,[11] every proposed interpolation in the Pauline letters appears in all extant manuscripts of the letters. This raises the crucial question: Might a passage appear in all surviving manuscripts and yet be a non-Pauline interpolation? I suggest that the absence of direct manuscript evidence for interpolation should be seen precisely as the *absence* of evidence. Barrett reminds us that 'the evidence of the [extant manuscripts] can tell us nothing about the state of the Pauline . . . literature before its publication' (presumably late in the 1st century).[12] Further, the evidence of the manuscripts provides no clear information regarding the state of the Pauline literature prior to the date of the oldest surviving manuscript of the letters – that is, near the end of the 2nd century. Koester notes that 'critics of classical texts know that the first century of their transmission is the period in which the most serious corruptions occur,' and that 'the Gospels [and the same could be said of the Pauline letters], from the very beginning, were not archival materials but used texts.' This 'is the worst thing that could happen to any textual tradition,' because 'a text not protected by canonical status, but used in liturgy, apologetics, homiletics, and instruction of catechumens is most likely to be copied frequently and is thus subject to frequent modifications and alterations.'[13]

It would thus appear that the period between the composition of Paul's letters (mid 1st century) and the date of the earliest extant manuscript (late 2nd century at best) was precisely the time when the letters would have been most susceptible to alteration, including interpolation.[14] Indeed, the circumstances provided ample motivation and opportunity for the introduction of interpolations. All of this, in my judgement, makes it reasonable to assume that interpolations are likely to have been introduced into the Pauline letters prior to the date of the earliest surviving manuscripts.

It remains to ask: Precisely how shall such interpolations be recognized?

[8]Josephus Antiquities 18/3:3; see Feldman **Josephus** 990f, Sanford **Propaganda** 127-145.

[9]Grant **Heresy** 24; see also Collins **Sibylline** 2-6.

[10]Charlesworth **Christian** 28.

[11]Rom 16:25-27 and 1 Cor 14:34-35 occur at different places in different manuscripts.

[12]Barrett **First** 14.

[13]Koester **Text** 19f.

[14]See further Walker **Unexamined**.

External Evidence for Interpolation

1. Absence from Witnesses. The most obvious type of evidence for interpolation would be the absence of a passage from ancient manuscripts, versions, or lectionaries. Such evidence exists for one Pauline passage. The doxology of Rom 16:25-27 appears in all the "best" manuscripts, but there is evidence for an early version of Romans without it. It was apparently not in the texts used by Marcion (2c), Priscillian (4c), or Jerome 4/5c); Gamble has argued that 'this patristic testimony is buttressed by . . . the complete omission of the doxology' in the original Old Latin.[15]

2. Presence in Different Locations. Besides being absent from some witnesses, Rom 16:25-27 is located after Rom 15 in the oldest extant manuscript, P46 (late 2c or early 3c); after Rom 16 in most of the "best" witnesses, including Sinaiticus (4c), Vaticanus (4c), Ephraemi Rescriptus (5c), and Bezae (6c); after Rom 14 in several witnesses; after *both* Rom 14 and 16 in a few including Alexandrinus (5c); and after both Rom 14 and 15 in one 14c manuscript. Such uncertainty about the appropriate location of the passage suggests that it may be a later addition.[16]

3. Lack of Citation in an Early Writer who might reasonably be expected to have mentioned it. 1 Cor 14:34-35 is cited by no Apostolic Father, and indeed by no early ecclesiastical writer prior to Tertullian (160-240).[17]

Internal Evidence for Interpolation

4. Interruption. A passage which seems to interrupt its context, so that the context becomes continuous when the passage is removed, is likely to be an interpolation. Of 1 Cor 14:34-35, Fee observes that 'one can make much better sense of the structure of Paul's argument without these intruding sentences,' which have little, if anything, to do with the subject matter of the surrounding material. In short, 1 Cor 14:34-35 is a self-contained unit that interrupts the context in which it appears, and its removal leaves a complete and coherent discussion of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor 12 and 14.[18]

5. Repetition From Context. Another phenomenon suggesting that a seemingly interruptive passage may be an interpolation is the repetition – near the end of that passage or in the verse directly following – of a significant word or phrase from the verse preceding. This might represent an attempt to improve the transition between the passage and its context. In 1 Cor 12:31a, for example, Paul encourages his readers to be 'zealous for the greater gifts.' This is repeated in 14:1b-c with the substitution of 'the spiritual gifts' for 'the greater gifts' and the addition of 'that you may prophesy.'

[15]Gamble **Textual** 25-26; see the entire discussion on p24-29.

[16]The most extreme example of presence in different locations is the story of the Woman Taken in Adultery, which is absent from the best texts of John, but occurs in 12th century and later manuscripts after John 7:52, or John 7:36, or John 4:44, or even Luke 21:38.

[17]Payne **Fuldensis** 247-248.

[18]Fee **First** 701f. [For the interpolated nature of 1 Cor 13, see Walker **Interpolations** 147f. Further examples of obvious interruption are Mark 14:28 and Mark 16:7, the second of which refers back to the first. Both feature a remark which is ignored by the persons in the following passage, who instead respond to a remark made in the *preceding* passage – The Editors].

With the elimination of 12:31b-14:1a as a non-Pauline interpolation, it would become necessary to remove either 12:31a or (more likely) 14:1b, which may have been added to provide a smoother transition between 12:31b-14:1a and its context.

6. Linguistic Evidence. With due allowance for the effect of subject matter on vocabulary, unusual vocabulary or grammatical forms in a passage may suggest that it is an interpolation. At several points, the vocabulary of 1 Cor 14:34-35 appears not to be characteristically Pauline.[19] (1) The verb ὑποτάσσω 'be subject' appears often in the authentic Pauline letters, but in all except three cases it refers to submission either to God, Christ, God's law, God's righteousness, or to 'futility' (Rom 8:20). Apart from 1 Cor 14:34, it refers to submission to humans at only three places, one of which (Rom 13:1, 5; governing authorities) is regarded by some as a non-Pauline interpolation. The others are 1 Cor 14:32 (prophets) and 1 Cor 16:16 (Christian leaders). In the pseudo-Pauline Colossians, Ephesians, and Titus, however, it almost *always* has in mind submission to other human beings.[20] (2) The verb ἐπερωτάω 'to ask' appears elsewhere in the undisputed letters only at Rom 10:20, in a quotation from Isaiah; otherwise it is found in the New Testament only in the Gospels. (3) The adjective αἰσχρός 'shameful' is found in the undisputed letters only at 1 Cor 11:16, which is part of another suspected non-Pauline interpolation; otherwise, it is found in the New Testament only in the pseudo-Pauline Eph 5:12 and Tit 1:11.

7. Content Evidence for the distinctiveness of a passage is the counterpart of linguistic evidence. The content of 1 Cor 14:34-35 contradicts its immediate context in 1 Cor 14, where women are among those who speak in church (note the 'all' in verses 5, 18, 23, 24, 31 and 'each' in v 26), and its wider context in 11:3-16, where it is assumed without reproof that women pray and prophesy in the assembly.[21] 1 Cor 14:34-35 also contradicts the egalitarianism of Gal 3:27-28 (in Christ 'there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus'). Also, the phrase "just as the law says" in 1 Cor 14:34 appears not to be characteristically Pauline. As Collins notes, 'Paul generally expresses a somewhat negative view of the law' (cf 1 Cor 15:56).[22]

8. Situational Evidence. The case for distinctiveness is stronger when the language or content of a passage is not merely different from its context, but can be related to specific outside material, or to a later situation. Thus, 1 Cor 14:34-35 resembles the pseudo-Pauline 1 Tim 2:11-12. Both use the verb ἐπιτρέπειν to enjoin silence on the part of women; both require that women be 'submissive' (using the same root, ὑποτάσσειν in 1 Cor 14:34-35 and ὑποταγή in 1 Tim 2:11), presumably to men, an idea that also occurs elsewhere in the pseudo-Pauline writings.[23]

[19]There is a danger of circularity, in that the definition of "Pauline" is tentative until all interpolations have been identified. It is also to be expected that interpolators in Paul, as in any other text, may attempt with more or less success to imitate the style and content of that text.

[20]To other Christians, women to men, slaves to masters, and subjects to rulers. The only exception is Eph 5:24, which speaks of the church being in submission to Christ.

[21]Fee **First** 702.

[22]Collins **First** 515.

[23]Col 3:18, Eph 5:24, Tit 2:5; cf 1 Pet 3:1, 5 (all using the verb ὑποτάσσειν).